

+ IN THE NAME OF JESUS +

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
**The Third Sunday after Pentecost**

June 29, 2025

***“OUR FREEDOM IN CHRIST”***

***GALATIANS 5:1, 13–25***

Introduction: *“It’s a free country!” “I have the right to choose.”* Our nation is familiar with such slogans. The guarantees of f\_\_\_\_\_ we will celebrate this Independence Day fix our attention on individual and personal “r\_\_\_\_\_.” Sounds great, right? Maybe so; but it can actually lead to an undisciplined surrender to self-c\_\_\_\_\_. We become s\_\_\_\_\_ to our own desire and will. In other words, the so-called freedom to choose is a deceptive l\_\_\_\_\_, for our natural will is not f\_\_\_\_\_. It is enslaved to s\_\_\_\_\_.

St. Paul warns us in our epistle reading that to live according to the flesh is d\_\_\_\_\_. It can actually d\_\_\_\_\_ faith and salvation, so the Apostle Paul warns us: BEWARE OF L\_\_\_\_\_ YOUR FREEDOM BY ALLOWING THE F\_\_\_\_\_ TO DIRECT YOUR LIFE.

***I. CHRIST HAS GIVEN US TRUE FREEDOM.***

***A. The world’s illusion of freedom***

The so-called “*freedom of choice*” we hear of so often is an i\_\_\_\_\_ Day did not begin in the Garden of Eden, but our first parents did there declare their i\_\_\_\_\_ from God: “*We know what is good and what is evil; we have the right to make our own choices.*” But to be independent from God is to become s\_\_\_\_\_ to the impulses, lusts, and desires of m\_\_\_\_\_ and b\_\_\_\_\_, and it puts us under the curse Paul speaks of in chapter 3: “*Cursed be everyone who does not abide by \_\_\_\_\_ things written in the Book of the \_\_\_\_\_, and do them*” (Gal 3:10).

***B. True freedom in Christ***

We have been given true freedom in Christ. “*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a \_\_\_\_\_ for us – for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree” (Gal 3:13).* We hear the Law’s judgment: “*the soul who sins shall \_\_\_\_\_.*” But this judgment has been meted out. The sinner has been e\_\_\_\_\_

“*For our sake he [God] made him [Jesus] to be \_\_\_\_\_ who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the r\_\_\_\_\_ of God*” (2 Cor 5:21). The Law’s just punishment for sin has been fully s\_\_\_\_\_, and we become the free children of God through faith in Christ.

***C. A Spirit-led freedom***

But how did you come by this faith? You were brought into it by the Holy Spirit, and the same Holy Spirit who brought you to f\_\_\_\_\_ in Christ is working in you through His Word and Sacraments to lead you into true, Spirit-led f\_\_\_\_\_.

***D. A new will***

We confess in the Creed that the Holy Spirit is “*the Lord and giver of \_\_\_\_\_,*” and so he is. But the life he gives is so much more than \_\_\_\_\_ life. He has made us “*alive together with Christ*” (Eph 2:5). He tr\_\_\_\_\_ us by “*the renewing of the mind*” (Rom 12:2). “*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come*” (2 Cor 5:17). This means we are given the w\_\_\_\_\_ to do the w\_\_\_\_\_ of God (cf. Phil 2:13).

***II. DON’T SURRENDER YOUR FREEDOM.***

So, don’t surrender your freedom, becoming enslaved to the unbridled l\_\_\_\_\_ of the flesh.

***A. Losing the new life***

The new life of the Spirit that God has so graciously given can be l\_\_\_\_\_ if we surrender to the \_\_\_\_\_, its lusts and impulses (v 13). “*We have met the enemy and he is \_\_\_\_\_,*” which is why St. Paul writes, even of himself, that “*I do not do the \_\_\_\_\_ I want, but the \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want is what I keep on doing*” (Rom 7:19). Paul calls this the “*old s\_\_\_\_\_*” (Rom 6:6). Luther calls it the “*old A\_\_\_\_\_.*”

***B. The works of the flesh***

This “*old Adam*” is always at work in us, sometimes, with great success; but it is not h\_\_\_\_\_ productivity. It is the work of the old self, the works of the f\_\_\_\_\_. Paul lists some examples: “*Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity,*

*sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these” (vv19-21).* No one sees in these things the \_\_\_\_\_ S. \_\_\_\_\_ at work.

### **C. Internal warfare**

Thus, there is an internal w \_\_\_\_\_ going on inside of us. We are both f \_\_\_\_\_ and s \_\_\_\_\_, o \_\_\_\_\_ nature and n \_\_\_\_\_ nature, and in this earthly life, these two natures will always be at war. It is a civil war over whether we are again e \_\_\_\_\_ or remain f \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ. If we surrender to the flesh, we lose our faith and f \_\_\_\_\_ our inheritance (v 21; cf. Eph 5:6; Rom 8:12–13). So, hear Paul’s warning: *“those who do such things”,* that is, those who continue to p \_\_\_\_\_ these things, *“will not inherit the kingdom of God” (v. 21)* They forfeit their salvation, for f \_\_\_\_\_ cannot live where there is no contrition and r \_\_\_\_\_.

## **III. WE NEED DAILY RENEWAL.**

This is why we need renewal – not every so often, not now and then, but \_\_\_\_\_.

### **A. Daily contrition and repentance**

This comes with daily contrition and repentance. Luther writes in the Small Catechism (Baptism, pt. IV) that *“the old Adam should by daily contrition and repentance be dr \_\_\_\_\_ and die with all sin and evil d \_\_\_\_\_ and that a new man should emerge to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”* This is one of the *“spiritual s \_\_\_\_\_” (1 Pet 2:5)* that we are daily to offer to God. David writes: *“The sacrifices of God are a b \_\_\_\_\_ spirit; a broken and c \_\_\_\_\_ heart, O God, you will not despise” (Ps 51:17).* Like the whole burnt offering of the Old Testament, we are to bring the f \_\_\_\_\_ and its evil desires to God and say, *“Kill this evil thing!”* Working though his Law, the Holy Spirit c \_\_\_\_\_ us of our sin, the terror of c \_\_\_\_\_ before God is formed in the heart, and so, the Spirit puts the flesh to death.

### **B. Daily emergence of the new man**

This is followed by the daily emergence of the new man, who will *“daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.”* True repentance is more

than s \_\_\_\_\_ over sin. It is also f \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. Through this faith, we receive the benefit of his holy obedience and death, and this faith is also the \_\_\_\_\_’s work in us.

### **C. Fruits, not works**

But we are still not done. The Spirit then begins to produce in us the f \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit: *“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (vv 22b–23a).* Notice Paul calls them fruits, not w \_\_\_\_\_. They are not the effort of your l \_\_\_\_\_. They are produced by God’s Holy Spirit as he works in you through his Word. They are good works, *“which God prepared in a \_\_\_\_\_ for us to do” (Eph 2:10),* and *“against such things there is no \_\_\_\_\_” (v 23).* They are the evidence of the f \_\_\_\_\_ and l \_\_\_\_\_ of the persons who are God’s free children and heirs together with Christ.

*Conclusion:* And that — the liberty of living not by your own sinful, personal \_\_\_\_\_, not under your individual r \_\_\_\_\_, but rather in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, who gave his life for your freedom — that is the freedom for which Christ has set you free.

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