"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day…"
– John 9:4

# Social Freedom

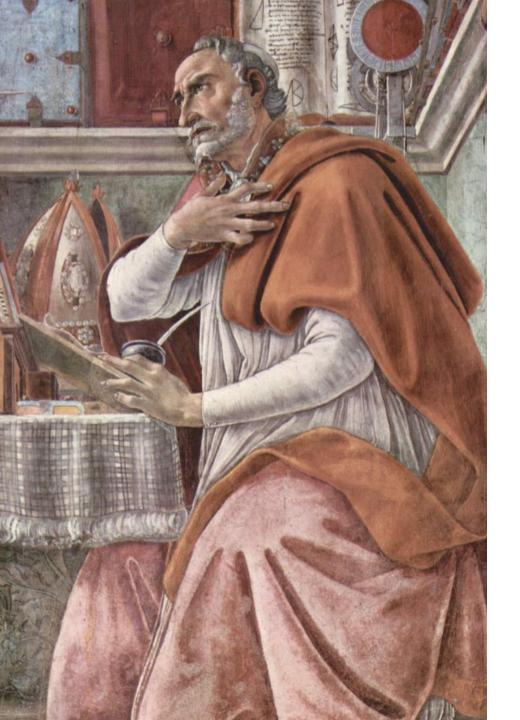6th Week of the Holy Great Fast

# Freedom

Everyone agrees that freedom is a basic ethical norm.

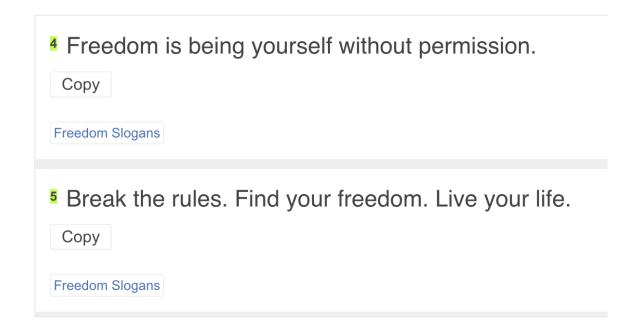Definition

Freedom lies at the heart of Christian teaching

Illusions of Freedom
**#1 Freedom is found outside of oneself**

*"You were within me, and I was outside myself,
and sought You outside myself."*

(St. Augustine)

Illusions of Freedom
#2 The belief that happiness can only be achieved through unlimited freedom

- Society tells us that unlimited freedom will give you limitless happiness.
- Humans were not created for slavery
- There is no happiness without love, and no love without freedom.
- Problem: Our love goes in the wrong direction
- Freedom gives value to love, and love is the precondition to freedom.

**4** Freedom is being yourself without permission.

Copy

Freedom Slogans

**5** Break the rules. Find your freedom. Live your life.

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Freedom Slogans

# Illusions of Freedom
## #2 The belief that happiness can only be achieved through unlimited freedom

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? …Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:35, 37-39)

# Illusions of Freedom
## #3 Freedom can only be attained in autonomy

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- EX: Eve

- Freedom can only be found in submitting to God

- "For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." (Matt. 16:25)

# Social Pressures

1. **Social Opinion**
2. **Social Acceptance**
   - A study conducted in the US in 2010, examined 2,000 randomly-selected middle-schoolers from one of the most populous school districts in the United States, 20% of respondents reported seriously thinking about attempting suicide (19.7% of females; 20.9% of males), while 19% reported attempting suicide (17.9% of females; 20.2% of males).
   - The most commonly-reported form of cyberbullying offending was: *"Posted something online about another person to make others laugh"*

Hinduja, S. & Patchin, J. W. (2010). Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Suicide. Archives of Suicide Research, 14(3), 206-221.

# Social Pressures

3. **Lofty Social Standards**
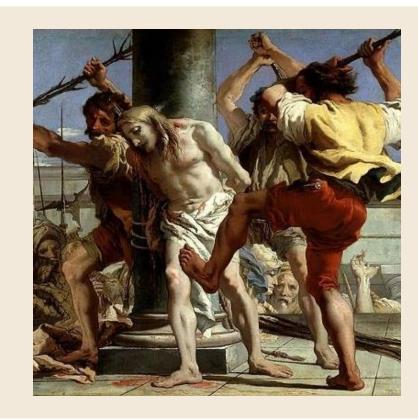   - Perfection
     - <span style="color:red">"For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." (Matt. 23:4)</span>
   - Perfect justice
     - *"Mercy Without Justice Is the Mother of Dissolution; Justice Without Mercy Is Cruelty."* (Thomas Aquinas)

# Freedom from the bonds of Social Slavery

1. **Tolerance**
   - To injustice
     - "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven…" (Matt. 5:11-12)
   - Being alone

# Freedom from the bonds of Social Slavery

2. Toughness (Courage)
3. Truth

# Summary

- Freedom
  - Freedom lies at the heart of Christian teaching
- Illusions of Freedom
  1. Freedom is found outside of oneself – where are we searching for freedom?
  2. The belief that happiness can only be achieved through unlimited freedom
  3. Freedom can only be attained in autonomy

- Enslaving Social Pressures
  - Social Opinion
  - Social Acceptance
  - Lofty Social Standards
- How can we free ourselves from bondage of social slavery?
  - Tolerance
  - Toughness (Courage)
  - Truth