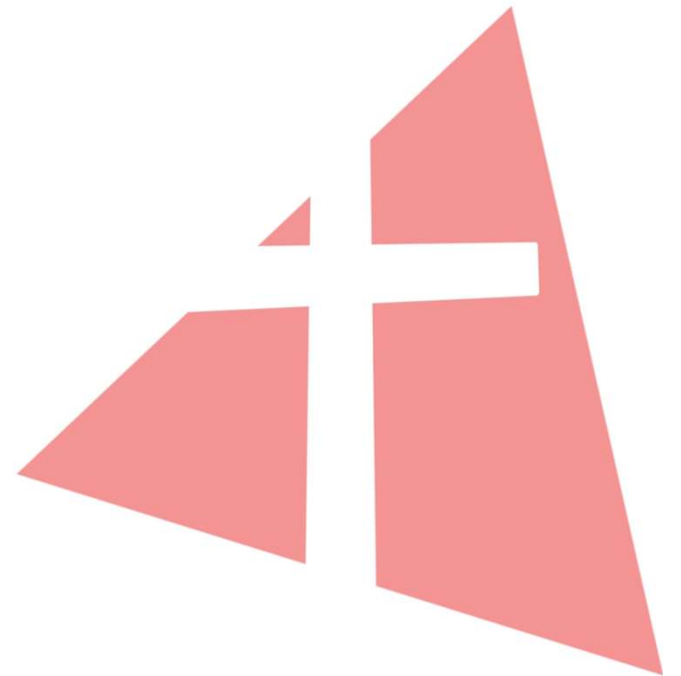


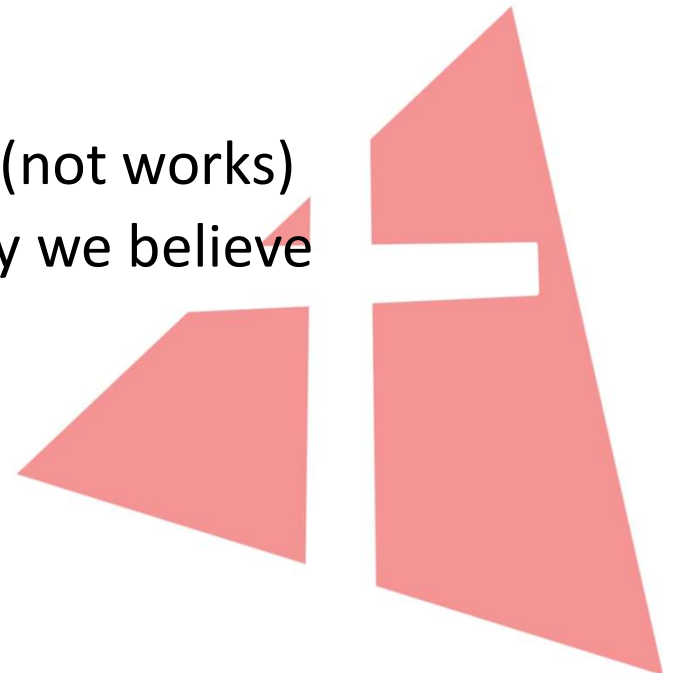
FREEDOM IN CHRIST

October 29th 2017



TOPIC OF LAST SERVICE

- **How do I know whether I am saved?**
- **Faith and Works**
 - We are made right with God by Faith only (not works)
 - But works confirm or disprove what we say we believe



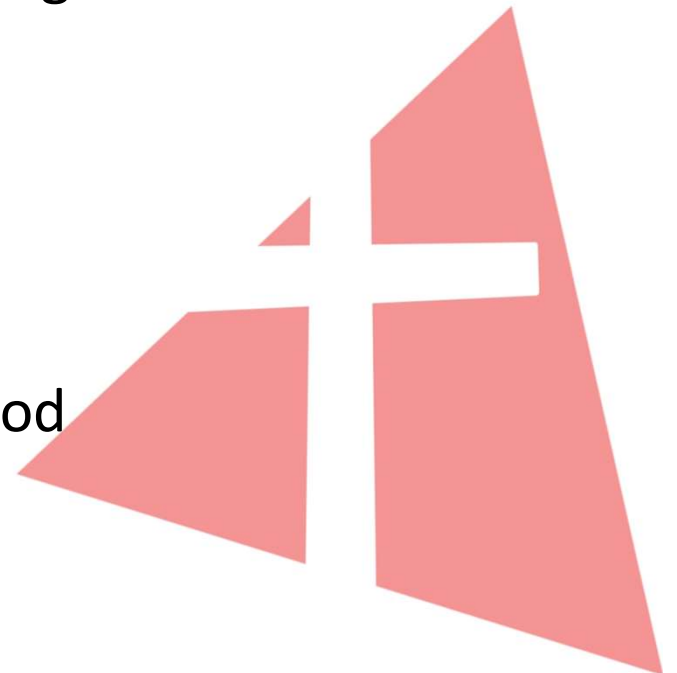
THE REFORMATION

○ Martin Luther's story

- As a monk and priest, he never had peace with God
- He never knew whether he was “good enough” to reach heaven
- He couldn't love an angry God

