

Walk By The Spirit

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[0 : 00] Newton's third law of motion. Newton's third law of motion says something like this. For reaction, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

I thought that was so good in where we're going today. For reaction, there is an equal and opposite reaction. While this law is true in the area of physics, it may not always be true in all the situations of life.

But it seems to have sort of been true in a spiritual way in the situation in Galatia. Paul had preached the gospel in Galatia.

And God had begun to build his church. And they began well. Paul commended them for their beginning. They were trusting in the work of Christ alone for salvation.

And they were growing. And then came along the Judaizers. Those Judaizers who were in the process of trying to convince them of their need to add law keeping to their salvation.

[1 : 11] Many were growing increasingly convinced. And were adding the observance. What appears to be adding the observance of Jewish days, months, seasons, and years into their practice.

They were growing closer to adding the need of circumcision to the requirement for salvation. The Judaizers kept promoting it.

And they kept listening. And stepping inches closer and inches closer to where they were willing to say, Yes, we think circumcision is needed for salvation.

Well, it wasn't good for them. They felt, if they continued that path, they would have felt obligated to keep the whole law.

Or would have been obligated to keep the whole law. And any attempt at keeping the law, of course, would fail. And as Paul said in our reading last time, they would be severed from Christ.

[2 : 16] They would fall from grace. Meanwhile, just like Newton's law, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

There was that opposite reaction of overreaction to what was brewing in Galatia. There was not only the reaction of people saying, Oh, yes, let's keep the feasts.

Let's keep the seasons. Let's keep the days, the weeks, and the years. There was also the opposite reaction that said, We don't have to keep anything.

Now, in saying this, I'm not speaking of just the law. In the sense of the civil and ceremonial. They were getting to the point where they were saying, We don't have to worry about rules at all.

And so, both the Judaizers were causing havoc. And these people who were super involved in liberty.

[3 : 21] And I haven't explained much of that. And I will explain that as we go on. But both of these groups were now causing havoc in Galatia. And interestingly, which always happens in this kind of situation, They were playing off from one another.

And they were devouring one another. And they were ending up devouring the church. And so that's where we're going to be today. Galatians chapter 5.

I'm going to start in verse 7. But our text is verses 13 to 15. Galatians 5, 7. You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view.

And the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, Why am I still being persecuted?

[4 : 27] In that case, the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettled you would emasculate themselves.

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.

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, Watch out that you're not consumed by one another.

Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for this. I thank you for your word. And Lord, I wished it wasn't true, But what we're looking at today Is something that all of us face Like a pendulum, Going from one to the other.

Keeping laws. Living in extreme liberty. And Lord, I pray that you would be with us. Help us to see Christ in this. Help us to see us trusting Christ in this.

[5 : 38] Help us to see our right relation to Christ in this. And I pray that you would help us to rest in that. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, the first section here, I'm going to divide verse 13 up into three things.

I'm not going to make a big deal of dividing it up. But I'm going to divide it up into three thoughts.

And I think will help us convey the idea Of what's going on in this passage. In this passage.

And as we begin the first section, He says, You were called to freedom. And I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this Because this is the bulk of what we've been talking about For two chapters now.

The first area of Paul exhorts them or reprimands them. And then he defends his apostleship And speaks about how he had gotten the gospel from God himself.

And then we get down into chapter 3. And Paul begins to speak of this issue Of trying to add law to the gospel. And so we've gone through that.

[6 : 38] And he's made his argument Showing that we cannot keep the law. We can't even add the law to the gospel To make our salvation complete. We have to trust in Christ alone.

And so he's made this case And said, You were called to freedom. And that's how he starts out chapter 5. And he warns them In relation to what they Would find themselves in If they didn't live in that freedom.

And so he's dealt with that. And he goes down into verse 7. As I mentioned In both the introduction Into my prayer Or in the reading They were running well But they were hindered.

And so they had been called to freedom. As we look at verse 13 Verse 13 is kind of the continuation Of verse I've lost it here.

Anyway It's a continuation of verse 8 or 9. Anyway I'm going to get mixed up If I'm trying to find it.

[7 : 39] He says You were called to freedom. He's saying You were called to freedom. You were going astray. And You were running well. And now you're not.

You need to be careful. And we've dealt with this idea Of we're free from obeying laws To earn our standing with God. Our salvation Is provided by Christ. The law required perfect obedience.

And they of course Could not do that. So we're free From having to keep the law To be saved. And we're free To live life With our acceptance Provided by Christ.

We're free to live Without regard To what we Have to do To be accepted with Christ. We're free Because of what Christ Has done.

