

## **LESSON 10: GALATIANS 5:7-26**

### **Liberty Constrained by Love, and Life by the Spirit**

1. Why isn't Paul more tolerant of these teachers? When, if ever, does intolerance become appropriate in the church?
2. Of what two things is Paul confident in v. 10? How does Paul's thinking in v. 11 fit in with the flow of thought in this passage? What is the offense of the cross, how has it "been abolished," and why is Paul so vexed at the thought of it?
3. Paul's strong statement in v. 12 suggest that these false teachers should castrate themselves, as did some of the pagan priests in Galatia. Why do you think Paul is so angry? Is such language appropriate in God's Word?
4. "You, my brothers," Paul writes in v. 13, "were called to be free." What is the nature of the freedom which Paul calls the Galatian believers to exercise?
5. How does this Christian concept of freedom differ from the world's understanding of freedom?
6. What are some areas where Christians are tempted to indulge "the flesh" in exercising their freedom? What is the flesh? Think about Paul's use of "flesh" through the whole course of his letter to the Galatians. What does he mean by "the flesh"? What do you think would be Paul's opposing principle? How might this antithesis be misunderstood and misapplied? And how, conversely, ought they be applied?
7. What is the difference between liberty and license?

8. How is the Christian free to love others in a way that non-Christians cannot?
  
9. Contrast what Paul says about “the whole Law” in 5:3 with what he says in 5:14. Can we rightly say that “the law is abolished”? Or are we liable still to keep “the entire law”? In short, try to explain in your own words Paul’s important point in all this?
  
10. Give examples of people devouring and destroying one another, and suggest how these situations could be changed by love.
  
11. Read the following two questions first, then read vv. 1-18 again with both these questions in mind. First, according to Paul, what ways can spiritual freedom be lost?
  
12. Second, what deliberate choice must Christians make if they are not to be hindered in their spiritual freedom? Why?
  
13. Read vv. 19-21 in more than one translation. With what various aspects of life do these works of the flesh have to do?
  
14. Which are overt actions and which are sins of the mind? And is the list exhaustive?
  
15. What severe warning does Paul give in regard to the works of the flesh? Why should this be so? (*Extra credit question for all you Reformed theologians in the class: Doesn’t Paul’s*

teaching here seem to conflict with our entire doctrine of salvation? Is he preaching works theology here?!? Doesn't this conflict with everything he's just said in the first chapters of Galatians (see 2:15-16)? Explain this.)

16. Why, do you think, is the term "fruit of the Spirit" (v. 22) (rather than works of the Spirit) set in contrast to "works of the flesh" (v. 19)?
  
17. What has happened to the old life of the one who now belongs to Christ (v. 24)?
  
18. What is the challenge of the Christian life if vs. 24-26 are true of us?
  
19. Briefly summarize the contrast between what the flesh habitually practices and what the Spirit produces in a person's life.