



Leader

5/24 - Galatians 5:1, 13–16 | John 15:12–14

LOVE

A new commandment I give to you, that you love *one another*... (John 13:34)

- *Internal*: How was your week? Any new life updates? How was your walk with the Lord this week?
- *External*: Practically, is there any individual or family that needs encouragement from us as a group?

TRUTH

Let the word of God dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing *one another*... (Col. 3:16)

1. When you reflect on the message from Sunday, what most resonated with you?

[Dialogue]

2. Let's read our primary texts. In Galatians 5:1, Paul says Christ set us free "for freedom." What does he warn believers not to do with that freedom?

Paul warns against two dangers in these verses:

- Returning to a yoke of slavery (v. 1); going back to law-keeping as the basis of standing before God, likely referring to the Judaizers' insistence on circumcision and Torah observance.
- Using freedom as an opportunity for the flesh (v. 13); turning liberty into license for self-indulgence.

Freedom is real, but it has a purpose and a direction. It is not a blank check for self-rule.

3. According to Galatians 5:13–14, what is the positive use of Christian freedom? How does Paul summarize the entire law?

The positive use of freedom is mutual service through love: "serve one another through love" (v. 13). Paul then summarizes the entire law in a single Leviticus 19:18 quotation: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (v. 14). This is a stunning claim...Paul does not abolish the law but shows its deepest intent is fulfilled in Christ's love for others.

4. Paul says the whole law is "fulfilled" in love (Gal. 5:14). What does he mean? Is he saying the law no longer matters?

Paul uses the word "fulfilled" (Greek: *peplērotai*) to explain the law is not abolished or replaced, but completed and brought to its full expression. He is drawing on Jesus' own teaching (Matt. 22:37–40), where love of God and neighbor are called the two greatest commands on which all the law and prophets hang. Paul is not saying ethics don't matter. He is saying that genuine love, produced by the Spirit, accomplishes everything the law pointed toward. The law's goal is love; love is the law's fulfillment. The contrast is flesh-driven law-keeping, which produces pride, comparison, and division; not love.

5. Is there a relationship in your life (in your family, your small group, or your church) where "biting and devouring" has taken root? What would it look like to walk by the Spirit in that relationship instead?

Biting and devouring in everyday life looks like: chronic criticism, gossip, passive aggression, keeping score, holding grudges, or escalating conflict. Walking by the Spirit in those relationships looks like: choosing to serve rather than retaliate, praying for the person, seeking reconciliation, speaking truth in love rather than in anger.

6. In John 15:12, Jesus gives a command. What is it, and what standard does He attach to it?

The command is: "Love one another." The standard is: "as I have loved you," not as we feel naturally inclined, not as others love us, but as Jesus himself has loved. This raises the bar immeasurably. Jesus' love is the measure, model, and motivation for our love.

7. Paul warns against two misuses of freedom: returning to legalism and using freedom for the flesh. Which of these is a greater temptation for you personally? Why?

Legalism temptation: Those who feel secure through rule-keeping, performance, or comparison. They may drift toward using standards as identity or as a measuring stick against others.

License temptation: Those who hear "freedom" and minimize personal holiness, accountability, or discipline; treating grace as permission rather than power.

[The pastoral point: both misuses fail to grasp the gospel. True freedom is directed toward love and service; it is neither cage nor chaos.]

8. Jesus says the greatest love is laying down your life for your friends (John 15:13). Short of physical death, what does "laying down your life" look like in your relationships, your home, or your church?

Love in daily life might look like:

- Laying down your preferences in marriage or family decisions
- Giving your time and attention when it is costly to do so
- Persevering through relationship dissension rather than walking away
- Forgoing status, credit, or comfort for the good of someone else
- Being honest with someone at risk to the relationship

Connect back to the text: Jesus didn't just teach this, He embodied it on the cross. We love because He first loved us.

9. Any other thoughts you would like to share before we wrap up this text?

[Dialogue]

GREAT COMMISSION

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matt. 28:19-20)

- Did you disciple your family well this week? Is it apparent to others that Jesus the reason for your hope in your daily activity? Would anyone like to practice sharing the gospel with the group?

CONFESSION/PRAYER/REPENTANCE

But exhort *one another* every day, as long as it is called "today,"... (Heb. 3:12-14)

- Confession is agreeing with God about our sin according to the Scriptures. Is there anything you want to confess before the group (generally)? [*apathy, idolatry, selfishness, jealousy, anger, envy*]
- Let's pray, asking God to help us apply His word to our lives.

Sources:

- ESV Study Bible Commentary
- GotQuestions.org
- Multiple AI Resources