July 3, 2016

Galatians 5:13-16
"Freedom"

Opening Illustration: Quotes about Freedom

"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same."
--Ronald Reagan

"If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter."
--George Washington

"Liberty has never come from the government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of it. The history of liberty is a history of resistance."
--Woodrow Wilson

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."
--Nelson Mandela

"I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."
--Voltaire

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."
--Thomas Jefferson

"They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."
--Benjamin Franklin

"Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide."
--Napoleon Bonaparte

"Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed."
--Martin Luther King Jr.

"I'd like to be remembered as a person who wanted to be free and wanted other people to be also free."
--Rosa Parks

We find freedom in the knowledge that Christ died for us and has set us free from sin. And then we find particularly that we can use our freedom to benefit others.
1) Use our freedom to benefit others (v. 13)

13:

- "Called to Freedom"
    - More than freedom as an American or living in America there is a calling to freedom in Christ. That means that those who are in Christ should understand freedom better than any other people group.
- Not for sin
    - I am free to do anything but don't take advantage of that:
        - 1 Corinthians 10:23-30- "All things are lawful"
            - I must consider others before doing anything and also the fact that freedom does not mean "free to sin"
- But to serve others. When you are not serving others it may be a sign of sin in your heart
    - If there is lack of serving others in your life or even a desire to do so it may be that is a byproduct of sin your life.
    - **Illustration: Remember the Story of Chuck Colson: http://chuckcolson.org/the-life-of-chuck-colson/**

Chuck Colson served. How do we serve?
2) God's standards inform the ways we serve one another (v.14)

- The text is not saying the law is invalid but rather fulfilled.
- Serving one another means holding others accountable to the moral code of God's law.

14:

- "Love your neighbor"
    - "Obedience is not a means of justification, but it is a crucial component of the Christian life."
        - John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
    - This is here because there were those trying to say that the law needed followed for the purpose of salvation. The church at Galatia had been invaded by Jews trying to say circumcision must be performed to "complete" salvation.
        - **Illustration: "Anything plus Jesus Christ is not the Gospel"**

The people of God will want to serve their neighbors to show that the law has been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. The opposite of serving one another in this instance, however, is the tearing down of others.

3) Tearing one another down leads to our own demise (v. 15)

15:

- Lack of love through service towards your neighbors leads to biting and devouring one another and being consumed by division. Division then leads to the kind of people that are more concerned with works of the law and less concerned with the kind of love that is transformative in the body of Christ.
- Notice the language: Bite or devour
    - **Illustration: The "man handler" in Estes Park. The best burger I have ever had topped with a good portion of pulled pork. I consumed it that evening.**
- "Consume"- All the major translations- "To use up, spend up, or destroy"
    - Lack of love and freedom shows itself in devouring one another
- **Hear me church**
    - We will either serve one another in love or devour one another but we can't do both. Not saying we won't have our differences and not saying we don't hold each other to certain standards but if all we can see is what someone has done wrong or what they aren't doing then we run the risk of being no better than the ones invading the church in Galatia saying you have to do this to be saved.