

“Your Independence Day”
Series: *Non Series*, July 4th Weekend
(Part 1 of 1)

Discussion Starter: Share two benefits you deeply appreciate about living in the United States of America.

Explore: Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.

Before his conversion, Paul was a loyal and strict Jew, proud to be a legalist obeying every aspect of the Law. After experiencing God’s grace on the road to Damascus, Paul became a champion for the freedom that is found only in Christ.

1. Why did Paul say it is important to “hold firmly” to the word (vs. 1-2)? What might this look like?
2. What are the key points to the gospel message emphasized by Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (vs. 3-8)? Could you share those points with someone else?
3. For what reason did Paul feel “unworthy” to be called an apostle of Christ (vs. 9)? Discuss reasons which might cause someone to feel “unworthy” today?
4. How did the resurrection of Christ impact Paul’s life (vs. 10-11)?

Reflect: Review the LG and discuss the questions below.

1. What does the word “freedom” mean to you?
2. Despite the fact that believers are justified by faith in Christ, why do you think some people still believe they must earn God’s favor through good works?
3. In Paul’s day, “legalistic” Christians were believers who could not let go of Old Testament rules and regulations. Why might this have been difficult to do for a good first century Jew? Describe what it looks like to be “legalistic” today.
4. Reflect on the following statement: *Nothing I do can make God love me more, and nothing I do can make God love me less than He does.* In what way has the truth of God’s unconditional love changed the way you live?
5. Freedom in Christ doesn’t mean we have the freedom to do what we want. What is the relationship between your freedom and your responsibility in Christ?

Live:

As a group: Which “freedom” mentioned in the lesson do you struggle with? Prayerfully thank God for the freedom He has given to you through Jesus Christ.

On your own: Really think about the freedom you have in Christ. Do you struggle with accepting God’s grace? or abusing God’s grace? Ask God to help you in this area.

Listening Guide Notes

On your Independence Day Jesus gave you...

1. Freedom from perfectionism.

^[1] “You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ^[2] I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? ^[3] Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” –**Galatians 3:1-3 (NIV)**

“Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’” –**Galatians 3:11 (NIV) (Habakkuk 2:4)**

2. Freedom from legalism.

“But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?” –**Galatians 4:9 (NIV)**

“What has happened to all your joy?” –**Galatians 4:15 (NIV)**

3. Freedom from conformity.

“As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!” –**Galatians 5:12 (NIV)**

^[13] “You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. ^[14] The entire law is summed up in a single command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” –**Galatians 5:13-14 (NIV)**

“[Jesus] gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age.” –**Galatians 1:4 (NIV)**