

Read Galatians 5:1-21

Take note of which words and phrases stand out to you.

Understanding the Text

1) **Read Galatians 5:13-21.** When Paul speaks of being “free from the law,” some of the Galatians might take him to mean that they are now free to determine their own standards of behavior. But for freedom to have any meaning, it has to be tied to a sense of purpose or a story about what God ultimately intends for human life. With that in mind:

- What are the limits of this freedom?
- What is God's purpose in our freedom in Christ (5:13-14)?

2) Paul's warning against biting and devouring each other comes in the midst of an intra-church quarrel regarding whether Gentiles must be circumcised to come to the faith.

- Why are quarrels and strife among believers so destructive?
- How do these kinds of quarrels reveal an abuse of the freedom Christ has come to establish?
- What are the kinds of things about which Christians split, quarrel, and fight about in our day?

Living the Text

3) What are some practical ways you can show love toward those you have conflict with?

4) In what situations do you find it hard to love others? In what way is serving one another an antidote to “biting and devouring”?

5) When disputes arise in your groups, how do you settle them? What examples does Paul provide?