

Date: July 14, 2019

Text: Acts 21:15-26

Title: The Gospel Gives Us Freedom

Big Idea: Because the Gospel gives us freedom, we have opportunity to lay down our rights to serve others.

The Gospel Gives Us Freedom to Give God the Glory (vv. 15-19)

Why was it easy for these leaders to rejoice in the story Paul told them, even though they were struggling to keep peace in the Jerusalem church in regards to the gospel going to the Gentiles?

Paul had many opponents who opposed him from jealousy (Acts 13:45; Philippians 1:15). Have you ever been jealous about someone else's accomplishments, spiritual gifts, or blessings?

What are the results of jealousy in the church (see 1 Corinthians 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; 1 Timothy 6:4; James 3:13-15)?

How does the gospel address jealousy? What work can you praise God for doing in someone else's life today?

The Gospel Gives Us Freedom to Live Free from the Law (vv. 20-22)

Many Jewish followers of Jesus had a "zeal for the law" (v. 20). Is this a bad thing? Why or why not?

What do the Scriptures say about zeal? Is it a bad thing? Why or why not?

Look at Galatians 5:1-6; Romans 2:25-30; and Romans 10:4. How could Paul's gospel message be misinterpreted as teaching Jews to "forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or walk according to our customs"?

How is the cross-centered gospel a "scandal" (see 1 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 2:20, etc.)? Why do we struggle with being saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10)?

Is there any way that you are still trying to *work* for your acceptance before God?

The Gospel Gives Us Freedom to Love Others (vv. 23-26)

How do you reconcile the elder's recommendation to Paul (vv. 23-24) with the idea of salvation apart from works of the law (Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:15-3:14)?

Read Romans 14 together and apply it to Paul's situation *and* to our own situations. How has the gospel freed us to love by laying down our rights for others? Are there any things that other Christians do that you "judge" them for but shouldn't? Are there things that you do as a Christian that might make other believers stumble in their faith?

How can you "pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding" (Romans 14:19)?