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**[SERMON NOTES]**

**Acts – Week 15** (*Acts 15: 1-22, 29; Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 6:1; Galatians 5:13, 16-17*)

“I think of a \_\_\_\_\_ as someone who understands the degree of \_\_\_\_\_ that comes with his \_\_\_\_\_.”

“No \_\_\_\_\_, no wrong, no \_\_\_\_\_ for me...  
I’m \_\_\_\_\_!” — \_\_\_\_\_

Remember the freedom to \_\_\_\_\_ in the family of God  
\_\_\_\_\_ free.

We are free from the \_\_\_\_\_ of our sin and \_\_\_\_\_ freed  
from the \_\_\_\_\_ of our sin.

We are free to live like \_\_\_\_\_, not however we \_\_\_\_\_.

Once we’ve found \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ, we help others  
\_\_\_\_\_ and find theirs.

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**[QUICK REVIEW]**

Looking at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

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**[MY STORY]**

Here in the West and especially America we have a passion for the concept of freedom, so much so, that countless movies and songs and TV shows have been created to convey our fondness for the idea of freedom. **What are some of your favorite movies, shows, songs, or any other media that has the core theme of freedom?** For example, I (Samuel) am a sucker for movies like *Braveheart*, *The Patriot*, and *The Shawshank Redemption*. In fact, one of my professors had the last name ‘Swoboda,’ which in Czech means, ‘freedom.’ So at the end of *Braveheart*, Mel Gibson—AKA William Wallace—yells out his last name in the Czech version. *How cool would that be?!*

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**[DIGGING DEEPER]**

In this week's message, we heard how the Jerusalem Council along with Paul and Barnabas wrestled to determine what was 'required' for the Gentiles to belong to the Body of Christ. They landed on these general stipulations: abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from sexual immorality. These rules seemed to be framed as wisdom warnings: "If you don't follow these things, there will be natural and spiritual consequences." Apart from that, they give them freedom to express their faith as they see fit, something that Paul calls in Galatians and other places, "freedom in Christ." But what *is* freedom? ***How would you have described freedom before hearing this week's message? How would you say society defines freedom? Do you think these definitions are aligned with faith in Jesus? Opposed to it? Or perhaps neutral?***

Read the following passages about freedom. **What are some of the characteristics of Biblical, Christian freedom?**

Romans 6:18

2 Corinthians 3:17

John 8:36

1 Corinthians 6:12

Galatians 5:13

Romans 6:18 says that, "*You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.*" Biblical freedom is actually found in becoming someone who cannot help but do the good—someone whose default is righteousness and love. **What are some of the things that are hard for you that would fall into the category of 'loving' and 'good' that you wish came more easily to you?**

Slavery to sin is one of the things that Jesus came to save us from. Saint Augustine talked about sin as disordered desire. For example, if someone loves work more than their child, that is a disordered desire. Loving work is not wrong, but loving it more than a child or a spouse is sinful. The reality is that our strongest desires are not always our deepest desires. The things we actually want are too often buried underneath the things we crave in the moment. **What are some of your deepest desires that too often get covered up by the immediacy or urgency of daily desires?**

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**[WEEKLY READINGS]**

Studies say that someone who reads their Bible 4 times or more a week improves their joy, happiness, contentment, and overall approval of their life. (*1 Tim. 4:8-10,16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17*). As a church, we believe that! Below are 4 passages of Scripture this week to dive into to pull deeper on our weekend's message. We encourage you to take notes in your Bible, and ask yourself: *What does this teach me about God? Myself and others? And how do I follow Jesus better?*

**Acts 15**

**2 Corinthians 3**

**Galatians 5**

**1 Corinthians 6**