

One Another

Week 3 - Serve One Another

Serving people can get complicated when it costs us something. We believe deeply that Christians are called to love and serve. Yet, at the same time, we can quietly build lives where our own comfort takes up most of the space.

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. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." **Galatians 5:13-15 NIV**

1) Freedom Is an _____ to Serve.

"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free."

We are saved by Jesus, forgiven by Jesus, welcomed by Jesus, and set free by Jesus. We are no longer slaves to sin. We are no longer trying to earn God's love through legalism.

God loves me more than you because YOU _____.

God loves me more than you because I _____.

We are no longer held hostage by guilt, shame, or the fear that we haven't done enough to be accepted by God.

"But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love." In other words, freedom in Christ is never meant to collapse into self-absorption.

Christian freedom is not permission to let every desire, preference, impulse, and appetite take the lead. It's the power to live a new kind of life. The new life looks like serving one another humbly in love.

Then he adds the word "humbly." That matters because we can

serve in a way that still keeps us at the center.

How can I love this person in a way that honors Christ?

It is meant to invite all of us to examine whether our lives have space for loving one another to become practical.

If our version of freedom always protects our preferences, we may be missing the freedom Jesus actually gives.

2) Love Turns Service into _____.

"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" V.14

Paul is not saying that love is a vague replacement for obedience. He's saying that when the Spirit of God forms genuine love in us, we begin to live out what God desired all along. God's heart has always been that His people would reflect His character. His character is full of mercy, patience, kindness, justice, compassion, and faithfulness.

When Paul says, *"Serve one another humbly in love,"* he is showing us what love does. Love learns to ask, "What does love require here?"

It is that question can reshape ordinary moments.

That's important because many of us have been shaped by a consumer culture more deeply than we realize.

The New Testament never describes the church as an audience gathered around a product. The church is a body. It's a family.

It's a Spirit-formed people where each person has something to receive and something to give.

There are seasons where wisdom says we need rest. There are times when receiving care is the faithful thing because we're wounded, grieving, recovering, or stretched thin.

The body of Christ should be a place where people can be carried when they can't carry much. At the same time, many of us are more ready than we think.

When service is rooted in love, even small acts become worship. A cup of water given in Jesus' name matters. A quiet act of faithfulness matters. A hidden sacrifice matters.

The kingdom of God is often built through ordinary people doing ordinary things with extraordinary love.

3) Self-Focus _____ Community

"If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

That is strong language. He moves from the beauty of humble service to the ugliness of a community turning on itself.

"Bite and devour" paints a picture of people injuring each other with words, attitudes, suspicion, criticism, selfishness, and conflict. When love no longer leads, people begin consuming each other. Often, it begins with small things that go unsubmitted to Jesus. A critical comment here. A little resentment there.

A decision to withdraw instead of have an honest conversation.

A habit of assuming the worst about someone's motives.
A growing frustration that nobody is meeting our needs exactly the way we expected. A community cannot be healthy when everyone is guarding their own territory.

The goal is not merely to get tasks done around the church. The goal is to become more like Jesus. Jesus said in Mark 10:45 NIV, *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

It was the shape of His life. If we are following Him, then service must become the shape of our lives as well.

Where is God asking me to serve?

Here's the challenge.

Don't leave this message as a general agreement. Ask God for one specific step.

Who needs your attention this week?

Where can you serve in your home?

What need have you been noticing in the church?

What gift has God placed in your hands that someone else needs?

What would it look like to stop waiting for perfect timing and simply take the next faithful step?

If you're tired, wounded, or in a season where you need to be carried, let the body of Christ serve you with grace.

A church that serves one another humbly in love becomes a living picture of the Savior who came to serve us.