

Galatians Chapter 5

Verse 12

1. Paul was very blunt in his desire for the churches of Galatia.
2. He wanted these false teachers "cut off."
 - "Cut off" literally means "to amputate."
3. This verse is proof that there are times when a person needs to leave a church. Paul desired greatly for these troublemakers to leave the church.
4. They were causing nothing but trouble in the churches of Galatia, and Paul said that it was time for them to go on their way.
5. It is important to note that Paul's chief concern for the church was not attendance figures or budgets.
 - His primary concern was for the spiritual health and doctrinal purity of the church. This was what mattered.
 - If it meant that the church must get smaller to get healthier, so be it.
6. Paul's zeal for sound doctrine is seldom seen in the church today.

Verse 13

1. The false teachers were spying out the liberty of the Galatians and attempting to bring them back under the bondage of the law. **Galatians 2:4**
2. Once again, Paul reminds the Galatians of their calling. They had been called unto liberty (**Galatians 5:1**). This liberty was rooted in and derived from the grace of Christ. 1:7
 - Praise the Lord, we are free from the burdens, demands, and condemnation of the law.
3. But now Paul will balance this glorious truth with a warning. Paul says, "...*only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh...*"
 - The word "occasion" means "opportunity."
4. Our freedom from the law should never produce a fleshly attitude of, "Now I can do whatever I want to do." This is an abuse and misuse of Christian liberty.
5. Our salvation in Christ frees us from self-centered and fleshly lusts. **Titus 3:3-4; Romans 6:6**
 - Our calling unto liberty is not a calling to uncleanness, but holiness.
1 Thessalonians 4:7
 - It is a freedom from the power of sin to be changed into the glory of the Lord by His indwelling Spirit. **2 Corinthians 3:17-18**
6. Our freedom from the law doesn't produce a fleshly "me-first" attitude. It produces a heart of service. Paul said, "...*but by love serve one another.*" **Romans 6:18, 20-22, 7:6; 1 Peter 2:16** (We serve God by serving one another.)
7. What motivates our service? Is it guilt, condemnation, fear, etc.?
 - The motivation is love. We realize that Christ had to die to set us free from the condemnation of the law and that He died for us because He loved us. 2:20

- That great love now lives within us and provides the motivation of our service.
- We don't serve God and others because we **have to**; we do it because love causes us to **want to**. As **2 Corinthians 5:14** says, "*For the love of Christ constraineth us...*"