

# Stand Firm In Your Freedom

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Preacher: Billy Nye

[0:00] I pull it up to the house with the keys in it. I go inside, I grab him, I pull him outside, and I show him the new car. I say, all right, pal, it's all yours.

Take her for a spin. Enjoy your newfound freedom. But instead of hopping in and peeling off, let's just say he looks at me and he says, thanks, Dad, could you give me a ride to the movie theater in the van, please?

If not, that's fine, I can walk. I give him a puzzled look and I say, but I don't think you understand. I bought you a car.

It's yours. I got it so that you can use it and enjoy it and help others with it. You have a car now, so get into it and drive it.

Why are you choosing not to experience the goodness of the freedom that I've given you? Now, you might be thinking, that is the most unrealistic story ever. No 16-year-old would receive such a gift and not enjoy it.

[1:10] And you would be right. But unthinkably, we as believers can often miss out on the goodness of a much greater gift of freedom that we have been graciously given.

Like Samuel, in my rather ridiculous story, those of us who have trusted in Jesus have been given a marvelous gift of freedom. And just as Sammy chose to receive it, but not enjoy the full experience of it, we can do the same.

Believers in Jesus can possess the gift of freedom in Christ, but not hop into it, not stand firm in it, not embrace it, and enjoy it, and use it to the full.

And that is Paul's major concern in Galatians chapter 5. And actually, it's one of his major concerns in the whole letter. He is simply flabbergasted that these dear people would retreat away from the most precious thing they have ever been given and choose not to fully embrace it and stand firm in it.

So to boil the passage we're about to dig into together down to a sentence, this is what the Spirit of God is saying to us. If Jesus has set you free, stand firm in your freedom.

[2:26] If Jesus has set you free, stand firm in your freedom. Well, let's unpack that sentence in the three main parts of this passage. In verse 1, it's the main point.

It's the command. Stand firm. So we're going to look at that briefly. The command. And then the next two sections, verses 2 to 6 and verses 7 to 12, there are two ways that Paul is giving us to live that command out in real life.

To flesh that command out. One of those ways in verses 2 to 6 has to do with our hope. And the other way in verses 7 to 12 has to do with truth.

So the command, something that has to do with hope, and then truth. So let's start in verse 1 by looking at this command to stand firm in our freedom. For freedom, Christ has set us free.

Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. So Paul gives a command here. Actually, it's two commands. They're really just two sides of the same coin.

[3:34] Stand firm, do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. But before we kind of dig into that command, we need to back up and hear the statement that provides the basis for the command at the very beginning of the verse.

For freedom, Christ has set you free. Now as 21st century Americans, we hear the word freedom, and we either think of William Wallace riding back and forth on his horse telling the Scottish

freedom, or we think of fluttering American flag.

We think of human rights, of democratic liberty for individuals. That's what we think of when we think of freedom. That's not what Paul's talking about here.

How do we know that? Well, this statement is not just coming out of nowhere. Paul has been mounting a theological juggernaut of an argument in chapters 3 and 4 that he's been building momentum towards this point for two chapters that talk about slavery and freedom in a very specific way.

It doesn't have to do with democratic human rights. As important as those are. Remember, the whole issue for the Galatian Christians was that some influential Jewish people have been making their rounds in the region of Galatia and the churches there, and they have been patting the backs of the newly minted non-Jewish Christians and saying, oh, I am so happy that you are believing in the God of Israel and his Messiah, Jesus.

[5:11] This is wonderful. Now, you're almost there. You have nearly become a part of God's covenant people, but you're missing something to really be in in order to really join the club and really be okay with God.

You need to observe the law of Moses to its full extent. You need to celebrate the Jewish Holy Days and eat kosher food, and if you really want to belong, guys, I'm sorry, but you've got to get circumcised.

Then you'll have complete confidence that you are righteous before God and that he approves of you. That's how you're fully in. Well, all of this actually sounded kind of appealing to the Galatian Christians in one sense.

They were leaning towards it because those are practical, visible things that you can check off a list and say, okay, I'm good. I know I'm okay because of what I've done to make sure I'm good with God.

But the problem with this is that it turns back the clock on what Jesus has done. The whole reason Jesus came was that human beings have never been able to keep God's holy law that he gave to Moses.

