

LESSON 5

WHAT FREEDOM BRINGS

GALATIANS 5:1–26



1 If a call-in radio program asked listeners to explain what *virtue* means, how would callers answer?



Read Galatians 5:1–26, the two charts “Vices and Virtues” and “Our Wrong Desires versus the Fruit of the Spirit,” and the following notes:

- ☐ 5:6 ☐ 5:13 ☐ 5:16–18 ☐ 5:17 ☐ 5:19–21 ☐ 5:22, 23 ☐ 5:23 ☐ 5:24
☐ 5:25

2 What does it mean to fall away from God’s grace (5:4)? What keeps us from living by grace?

3 How does faith express itself through love (5:6)? What makes this a struggle for most believers?

4 How do the vices that Paul mentions (5:19–21) undermine relationships with both God and people? Which vices do you consider to be the most dangerous for your church?

5 Which is more important: eliminating vice or cultivating virtue? Why?



Living the Christian life is a two-sided battle. On the one hand, we fight to remove vices from our life and avoid temptation. But a complete victory on this side alone is not enough. We also need to fill our life with virtues or expressions of our spiritual gifts. But we may not know how to cultivate these virtues, and we may even wonder what they are. Paul gives us a clear picture with the list commonly called the fruit of the Spirit. To have this fruit, we must reject our sinful desires and ask the Spirit to mold us into the kind of people Jesus has freed us to be. Then others will begin to see in us the delightful fruit of our Christ-bought freedom.

6 What does it mean to crucify the sinful nature? If our sinful nature has been crucified, why are we still tempted to sin?

7 What does your church teach new Christians about how to grow in the fruit of the Spirit? Why is there often confusion about this important area of Christian growth?



8 Why does it seem so much easier for vice to manifest itself in our lives rather than virtue?

9 In what way is the fruit of the Spirit the result of God's grace? In what way is it the result of our obedience?

10 Which of the virtues listed is the most developed in your life? Where have you seen the most progress over the last year? Rate your progress on each:

	<i>No progress</i>	<i>Some progress</i>	<i>Great progress</i>
Love			
Joy			
Peace			
Patience			
Kindness			
Goodness			
Faithfulness			
Gentleness			
Self-control			



11 Which fruit of the Spirit has God been helping you develop recently in your life? Which is the least developed in your life or in most need of attention?

12 Which fruit of the Spirit do you most want to develop further? Where in your life is this most needed: home, school, work, church, or in the community?

13 Ask God to make you more and more like Christ in this area. What specific steps can you take to bring your behavior in line with the Holy Spirit's leading?

A What does it mean to use Christian freedom responsibly? How will this appear to others? Give an example of one way that you are limiting your freedom for the sake of others.

B How did the insistence on circumcision devalue what Christ had done on the cross? What works do some Christians insist on performing today?

C In what ways are modern-day believers still being persecuted for the sake of righteousness? How are you persecuted? How does God want you to respond to persecution?

D In this chapter, Paul is speaking strongly and directly. He does not pull any punches, yet his words are instructive for the Galatians. What is the difference between constructive confrontation and destructive criticism?

E How can you know when you are living "by the Holy Spirit" (5:25)? What can you do to get back in step with him?

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