○ The church system

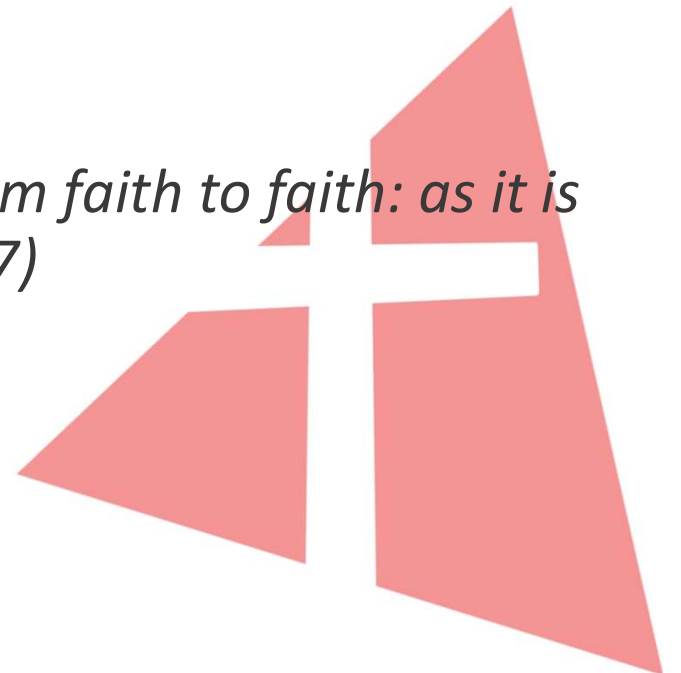
- Legalism
- Indulgances
- God was portrayed as a harsh and angry God



THE REFORMATION

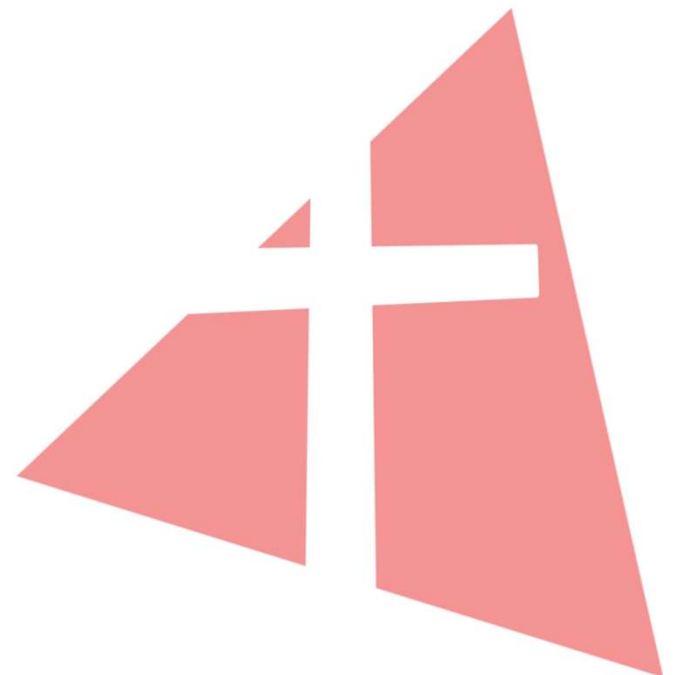
- **After months and years of study, he found what the Bible taught**
 - Salvation by Faith alone

For in it is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. (Romans 1:17)



THE 5 “SOLA”S

- **Sola Scriptura (The Bible alone)**
- **Sola Fide (by Faith alone)**
- **Sola Gratia (by Grace alone)**
- **Solo Christo (through Christ alone)**
- **Soli Deo Gloria (glory to God alone)**



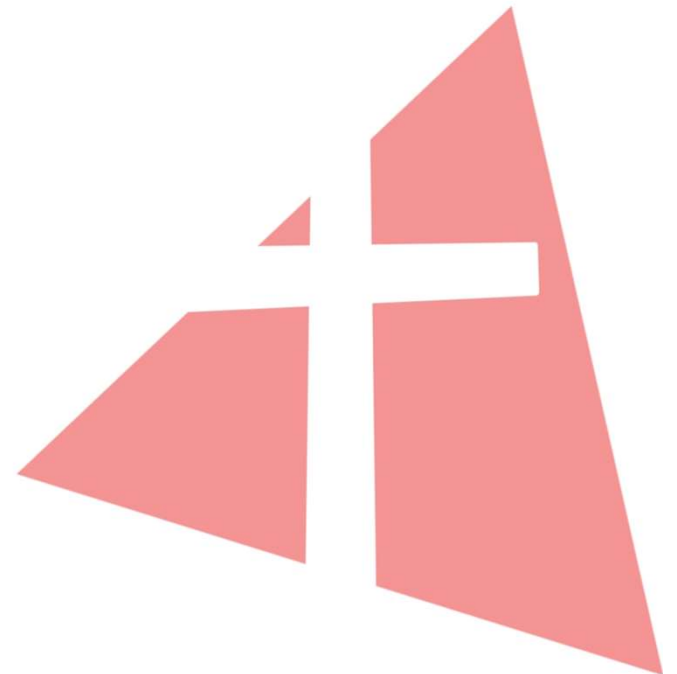
THE RESULT

- **Luther never planned to start a reformation**
 - All he ever wanted was to save his own soul
- **Luther didn't get it "all right"**
 - Luther hated Jews and wanted to annihilated them
 - Luther thought the book of James should be removed from the Bible, because it focuses on works, not "faith alone"

