

Stand Firm in the Freedom of Christ.

(Gal. 5 vs. 1-14)

RCA  
Actonville

1983

Gal 5 vs 1 - Christ set us free to be free men. Stand firm, then, and refuse to be tied to the yoke of slavery again.

The RCA finds itself in a state of crisis - as equally the all the other denominations which form part of the family of Dutch Reformed Churches, namely the DR Mission Church, the DR Church in Africa and the white DR Church find themselves in a similar state. This state of crisis, at its deepest level, has been caused by the policy of apartheid, which like a cancerous growth has penetrated and infected not only ~~the~~ the body of Christ, <sup>i.e.</sup> the Church, but also every other sphere of life in S.A. This infection, partly visible and partly hidden, was brought into the open by the resolution of Ottawa declaring apartheid to be a heresy, a definite denial of <sup>certain crucial</sup> ~~a central~~ truths of the Gospel which forced & challenged every denomination in the country, esp. the <sup>churches of the</sup> Reformed Confession, to take a clear stand in support of or in opposition to Ottawa. Perhaps the outstanding merit of the Ottawa resolution is that it has stripped away the ~~false cloak~~ <sup>false</sup> cloak of neutrality <sup>which</sup> which Churches & Christians wanted to hide themselves

2.

The eventual effects of this crisis cannot be fully determined at this stage. But what is clear is that it has caused a deep division in every church - a division which could eventually split every denomination in S.A. in two, not only of the Reformed family but also of many other confessions. Why this danger and why this danger of a total split? Simply because no man Christian is confronted with a choice between the true and a false Gospel, between being free disciples of the Risen Lord <sup>or Repentant</sup> or slaves of a life of bondage to ecclesiastical legalism, between a faith active in love and a pseudo-faith controlled by pride, prejudice & fear.

This was the basic problem which existed in the congregations of Galatia where some of them were insisting that <sup>the separate</sup> a full and free Christian life could only be found in obeying every iota & tittle of the law, a return to the old religious life of legal slavery of religious rules, regulations from which Christ had liberated them. And Paul, clearly seeing the danger, writes to them and appeals to them in passionate terms of love to state: Stand firm in the freedom of Christ - and refuse to be tied again to the yoke of legalism!

3.  
Which freedom is he referring to?

(1) Freedom to love as Christ loved:

1) Freedom to love as Christ loved

of conflict in their own hearts -  
freedom in themselves

conflict in hearts -

2) Freedom to promote true X<sup>t</sup>

unity

conflict in hearts -  
to love to love

3) Freedom to grow in standing

← growth

The yoke of servitude of the papal  
Church & the apostolic chains

1) Do not exercise the freedom to love

as X<sup>t</sup>-loved exercise the freedom to

2) Do not promote true X<sup>t</sup> unity

3) Do not exercise the freedom to

1) freedom to choose  
- caught in their own nets of  
legalism & formalism

- caught in conflict between  
obed. to conscience & ob. to church  
law

- caught in conflict of choice  
betw. obedience to God or  
to state

→ Barnea

← Bechar

1) Don't want to give the freedom to have  
Christian & the apostles return

2) Don't want to give the freedom to have  
as it - have the freedom to  
the 1st. want

3) Don't want to give the freedom to have