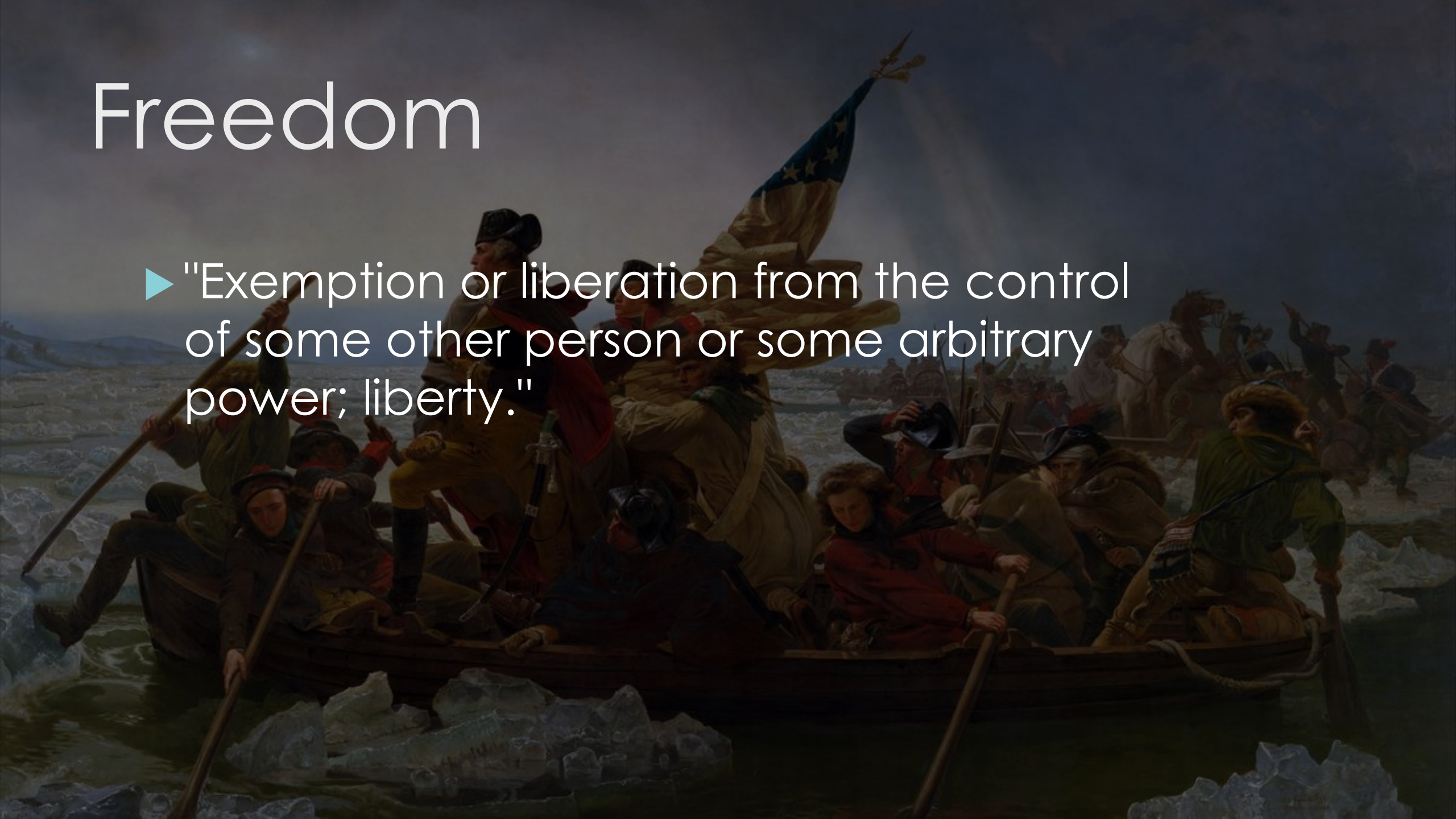


# Freedom

- ▶ "Exemption or liberation from the control of some other person or some arbitrary power; liberty."