THE RESULT

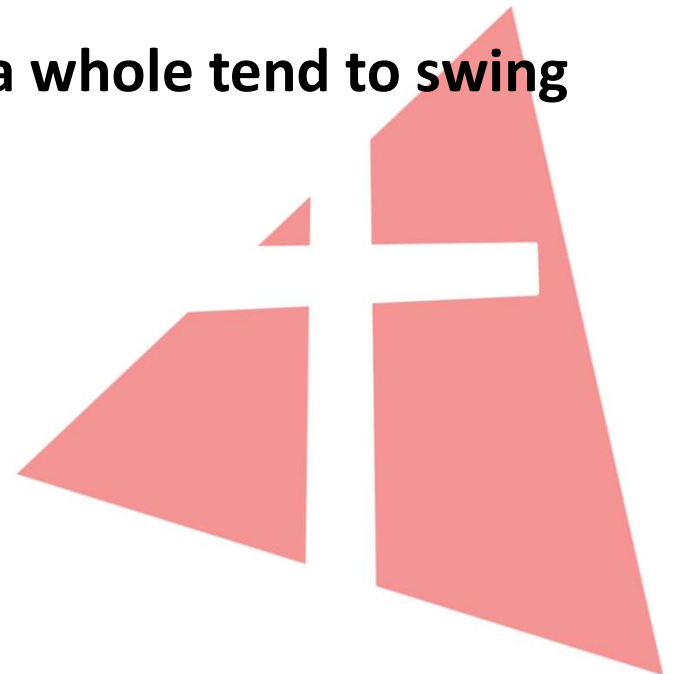
- **Major church split**
 - Catholic church
 - Protestant church

- **Churches today**
 - Legalism
 - Libertinism
 - Everything in between



CHURCH HISTORY

- Individual churches as well as the church as a whole tend to swing towards one or the other extreme



WHAT'S THE RIGHT WAY?

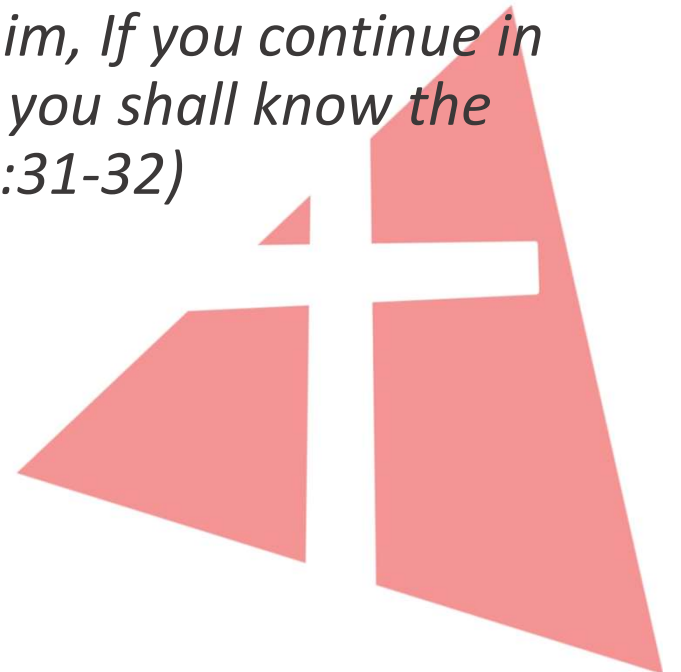
- **What can we learn from the reformation?**

- What did Jesus teach?
- What was the “big thing” that Luther achieved, that we are still celebrating this event 500 years later?



FREEDOM

Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on him, If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:31-32)



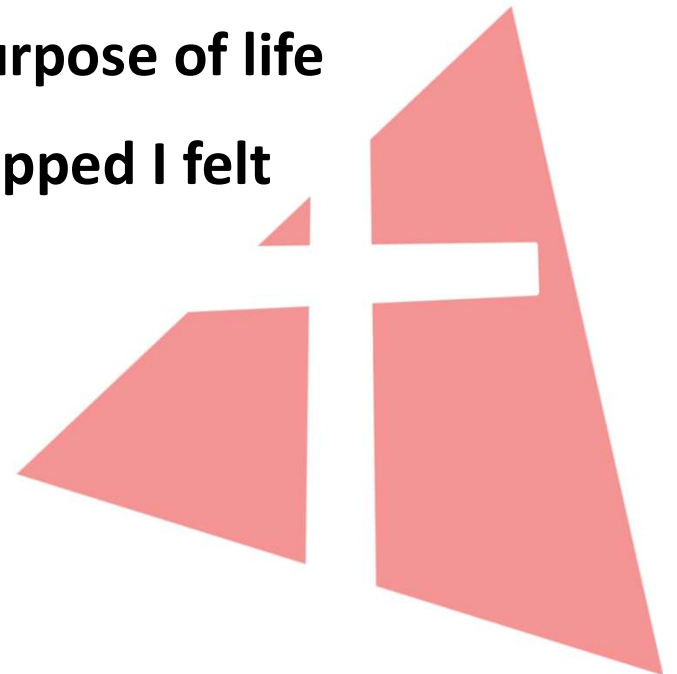
FREEDOM

Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1)



