

“Set Apart and Called by Grace”

Galatians 1:10-2:14

Paul’s calling was to preach the gospel. This is why he had been set apart and called by grace. He had founded a number of churches in Galatia as a result of preaching the gospel of Christ crucified throughout the region. And now, shortly after his departure from the area, the gospel was under full assault, prompting the apostle to write this epistle to the Galatians, certainly one of the most powerful letters in the New Testament.

As we saw in the opening verses of the first chapter, the Epistle to the Galatians is Paul’s response to a situation in which the gospel itself was under siege. Paul had preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Galatians previously, publicly placarding Jesus Christ before their very eyes. Now a group of false teachers known to us as the Judaizers, had gained a significant foothold in these churches. They were teaching that in order to be justified (or regarded as “right” before God), Gentile converts must also submit to ritual circumcision and keep certain aspects of the ceremonial law in addition to placing one’s faith in Christ. Paul’s gospel of Christ crucified was very disconcerting to these false teachers since Paul’s preaching removes all place for human merit and works righteousness, which is the religion of the natural man (the flesh). The “different gospel” which the Judaizers were teaching was in reality “no gospel.” Paul opposed this teaching with everything in him.

In the first nine verses of this letter, Paul has made clear what is at stake when another gospel is preached. According to Paul, any gospel other than that he preaches is no gospel at all. Anyone preaching such a gospel comes under God’s curse. In order to respond to those who are preaching a false gospel in the Galatian churches and drawing away disciples after themselves, Paul must defend his own apostleship and apostolic authority.

In order to defend himself from false teaching and accusations of the Judaizers, in the balance of chapter one and the first half of chapter two, Paul sets out four points for the Galatians to consider. First, Paul will speak of the origin of the gospel he preaches. Second, he will describe the nature of his call to be the apostle to the Gentiles. Third, Paul will recount his previous life as a Jew and his zeal for the religion of his fathers. And then, finally, the apostle will detail his two prior visits to Jerusalem and his dealings with the apostles, Peter, James and John, and the rise of this Judaistic heresy, which culminated in Paul’s confrontation with the apostle Peter about Peter’s own apparent acceptance of this heresy.

In Galatians 1:10-12 we pick up with Paul’s first point of defense, which is that the gospel of Christ crucified is not a figment of his own imagination. The gospel Paul preached was revealed to him by none other than Jesus Christ himself. Amazed at the speed at which the Galatians had been taken in by these false teachers, Paul begins in verse 10, with a lament of sorts,

10 Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please

men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ. 11 I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. 12 I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

Paul makes a number of important comments here and we ought to look at them in some detail.

To begin with, the gospel is about the objective and historical work of Jesus Christ *for us*, in his life, death, burial and resurrection according to the Scriptures as described in 1 Corinthians 15:1-9. In Romans 1:16-17, the gospel is defined in terms of the revelation of the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. If preaching the gospel is recounting the facts of redemption, the charge of novelty made against Paul utterly collapses since these facts surrounding Christ's death and resurrection were common knowledge. And given the offence of the gospel and its character as a stumbling block to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile (cf. I Corinthians 1:23), Paul could hardly be preaching this message in order to gain favor with men. He himself at one time had hated the gospel and was one of the chief opponents of the new sect called "the Way."

At the time of his conversion—described in Acts 9—the message he has been preaching was revealed to him by none other than Jesus Christ himself, and this gospel will later be confirmed by the other apostles. As Paul puts it in Galatians 1:16, "*God was pleased to reveal his Son to me so that I might preach Jesus Christ among the Gentiles.*" Thus the gospel that Paul preaches originates through a direct and supernatural revelation from God.

But God also confirms this internal call through the ministry of Ananias, and later, the other apostles. This is why Paul can say in 1 Corinthians 15:1-3 that the gospel that he preached to the Corinthians, is "*what I received [and] passed on to you.*" The word Paul uses here, (*paralambano*, "receive"), is a word which the Rabbis used to describe the transmission of sacred tradition. Thus Paul's own calling, in which the essence of the gospel was revealed to him by Jesus Christ, was also confirmed and fleshed out in more detail by Paul's later contact with the other apostles.