# John 8:31-32

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a gesture of freedom or praise. The person is wearing a hooded garment. They are holding onto a chain that is broken into several pieces, with the links falling away. The background is a dark, warm brown color.

- ▶ <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a gesture of freedom or praise. Two chains are attached to their wrists, but they are broken, with the links floating in the air. The background is a warm, golden-brown gradient with a bright light source behind the person's head, creating a halo effect.

# Freedom In Christ

JOHN 8:31-36

# Freedom In Christ

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised in a gesture of praise or freedom. They are wearing heavy chains on their wrists, which are attached to a central point above their head. The background is a dark, warm gradient.

- ▶ The Good News of Freedom
- ▶ The Greatest Freedom – Freedom From...
  - The bondage of sin (Jn.8:31-36)
  - The penalty of sin (Rom.6:23)
  - The guilt and shame of sin (Jn.8:36)
  - The fear of death (Heb.2:15)
  - Ultimately, Free from Mortality (Rom.8:20-21)

# Freedom In Christ

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, wearing chains on their wrists. The background is a gradient of brown and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The person's arms are raised in a gesture of praise or freedom, despite the chains.

- ▶ The Good News of Freedom
- ▶ The Greatest Freedom – Freedom From...
- ▶ The Price of Freedom
- ▶ Freedom is Not a License
- ▶ Freedom Comes With Responsibility

# Satan's Devices

A silhouette of a person wearing a hooded sweatshirt, with their arms raised in the air. They are wearing black handcuffs on both wrists, which are attached to a chain. The background is a dark, gradient brown color.

- ▶ Persecution
- ▶ Error / False Teaching
- ▶ Division Over Liberties
  - (Gal.5:7-15)

# Galatians 5:7-15

A silhouette of a person with their hands raised in a gesture of prayer or surrender. They are wearing heavy metal chains on their wrists, which are attached to their hands. The background is a dark, warm brown color.

- ▶ <sup>7</sup> You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?
- ▶ <sup>8</sup> This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. <sup>9</sup> A little leaven leavens the whole lump.
- ▶ <sup>10</sup> I have confidence in you, in the Lord, that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is.

# Galatians 5:7-15

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, wearing chains on their wrists. The background is a dark, warm gradient.

- ▶ <sup>11</sup> And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.
- ▶ <sup>12</sup> I could wish that those who trouble you would even cut themselves off!



# Galatians 5:7-15

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, wearing a chain around their neck and wrists. The background is a dark, warm brown color.

- ▶ <sup>13</sup> For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
- ▶ <sup>14</sup> For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- ▶ <sup>15</sup> But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

# Satan's Devices

A silhouette of a person with their hands raised, wearing chains on their wrists. The background is a dark, textured brown. The person's hands are raised towards the top of the frame, and the chains are visible as dark links against the lighter background.

- ▶ Persecution
- ▶ Error / False Teaching
- ▶ Division Over Liberties
  - (Gal.5:7-15)
  - Using freedom as an occasion to destroy us
  - Often strong members – Peter & Barnabas
  - Opinion, Pride, Biting and Devouring

