

GALATIANS 5:13-16

A. Galatians 5:13 - For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

1. [For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty;]

- a. Christ has freed us by dying on the cross, thus redeeming us from the curse of the law. If we now place ourselves under law, we **sin** greatly.
- b. We should not ever allow men, theologians, or religious leaders to entangle us with the law's **bondage**.

Galatians 5:1 - Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

- c. Think. If we would place ourselves under legalism, then how could we share the grace gospel or the grace life? We are free in Christ!
 - (1) We are free from the guilt of sin - **Forgiven**
 - (2) We are free from the penalty of sin - **Cross**
 - (3) We are free from the power of sin - **Spirit**
 - (4) We are free from the bondage of the law - **Grace**

* | We are not slaves under law, but now we are **sons** under grace!

2. [only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,]

- a. Paul challenges and warns them not to use their liberty as a license to follow their flesh's **pull** (many do).

*Grace and liberty are real - true, wanting us to live godly for God.

- b. It is disappointing that often those who have been saved - freed think they have a license - liberty to sin. They think they can do whatever they **want** to do. Then there are those who take the extreme **opposite** and impose legalism on everybody.

*Truth is, it is somewhere **between** license and legalism, and it is called Christian liberty.

II Corinthians 3:3, 6 - *Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. II Cor. 3:6 - Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

3. [but by love serve one another.]

- a. This is the true use of the believer's liberty. "It is seeking others' highest good."
- b. Paul is saying, "Rather than using our liberty to satisfy our **own** lust of the flesh, use it to help and lift others. Being free, we now have the ability to **love** and do what is right."

I Corinthians 10:23-24 - All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. I Cor. 10:24 - Let no man seek his own, but every man another's **wealth**.

- c. Paul also warns:

I Corinthians 8:9 - But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak.

- * There may be times or things our flesh desires to do that is not unlawful nor unscriptural.
- * However, it may offend an immature believer, so we decide in grace that, if it does not help or lift them up, it would be the wrong thing to do (that is love-liberty).

- d. There are too many believers who carelessly forget their responsibility to others. Notice grace in action:

Romans 14:13 - Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

Titus 2:11-12, 14 - For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Titus 2:12 - Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Titus 2:14 - Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 3:8 - *This is* a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

- e. [love]? The best believer tries to be the best citizen, the best neighbor, the best friend, the best partner, and the best testimony for His Savior.

- B. Galatians 5:14 - For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

1. Though we may be free from the law, freedom has risks. However, we know that God is willing to take the risk of His grace being abused to provide freedom for us.

*If God was - is willing to do this, should not we as believers always be using our freedom to serve Him out of our love for Him and for the new life He has given us? We are not under a performance-based system in order to be accepted by Him. As believers, we are always accepted in Christ (Ephesians 1:6).

2. Remember, faith operates through love.

Example: The normal mother does not need laws or rules to make her take care of her children. She loves, nurses, washes, dresses, cares, protects and feeds them. Why? Because a law requires her to? No! It is because she loves them!

3. Likewise, in our Christian walk, our love for Christ motivates us to live dispensationally godly, to try to live above reproach, far more than the law's requirements could make us do.

* Truthfully, love makes us desire to please God. We even go beyond what the law demands (second mile).

4. Even when God gave the law, the law spelled out how love operates, what love does not do, and what love does.

Example: When you put God first and foremost in your life, you do not kill your neighbor; you do not steal; you do not commit adultery, or any of the rest. That is what love is and does. But liberty minus love causes license!

C. Galatians 5:15 - But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

1. Interestingly, if love is **absent**, we revert back to the **old** nature controlling us and behave no better than animals.
 - a. These Galatians were fighting among themselves. The legalistic Judaizers were attacking those who wanted to live in grace and not law.*Legalism, or license, was creating awful problems in the church. Their absence of love had created an atmosphere of **destructive** criticism. They were preying on each other and becoming Christian **cannibals**.
 - b. This attacking criticism always leads to them **retaliating** and potentially destroying one another. Ultimately, both sides lose, and the cause of Christ suffers within the church, while losing its influence to the lost.* | The hurt is **unbelievable**.

2. I have learned: Those who keep rituals, traditions, or those who want to be like the world to try to reach the world, generally follow legalism or license.

*If you do not believe this, try joining their churches with**out** being baptized; believing grace makes you free; love some of the old hymns; stand on the King James Version, or even **rightly** divide. You will then see that they have a system of religion. It is as if you have **leprosy** (absence of love). The greatest weapon Satan uses is the Body Church against **itself**!

D. Galatians 5:16 - This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

1. Salvation (justification) is not possible through **self** efforts (Titus 3:5). Our sanctification (setting us apart from **old** sinful habits to a more **godly** lifestyle) also is not possible through our own effort or strength.

2. Note the stages of our sanctifying:

- a. **Preparatory** - This is where the Holy Spirit moves within us to believe - receive salvation.

II Timothy 2:13 - If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

- b. **Positional** - The Holy Spirit places us eternally **in** Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Hebrews 10:14 - For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

- c. **Progressive** - The Holy Spirit works **daily** in our lives to put off the old man and to put on the new man.

Philippians 2:13 - For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.

Ephesians 4:22-24 - That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Eph. 4:23 - And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Eph 4:24 - And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and

true holiness.

- d. Prospective - The Holy Spirit will deliver us to heaven.

Romans 8:29-30 - For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Rom. 8:30 - Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Ephesians 4:30 - And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

- 3. Our walk has to be controlled by the Holy Spirit or we will never have a victory walk. In our own ways, our own strength, we will fail. It is when we walk in the flesh's way that, as believers, we grieve and quench the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives.

*The battle is not getting more of the Holy Spirit, but it is our surrendering to the Holy Spirit in all areas of our lives. It is the Holy Spirit getting control of more of us.

- 4. [flesh] It is not just your body, but the sin principle, the evil bent we have. It is our fallen nature that has sinful desires.

Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

Romans 7:19-21 - For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

Rom. 7:20 - Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

Rom. 7:21 - I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.