



Sermon Growth Guide

October 23, 2022

Freedom – Freedom Fruit

Galatians 5:16-26

Key Verse: Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Big Idea: The fruit of the Spirit brings fullness of life.

Foundations

Paul has been repeatedly stressing the kind of freedom we have in Christ. He really wants us to know that when we are in Christ, we have been set free. We are free from any obligation we may feel that we must earn God’s favor.

In this passage, Paul gives us lists of virtues and vices. The list of vices is quite long and like all of Paul’s lists, is not exhaustive. So, we cannot read this list and conclude that we’re OK if our particular sin doesn’t make the list. But we can group these behaviors into four groups: (1) sexual impurity, (2) idolatry, (3) dissension, and (4) intemperance or excess. We commit these sins when we follow the desires of our flesh and not the Spirit of God.

When Paul speaks of the flesh, he is not talking about the *body*. He is speaking of our human nature that has been corrupted and lives on its own, at odds with God.

But when we live in step with the Holy Spirit, we are freed from those personally and relationally destructive behaviors. The result is a freedom to truly love one another and grow a community that bears witness to the fact that life can come out of death. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the tomb can free us to live a winsome, abundant life, pleasing to Him and caring for one another.

Understanding God’s Word

You might have noticed that Paul’s lists of behaviors and attitudes in Galatians 5:19-23 are, for the most part, related to our behavior toward one another. Clearly the Galatian slavery to works-righteousness was tearing the community apart. In what ways do you think the fruit of the Spirit would enable the healing of broken relationships? Then, being freed *from* that slavery, what would they be free *for*?

Applying God’s Word

You may remember singer/songwriter Bob Dylan’s lyrics: “You gotta serve somebody; it may be the devil, or it may be the Lord.” Paul is clear that the fruit of the Spirit will transform our life together. He is also clear that we cannot grow that fruit on our own... that requires reliance on the Holy Spirit.

Paul uses three verbs to describe our relationship to the Spirit: *walk, led, live*. How do you understand those actions in your life?

Witnessing God’s Word

“You may be the only Jesus people ever see.” How does loving one another by growing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives make Jesus visible to the world?