

First Things First: Galatians *Grace and the Spirit*

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture

"4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." – John 15:4-5 (ESV)

"13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another. 16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. – Galatians 5:13-26 (ESV)

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Start Talking: Find a conversation starter for your group. (15 Min)

- What's your favorite fruit?
- What are some things that distract you when you're praying?

Head: Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking. (10 Min)

- In Galatians Paul condemns legalism (5:1-12) and licentiousness (5:13-26) and teaches love which is life by the Spirit. According to the passage, how might we abuse our freedom in Christ and become enslaved to unabashed, habitual sin? Why is this not acceptable?
- Sin always leads us to put ourselves first (5:19-21). Love always leads us to put others first (5:22-23). Notice how the fruits of the Spirit all impact our relationships.
- How do we go about bearing the Fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22-23? What does John 15:4-5 say about that?

Heart: Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness. (10 Min)

- How do you think that our freedom in Christ is sometimes used as an excuse to sin unabashedly? What are the excuses that we offer?
- Is it even possible to love our neighbor the way God wants us to love them? If so, what would that look like in your own life?
- The "Gifts of the Spirit" in 1 Corinthians 12 may be given differently to each person uniquely, and it is understood that we are called to use the gifts we have been given. Is it the same with the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23? The gifts of the Spirit are for ministry. The fruits of the Spirit are for maturity.

Hands: Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week. (10 Min)

- Identify: what's one work of the flesh and one fruit of the Spirit that God might be calling you to trade? Share this with your trios group, or ask a friend to pray for you as you work on this!

Start Praying. Be bold and pray with power. (15 Min)

- For suggestions on structuring prayer time, see the *Group Prayer Ideas* page in this packet.

Trios: Split into same-gender groups of three. (15 Min)

1. What's a passage of scripture that has impacted you this week? Read it to the group and explain why.
2. Is there anything God is leading you to repent of?
3. How's your weekly 3-2-1 challenge going? (*3 Conversations with New People, Learn 2 Names, Make 1 Meaningful Connection*)
4. Who is one non-believer that you need to reach out to this week?
5. What's something you'd like someone else to check in with you about this week?
6. Pray for one another.