MY STORY

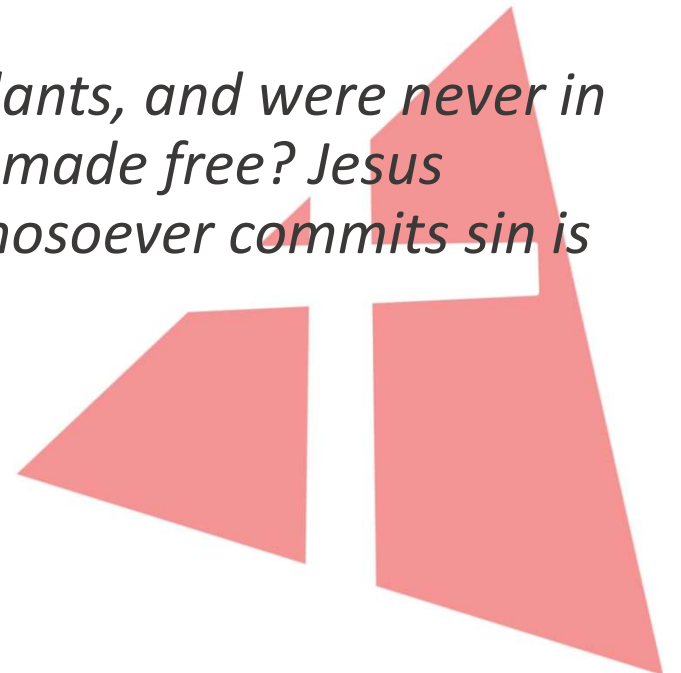
- **As a child, I thought that “freedom” is the purpose of life**
- **The more I sought my freedom, the more trapped I felt**



FREEDOM

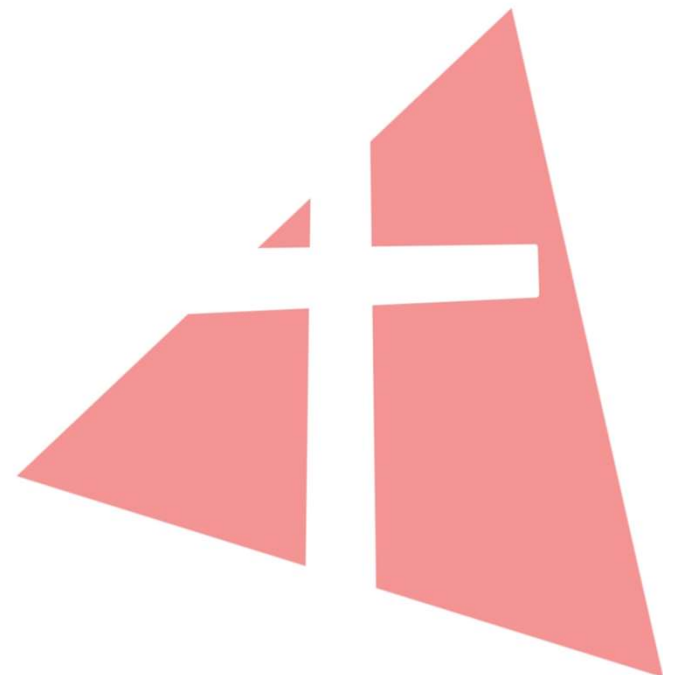
- **Freedom from the power of sin**

They answered him, We are Abraham's descendants, and were never in bondage to any man: how say you, You shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin. (John 8:33-34)