But in The second part of verse Verse 13 We begin to see Freedom Misused Freedom Misused He says Only Do not use Your freedom As an opportunity For the flesh As I mentioned There was a pendulum Swing Most of the Galatians Were being Wrongly influenced By the Judaizers To not stand In the freedom That Christ Has provided for them But there was Now becoming This pendulum Swing Where another Group Was coming up In Galatia This group Of people Who took Their freedom Too far They were the Kind of people Who said If I am free In Christ Then I can do Whatever I desire Now They really Went far And we're Going to see Not this week But as we go Into further Verses How far They went They went Very far

[9 : 32] They went Way beyond Anything that Would be Socially Acceptable Even in Today's mind At least They thought They could Go there And so They said I am free I don't Have to Keep God's Laws I don't Have to Even Keep The moral Law They said I'm in Christ I'm free In Christ I can do Whatever I Want Down below In Galatians 5 19 to 21 It says Now the Works Of the Flesh Are evident Sexual Immorality Impurity Sensuality Idolatry Sorcery Amnity Strife Jealousy Fits of Anger Rivalries Dissensions Divisions Envy Drunkenness

Orgies And things Like these There's a Sobering List They had Begun to Be people Who had Swung So far Now I'm Guessing In Reaction To the Judaizers Had swung So far In reaction To them That they Said I Can do Whatever I Want If all My sin Is paid For If all My sin Is paid For Past

Present And future And God Sees me No matter What I Do As perfect In the Righteousness Of Christ Before him No matter No matter What I Do I'm Still Okay Before God Right You say Well how Could Anyone Ever Live in This Way I Hope As

We're Done Now Many Of us Probably Wouldn't Be Listed In Any Or Many Of These Activities Outwardly But if You start Thinking In Relation To How Christ Related The Law To People On The Sermon On The Mount Some Of These Things Are Things That Could Be In Our Lives How Could How Could We Allow That How Could We Think That That Would Be All Right I Think Part Of It Is This Idea That Sometimes We Swing Too Far And Start Thinking Christ Paid For My Sins All My Sins Are Taken Care Of I Don't Have To Worry About My Standing Before Christ When I Stand Before The Judgment Seat All My Sins

Will Be Not Charged To My Account They Were Charged To Christ And We Can Start Rationalizing Things In Our Life Now We May Not Be People Who Think Through This Every Time We're Tempted To Sin But Sometimes We Might We Don't Often Rationalize In The Mids Temptation Saying If I Go Ahead And Do This God Will Forgive Me Or Don't We You Have Been Sitting In Front Of The Television And A Show Comes On And You're Wrestling With It And You Think This Will Be All Right It Gets Worse And Worse And You're Convicted That You Ought To Turn It Off That I'll Be For I'll Be Just Confess

And It Will Be All Right He Has To Forgive Me Jesus Has Already Died For My Sin Now We May Or May Not Run That Thinking Through Our Mind When We Face Temptation But So Often Whether We Run That Thinking Through Our Mind Or Not We Approach Sin And Temptation With Way Too Simple A Thinking Way Too Light Of A Thinking Temptation Comes And We Never Give A Thought To What Our Savior Went Through To Provide That And I'm Not I Acknowledge That We're Sinners And We're Going To Struggle With Sin The Rest Of Our Lives But Paul's Trying To Get These People To Realize That Just As Trying

[14:36] To Work Your Way To Heaven Won't Do It To Say That I Can Live However I Want With No Consequences Without Without It Being Just All Right Is Just As Evil We Justify Giving Into Our Desires Based On The Grace Of God And This Is Just What Paul's Getting At In Romans Chapter 5 Verses 20 Through Chapter 6 Verse 1 Now He's Explaining It In Relation To The Wonderfulness Of The Gospel The Gospel Is So Great That No Matter How I Sin I'm For For For It's Already Paid For Now We Still Confess Our Sins And We Turn From Them But In The Justice Sort Of Way No Matter What I Do If I'm

A Person Who's Trusting Christ No Matter What You Do If You're A Person Who's Trusting Christ That Sin Has Been Provided The Penalty Has Been Provided By Christ And So Sometimes We Let That Thinking Go Too Far And Say Well That That Means I Can Do Whatever And I Don't Have To Worry About 5 Verses 20 Through Chapter 6 Verse 1 Now The Law Came In To Increase The Trespass But Where Sin Increased Grace Abounded All The More So Paul Saying Paul Comes The Law Comes In And I See The Law And I React Against It And I Go Ahead And Commit The Things That The Law Tells Me I Can't Commit I React And I Just Go Into It And Paul Saying But There's Grace God Still Provides So

That As Sin Reigned In Death Grace Might Also Reign Through Righteousness Leading To Eternal Life Through Jesus Christ Our Lord And So Paul Goes Into The Next And I'll Read It In Just A Second But Paul Goes Into The Next Verse And He Anticipates The Answer The Anticipated Anticipates The Question He Anticipates People Will Say Well If God Shows Grace Upon Grace When I Sin And And If The Law Stirs Me And I Rebel Against It And I Continue Sin And God Just Provides Grace For That Doesn't That Mean That I Can Just Keep On Sinning And Sinning And Sinning And It Won't Matter Does It Mean That That I Can Sin And Just Not Worry About It Well In A Sense No

