



# off the chain

FINDING REAL FREEDOM  
IN AN UNREALISTIC WORLD

**SMALL GROUP GUIDE**





## **Part One: Free Trade**

**Scripture:** Galatians 4:1-7 NLT; Ephesians 3:14-21 NLT

**Bottom Line:** Real freedom isn't found in striving, it's found in surrender.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. What did Jeff share that stuck out to you?
2. Why do you think so many people see Christianity as the last place to look for freedom in their lives? What is at the root of this perspective?
3. Jeff argued that a truly loving relationship is where people feel most free. Would you agree? Why or why not? When only one party surrenders their freedom and only the other benefits, it is called exploitation. Have you seen this in your own life?
4. Read Galatians 4:1-7. In your own words, how would you say Jesus brings an opportunity for freedom?
5. Do the images of an "Abba Father" (daddy) and adopted child make this expression of freedom more meaningful or more difficult for you personally?
6. Do you think that we all have a need to gain approval from someone? Why or why not?
7. If surrendering our life to Christ opens the door for our designer to become our perfect dad (to be fully accepted), why do you think we are so reluctant to surrender things to Christ at times? Why do we try so hard, or carry guilt?

### **Moving Forward**

Where are you striving to get the approval of God or the people around you? What steps do you think that you need to take this week to surrender these things to Christ? Together, as we look to understand God's love as our father, read Ephesians 3:14-21 as you close your prayer time.

If you haven't been baptized, baptism is a great opportunity to let God know that you are fully surrendering to Him. Check out [www.connexuschurch.com/baptism](http://www.connexuschurch.com/baptism) to learn more about baptism.



Join us for the “Galatians Challenge” - read 1 chapter from Galatians each day of the week for a month. See what God says to you about freedom. You can find a fantastic overview of Galatians at [www.connexuschurch.com/blog](http://www.connexuschurch.com/blog) or text “Galatians” to 705-990-5090.

**Remember**

Freedom isn't found in what you do, it's found in what Jesus has already done.



## Part Two: My Soul Is Free ... But Then I ...

I know that true freedom is found in Jesus. It's amazing that He has made a way for us to experience a loving relationship with God. At the same time, I don't always feel like I'm living in freely in my day to day life - I give into temptation, lose my temper, fall into bad habits, get overwhelmed, etc. How do I experience this freedom as I live my life each day?

**Bottom line:** Freedom is found in Christ, but lived out by the power of His Spirit.

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:13-26

### Discussion Questions

1. What did Jeff share that stuck out to you?
2. On a typical day, what moments do you struggle to feel like you are living free? What relationship do you find the most freeing or the least freeing?
3. In Galatians 5:13-14 Paul instructs us that our freedom brings with it two responsibilities:
  - i. Don't let your freedom become something you use to serve yourself.
  - ii. Use our freedom to serve others in love.
4. Do you think Paul is being overly simplistic about freedom found in Christ? Do you think love and freedom are that closely connected?
5. In verse 16 Paul goes on to explain that the Spirit and our selfish desires are always at odds fighting for and against choices that would allow us to live in freedom. When do you feel that tension the most?
6. Jeff said that selfishness feeds the flesh, but selflessness frees the soul. Would you say that's true? How have you seen that in your own life?
7. Galatians 5:19-25 juxtaposes two ways of living, with the Spirit being the key to bearing real fruit in our life. Do you think these fruits are something prescriptive that we strive to change in our lives (behaviours we manage)? Or do you believe Paul is talking about the Spirit supernaturally remodelling our hearts?
8. If you believe God's Spirit can supernaturally change you, what attribute of the fruit of the Spirit do you want most in your life day-to-day?



## **Moving Forward**

Okay let's see God do something supernatural. As a group, have each person pick the one fruit attribute that they want to see in their life (they can even share why if they want). Then write the fruit down next to their name on a group list. Pray for the Holy Spirit to change each other's hearts in that specific area (you can pray through the list during the week). Then share next week how God might be changing your hearts. Feel free to do this each week to the end of the series.

As we talk about living in freedom, a great step of surrender is the step of baptism. If you would like to take that step, May 27th is the Sunday for you. Check out [www.connexuschurch.com/baptism](http://www.connexuschurch.com/baptism) if you haven't been baptized, and would like to celebrate living free!