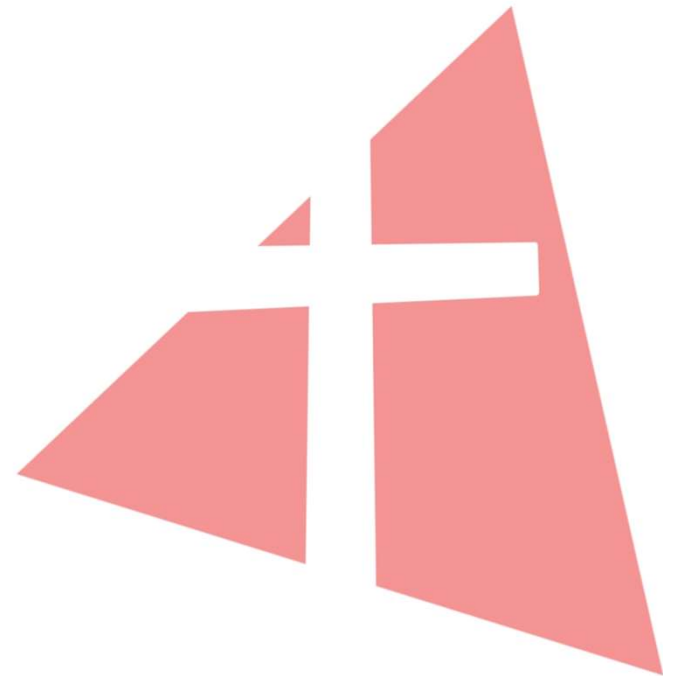
FREEDOM FROM THE POWER OF SIN

- **Guilt and shame**



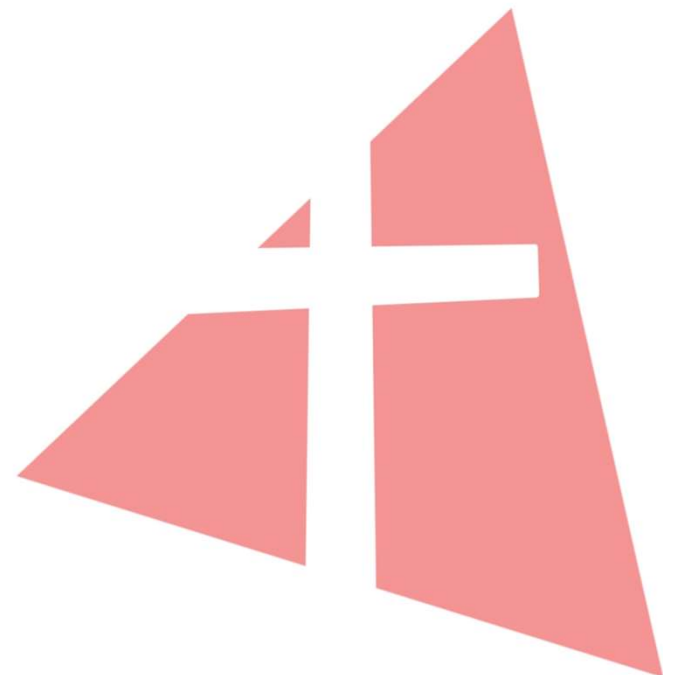
FREEDOM FROM THE POWER OF SIN

- Addictions



FREEDOM FROM THE POWER OF SIN

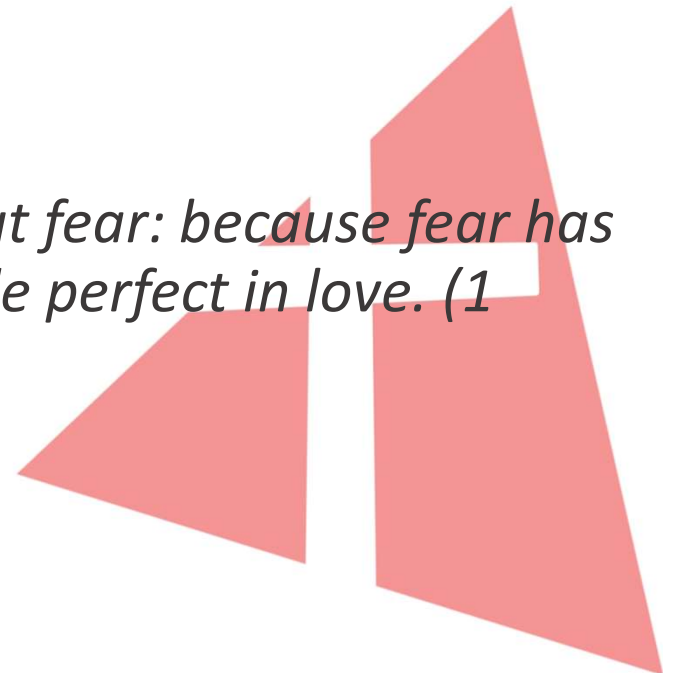
- Freedom from “having to earn God’s favor”



FREEDOM FROM FEAR

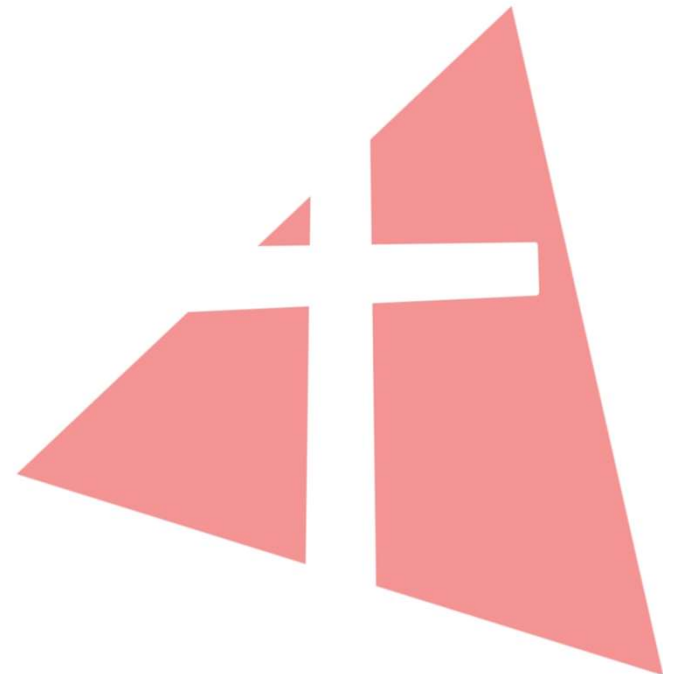
- Not that we don't have problems anymore
- But when we truly know what we have in Christ, earthly things are simply not that important any longer