[6:25] Israel never once came close to achieving the standard of holiness that God requires. Look back at chapter 3, verse 21. Chapter 3, verse 21.

Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not. For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

So Paul's saying here, the law's not bad. It's not an evil thing. It simply has no power to make you righteous. It can't give you life. It can't give you a right standing with God.

In fact, all those who relied on the law, according to chapter 3, verse 10, for all those who rely on works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law and do them.

No one can actually keep the law and so all those who rely on the law were cursed, were doomed to be unrighteous in the law's sight.

[7:25] But when Jesus came, as chapter 4, verse 4 puts it, he was born of a woman and he was born under the law, under which he actually kept it.

He's the only one who did. And then he willingly became a curse-removing substitute for those of us who broke the law. And by doing that, he released all of us who were under the curse of the law, who were enslaved under the law, and set us free from its shame and its condemnation and the futile attempts, the hamster wheel we have effect of trying to be right with God on our own.

And in the passage immediately before ours, as Pastor Mack preached last week, the Galatians, by trying to go back to the law as a way to be right before God, were denying their true identity as free sons and daughters of God.

And they were going back to slavery. So what's the freedom that Paul's talking about? What's the freedom for which Christ has set us free? It's freedom from depending on our own moral efforts to get right and stay right with God.

We're free from that. Free from any need to get right and stay right with God on our own, through our own effort. And notice what Paul says.

[8:46] It's for this freedom that you got set free. I mean, it's kind of a redundant statement. He doesn't, it's kind of a duh. You didn't get set free to go back to slavery.

You get set free to be free. You are to remain free, to stay free, to fully experience the goodness of that freedom that Jesus purchased for us. It would be unthinkable to go back.

So that's what the therefore in verse 1 is there for. Because Jesus set you free by grace so you can actually remain free and not return to your own efforts as a way to get right with God, stand firm. Stay in it. Don't go back to a yoke of slavery when Jesus has removed it. So we are free from depending on our own efforts to be right with God and we must stand firm in that freedom and not go back to slavery.

That's the command. That's just pretty plain and simple and kind of obvious. But perhaps you're thinking, okay, I think I got that. That makes sense. What does that look like?

[9:49] How do I do that? How do I stand firm in my freedom that Christ has purchased for me? For the rest of the passage, Paul gives us two ways to stand firm in our freedom.

First way has to do with hope. Second way has to do with truth. The first way is in verses 2 to 6. It's this. Don't hope in your visible human effort.

Hope in Christ's unseen righteousness. Don't hope in your visible human effort. But rather, hope in Christ's unseen righteousness.

Right in verse 2, the big issue comes out. for the first time since chapter 2 of Galatians, circumcision gets mentioned.

And apparently, a whole bunch of the hullabaloo going on in Galatia had to do with this very specific, concrete ritual of getting circumcised.

[10:51] circumcised. The non-Jewish believers are not circumcised. The Jewish people influencing them to get circumcised were saying, in order to really be in, you've got to get circumcised.

You've got to go under the knife. At least all the men needed to. But look at Paul's sharp warning in verse 2. If you get circumcised, then Christ is of no advantage to you at all.

The false teachers are saying they could somehow mix the grace of Christ with human effort to produce a recipe of getting right with God. And Paul says, nope. God does not share his glory with human effort.

It's either all of grace or not at all. It's all of works. And this is why. Look at verse 3. He gives us the reason. If they get circumcised as a way of getting right with God, what does he say?

You're obligated to keep the whole law. It means you have to submit yourself through the entire system of the law of Moses, which requires that they perfectly obey the whole law in order to be righteous before God and no one has ever done that except Jesus, which is the point.

[12:02] It's got to be by faith in him. And he puts it really starkly in verse 4. If you're trying to get right with God through your obedience to the law, then you're severed from Christ.

You're fallen away from grace. You've fallen off the grace train. The only one who can save you then is you. And then you're up a creek because you can't.

You know, sometimes Paul is a little bit hard to understand. Not here. It's super clear. He's repeating himself over and over and over again. It's like, grace or not grace.

I don't think you guys get it. It's this or this. You either go back to a slavish dependence on your own ability and your own effort to get right with God and you hope in that.

But if that's true, then you have nothing to do with Christ. One writer puts it this way. If the Galatians get circumcised, they are crossing a border into occupied territory where the law rules and not Christ.

