

FREEDOM — IN THE — IN-BETWEEN

Introduction:

Galatians 5:16-25

Up to this point in Galatians, Paul has systematically made the defense that right standing with God comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. He has spoken to both Jews and Gentiles to show them how God will save us in no other way but through the work of Jesus. Paul has even reprimanded the Galatians for their foolishness in drifting from God's grace.

This week's main point:

The Spirit helps us live out the gospel and battle with our sinful natures.

Take a few minutes to think about and summarize on a scratch sheet of paper each chapter in Galatians up to this point. Are there any themes that stand out to you?

- The accuracy of the gospel is vitally important.
- The Christian is justified by faith in Jesus Christ alone.
- The Law, while helpful in leading us to Christ, has no power to save us.
- Christ came to make us God's sons and daughters, not just more obedient slaves.

Hopefully it is clear that the Christian is *completely* free! But maybe you are like me, and there is this lingering question: If the Christian is fully justified by faith in Jesus and is therefore totally free from the Law, does that mean we can do anything we want? Paul answers this question in Galatians 5 by demonstrating how the Spirit of God helps us live out the gospel and battle with our sinful flesh through being rooted in Christ's finished work.

Sermon Response Question:

1) How has faith in the gospel produced love in your life?

Read Galatians 5:16-26.

Bible Study Questions:

2) Most modern translations include the words "Spirit" and "flesh" many times in chapter 5. Take some time to describe how Paul is using both of these words in this chapter. What is the flesh? What or who is the Spirit?

3) Based on Paul's words in verses 16-18, how would you describe what is going on inside of the Christian at all times?

FREEDOM — IN THE — IN-BETWEEN

4) What game plan does Paul offer the Galatians in verses 16-18 so that a person might wage war against the desires of the flesh?

5) What warning does Paul give for those who practice the works of the flesh? Are you surprised to hear such a warning?

6) The fleshly works listed in verses 19-21 have some similarities. What makes the works of the flesh so obvious in Paul's opinion? What do these works have in common?

7) Working through the list of the fruit of the Spirit, how does it combat and contrast with specific works of the flesh?

8) How does verse 24 provide gospel fuel for life in the Spirit?

Application Questions:

9) The Bible demonstrates that sometimes we sin when we do things that we should not, and then sometimes we sin by not doing the things that we should. Are there works of the flesh that you are practicing? Are there parts of the fruit of the Spirit that you are neglecting? What should repentance look like for you?

10) This passage places a heavy emphasis on the importance of desires. How can our desires be changed to reflect what God desires?

Prayer:

- Thank God for giving his Spirit to believers for help and for fellowship.
- Pray that the warning from the text about practicing the works of the flesh would be sobering and drive us to pursue holiness.
- Pray for our church, that we would be marked as a people who are led by the Spirit, who love the gospel, and who actively crucify the flesh.