Indeed, there was much to learn from the other apostles such as the historical facts of the gospel as seen in the content of the sermons recorded in the first eight chapters of Acts, and likely passed on to Paul by Peter during Paul's 15 day stay with him, some three years after Paul's conversion (see 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:3 ff.). In addition, there was our Lord's own teaching which had certainly been memorized and passed on to others. One New Testament scholar has pointed out that there are over "twenty-five instances where Paul certainly or probably makes reference or allusion to a saying of Jesus. In addition, [there are] over forty possible echoes of a saying of Jesus . . . distributed throughout all of the Pauline letters."¹ And let us not forget that once Jesus Christ had appeared to him, perhaps the greatest source of Paul's thinking about the Messiah was the Old Testament, the lens through which Paul viewed most everything. Old

¹ S. Kim, "Jesus, Sayings of," Dictionary of Paul, 490.

Testament images and phraseology are in the background of virtually everything Paul teaches and writes.²

These are very important points, because they certainly fly in the face of the very misguided and all too popular notion that Paul had very little if any first-hand knowledge of Jesus, hence, the ill-informed contention that Paul is the founder of Christianity.

The second main line of defense that Paul takes is found in verses 13-14, where Paul recounts his own personal history as one who was both a persecutor of the church and one who was rapidly advancing in Judaism.

13 For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. 14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Interestingly, the term used here, “to persecute,” comes from a word which means to pursue or hunt down. The tense of the verb indicates that this was a consistent action on his part. Paul advanced in Judaism as one who blazes a path, who goes ahead as a trailblazer, relentlessly pursuing all those whom he regards as enemies of the religion of Israel.³ Saul of Tarsus was intent in his personal ambition to cut-down all opposition, exceeding all his contemporaries in his zeal for the faith.

Paul’s third point made in his own defense in verses 15-17, is his description to the Galatians of the sovereign and gracious nature of God’s call of him to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

15 But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.

Though actually occurring about three years after the crucifixion of Christ when Jesus appeared to him, as Paul sees it through the eyes of faith, his call to apostleship was a call from his birth, literally from his mother’s womb. The stress here clearly falls upon God’s sovereign pleasure in calling Paul to faith and equipping him to be the pre-eminent missionary to the Gentiles.

Paul’s mention of this point should point us to the Servant Song of Isaiah 49:1-7, where prophet Isaiah foretells that Jesus, the coming servant and Messiah, would be a light to the Gentiles and

² Richard B. Hays put it this way: “In Paul we encounter a first-century Jewish thinker who, while under going a profound disjuncture with his own religious tradition, grappled his way through to a vigorous and theologically generative reappropriation of Israel’s Scriptures. However great the tensions between his heritage and his new Christian convictions, he insistently sought to show that his proclamation of the gospel was grounded in the witness of Israel’s sacred texts.” See Hays, *The Echo of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 2.

³ Burton, *Galatians*, ICC, p. 45.

would bring his salvation to the end of the earth. Paul was chosen by God before his own birth to preach Christ to the nations, since Paul is now a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, the servant-king.

It is interesting that Paul speaks of God as revealing his Son “to him” (not “in me” as the NIV puts it) in literally an “apocalypse,” or “unveiling.” This is exactly what happened on the Damascus Road when scales fell from Paul’s eyes. No doubt, this revelation of Christ and Paul’s own unique calling included two things we will see affirmed later in this epistle:

(1) The recognition that Jesus is God's promised redeemer, the Messiah, the Son of God, and that we can be saved from God's future judgement, only through faith in him.

(2) Since this is the case, we cannot escape the future judgement of God by our own good works.