Matter How Much We Sin It Is Taken Care Of And When I Say In A Sense I Am Not Saying That It Isn't Taken Care Of But When When We Sin Like That We Have To Realize That God's Grace Is Complete But Going On To Verse 6 He Says What Shall We Say Are To We Continue In Sin That Grace May Abound And The Answer Is May It Never Be Grace Will Continue To Abound But The Christians Responsibility Is To Not Say I'm Going To Sin As Much As I Can Or As Much As I Want Because Grace Covers It He's Saying No It's Not The Right Attitude And I Point To That In Paul's Writing In Romans To Show That Men Tend Towards That But Paul Is Saying Here In Galatians And He's Saying The Same Thing In Romans We're Not To Use Our Freedom As An Opportunity In The Flesh

For The Flesh Paul's Statement Here In Galatians 5 13 Is Basically The Same Kind Of Response He Gives In Romans 6 2 May It Never Be In The Middle Of Romans Or Galatians 6 13 He Says Only Do Not Use Your Freedom As An Opportunity Of The Flesh He's Saying The Same Kind Of Thing We Just Can't Say Well Since Everything Is Forgiven I Can Just Live However I Want While It Is True That Our Sin Is Totally Paid For That Freedom Is Never Meant For Us To Say That We Can Live However We Want And That's An Important Distinction Our Sin Is Paid For And No Matter How Far We Fall In Sin As A Christian I Say That Reservedly But No Matter Our Sin It's Paid For But It's Never To Be The Kind Of Thing Where We Say Well Since

[19 : 39] It's Paid For I Can Just Live Like I Want I Can Go Do Anything I Want And That's What These Galatian People Half Of Them Were Now Trying To Do Oh You Law Keepers Don't You Know We Have Grace In Christ Let's Live Like We Want It's Okay Don't Worry About The Flesh The Body Is Evil Let's Just Let It Have Its Desires And That's He's Saying No That's That's Not How It Should Be It's Not How A Christian Should Live May It Never Be And Our Sin Is Totally Paid For But That Freedom That We Have That Freedom That Paul Has Been Arguing For He's Been Arguing In In Relation To The Judaizers And They're Side We Have Freedom Freedom It's Not A Freedom To Live In All Kinds Of Sin It's A Freedom To Live Unto God Just As Romans 6 Our Freedom Is Given So That We Can Serve God

And One Another So That's Exactly What He's Getting At Here In Galatians So He's Reprimanding Two Groups Of People In Galatia Those Who Would Try To Earn Their Salvation Along With Whatever I Want And So He Gives Instruction That Parallels The Instruction In Romans Chapter 6 And That Is The End Of Verse 13 He Says Use Your Freedom Through Love To Serve One Another You've Been Made Free From The Law Because Christ Paid For All The Consequences Of You Disobeying The Law But Use That Freedom Through Love To Serve One Another We'll See In A Few Minutes That They Were Using Their Freedom And Exercising

Their Freedom In Such A Way That They Were Using And Abusing One Another We Won't Get To These Verses Today I've Read Them Already But They Were Using Some Of Them Were Using Their Freedom And Enjoying Their Freedom And It Was Doing Anything But Loving One Another They Saw Something They Wanted They Took It Didn't Matter If That Hurt Their Brother They Were Using Their Liberty As A License They Were Saying That Since All Their Sin Was Paid For By Christ It Doesn't Matter What I Do In My Body Using Our Freedom In Christ As License To Sin Is Actually A Huge Temptation For Christians And As I Mentioned It's A Theme Here In Galatians And Romans 6 But Peter Also Addresses The Same Thing In 1 Peter 2 16

Live As People Who Are Free Not Using Your Freedom As A Cover Up For Evil But Living As Servants Of God And So He's Telling Us That We've Been Given This Freedom But It's For Specific Purpose But One Of Us Is Not Struggled With Temptation And Given In Saying Lord Forgive Me Or The Lord Will Forgive Me Our Freedom In Christ Is Not A License To Sin Such An Attitude Needs To Be Confessed If We Go On In Life And Say I Can Sin Because The Lord Will Forgive Me We Need To Not Only Confess The Sin But Confess That Attitude Find Don't So

Act Will loving one another is not something that goes down on the list as something we can do for extra credit it's not something we do well if I want to be in God's graces I'm going to love some of the people in the church loving one another is the responsibility of the Christian serving one another through love is the moral responsibility of man we're to use our freedom to serve one another through love and a great picture of this is from John chapter 14 and our Lord Jesus

