

JESUS CHRIST CALLS US TO FREEDOM.

Galatians 5:13-18

For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

What is the struggle?

1) To never realize our calling – 5:13a *For you were called to freedom, brothers.*

Augustine's 3 stages of living

- a. Lust – No restraints on the flesh.
- b. Law – Motivated by fear, loss, and the threat of punishment.
- c. Love – Motivated by love for God and people.¹

2) To use our Christ-given **freedom** for the **flesh** – 5:13b *Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

Q: What is freedom?

A: Freedom is not the license to do whatever you feel like but the ability to do what is most meaningful.

Q: What is the "flesh?"

A: The "flesh" is a Bible term that describes your warped and selfish desires.

- We are called to **reflect** Christ by using our freedom to **serve** rather than tear down one another – 5:14-15 *For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.*

3) To think that you're **above** the struggle – 5:16-17 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.*

How to thrive in the struggle

- **Start** by submitting to Christ.

- Walk in the Spirit – 5:18 *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

¹Mark J. Edwards, ed., *Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 1999), 85.