Finally, in order to defend his authority, Paul sets out in some detail his two post-conversion visits to Jerusalem, and subsequent ministry beginning in 1:18-2:14.

18 Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days. 19 I saw none of the other apostles—only James, the Lord's brother. 20 I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie. 21 Later I went to Syria and Cilicia.

Upon arriving in Jerusalem, Paul tells us that he sought to get acquainted with Peter, and that they spent over two weeks together. We can only imagine what they talked about. Peter must have been a tremendous source of information about the historical events surrounding the life and ministry of our Lord. Paul also met with James, the Lord’s brother.

Paul did not spend all of his time with Peter and James, however. In Acts 9:28-30, we learn that he “*spoke throughout Jerusalem, boldly in the name of the Lord, and the Grecian Jews plotted to kill him.*” The opposition to Paul’s ministry was nothing new. But the way in which the Judaizers had undermined a Christian congregation was. And Paul fights against them with everything in him.

In verses 22-23, we learn from Paul that

22 “I was personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ. 23 They only heard the report: “The man who formerly persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”

Paul also mentions how he had labored in Cilicia and Tarsus for some time.

24 And they praised God because of me. 1 Fourteen years later I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.

Here, Paul is describing his second visit to Jerusalem. This is likely the famine-relief visit mentioned in Acts 11:27-30, and occurs prior to the Jerusalem council described in Acts 15. Says Paul in verse 2

I went in response to a revelation and set before them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. But I did this privately to those who seemed to be leaders, for fear that I was running or had run my race in vain.

In Acts 11:28, we read of the prophecy of Agabus, who through the Spirit, predicted the coming famine in Jerusalem which prompted Paul and Barnabas to take the famine relief money from Antioch down to Jerusalem. In what was probably a private interview, Paul set his teaching—the gospel I teach among the Gentiles—before the leaders of the Jerusalem church, not so much for their approval, but in an acknowledgment of their authority so that there would be no division between Jewish and Gentile Christians, and so that the offering taken from among the Gentile churches could be accepted. Paul does this to demonstrate to the Judaizers in Galatia, that his gospel was not only revealed to him by Jesus Christ, but that it was the same gospel believed and taught in the Jerusalem church.⁴

Paul now turns to what is perhaps the most sinister threat facing the Galatians, the deceptive nature of actions of the Judaizers. Therefore, in verses 3-6 he reminds the Galatians,

3 Yet not even Titus, who was with me, was compelled to be circumcised, even though he was a Greek. 4 This matter arose because some false brothers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves. 5 We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. 6 As for those who seemed to be important—whatever they were makes no difference to me; God does not judge by external appearance—those men added nothing to my message.

It is important to inform the Galatians that Titus, a Gentile traveling with Paul, was not compelled by the Jerusalem church to be circumcised. This means that the Judaizers did not have the support of the Jerusalem church, which is an important point given the fact that these false brothers had deceptively infiltrated the ranks of the believers at Antioch as recorded in Acts 15 and were teaching this different gospel (in reality no gospel) that “*unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses you cannot be saved*” (Acts 15:1).

These men were apparently the same ones who were now deceiving the Galatian Christians and who will later appear at the Jerusalem council, in protest against Paul’s doctrine of justification by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone.

In this Paul condemns the Judaizers in the harshest of terms, as their behavior is deceitful and fraudulent. “*They secretly infiltrated into our ranks, and they spied on us,*” by reporting our

⁴ See the discussion of this in Bruce, [Commentary on Galatians](#), pp. 108-111.

liberty—specifically in this case, that the doctrine that the Gentiles were justified by faith alone, apart from keeping the law of Moses and submitting to circumcision. These false teachers seek to enslave the very Christians for whom Christ died to free, thereby denying the gospel itself. As Paul would go on to say later in chapter 5, “*it is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery (5:1).*” In that same chapter, Paul also says, if you give into them, Christ will be of no value to you! You will desert Jesus Christ and fall from grace!