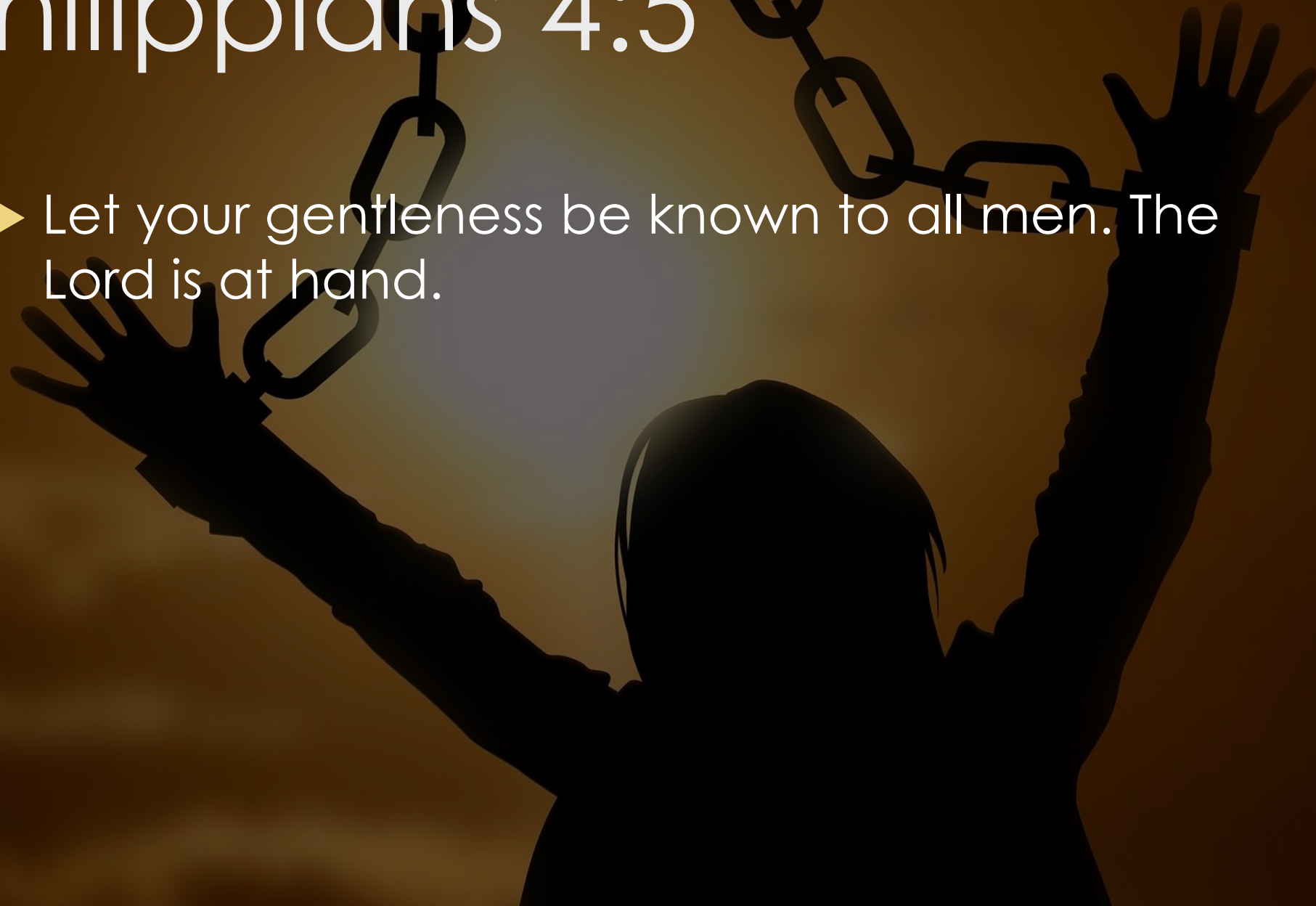
# Seeing More Division

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, wearing chains on their wrists. The background is a dark, textured brown. The person's arms are raised towards the top of the frame, and the chains are visible as dark links against the lighter background.

- ▶ Past Election
- ▶ Social Media and 24 hour News cycle
- ▶ Need to come back to the balanced principles of Christ

# Philippians 4:5

- ▶ Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.



# Philippians 1:9-11

A silhouette of a person with their hands raised in a gesture of praise or prayer. They are wearing handcuffs on both wrists, which are attached to a chain. The background is dark with a subtle light gradient.

- ▶ <sup>9</sup> And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,
- ▶ <sup>10</sup> that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,
- ▶ <sup>11</sup> being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

# Seeing More Division

A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, wearing chains on their wrists. The background is a dark, textured brown. The person's arms are raised in a gesture of protest or struggle, with the chains hanging down. The overall mood is one of conflict or division.