[13:06] The Galatians were in grave danger of seceding from the kingdom of grace and therefore removing themselves from the blessings of the kingdom of grace.

So basically, Paul's saying, don't hope in your human effort to get right with God. If you bank on your moral performance, you're sunk because it cuts you off from the only true hope you have, which is Christ.

And that's now where he turns in verse 5. He shifts gears and he starts looking at our true hope. Paul throws the drifting Galatians a rescue line of appeal in verse 5.

For through the Spirit by faith we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. Notice how he goes from talking directly to the Galatians with you, the you pronoun, and then he shifts by using

we.

He's inviting them to rejoin the we of all those who have trusted in Christ alone for true righteousness. Don't you love what Paul's implying here?

[14:16] He's saying that our hope is not in a checklist of visible human effort, but in an unseen reality that we participate in and wait for by faith through the Spirit.

Let's unpack that for a moment. when you realize that you could only be right with God through Jesus' work on your behalf and you trusted in Jesus, then God effectively and eternally pronounced you to be righteous in his sight.

it was a verdict that was pronounced in eternity and it was unseen in one sense in this world.

But one day it is our certain hope that our very real righteousness which we is still unseen and we partially experience now in terms of seeing that worked out in our lives, one day it will be on full display.

it's totally ours. We have it. We are declared righteous, done from now and forever. And that starts gradually getting worked out in our lives from the present all the way into the future.

[15:32] Let me illustrate it this way. People have often said I look like my dad. Now my likeness to my dad in one sense it's always been there ever since I was a baby.

You would probably be able to spot some similarities perhaps to my dad and my baby pictures and elementary school photos but I was a baby. I was a little kid. I wasn't a spitting image of him as he is now.

But as I've grown and matured that likeness has increased in more ways than one. I've taken on his physical characteristics. I'm taller. I'm losing my hair.

I even cough like my dad. We have the same cough. It's weird. But also in our character. I've begun to become more and more like him. I'm more patient than I used to be.

I hope. I'm wiser than I used to be I think. And in that sense that likeness was slow to emerge and I'm certain though that when I'm 60 I will look even more like my dad than I do now.

[16:37] It's in my DNA to become more and more like my dad. That's the hope of our righteousness. It's in our spirit encoded DNA that we are are becoming and forever will be righteous as Jesus is righteous.

That's our hope. And it's not a I hope it's a maybe hope it's a certain hope. it's happening now and it will happen in the future.

So we wait for it patiently eagerly expectantly actively and Paul clenches it in verse 6 for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything but only faith working through love.

So he's saying here whether you're a circumcised Jewish person or an uncircumcised non-Jewish person that's pointing to whether you make this religious checklist or not the only thing that actually brings about righteousness is not the visible human effort but faith and genuine faith in Jesus faith that justifies also brings about the evidence of righteousness which is love.

As someone else has said we are justified by faith alone but not by faith that remains alone. As we continue to trust in and rest in and value and get to know Jesus by faith then the family resemblance of truly belonging to Christ starts to emerge in the form of love.

[18:34] I'm not going to steal much from Pastor Mike's sermon next week in verses 13 to 15 but it's helpful that Paul right here doesn't want the Galatians to think that human effort doesn't have a place.

Oh it has a place. We don't just say I believe and then we sit back and do nothing. No we say I trust in Christ alone for being made right with God now and forever.

It's nothing I do at all. that makes me right with God. It is only what Christ has done and therefore because of what Jesus has done I'm going to expend all my energy in gratitude fueled obedience to the God of grace by loving the people around me for Jesus sake.

So if love is the fruit then faith in God's grace is the root. Our hope is not in the fruit not in what we do.

That's not our hope for getting right with God. But in the reality of righteousness that God has granted us by faith and through the operation of the Spirit in us to bring out that righteousness DNA.

[19:46] Isn't the irony of this verse beautiful? Our unseen righteousness shows up visibly as love. love. And it's only possible through the non-effort of faith in the effort of another.

As the hymn says, my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I don't trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Our true hope of being one with Jesus by faith, justified both now and forever is too precious a thing to lose. And Paul is warning us here that if we embrace our own human effort as our hope, then we lose our only certain hope of experiencing true righteousness.

