

From Blessing to Abuse Galatians 5:13-21

“Liberty is not the power of doing as we like, it is the right to do as we ought” (Lord Acton). Unfortunately too many don’t live out the reality of that truth. Abusing the freedom that we have in Christ leads to a belief that freedom in Christ means freedom to do as we please without consequence. That brings devastating results.

From blessing to abuse (5:13-15)

The principle: Any principle, no matter how good, how noble, or how right can be **distorted in principle** and **perverted in practice**

Living by the flesh is more than just **bad actions**; it’s **bad thinking**

The key: Love your neighbor as yourself

613 old rules vs. one. Why it isn’t just another form of legalism. It’s not checking boxes, it’s checking hearts.

The fight is on (5:16-18)

Spirit-walking vs. flesh walking – it’s a battle

“Life by the Spirit is neither legalism nor license – nor a middle way between them. It is a life of faith and love that is above all of these false ways. Being led by the Spirit does not imply passivity but rather the need to allow oneself to be led.”

The high cost of losing the battle (5:19-21)

The five-year rule:

How flesh-living shows itself

Acts of passion (sexual immorality, impurity, reckless abandon)

Acts of God-replacement (idolatry and sorcery)

Acts of relational egotism (hatred, constant bickering, jealousy, rage, ambition, divisiveness, and envy)

Acts of excess (drunkenness and binging)

A severe warning: The cure for check-box Christianity is not to just replace it with another set of boxes! It’s changing why we do what we do.