

4. Read v. 19-21, especially the character issues. How do these relate to spiritual cannibalism in verse 15? How would they destroy a church and relationships within a family or a church body? Is there one trait that stands out more forcefully than another in a negative sense?

5. How does each quality of the fruit of the Spirit (22-23) explain what serving humbly in love (13) looks like?

6. Our lack of purpose often causes us to miss opportunities to serve that are right in front of us. List some specific people you know that you haven't seen, specific opportunities you've been overlooking, or some specific things that held you back from service. Try to look at things that are already there; not things that you have to add to your schedule.

Prayer Requests

SET FREE TO SERVE

Galatians 5:1, 13-18; Luke 22:24-27

No one has expressed the paradox of Christian freedom more succinctly than Luther in his famous maxim: "A Christian is free and independent in every respect, a bond servant to none. A Christian is a dutiful servant in every respect, owning a duty to everyone."

Called to be free

To distort it by indulging the flesh or
to preserve it by serving.

Self-indulgence is more than just bad living,
it's bad thinking.

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Freedom's focus

Freedom accomplishes the goal of the law without imposing the burden of the law

Failure to take the call to serve seriously can result in spiritual cannibalism.

What walking by the Spirit looks like

Where does the ability to walk by the Spirit come from?

Where it doesn't come from:

It is only by the Spirit of God; by walking, being led, and keeping in step with him. In short, following the Holy Spirit and loving others becomes the absolute priority in our lives.

Getting to know you

Sunday we saw that some distort the concept of freedom to do whatever they want, but the real goal of Christian freedom is to be freed to really serve others with godly qualities. Think of someone who was that servant to you when you really needed it. Write down enough so you can tell us the story.

Digging deeper

1. We often think of self-indulgence as gross behavior. Read Matthew 23:25-26. These were people with high moral standards. How could Jesus call them self-indulgent? How does this alter your concept of self-indulgence and how we might fall into the trap?
2. Paul continues to do it humbly, in love. What are some alternate motivations that might move us instead of love?
3. BONUS: If Paul says in Galatians that we're not under the law (5:4), why does he bring up the fulfilling the law (5:14)?