

## Living by the Law of Love Galatians 5:13-15

**Our Problem: Turning our freedom into an opportunity for our flesh.** Galatians 5:13  
*"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh..."*

2 Peter 2:18-21; Romans 13:14; 15:3; 1 John 2:15-16

- **Our presumed freedom:** I do what I want even if it is not right; selfishness.
  - **Flesh:** the desires of my body that tempt me to sin.
  - **Opportunity:** a starting point; was used to denote a base of operations in war.
- **Examples of turning freedom into opportunities of the flesh:**
  - Freedom to not be active in the local church because I am spiritual, but not religious
  - Freedom to sin because Jesus will forgive me
  - Freedom sexually because God made me this way
  - Freedom to sin because my circumstances are so difficult and desire so strong
  - Freedom to leave my marriage because God wants me to be happy
  - Freedom to live together before marriage to learn if we really are compatible
  - Freedom to not forgive someone who hurt me because they treated me unfairly
  - Freedom for revenge because that person was wrong and deserves it

**Our Calling: Through love, serve one another.** Galatians 5:13-14

*"...but through love serve one another. For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'"*

Luke 22:24-27; Philippians 2:1-5

- **Our biblical freedom:** I do what is right even if it is not what I want, selflessness.  
*(See Digging Deeper on the back)*

**Consequences of failure: Bite, devour and consume one another.** Galatians 5:15

*"But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another."*

# Digging Deeper + LifeGroup Discussion

Jesus announced the number one way to let people know that we are His followers in John 13:34-35:  
*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Proof of following Jesus is not based on religious practices or our own knowledge, rather, on how we love one another. Paul’s instructions in today’s passage were based on Jesus’ teaching to love God and love our neighbors. But what does that look like in action? Read 1 Corinthians 13 which describes the actions and attitudes of love. Use the following chart to assess your heart and deeds of love. Which column best describes you on each item? Evaluate on a sliding scale if you tend to be closer to one column or another? Pray for God’s grace to be fully aligned with His description of love.

If I love someone, I will.....	If I do not love someone, I will....
Be patient	Seek revenge and not forgive
Be kind	Do nothing, be selfish
Not be jealous	Hope the person loses out or gets hurt
Will not brag	Talk about myself rather than listen to another
Not be arrogant	Pursue my interests rather than another person’s
Not act unbecomingly	Be rude and gross
Not seek my own desires	Seek what I want regardless of what you want
Not be provoked	Respond in anger and feel justified
Not take into account wrongs from others	Keep track of wrong to seek revenge
Not rejoice in unrighteousness	Gossip and spread the “sins” of others
Rejoice with the truth	Spread rumors
Bear all things	Expose the sins of others and strike back
Believe all things	Expect the worst, lack faith
Hope all things	Will not seek reconciliation
Endure all things	Quit, gives up on someone

## Next Steps

- Spend some time journaling** about the ways you identify with the deeds of love, or the ways you struggle with loving others. Take a look at the chart above to help you assess your heart. Pray for God’s grace and the transforming of your heart to love others in the way that God describes love.
- Join us for VBS!** At Fun Factory VBS (Vacation Bible School), July 24 – 28 at 9:00 am – 12:30 pm, kids discover not only that God made them the way they are, but for a purpose too.
  - Register for VBS:** Calvary's VBS is open to kids entering grades 1 through 6 (in the fall of 2017). And best of all, it's all FREE! Register your kids - and invite other families to do so too - at [calvarylife.org/vbs](http://calvarylife.org/vbs)
  - Volunteer at VBS:** It's rare to be able to offer such a great VBS for free. One distinction with Calvary Church's VBS is that it has always been free and will always be, but that is only because of great people like you. Register to volunteer at [calvarylife.org/vbs](http://calvarylife.org/vbs)
  - Donate to VBS:** Can't be a VBS volunteer and still want to help? You can help by donating supplies. With a new, fun craft and snack every day of VBS, we'll need lots of help in this area. Visit the VBS Donation Station in the lobby to pick up a tag, then just purchase that item and bring it back to Calvary. Or we can always use gift cards to Smart & Final, Costco, and Target too. Learn more at [calvarylife.org/vbs](http://calvarylife.org/vbs)