Reminding the Galatians in verse 7 what had happened when Paul reported to the leaders of the Jerusalem church, “*on the contrary, they saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews,*” as Paul goes on to finish the point begun in verse 1. The leaders of the church added nothing to Paul’s message to the Gentiles, such as the condition to be circumcised or keep certain aspects of the ceremonial law, which means in no uncertain terms that circumcision is not part of the gospel!

This is also evident in the diverse ministry of the church to Jew and Gentile. Says Paul in verses 8-10,

8 For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles. 9 James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. 10 All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

There was clearly a very positive result from the meeting between Paul and the apostolic leadership of the Jerusalem church.

First, they recognized that God was as at work in Paul’s efforts to reach the Gentiles every bit as much as he was in Peter’s efforts to reach the Jews. The clear implication was that Peter and Paul were preaching the same gospel to different audiences. The leaders of the church also recognized “the grace” bestowed upon Paul, by acknowledging God’s call of Paul to an apostolic office.

Second, they acknowledged that the mission of Paul and Barnabas was to go back to the Gentiles and continue preaching to them. The clear implication was that they would continue their efforts to reach the Jews by preaching Christ crucified and justification by grace alone through faith alone.

Third, they extended to Paul the “right hand of fellowship.” Paul, clearly recognizes that Peter, James (our Lord’s brother) and John are the leaders of the church, picking up on the theme of the church as God’s temple, with these three being “pillars” of that temple of which John will later describe in an eschatological sense when referring to the church in Philadelphia (cf. Revelation

3:12).⁵

Given the deception of these Judaizers and the attractiveness of their false gospel of faith in Christ plus human effort, a collision between the weak-willed Peter and the iron-willed Paul was inevitable. In verses 11-14, Paul tells us that . . .

11 when Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. 12 Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. 13 The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. 14 When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, “You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?”

Paul concludes his defense of the gospel and his own apostolic authority by reminding the Galatians that even apostles must have their doctrine checked in light of Scripture!

This leads to a rather interesting recounting by Paul of how he was forced to confront Peter when he had fallen into their trap. As one commentator points out, there is a rather interesting progression here. Paul first calls himself Peter’s guest (Galatians 1:18-20), then he describes Peter as a fellow apostle (2:1-10), before, finally, Paul ends up confronting Peter when he falls into serious doctrinal error (Galatians 2:11-14).⁶ While it is difficult to know just how much of this is a word for word account of what Paul said to Peter, and how much is a summation, in any case, this amounts to a major confrontation over the doctrine of justification. And Paul wins!

The Gentiles and Jews had enjoyed table fellowship in Antioch—that is, they participated in the Lord’s Supper together, with Peter apparently approving of the notion. In Acts 10:9-48, we read of Peter’s vision and visit to Cornelius’ home, where the Holy Spirit had told him that “all foods were clean.” From this Peter had concluded, “*I now realize how true it is that God accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right* (v. 34 ff.)” As recounted by Luke, the Gentiles were baptized and received the Holy Spirit, just as had occurred to the Jewish believers. Thus Peter saw Jew and Gentile on an equal footing before God, and both groups were harmoniously receiving the sacrament together. That is, *until* “certain men came from James,” who were members of the “circumcision group.”

From then on—because of their influence over him—Peter withdrew from table fellowship with Gentiles, and even talked the otherwise reliable Barnabas into doing the same. Paul speaks of Peter’s and Barnabas’ actions as hypocritical, and he notes that Peter’s decision results from his “fear.” The term that Paul uses, translated as “hypocrite,” literally means “play-acting”

⁵ Bruce, *Commentary on Galatians*, p. 122.

⁶ Fung, *Galatians*, pp. 104-105.

(*hypokrisis*), and points to Peter's complete lack of courage in standing up to these false teachers.⁷ Whether Peter was simply afraid that his actions would compromise missionary efforts to the Jews, or whether or not he was afraid of being ostracized by other Jewish leaders, or whether or not he was even afraid of bodily harm, isn't quite clear. But as a result of his weakness, Paul opposes him to his face.