- ▶ Past Election
- ▶ Social Media and 24 hour News cycle
- ▶ Need to come back to the balanced principles of Christ
  - Phil.4:5
  - Phil.1:9-11

# Liberty

- ▶ The Freedom to Choose
- ▶ Some Things are Required or Forbidden
- ▶ Liberties are neither Required nor Forbidden, but are Allowed
- ▶ Liberty Permits Different Judgments



# Liberty

## ▶ Examples of Liberties

- Politics and Voting
- Public Schools or Home School
- Vaccinations





# Liberty

## ▶ Examples of Liberties

- Time of worship on Sunday
- How many worship services on Sunday
- Assembling for bible classes
- Gospel Meetings
- Youth Lectures
- Women's Lectures



# Liberty

- ▶ The Freedom to Choose
- ▶ Some Things are Required or Forbidden
- ▶ Liberties are neither Required nor Forbidden, but are Allowed
- ▶ Liberty Permits Different Judgments
- ▶ Elders' Role in Areas of Liberty



# Liberty and Unity

The Statue of Liberty is visible in the background, standing on a pedestal against a dark, cloudy sky. The statue is green and holds a torch in her right hand and a tablet in her left.

- ▶ Don't let your **Liberties** become your **Lord**
  - (1Cor.8:1-13; 9:24-27; 10:1-11)
- ▶ Don't let your **Liberties** become your **Law**
  - (Matt.15:1-3) (Gal.2:4)
- ▶ Don't let your **Liberties** take precedence over **Love**
  - (1Cor.8:1-2) (Gal.5:13-15) (Rom.14:10,15-16, 19)

# Liberty and Unity

The Statue of Liberty is visible in the background, partially obscured by the text. It is a green patina statue with a crown of spikes, holding a torch in her right hand and a tablet in her left. The background is a dark, overcast sky.

- ▶ If people indicate that they have been hurt or are hurting, our response should not be dismissive. For example, if people say they have seen or have been victims of racism, we should not say, “well, I haven’t seen it.” That’s dismissive. Having seen or not seen something has no bearing on the truth of what the other person is saying. I might be taking pride in my ignorance by doing this, and it does not bode well for honest and sincere love for others.

# Liberty and Unity

The background of the slide features a low-angle photograph of the Statue of Liberty. The statue is shown from the waist up, holding the torch in her right hand and the tablet in her left. She is set against a clear, light blue sky. The lighting is soft, suggesting either dawn or dusk.

- ▶ “But how do we know if they are telling the truth?”  
For a child of God, and especially when we are dealing with our brothers and sisters in Christ, that is not the question to ask. Love believes all things and hopes all things. This is not gullibility, but it is instead treating others as we would want to be treated. If I tell someone that something happened to me, I don’t need that person to question whether or not I’m telling the truth, nor would I want that person to be dismissive about the pain I’m trying to share. Relationships will fall apart if we cannot trust what we are telling one another.

# Liberty and Unity

The background of the slide features a low-angle photograph of the Statue of Liberty. The statue is shown from the waist up, holding the torch in her right hand and the tablet in her left. The sky is a clear, light blue, and the lighting suggests it might be early morning or late afternoon, as the statue's surface has a slight golden glow.

- ▶ Rather than dismiss what others say is real and painful to them, we should ask ourselves this: how can I, through love, serve? This is a simple application of a passage that tells how we can practice loving others:
- ▶ “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.” (Gal 5:13-15)

# Liberty and Unity

The Statue of Liberty is shown in the background, partially obscured by the text. It is a green patina statue with a crown of spikes, holding a torch in her right hand and a tablet in her left. The background is a dark, cloudy sky.

- ▶ The biting and devouring of one another has been real and it has and is causing a significant amount of pain. Rather than react negatively, rather than dismiss out of hand, rather than stubbornly “hold my ground” out of some warped sense of pride, we must show the Christ-like spirit of compassion, mercy, and justice.

