

The Life Challenge

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: Love One Another

Title: Serve One Another

Key Text: Galatians 5:13-15

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WARM - UP

The human quest for freedom is universal. Most people want to be emotionally, politically, financially, and relationally free. What are some of the personal quests for freedom in your life? Are there some stories of your search for freedom that you could share with the group? What lessons have you learned about the search for and finding freedom? Has there been a time in your life where you were trying to get freedom but it was motivated by self-indulgence?

DISCUSSION

Read Galatians 5:1-16 together. What is the central point that Paul is making to the Galatian Christians? What are his underlying issues and concerns? What solutions/challenges does he offer?

Paul is deeply concerned that the Christians will walk in the freedom that Christ gave to them but he knows that we will drift into false freedom - freedom that indulges the flesh. There are two poles of self-indulgent freedom:

1. Legalism - you must put on rules to be Christian. How have you been influenced by legalistic teaching in your journey? What do you notice is the effect of this teaching on people's lives?
2. Libertinism - you must throw off rules to be a Christian. Where does this understanding of freedom ultimately lead? Where are you inclined to indulge yourself in doing whatever you want in the name of your freedom in Christ? How does this work out for you? What lessons have you learned? How do you get back on the right path after that?

DISCUSSION CONTD.

Legalism demands responsibility without freedom - Libertinism grants freedom without responsibility. What do you think about that? In what practical everyday ways would you say Christian freedom is abused?

Paul turns this idea of freedom on its head. He instructs us to use our freedom to serve others. How do we become free to serve others? In what situations do you find it hard to love others? How does the instruction in Galatians 5:13-15 help you work through that? What are some of the major truths we must embrace if we want to turn away from self towards others? How would you grade yourself in the area of serve? Why?

When Christian freedom is rightly understood and properly lived out, it leads to a life of fruitful service to God and others. However, if it is abused it leads to a life of frustrating self-indulgence. According to Galatians 5:13-14, what is the goal and end result of Christian freedom? How does Romans 13:8-10 describe this "new law" under which believers are able to operate?

APPLICATION

Galatians 5:13 calls us to use freedom to love one another. How could you love your neighbor this week? (Perhaps think about your geographical neighbor, not just your metaphorical one). What is a specific way that you could use your freedom to serve someone else this week?