This was not simply a personality conflict. For Paul, Peter's conduct "*was not in line with the truth of the gospel.*"

The verb that [Paul] uses [here] (*anthistemi*, v. 11) implies that to him Peter's conduct was tantamount to the beginning of an attack on the position he was maintaining at Antioch . . . Measured by this position, in which Paul's estimation clearly represented 'the truth of the Gospel,' Peter's play-acting was, in fact, nothing short of a defection or deviation from that truth.⁸

Thus Paul confronts him with his hypocrisy in front of everyone. "How is it Peter, you live like a Gentile, yet are forcing Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?" Your actions are not only divisive between Jew and Gentile, they undermine the gospel which is grounded in the doing and dying of Jesus Christ and not in obedience to the law of Moses.

Thus Paul's very public rebuke of Peter becomes the basis for the public discipline in the church for public offenses, especially so in the case of elders (1 Timothy 5:20). Since this issue involved scandal which effected the preaching of the gospel, it could not be handled privately as in Matthew 18:15-20.

How does Paul's defense of his gospel and his calling as apostle to the Gentiles apply to us today?

To begin with, this whole episode reminds us that Paul's gospel is not something that he made up, but was first revealed to him by Christ, and then confirmed by the pillars of the church, Peter, James and John. Once again, Paul reminds us that the critical issue here is not so much "who" is preaching, but "what" is preached. Even Peter must be confronted when he falls into doctrinal error, and fortunately, Paul rescues Peter from very serious consequences. The issue is content and the standard is fidelity to the gospel!

In Galatians, Paul is dealing with the fact that there will indeed be those who distort the gospel and who risk falling under Paul's anathema. But a more difficult scenario, and one we are more likely to face today, is when we have a minister who professes to believe the correct gospel, but won't preach it for fear of scaring off so-called "seekers," or out of fear of ruffling feathers. The problem is that a heresy trial is far easier to conduct than to test for a lack of courage or conviction.

⁷ Fung, *Galatians*, p. 109.

⁸ Fung, *Galatians*, p. 109.

But to profess the gospel but then not preach it, is, no doubt, a victory for the Judaizers, since the false gospel spreads much more quickly when the real gospel is absent through silence.

Another scenario raised by Paul is that will be those who preach Christ correctly, but from selfish or improper motives. Clearly, lacking omniscience, we cannot judge a preacher or teacher's motives, but we can judge doctrine and the content of their preaching—the point that Paul is making here. Paul himself concludes in Philippians 1:18: “*the important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.*” Too often, we have this backwards. In an entertainment culture such as ours, we tend to evaluate whether or not the preacher is a nice guy, sincere and entertaining, and if he is, it is easy to overlook the fact that he may not be preaching Christ, or else preaching another gospel of faith in Christ plus the merit of human effort!

The next matter is a difficult subject, but must be dealt with. Just as false brothers infiltrated the ranks of the Galatian churches to spy on their liberty, so too, we can expect similar spies and agitators to try and do the same thing in our congregations today. Satan is not very original but he is very persistent. Thus spies will come and report back to their judaizing cronies about our liberty in Christ and deceptively, attempt to enslave us again by taking our freedom from us, usually by attempting to subvert the preaching of Christ crucified. It is Jesus Christ who sets us free through his blood and righteousness, and let us not forget that it is Satan and his minions who seek to re-enslave us to works-righteousness, or the rules taught by men, such as “do not taste,” “do not handle,” “do not touch” (cf. Colossians 2:20-23) In Galatians 5:1, Paul exhorts the Galatians to remember that Christ has died to set them free, and that they are to stand firm in their opposition to all those who seek to enslave them. It was our Lord, after all, who declared “if the son of man sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36)!