Well, we're not Galatians, we're Kenosians, so how does this fit with us? How do we respond to this? Do we just say, oh, glad circumcision isn't a thing anymore?

No. We must not distance ourselves too quickly from this text just because of the circumcision language. There's a very important principle here that we've been working on.

[21:10] It's not human effort, it's Christ's grace. And it needs to strike us as bluntly as it struck the Galatians, because we too are very prone to rely on our moral performance and our human effort just as much as they were.

How do we do that and why do we do that? Well, it's because moral performance is our default. We know we're not okay.

Everyone alive has this sense of, eh, I'm not alright. We do things that are wrong, we feel the shame, and then what do we do with that? We have this sense of, I'm not complete, I'm not okay, there's something missing.

Why am I not okay? It's down on the inside of us and we can't escape it. So what did our ancestors do? Well, Adam and Eve in the garden, they messed up, their shame told them that something was wrong, something was off, they weren't okay, told them that they were naked, so what did they do? They stitched some fig leaves together, they covered themselves up, it was a self-salvation project based on human effort and it failed miserably. In our American culture in 21st century, we are exactly the same.

[22:25] We are all about helping ourselves, becoming the best version of ourselves, giving ourselves self-care and self-love to try to address the deep down sense that we're not okay.

That's why Oprah is rich, it's the gospel she preaches. But the fact is, we aren't okay. And no amount of telling ourselves that we are okay and we got this can make us okay.

If we put our hope in ourselves, we lose our only true hope, which is our true righteousness that we have by faith in Jesus Christ who loved us and gave himself up so we can be okay.

So dear friend, what are you hoping in? Where is your hope that you're going to be okay somehow? are you assured of and hanging on to the certain hope of righteousness that Jesus accomplished for you?

[23:27] Or are you hoping in a hamster wheel of a maybe hope? Maybe if I run hard enough, maybe if I do well enough today, I don't know about you, but I wake up as this is my default.

default. I wake up with this sense of, okay, I've got to make sure I get things in order. However that manifests itself, whether it's in having a long enough devotion, or I'm praying enough, or whether I do a great job as a dad that morning, or if I'm loving toward my wife that morning, but I get this sense default in me, I might be the only one in the room, I don't know, but I get this sense of like, I've got to make sure I'm okay.

But what I have to do every morning is I have to say, I'm okay, now and forever, because of Jesus. That's where I rest.

It's a deep level sense of trust. It's extremely hard to live there. Depending on who you are, I don't know, that's how it is for me.

You might be trying to be okay or stay okay on the basis of whether you're succeeding in your job, or whether people approve of you, whether you're being the best version of yourself today, or whether you're a good parent, or whatever it may be, we all want to be okay, but the fact is we're not.

[24:52] And Jesus has secured our only hope of making us okay through his death and resurrection. So rest. Rest in this certain hope with the

Spirit's help and get off the hamster wheel of human effort.

But maybe for some of you you've been listening and you're like, that isn't me at all. I'm not feeling that. Well, maybe the other side of the coin that Paul points out in verse 6 needs to hit you.

Perhaps your faith is too casual. Perhaps your faith is flippant and it's not showing up as love.

You're not taking sin seriously.

You are centered on self and you're okay with that. This is not standing firm in freedom. Being free in Christ doesn't mean you're free to do whatever you want.

It means you're free to not sin. We need to stay away from the slavery to sin just as much as the slavery depending on our human effort. So if you're not taking sin seriously, then it's worth examining your faith.

[26:00] Is it a true and repentant faith that gets worked out into love? Not perfectly. Don't be under a sense of condemnation here if you have true faith, but it is worth asking, is my faith sincere?

Is it getting worked out in love toward God and toward others in my life? Is it producing the fruit of the righteousness that God requires? Only genuine faith latches on to our true hope of being right with God.

Flippant faith will ultimately not produce the fruit of righteousness. So if that's you, then hear and obey Paul's words to Timothy and 2 Timothy 2. Flee youthful passions.

Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace along with all those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. So that's the first way that we can live out what it means to stand firm in our freedom.

We have to latch on to the only hope of Christ's unseen righteousness both now and forever. So what's the second way? The second way that we can stand firm in our freedom in Christ that Paul points us to is this, has to do with truth.

