

BUILDING UP ONE ANOTHER
FREE TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER
GALATIANS 5:13-15

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge in the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. Galatians 5:13-15

I. In Christ, We are Called to be Free!

- ***We are free from the _____ of sin*** – The penalty for our sin is spiritual death (Romans 3:23, John 3:18). Through Christ's sacrificial death, we are free from sin's penalty.
- ***We are free from the _____ of sin*** – We no longer are slaves to sin (have no control). Now, we are free to say "no" to sin's influence and control. Just say "no" to sin. (Romans 6:11-14, Galatians 5:13)
- ***We are free from the _____ of the Law*** – We no longer have to follow the Law to prove ourselves righteous to God and others. This also frees us from the control of "Judaizers" (those who demand that we follow their religious rules in order to be "acceptable" Christians) within the Church.
- ***We are free to _____ the Christ Life*** – Freed from the power of sin (and the sinful nature), with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now free (and able) to become more like Christ and live the Christ Life (II Corinthians 3:17) and be all we can be.

II. We are Free to Serve One Another in Love

- ***We are free to _____ one another*** – When we are freed from the power of our own sinful nature (the flesh), we are free from our own selfish desires. Now we are free to focus on others' needs and serve them.



Serve - (Greek δουλεύετε) - The strongest of the Greek words for serve (the verb form for "δουλος" which means slave); giving oneself completely for another, giving ourselves totally to another. Some form of this word is used 160 times in the New Testament!

This is the opposite of the rest of the world where, "I am the most important"; "My rights are the most significant thing." I come first. If my rights conflict with your rights, we go our separate ways.

- ***We serve by always considering others over _____***
 - By helping others physically and actively
 - By showing kindness and gentleness
 - By expressing concern and care
 - By demonstrating sympathy and empathy

- ***We serve in _____*** – When we serve one another in love, it is never for selfish gain, such as receiving recognition from others for what we have done (look at me), or to manipulate them to do for you in response (you owe me). When we serve in love, we never ask whether the person deserves our effort or help, or is worth the effort or help. We serve others because we love them as much as we love ourselves. (Galatians 5:14, James 2:8, Romans 13:8-10)
- ***The ultimate servant and our example, Jesus, “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45***

III. When we serve in love, we won't devour or destroy

- ***If you keep on biting and _____*** – This was the problem in the Galatian church, with ongoing conflict between the Judaizers and the non-Jewish Christians. These verbs are exceptionally strong and descriptive, and suggest wild animals engaged in a struggle to the death. In contrast to using freedom to serve one another in love, freedom was being used to indulge in the sinful nature (the flesh) to hurt and destroy others. This is the opposite of love. It is anti-love.
- ***We fight and devour with these _____ actions –***
 - Refuse to help - Covet - Gossip - Condemn - Criticize
 - Exploit - Hurt - Accuse - Take - Slander
 - Manipulate - Abuse

When we lose the motivation of love, we stop looking for the good in others and their needs, and instead become critical and condemning.
- ***The Result – We _____ One Another*** – We destroy fellow Christians, brothers and sisters, spiritually, emotionally, reputationally, even physically (conflict causes stress, which causes physical problems). There are too many Christians who have been spiritually wounded in the Church and have become bitter Church drop-outs. We also destroy the unity in the Church when we bite and devour. This puts out the Spirit's fire (I Thessalonians 5:19). God doesn't bless us. The Church becomes “toxic” – toxic church. Will we serve one another in love, or devour one another in the flesh?

Answers: I. Penalty; power; purposes; live. II. Serve; ourselves; love. III. Devouring; destructive; destroy.