



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Godly Freedom

Date: July 5, 2026

Scripture Text: Galatians 5:13-15

Notes:

Happy Independence Day! America celebrates her 250th anniversary. Godly freedom, when viewed through both the Declaration of Independence and the Bible, emerges as a great gift rooted in God’s authority rather than human permission. The Declaration proclaims that all people are “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,” grounding liberty in God’s design rather than the whims of governments. Scripture reinforces this foundation, teaching that true freedom begins in the heart—where God releases people from the bondage of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ and calls them to live in righteousness, justice, and love. Together, these sources paint freedom not merely as independence from tyranny or responsibility (with the mentality that one can do whatever they please) but as the God-given ability to pursue truth in Him, live with moral responsibility, and flourish in the purpose for which we were created. May God bless America! So, let’s look at what godly freedom is...

I. Freedom Given by God (Gal. 5:13)

It is a challenge at times to balance godly freedom between the law and license when we exercise our liberties. Appearance, music style, programs, etc. can be defined by a legalistic view or total liberty, but neither include love in their application. Going back to the source, which is God, and looking to Jesus as our example, we can find the balance needed to exercise godly freedom.

- What are examples of godly freedom being limited by legalism?
- What are examples of godly freedom being abused by license (“opportunity for the flesh”, [v.13](#))?
- A perverted perspective of freedom is ‘the ability to do as you please, regardless of impact on others’. How is godly freedom different?
- [Gal. 5:1](#) states “It was for freedom that Christ set us free”. Free from what?
- If we are free from the law, how can being legalistic be counter to the godly freedom Christ gave us?
- One definition of legalism is the imposition of my convictions on others. Have you imposed your convictions on others in the past, whether in thought or word?
- What are examples of such convictions?
- How can we live in godly freedom, living within the convictions God has given us without feeling the need to expect others to live within those same convictions?



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II. Freedom is Governed by Love (Gal. 5:13b-14)

The boundary established by God by which we find the balance between legalism and license is love. Love is the fence that keeps us from judging others through legalism and abuse of exercising our liberty. By exercising godly love (agapē), we place the needs of others above our own. [Phil. 2:3-4](#) states “Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.”

- How would you define godly love?
- What role does godly love play in godly freedom?
- What would our church be like if everyone exercised godly love?
- How can you do a better job at having godly love for others as you exercise godly freedom?

III. Freedom Guided by Wisdom (Gal 5:15)

“As a result of the legalists, this church was divided. They were biting and devouring each other. Their church and community of faith were on the verge of destruction. Legalism treats people harshly and often leads to divisions.” (Anders) We need to be discerning how we exercise our freedoms. When done inappropriately, we can cause strife within the church, make one another stumble, and be a poor witness for Christ to the world.

- Describe a time when you observed division within a church. Was it a result of legalism or liberty being exercised without love?
- How can godly love raise our radar towards the impact of our actions on others?
- How can the appropriate practice of godly freedom build up a church and make them impactful for God’s kingdom?
- How can you be an example for the appropriate practice of godly freedom?

“While we are zealously performing the duties of good citizens and soldiers, we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of religion. To the distinguished character of Patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of Christian.”
– George Washington

“Now I will avow, that I then believe, and now believe, that those general Principles of Christianity, are as eternal and immutable, as the Existence and Attributes of God; and that those Principles of Liberty, are as unalterable as human Nature and our terrestrial, mundane System.” – John Adams

“A watchful eye must be kept on ourselves lest while we are building ideal monuments of Renown and Bliss here we neglect to have our names enrolled in the Annals of Heaven.” – James Madison