

Who Cut in On You?

Scripture: Galatians 5:1-15
(07-05-26 Pastor Tony Hao)

Tripping in sports is a direct offense that occurs when a player intentionally or carelessly uses their leg or foot to cause an opponent to fall or lose balance. In Galatians Paul sees a stadium full of tripped-up runners among the fellow Christians. He diagnoses the exact spiritual mechanics of how a believer goes from sprinting in the joy of freedom to stumbling under the weight of performance. He forces us to look at our own spiritual stride and gives us the ultimate recovery plan to get back our gospel momentum.

Paul reminds us in 5:1-12 that grace and human performance are mutually exclusive systems. They cannot coexist. By insisting on your good works, you are saying Jesus' death was insufficient. You have walked across the border of grace and back into the prison of performance.

When Christians focus on rules, performance, and comparison, they stop running the race and becomes a demolition derby. People start biting, judging, and destroying one another to prove who is winning. But when they focus on the radical grace of Jesus (5:13-15), the race becomes a relay where everyone is trying to help each other cross the finish line.

GROWING DEEPER (Reflection & Application)

1. Respond to this sentiment: Adding a little to the gospel is not a major problem, as long as we believe in the cross.
2. Does eternal security give us freedom to sin without fear of the consequences? Explain. How do many in our culture define freedom? How does Paul define it?
3. Why should our freedom in Christ lead us to a life of love for one another and our neighbors?
4. Have you ever seen people "bite and devour one another?" (5:15). What were the causes? How does this passage speak to this problem?