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**Week 1**

**Grace … Freedom**

**INTRODUCTION**

Freedom means being rid of the things that constrict us, shackle us, and hold us captive – these may be sins, habits, patterns or even people. It also means letting go of the things we use as security blankets or crutches. Talk about a habit you have, or a pattern in your life that constricts your freedom.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to be harsh with someone to stop them from doing something dangerous?
2. Paul, who wrote the letter to the Galatians, took a very firm stance with them. Read Galatians 1:6-9. Why do you suppose he was so abrupt with them?
3. Galatians 2:20 defines the gospel of Christ. Read it and explain it in your own words.
4. Mercy is not getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don’t deserve. Talk about how mercy and grace connect you to God.
5. Many people think that they can earn God’s favor by doing good things. Read Galatians 2.15-16. What do these verses say about that idea?

**STEPPING FORWARD**

The story of Paul’s visit to the Galatian region is found in Acts 13-14. This week read those chapters and compare them with the letter Paul wrote to the Galatians.

*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.*

**Galatians 5:1**