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear has to do with punishment. He that fears is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)



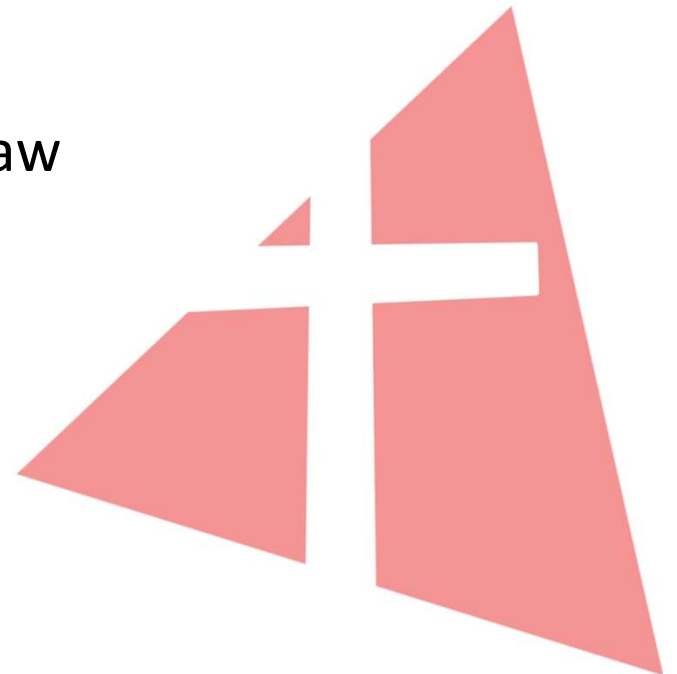
FREEDOM

- **Doing what we want to do**
- **Nobody having to tell us what we can't do**



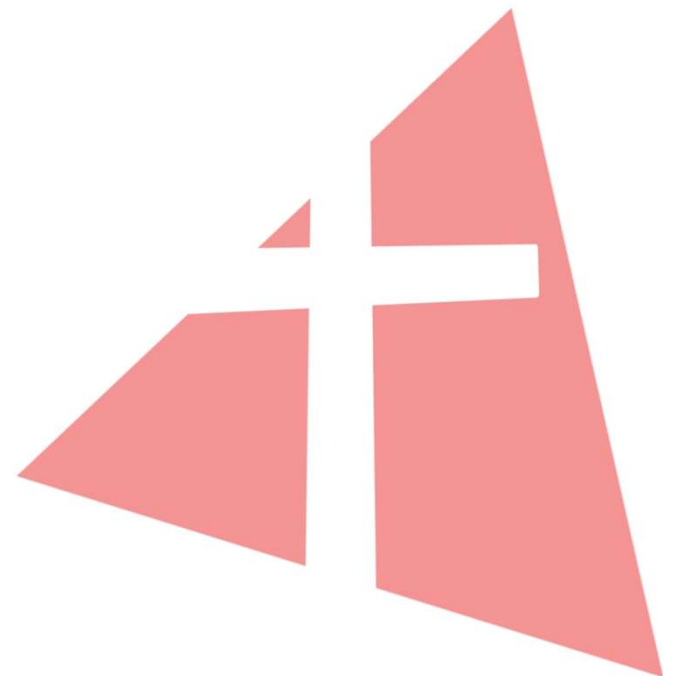
MY PREVIOUS PERCEPTION

- **Christianity seemed so restricting to me**
 - My sinful desires were opposed to God's law



