

Series: Galatians  
Title: Liberty to Love  
Text: Gal 5: 13-16  
Date: April 25, 2021  
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**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. 14: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 15: But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. 16: *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.**

**Galatians 5: 13: For, brethren,**

This is written to brothers and sisters in Christ. The family of God. We are one body and each members of one another with Christ as our Head. We are brethren.

**Galatians 5: 13...ye have been called unto liberty;**

The Spirit of God has called us from death to spiritual, eternal life in Christ. The Spirit of God called us from unbelief to faith in Christ—to God be the glory.

Ye have been called UNTO LIBERTY. God has made us know in our new heart that we are complete in Christ. Those who are called know they are righteous in Christ. The law says in Christ we are perfect, righteous and the law shall never condemn us.

We are given liberty from the dominion of our sin-nature. By the Spirit we can now believe on Christ. The Spirit of God makes us walk by faith looking to Christ. By the Spirit our sin-nature shall never be allowed to cause us to fall away in unbelief so as to apostatize. Our sin-nature does not allow us to be perfect as we would. But the Spirit of God will not allow our sin-nature to do all that he would. Sin shall not have dominion over you—no possibility—for you are not under the law but under grace.

Christ has given us liberty to live unto God our Father as children of God. We are given liberty to come to the Holy God of heaven and earth crying, Abba, Father as his everlastingly loved child. He gave us liberty to come to Christ our High Priest, who knows our every infirmity, to find grace to help in every time of need.

Liberty is the greatest peace there is. It is peace with God from having our conscious purged by Christ's blood to know and believe this great good news. Now we live the rest of our days on this earth knowing I am accepted of God in Christ the Beloved!

**Galatians 5: 13...only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,...**

We are never to use liberty as an excuse to fulfill the sinful lusts of the flesh. Christ did not lay down his life, shed his precious blood to purge our sins and give us liberty to use as a basis to excuse sinful behavior. The whole purpose of God's electing grace, of Christ's redeeming blood, of the Spirit's regenerating grace is to give his child liberty *FROM* sin NOT liberty *TO* sin. And though we have liberty in meat and drink, we are not to exercise liberty if it offends a brother in Christ.

Romans 5: 20:...where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. 6: 1: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2: God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

What is the direct opposite of using liberty as an occasion to the flesh?

**Galatians 5: 13...but by love serve one another. 14: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even in this*; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

If we have the love of God in our heart, we do not need the letter of the law to tell us not to worship another God because we love God and want to worship only him.

If we have the love of God in our heart, we do not need a letter to tell us to remember the sabbath because we rest in Christ our Sabbath; we want to worship under his gospel, and every day is a day to worship our Savior; we want to take all burdens off one another, not put more on them.

If we have love in our heart, we do not need a letter telling us not to covet our neighbor's things or murder his body or his character because we want to see our lost neighbor called to faith in Christ.

If we have love in our heart, we do not want to give occasion to our flesh to sin against our Redeemer because we love him, we love our brethren.

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

How are we given this love? The Holy Spirit turns us to behold Christ's great love for us and the Spirit keeps doing so each time we need to be humbled in heart to love.

We behold Christ the Son of God was equal with God. But Christ made himself of no reputation—an absence of pride. He took upon him the form of a servant. Love is to serve. Christ took the form of a servant and served. He served sinful, offensive, unloving, hateful sinners like us. And as a Man, in our place, obeyed the law unto the death of the cross. By love he served his people unto the death of the cross.

Now, in Christ, each one he Redeemed, he calls by the Spirit to behold we have fulfilled the whole law of God in perfect love. Christ is our Righteousness because by love he served us.

When Christ is formed in us—and each time the Spirit turns us and sets our affection on Christ above—the power of his great love fills us with his love, the love of God. Therefore we love him because he first loved us. Then our new will and motive is love. He continues to renew that new will through each trial to bring us low and make us love.

If our flesh needs to be mortified, it is beholding Christ's great love. That love fills our new man and the Spirit strengthens us inward to fight against our flesh. His love makes our inmost desire not to be to use our liberty as occasion to sin and offend one another, but by love to serve one another. He says,

John 15:12: This is MY commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.  
13: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14:  
Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

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

What does that mean? Christ tells us plainly.

Matthew 7: 12: All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

It is easy to love someone when they are loving you and living righteously. But let's remember the context of this epistle. Many of these Galatian brethren were offending one another and greatly offended at one another. So the Spirit moved Paul to give a warning concerning the opposition of love. This is giving occasion to the flesh.

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

They were offending and being offended by one another. So in their sin-nature some heard Paul's words like this, "*My brother should be loving me as he loves himself.*" That is how the sin-nature hears the word. But that is not what the word says. It says I am to love my brother as I want to be loved.

How does the Spirit of the Lord lead his child? How does he make his redeemed willing to walk in the Spirit so that we are turned from the lusts of the flesh. It's an inward work that goes something like this.

One of these Galatian believers hears Paul's epistle and says, "Well, that brother has always been faithful. He loves the Lord. That brother always walks honorably toward me and my brethren." The Spirit of Christ brings scripture into the heart, "Yes, for a righteous man some will lay down their life. Indeed, love him as you would want to be loved."

Then he thinks, "Well, this other brother has been faithful. He has sinned. But for the most part he has been faithful to the Lord, he has treated me right most of the time." The Spirit of Christ says, "Yes, for a *good man* some would even dare to die. Indeed, love him as you want to be loved."

Then the Galatian looks at this other brother and says, "But this one, oh no! He has betrayed me. He has sinned greatly." Then the Spirit says, "Yes, but God commended his love toward you, in that while you were yet a sinner, Christ died for you."

The Galatian is still in his flesh so he tries to justify himself, "But that was when I was *dead* in sins. This is one who professes to believe Christ and look how he has sinned." The Spirit brings to mind another scripture, and says, "Remember when the Lord took off his garment and bowed down to his disciples' feet? They were believers. He had not yet been to the cross. He knew *every* sin of their sin-nature and *every* sinful deed. The Lord knew Peter would deny him and go back to his fishing boats. He knew they all would abandon him and leave him alone. Christ knew Thomas would doubt him. He knew all the sins they would commit the rest of their days. Our Substitute knew he was about to bear all their sins—along with all the sins of his elect in every generation—and bear the wrath of God for them.

Yet, having loved his own, [with all the soul troubling agony of the cross on his mind] he loved them till the end. So he took off his outward garment and bowed down and washed the dirt and grime off their feet. He did it to show us how he continues to cleanse the defiling sin of his believing people as we walk through this life. The Lord Jesus speak into the new heart,

John 13: 13: Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14: If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15: For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Immediately, his love fills the heart the Spirit turns the affection [singular] of the inward man from the many "affections and lusts of the flesh" and sets our affection on its singular object, Christ above where our life is hid. Right then that Galatian saint is given strength in his inward man to mortify his sinful flesh and serve his brother in love as he would want to be loved, even as Christ loved us and laid down his life for us.

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

**Amen!**