

The Foundation of Freedom – Outline and Slide content by Rick Dietzman

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Preamble to the U.S. Declaration of Independence. July 4, 1776

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Galatians 5:1 King James Version

1st Great Awakening 1730-1750

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26-28 King James Version

Addressing the topic of slaves getting access to the gospel

"I know the general pretense for this neglect of their souls is, that teaching them Christianity would make them proud, and consequently unwilling to submit to slavery; But what a dreadful reflection is this on your Holy Religion?" George Whitefield in 1740

2nd Great Awakening 1800-1840

Growth of conviction on the subject of slavery

"The churches must take right ground on the subject of slavery... It is in vain for the churches to pretend it is merely a political sin." Charles Finney in 1835

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” Galatians 5:13-14 King James Version

This call to action led to many practical applications

Christian Colleges established (1800-1830)
American board of foreign missions (1810)
American Bible Society (1816)
Colonization Society for liberated slaves (1817)
The American Sunday School union (1824)
The American Tract Society (1825)
The American Education Society (1826)
The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance (1826)
The American Home Missionary Society (1826)

How does this foundation challenge us today?

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.” Galatians 5:13-15 (NIV)

Autonomy vs. God’s Will

Rights vs. Responsibilities

External vs. Internal

“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” Galatians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Those who deceive “promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.” 2 Peter 2:19 (NLT)

“Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.” Romans 6:6-7 (NLT)

Recommended Film: A Great Awakening (2026) – Available on Amazon Prime Video
Hint: Subscribe to 7 day free trial of “Wonder Project” channel and watch for free!

Recommended Reading: A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada by Mark A Noll

Rick’s previous classes on the Great Awakenings:

1st awakening <https://vimeo.com/464841935/bf2ff4d4c6>

2nd awakening <https://vimeo.com/467201580/eb5c1b127d>

3rd awakening <https://vimeo.com/469603324/39448192c2>

4th awakening <https://vimeo.com/472106542/64f35801e4>

SCC Small Group Discussion The Foundation of Freedom

Derived from a sermon on July 5, 2026 by Rick Dietzman – Associate Pastor

Getting Started:

Opener: What did freedom mean to you when you were 18 years old? What does it mean to you today? What has changed over time to affect your view?

Recall a time when you felt “imprisoned” by an unfulfilling job, a bad habit, an illness, or financial debt. How did you become free from that situation? How would you describe the sense of freedom you experienced at that time?

Searching the Scriptures:

Read Galatians 5:13-15

1. What does the abuse of freedom commonly look like?
2. Why do you think Paul emphasized service to one another through love? How does service protect from the dangers of freedom?

Read Galatians 5:16-21

3. How would you define the term “flesh “ (or “sinful nature”) in your own words (v. 16)? In contrast, what does walking (or living) by the Spirit mean?

4. If we are made alive by the Spirit, why do we still struggle with sin?

5. What makes these sins “obvious” (v. 19)? How are they “contrary to the Spirit” (v. 17)?

6. What is the significance of Paul’s warning in verse 21?

Read Galatians 5:22-26

7. What do each of the fruit of the Spirit have in common with each other?

8. Where do you see the Holy Spirit bringing out these characteristics in your life?

Application

Is there an area in your life where you are following the flesh instead of the Spirit?
What step can you take today to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit?

In what ways have you recently been reminded of the Spirit’s presence and power in your life? How can you be more aware of and sensitive to the Spirit’s presence and power?

Get discussion questions in word format & link to Bible App plan for this week at www.sequimcommunitychurch.org/downloads