# Liberty and Unity

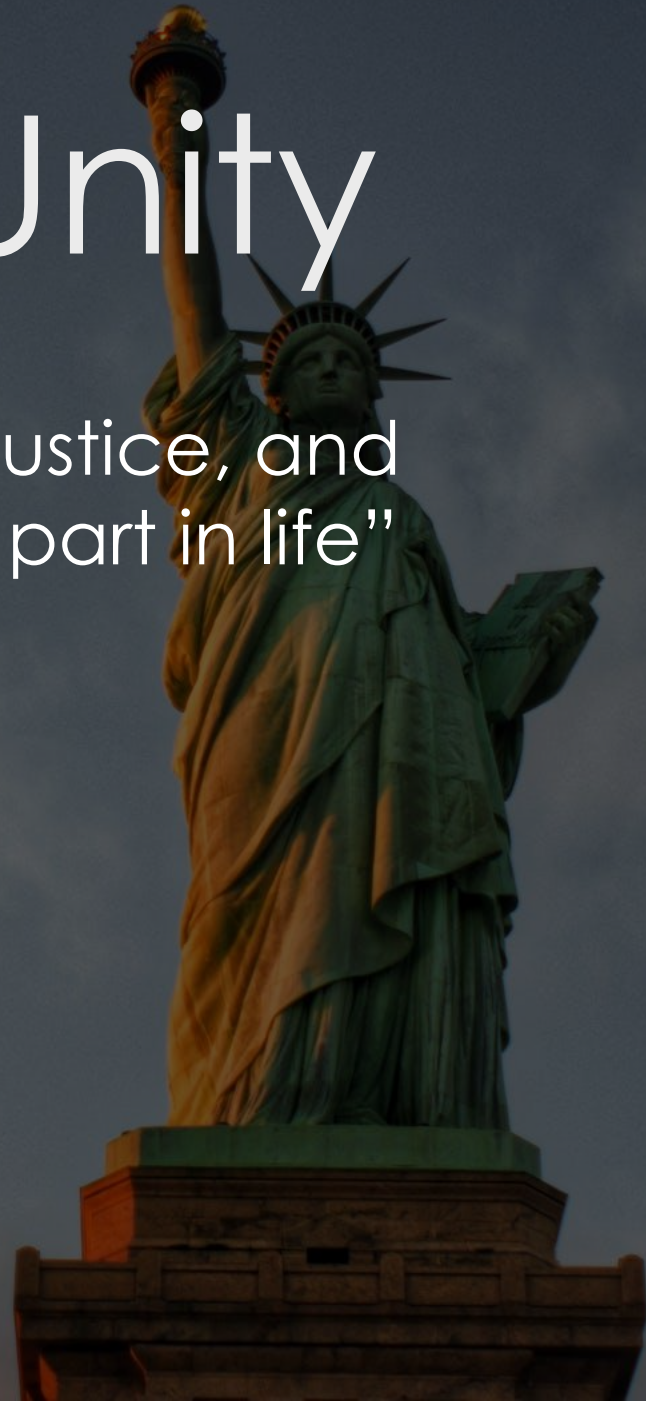
The Statue of Liberty is visible in the background, partially obscured by the text. It is shown from the waist up, holding the torch in her right hand and the tablet in her left. The background is a dark, clear sky.

- ▶ This isn't political. It's not about holding signs for political movements. This isn't a compromise of God's truth. On the contrary, holding to the truth of God and His word requires action on our part that demonstrates the love of which we speak. Standing up for what's right requires standing for the oppressed (cf. Isa 1:16-17; Jas 1:26-27). That is as right and biblical as any issue of authority we may discuss. It is as wrong and sinful as any work of the flesh if we ignore it.



# Liberty and Unity

- ▶ Think about this: “Kindness, justice, and righteousness are heaven’s part in life” (Heschel).



# Liberty and Unity

- ▶ “In matters of faith, unity; In matters of opinion, liberty; In all things, charity”