[27:13] Zealously hold to the exclusive truth of the cross. Zealously hold to the exclusive truth of the cross.

look at verse 7. You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? Something had happened to the Galatians. They were on a good course.

They were running the race well, but someone got in their way. And instead of pushing them over and keep running the right way, they diverged. Paul wants to know who is responsible for hindering them from following the truth of the good news of the gospel of the cross.

And it's not because he's curious. It's because he's ticked. In fact, this whole section on the surface, Paul's kind of off his usual style.

It appears a little bit like disjointed at first. It's not his kind of usual steady logical self. As one writer puts it, it's like Paul is uttering snorts of indignation. His temperature is running hot, but it's not the Galatians.

[28:23] It's at those who steered them away from the truth of the cross. Paul wants them to know in verse 8 that this line of thinking, this persuasion that they need to get circumcised to get right with God, it's not from God.

It's not from him who calls you. God called them to be free from the curse of the law, free from futile, hamster wheel, human effort. God called them to experience and to enjoy and stand firm in the freedom of a right relationship with God through faith in Christ.

He did not call them to go back into slavery again. He called them to hop into the car and take off.

And in verse 9, we see that this thinking has the potential to spread and corrupt the whole region of Galatia and affect all the churches there.

And the Galatians need to be aware of this. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. Almost in the same breath in verse 10, he appears to calm down and communicate a real confidence in the Galatians.

You can tell of his affection for them. He is not so concerned about them that they are going to abandon their freedom in the end. He is persuaded in the Lord, helpful phrase, in the Lord, that their thinking will line back up with the truth.

[29:42] That phrase in the Lord is very helpful. Paul isn't necessarily confident in the Galatians themselves, but in God's ability to protect his people from error and to persuade his people of the truth from the heart.

But the opposite is true for those who are persuading his people to abandon their freedom. Look at the last half of verse 10. And the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. This is a reference to God's judgment. In the end, those who persist in persuading God's people away from the truth of the cross will be the recipients of God's hot judgment. This is a big deal in Paul's mind. And we get to the crux of the matter in verse 11. Apparently, these false teachers were saying that Paul himself was preaching that circumcision was a way to get right with God.

I guess, even though this is a flat lie, perhaps it was potentially to add more credibility to what they were saying. And Paul totally denies this, but he gets at the heart of the issue as well.

[30:51] If I still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? Later on in chapter 6, he's saying, I bear on my body the marks of Jesus. Let everyone else leave me alone. He's like, my message of the truth is real, and I have the marks to prove it.

These false teachers were offended by the cross. They did not like the idea of being persecuted, and so therefore they watered down the message, the exclusive truth of the cross.

Look at that in verse 11. In that case, the offense of the cross has been removed. Apparently, they were okay with the crucified Messiah, but they didn't like the fact that it was grace and grace alone that justifies a person through the cross of Christ.

They were offended. They couldn't add to the cross. And here's where we come to the heart of all kinds of false teaching. There have been scores, hundreds perhaps, of deceptive false messages, false gospels, which sound very similar to true Christianity from the very first century all the way to now.

How are you supposed to tell the difference? What's at the heart of all false teaching? Well, it's verse 11. It's any teaching that takes offense at the exclusive claims of a crucified Messiah.

[32:17] That's how you can tell false gospel from real gospel. Anything that says, eek, crucified Jesus, I have to follow him? He's the only way?

He paid it all? Eh. Anything that flinches in the face of the cross is false teaching. So whether it's Jehovah's Witnesses teaching or Mormon teaching or Roman Catholicism or the prosperity gospel or the self-help gospel, they all have one thing in common.

That the message of Christ crucified is not enough to justify a sinner before God. All of them smuggle in some form of human effort as a condition to benefit from God's grace to us in Christ. And in case we were in any doubt how Paul feels about this. Look at verse 12. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves.

Wait. Did Paul just say that he wished these false teachers would castrate themselves? Yes. Yes, he did. He just said that.

[33:26] That's in our Bible. You think reading the Bible is boring. No, there's castration in the Bible. Wow. Why is he saying that?

Well, as we've said before, he's ticked. He's feeling pretty hot under the collar here. There is righteous anger in Paul towards these false teachers. And he's basically saying this.