No doubt, Reformed theology attracts some who do indeed abuse the liberty and freedom they have in Christ. Such people are immature and in sin. But God will judge them and convict them of their sin through the preaching of the law and it is the difficult but essential task of the elders of Christ's church to discipline those who do not act in accord with the Word of God, especially in the case of those who abuse their freedom in Christ.

But let's not forget Satan's tactics either. When modern Judaizers worm their way into a congregation that preaches Christ and enjoys Christian liberty, these spies immediately find those few who abuse their freedom in Christ, and then, such sinful and immature behavior is made the example of why we should not preach free grace and Christ crucified, since, as they tell everyone who will listen, the abuse of freedom is where the proclamation of free grace and Christ crucified inevitably leads. The abuse of freedom by some, supposedly proves that it is freedom in Christ which is the problem, taking our eyes off the real source of the problem—the sinfulness and immaturity of the abusers. This makes sense to the natural man who thinks that religion is about making people better, and who cannot understand that Christianity is about Jesus Christ setting sinners free from the guilt and power of sin for his own glory.

Let's not miss Paul's point here, for this is the very thing that Paul exhorts us to stand firm

against. Those who abuse their freedom should be subject to Godly discipline, for the problem lies with them and not with the gospel. The gospel sets us free to live lives of gratitude, it does not create license for us to continue in sin. It is human sinfulness, not the preaching of Christ crucified which deceives us into thinking that we can become Christians and still live like pagans. The abuse of freedom is sin, not a reason to enslave ourselves again! This is the great lie of Satan— “since some abuse their freedom in Christ, get rid of the freedom in Christ!” And, before we know it, we have been taken in.

If Christian liberty is ever taken away on the grounds that someone abuses their liberty, the Judaizers win. Instead, while we discipline those who abuse their freedom, at the very same time, we must preach the gospel of Christ crucified and Christian liberty louder and clearer than ever when Judaizers in our midst tip their hand. We must not give into them, Paul says, for the truth of the gospel!

For Paul, to give Moses even an inch is to give Moses everything. To give in to the Judaizers *at all*, is to deny the gospel! A so-called gospel of Jesus Christ *plus* human merit is a different gospel which is no gospel at all!

And it is here, in the face of the opposition from the Judaizers, that Paul’s confidence in the sovereign power and purpose of God rises to the fore, and why it is important to for him to affirm that he has been set apart and called by grace to preach it! The zealous defenders of the law of Moses and the religion of Israel have departed from Israel’s God, who one who has raised Christ from the dead, and commissioned Paul to preach Christ to the Gentiles. It is God himself who foretold through the prophet Isaiah that Jesus Christ would be preached to the nations, as a light to the Gentiles and so that salvation may be brought to the end of the earth. At the mention of this gospel, kings will rise to their feet in respect and princes fall to their knees in shame. This will happen, Isaiah says, because the Holy One of Israel has anointed his Messiah, and now we learn that the Holy One has chosen Paul to preach that same Messiah to the nations. This was God’s doing, not Paul’s. Who were the Judaizers to try and stop Paul?

Therefore, despite the efforts of the false teachers and their deceptive tactics, Jesus Christ must be preached, and when he is, sinful men and women will be set apart and called by grace to trust the Savior, just as happened to Paul. For God has ordained the ends (who will be saved), and he has ordained the means to save them, the preaching of the gospel of Christ crucified.⁹

It is this gospel through which we have been set apart and called by grace. And it is this gospel which alone can set us free from the guilt and power of sin and the deception of Satan and his henchmen. For when this gospel is before our eyes in Word and Sacrament, Jesus Christ himself sets us free from all of those things which had enslaved us.

⁹ Cf. *Canons of Dort*, I.3-4; II.5

Let no one dare attempt to undo what the blood of Christ has purchased for us. By the grace of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit, let us, like Paul, stand firm and resist every attempt of those who seek to enslave us when Christ has died to set us free!

Amen!