AFTER BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

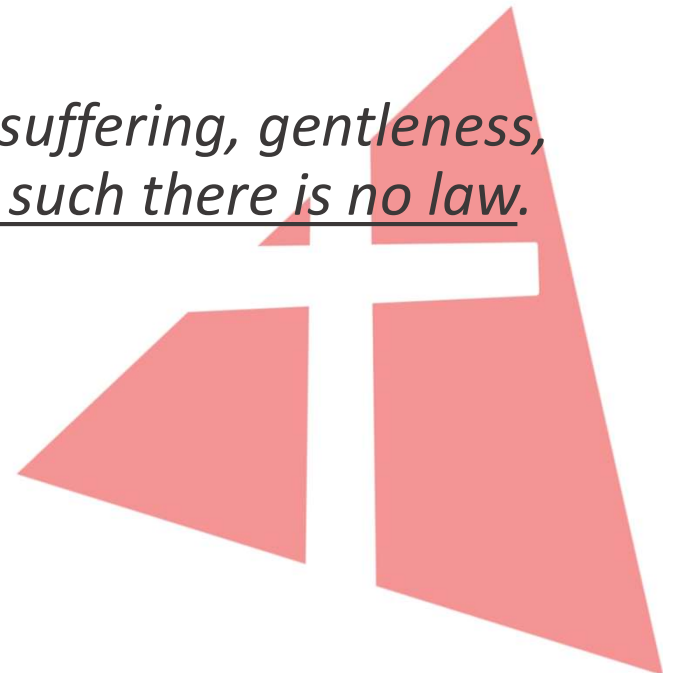
- **My desires radically changed**



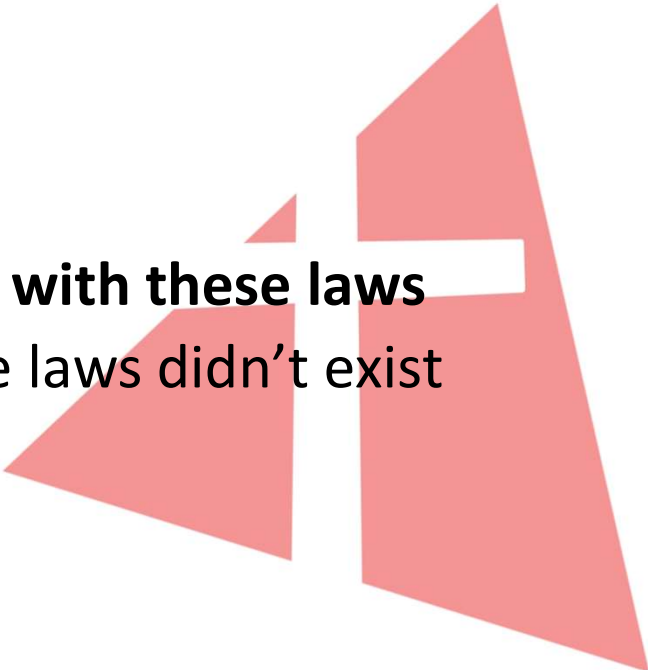
THE SPIRIT

- **The Spirit changes us to want to act like God**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, self-control: against such there is no law.
(Galatians 5:22-23)



EXAMPLE OF GERMAN LAW

- **German laws that do not restrict me**
 - Don't kill
 - Don't have sex with children
 - Don't break into other people's houses
 - ...
 - **These laws don't restrict me, because I agree with these laws**
 - I would obey these principles, even if these laws didn't exist
- 

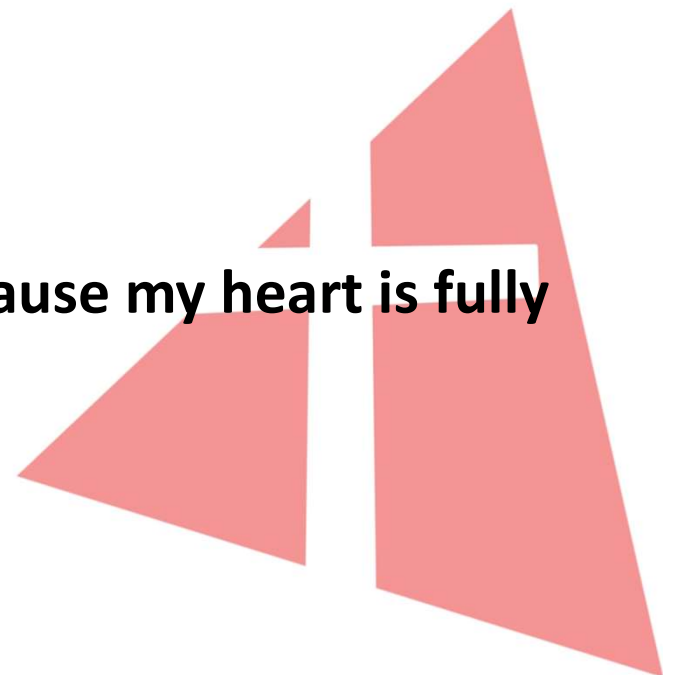
EXAMPLE OF GERMAN LAW

- **German laws that do feel restricting to me**
 - Speed limit
 - Copyrighted material on the internet
- **These laws restrict me, because my heart is not fully aligned with the things the law tries to achieve**
 - My selfish motives and desires sometimes override the spirit behind these laws



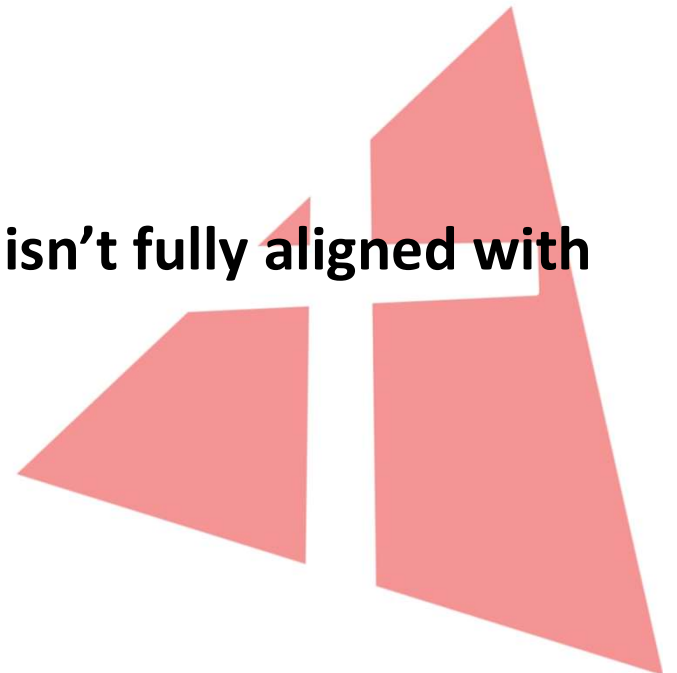
EXAMPLE OF GOD'S LAW

- **There are laws from the Bible that do not restrict me**
 - Don't murder
 - Don't pray to other gods
 - Do not use swear words
 - ...
- **These laws do not feel restrictive to me, because my heart is fully aligned with these laws**