[24 : 41] John 14 3 through 5 and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and take you to myself that where I am you may be also and this is where the illustration begins I actually it should have been turn to John 14 I have the wrong verses John 14 well let me just read verses I must have written down the toll let me just tell you the story there the disciples are gathered together and as they are gathered together

Christ is only hours from the cross and as he is looking towards the cross and spends time with them he says he's talking to them about their relationship and he takes his outer garment off puts a towel around himself and goes around and washes the disciples feet of course Peter objects but the Lord instructs him concerns that when he gets done he puts the towel aside and he puts his robe back on and as he looks around he says now what I've done I want you to do he says I'm your master you call me master and that's right but just as I've laid aside my robes and I've taken up the lowest servant's task and come and served you so you should do to one another and so he gave that example

Matthew 20 28 even as the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many we're to be like that Christ served and loved others even at great cost to himself we're to serve and love one another for good we're to serve and serve one another out of love what he's getting at here is this idea of fulfilling the law and that's what's talked about in verse 14 why should we serve one another it's because it fulfills the law we're not earning our salvation by loving one another we're obeying the instructions of the law when we serve one another Romans 13 8 through 10 owe no one anything except to teach each other or to love each other for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law for the commandments you shall not commit adultery you shall not murder you shall not steal you shall not covet and any other commandment are summed up in this word you shall love your neighbor as yourself love does no wrong to a neighbor therefore love is the fulfilling of the law so what Paul's saying here is these people some of them were trying to earn their salvation by keeping the law but they were free they didn't have to do that others had taken this pendulum swing and now we're we're saying

I'm totally free from the law and Paul's saying neither of these are right if you're going to really fulfill the law you're going to love people as Christ loved us obeying the commandments is love to one another if I love you I will not hate you or kill you if I love you I will not commit adultery with you or lust after you in my heart so to do as the law commands is true love to one another it's the fulfillment loving God with all your heart soul mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself is keeping the whole law it's not earning your salvation but it is carrying out the law as God has intended and if we don't serve one another through love the other option is horrible if we add law to our salvation then we're the kind of people who judge others rather than love others have you noticed that people who say oh if you are if you read your Bible enough that's that's what a real

Christian does they read their Bible and they establish the standard and they say oh this is the standard of a person who's really a Christian those kinds of people start looking around and they say do you read your Bible or do you read your Bible this much and when they set those standards then they become people who look down on others who don't accomplish those standards and there sometimes is words little snips and bites and mean things are said and then there's the opposite side of the coin those who say we don't have to worry about anything and they start looking down at people who keep this or do that and they start saying things and they start acting in ways and so as Paul is talking about here these people begin to bite they're like animals going after one another you don't keep this law or my standard then you're not this or you're that you keep that standard or you say that this has to be you're not free and so words begin and people begin to bite and devour and will destroy one another and just like

[31 : 20] Paul was concerned for the Galatians we should be concerned if we become such people because churches are destroyed by such things where people either have their standards and judge the people around or people throw off all standards and judge the people around those kinds of things are where people bite and devour each other and churches destroy themselves and so as we close Christian are you described in these verses do you want to serve one another through love or do you measure and judge others by the standard of your righteousness or do you measure and judge others by how free they are in relation to you and I would venture that all of us do this

I know I have I know I do I set up standards and say this is what a good Christian is God has worked in me a lot you know my past I've talked about my past before it was full of setting up standards and saying this is what a good Christian is and I've had to turn away from that I've had to repent of that and there are many who've been the opposite it's not been my tendency so much although yet in individual situations I have been a person who has been willing to say I'm in the midst of this temptation and it is strong I'll give in because I know God will forgive me I've been both sides I struggle with both sides

I venture to say you do too what do you do is it hopeless it's not hopeless all of us as Christians have fallen on the horse off the horse have fallen off the horse on both sides of this era what do we do we do exactly what Paul has told us to do we rest in Christ's work we confess our sin Lord I've measured somebody by my own standard forgive me help me to turn from that or Lord not only have I committed this sin I presumed on your grace and I've said I could go ahead and give in to temptation because I knew you would forgive me and my only hope as it is in everything is the fact that Christ has lived a perfect life died in my stead and I'm accepted before the father because he made it right let's be careful to be people who don't use our freedom to be law keepers and don't use our freedom to be just living however we want but let's be people who run to Christ let's pray

father thank you for your word and father

I pray that your word has come through in the midst of today I pray that we would be people who see where we are wrongly being law keepers judging others trying to earn points for with you Lord show us where we're people who throw off all restraints say I can live like I want and pray that you would help us to be people who turn from both of these and be people who live in the true freedom of Christ having paid for our sins and made us acceptable before you and pray that you would be with us help us to remember these truths regularly in Jesus name amen amen amen Thank you.