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### **Part Three: I'm Free ... But Then They ...**

I know that true freedom is found in Jesus, and I know the Holy Spirit wants to remodel my heart so I can live freely, but here's the problem ... people. It seems like relationships can rob us of our freedom when they aren't going well. Whether it's our kids or spouse on a bad day, the boss who stresses us out, the person who takes advantage of us, or the person who cuts us off on the road, people have the power to rob us of living in freedom. How do we pursue relationships in a way where we can experience freedom?

**Bottom line:** Don't look to others to be Jesus, but look to be Jesus to others.

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:25-6:15 NLT

#### **Discussion Questions**

1. Looking back at the last 2 weeks, are you being changed in how you think or in how you live your life when it comes to freedom? How have you seen these changes in your daily interactions?
2. What are your "triggers" when things get tense in a relationship?
3. Read Galatians 5:25-6:5. Paul talks about fighting our desire to compare to others and instead to go above and beyond to help people in messy situations. Which of these two things do you find most difficult?
4. As you think about yourself, which of the following do you crave most from people: Pleasing, Proving, Praise, or Power? How does this impact your willingness to live out verses 1-5?
5. What relationships do you sometimes look to in your life to fill a void they aren't meant to fill? What does this look like?
6. In Galatians 6:7-10, Paul challenges us to live to please the Spirit, as opposed to pleasing our sinful nature, because of what we will reap. What do you think is the difference between those two harvests? In life, do you find this harder than it sounds? Why?
7. In verse 14 Paul talks about boasting in Christ. What do you think boasting means in this passage and what are the things that we are tempted to boast in instead of Christ?
8. What do you think it looks like to boast in Christ throughout your day? What do you think could be the benefits (or challenges) of that?



### **Moving Forward**

Where are you being tempted to compare or measure yourself against others or putting God sized expectations on other people. This week, when you find yourself looking to others to take the place of Jesus, find ways to be Jesus to others. Start each day by boasting in Christ out loud and pray that God would bring you an opportunity to encourage someone or help carry their burden.

As a group, don't forget to pray for those who are being baptized on Sunday. Still interested in being baptized? Check out [www.connexuschurch.com/baptism](http://www.connexuschurch.com/baptism) to get in touch with our Baptism Sunday team.

Join us for the last week of the "Galatians Challenge" - read 1 chapter from Galatians each day of the week for a month. See what God says to you about freedom. You can find a fantastic overview of Galatians at [www.connexuschurch.com/blog](http://www.connexuschurch.com/blog) or text "Galatians" to 705 990 5090.



## Part Four: Baptism Sunday

What a morning to celebrate how Jesus has changed people's lives and their choice to follow Him. It's amazing to see what God is doing. Baptism is also a time for all of us to reflect on the death and resurrection of Jesus, and celebrate the freedom He brings us.

**Bottom line:** Baptism is a physical expression of our spiritual freedom in Jesus!

**Scripture:** Galatians 3:23-29, Romans 6:3-5

### Discussion Questions

1. What baptism story really resonated with you or spoke to you from Sunday? Why do you think it spoke to you?
2. Read Romans 6:3-5. If you had to explain to someone who had never been to church what baptism is, what would you say?
3. Read Galatians 3:23-29. Why do you think Paul says that when we are baptized we clothe ourselves with Christ? Why do you think he uses that imagery?
4. Paul seems to argue that those who follow Jesus are equal and unified through baptism. How do you think that changes the way we see Christians locally and globally?
5. Through our study on Galatians, Paul has often used the image of slavery. Slavery was a common part of culture at that time. Would you agree or disagree with this quote from theologian RC Sproul? Why or why not?
6. "The only freedom that man ever has is when he becomes a slave to Jesus Christ."
7. As we reflect on baptism and the topic of freedom through this series, take a moment to look back on your life. What are you grateful that God has freed you from? Where are you looking for more freedom in your life?

### Moving Forward

As we move into a new series at Connexus next Sunday, be reminded of this each day:

When you don't feel free - you have found freedom in Christ.  
When you struggle to live freely - you can live free by His Spirit.  
When you feel powerless - you can boast in His power.



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We live in a culture where we've never had more options to choose from, but in many ways, we also feel chained down by those same choices. We can feel the pressure that comes from being tied to our job, to a broken relationship, to our past, to our financial situation, to inner battles, etc. No matter how hard we try, why is it so hard to feel free in our daily lives?

We'll be talking about what it means to experience real freedom in our souls and lives. What if it really is possible to live free?



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