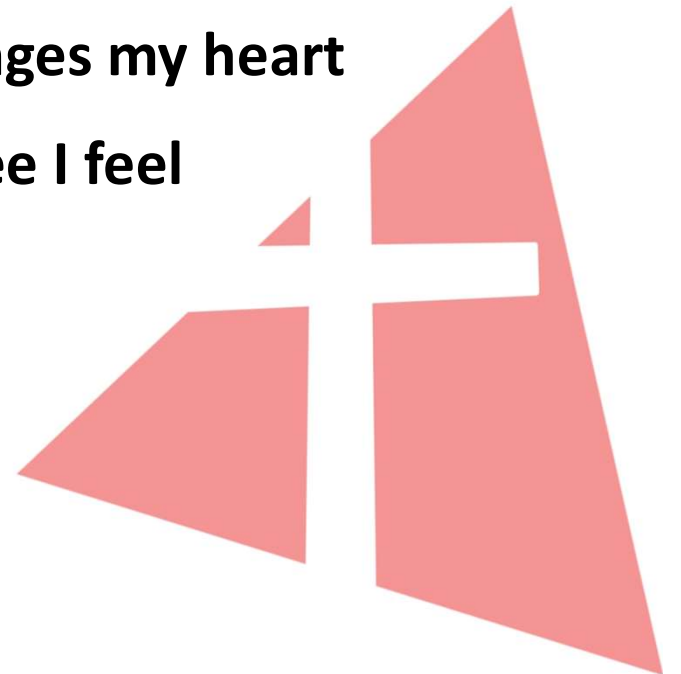
EXAMPLE OF GOD'S LAW

- **There are laws in the Bible that feel restrictive**
 - Do not covet
 - Do not be proud
 - Seek God first in everything
 - ...
- **These laws feel restrictive because my heart isn't fully aligned with God yet**



MY EXPERIENCE

- **The more I walk with God, the more He changes my heart**
- **The more He changes my heart, the more free I feel**



FREEDOM

- **The Holy Spirit replaces all sinful desires with God's desires for our lives**
- **When we only have God's desires, there is no law that restricts us from living the way we want to live**
- **We'll experience perfect freedom to live exactly the way we desire to live**

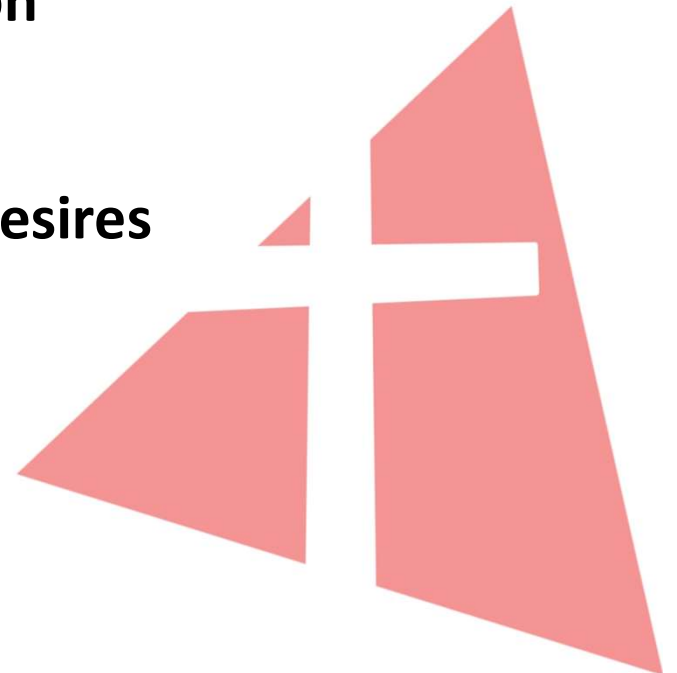


RESTRICTIONS BY THE LAW

- **If we feel restricted by God's law, it is evidence that we still have fleshly desires**
 - When we don't feel like reading Bible/pray, it probably shows a lack of love for God
 - If we love money and never seem to have enough, it probably shows a lack of trust in God's provisions
 - When we worry all the time, it probably shows that we don't trust in God's care for us
 - When we look for complete satisfaction in relationships and sex, then it probably shows that we are not truly fulfilled in Jesus

WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Most people “try harder to be a better person”
- Instead, we need to ask God to change our desires



GOD'S FREEDOM

- Instead of “having to work hard to be accepted by God” we can simply receive salvation as a gift
- The more we allow God to change our heart, the more free we will be




FREEDOM

Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1)



ARE YOU FREE?

- Do bad habits and desires control aspects of our lives?
 - Do bad experiences from the past still affect our lives today?
 - Do we struggle with guilt and shame?
 - Have we been “trying to do better” for a long time, but we just fail again and again?
 - Do we feel limited by what God tells us (not) to do in the Bible?
- 

CLOSING QUESTION

- Do we want to ask God today to set us free?

