

Message Notes:

Byron begins his message with a review

- The first theological or doctrinal dilemma for the early church was clarifying what was necessary for Gentiles to be saved. Should they become Jews first (with circumcision) or may they go straight to Jesus?
- Acts 15 decision with the Jerusalem Council was “straight to Jesus.”
- Paul agrees with this decision in Galatians (see Gal. 1:6; 2:16; 2:21).
- Three major words in Galatians — grace, faith, and freedom.

Yet, Paul offers this caution about “freedom.”

- **Galatians 5:1** — “So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.”
- **Galatians 5:13** — You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.
- There are good ways to express our freedoms and there are bad ways to express our freedoms.

Galatians 5:16-26 (plus 6:7-8) discusses the positives and negatives surrounding our expressions of freedom.

- Verse 16 — “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”
- Verses 16-26 — we are in a spiritual battle for our souls. Flesh versus Spirit.
- Byron compares this battle to the presence of “two dogs” in every human heart. The strongest is the one you feed the **most** or **best**.
- The above notion fits with Paul’s teaching in Gal. 6:7-8 — “You reap what you sow.”

Those who “sow” or “seek to gratify the desires of the flesh” will have one outcome:

- (5:19-21) 19 The works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Those who “sow” or seek to walk in the Spirit” will have another outcome:

- (5:22-23) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Quote by CS Lewis:

- “Good things as well as bad, you know, are caught by a kind of infection, if you want to get warm you must stand near the fire: if you want to be wet you must get into the water. If you want joy, power, peace, eternal life, you must get close to, or even into, “the Thing” that has them. They are not a sort of prize which God could, if He chose, just hand out to anyone. They are a great fountain of energy and beauty spurting up at the very center of reality. If you are close to it, the spray will wet you: if you are not, you will remain dry.”

Discussion Questions:

As something of a review, Byron discusses the Judaizer position in the early church — that Gentiles needed to become Jews first (including circumcision) before they could become Christians.

- Do modern Christians ever do the same thing? Do we have a set of “spiritual tests” or “outward conditions” that we look for in a new convert to determine if someone has truly accepted Jesus?

Byron stated that three important words from Galatians are (1) grace, (2) faith and (3) freedom.

- How are these important?
- Why are these important?

Byron stated — Paul offers these cautions about “freedom.” How do you interpret the following?

- **Galatians 5:1** — “So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don’t get tied up again in slavery to the law.”
- **Galatians 5:13** — You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.
- There are good ways to express our freedoms and there are bad ways to express our freedoms. Give examples.
- How does Galatians 5:16-26 relate to the subject of freedom? (Also, Galatians 6:7-8)

What do you think about Byron’s analogy of the two dogs — every person has inside of them two dogs (Flesh and Spirit). The strongest dog will always be the one you “feed” the most.

- Spend some time talking about how one feeds his/her “flesh,” or “spirit.” (Both)

Spend some time talking about Paul’s lists of “fruit of the flesh” (5:19-21) and “fruit of the Spirit” (5:22-23).

- What is the bad or the good found within the lists?

Break down the important lessons found in Galatians 6:7-8.

- 7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. People reap what they sow. 8 Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.
- What important role do consequences play in life?
- What would you think if we received one-to-one consequences for every sin in our lives? What if every sin was immediately and appropriately met with justice? Compare that kind of world with Galatians 6:7-8.

In his message, Byron tells a story and uses the following as a punch line — the young husband wanted: “To create an environment that his wife would want to live in.” What would it look like for you, if you sought to “make your heart and soul an environment that the Holy Spirit would want to live in?”