If these guys are so obsessed with cutting off pieces of flesh from that part of the body, then why don't they just go all the way and cut everything off? At least that would expose them for the frauds that they are, thinking that the more they cut off, the more righteous they'll be.

I just love that this is part of my Bible. But let's feel how it hits us. If Paul took this so seriously, and he was so zealous for the truth of the cross, and for God's people's trust in that message, then how much more so does God take it seriously when people mess with his gospel and with his bride?

We must zealously hold to the exclusive truth of the cross. Because any other persuasion is false.

[34:40] And it's opposed not only by Paul, but by the God of truth. And he fiercely loves his church. This is how to stand firm in our freedom. By assuming a firm, defensive position around the exclusive truth of the cross.

Like Matt said last week, like a coach, football coach, holding up a blocking pad, and with a good physical firm stance. We need to do that around the truth of the cross.

Well, how should we do this? Well, personally, we need to savor the cross. We need to ask ourselves the question, what if there was no cross?

What if Jesus had said no to the Father in Gethsemane? What if Jesus had never gone to the cross?

What would that mean for my current relationship with God? The answer to that is chilling. It would mean that I would be under the righteous wrath of God now, in real time, because of my rebellion against him.

[35:46] Because my sin is that bad, and God is that good. It would mean there is no way out. There's no other way out except through the cross. It would mean that God is against me, not for me.

It would mean that I await an eternity of experiencing God's holy anger and hot judgment. We need to savor the cross. And that would make us assume a firm defensive stance against it.

But not only should we seek to zealously hold fast to the truth of the cross personally, but we should also, as the church, take the truth very seriously.

It's truth that's built around the cross. In verse 7, it's evident that Paul was ticked, really ticked, about how this twisted teaching of self-salvation had infiltrated the church and turned the Galatians away from the truth, from obeying the truth.

And we should be too. That doesn't mean we go around with knives in our hands and threaten encastration for anyone who says something differently than the Bible. That's not the point of the passage.

[36:57] It does mean that we must speak the truth, even if the truth offends. The message of the cross is offensive. It offends human pride.

It offends a human sense of control. And we must try to do speak that truth in an inoffensive way, always with love, but like yeast, falsehood can spread and infect quickly.

So we must take the truth seriously. Not get floppy on it. We must pray for discernment to be able to recognize falsehood and pray for humility as we address it.

But address it we must, as a church. And it's not just for pastors and leaders to do that. Paul tells Timothy in first Timothy, the church of the living God is the pillar and buttress of the truth.

It's not just pastors. It's everybody. So we must stand firm in the zealously so in the exclusive truth of the cross of Christ.

[38:05] It is our certain hope and our freedom. And we must stand firm in it. This last week, Brass Community School, which is where my kids go to school, hosted a commemoration of the arrival of African slaves in the Americas, which occurred 400 years ago in 1619.

It was a great way to build an awareness of our history, our nation's history. Jess and two of my kids went to it, and they learned a lot about the stage in our nation's past.

And at the event, there were quotes by African slaves posted on the walls. And one of them was a quote by Elizabeth Freeman, who was a former slave. It's a powerful quote.

Any time, any time while I was a slave, if one minute's freedom had been offered to me, and I had been told that I must die at the end of that minute, I would have taken it.

Just to stand one minute on God's earth, a free woman, I would. What if, church, what if true freedom in Christ were as precious to us as earthly freedom was to Elizabeth Freeman?

[39:27] Let's take the keys. Let's hop into our freedom of knowing and belonging to Christ by faith, hoping only in him, and guarding the truth of the gospel, faithful, and enjoy and experience and stand firm in our freedom, because that's why he set us free.

Let's pray. Father, you know how hard it is for us to live in the freedom that Jesus purchased for us. Lord, we ask that you would help us to identify false hopes and to shift all of our real and true hope onto Christ.

Help us to do that not just now on Sunday morning. Help us to do it tomorrow. Help us to do it the rest of this week. Help us, Lord, not to lose our joy in the freedom that you've purchased for us.

Guard us from hamster wheels of human effort. Help us, Lord, to speak the truth to one another, to remind us to place our hope where it belongs. Give us the grace, God, to zealously hold to your truth.

[40:50] We need your help, God. Help us to delight in your amazing grace. In Jesus' name, amen.