

Freedom: Blight or Blessing?

Galatians 5:13-15

Introduction

1. **Freedom** is a word that will be on many Americans' lips this Independence Day week.
2. The possession of freedom can be a dangerous thing—it can be a **BLIGHT** or a **BLESSING**.
 - In the Past—many **died** for our freedom
 - In the Present—we have to learn to **live** with freedom
3. Paul addresses this danger in Galatians 5:13-15, challenging us to avoid two possible pitfalls:
 - **Legalism**—we are saved by what we do (works).
 - **Libertinism**—it makes no difference what we do (we are free to “live as we please”).

I. **The CALLING to Freedom**—Galatians 5:13a

“You, my brothers, were called to be free.”

A. Who Calls? “God”

B. Who Is Called? “You”

1. As Christians
2. As Citizens

C. Why Are We Called? “For Freedom”

(Most non-Christians cannot comprehend this.)

II. **The ABUSING of Freedom**—Galatians 5:13b, 15

“But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature.”

A. Indulging Ourselves—Galatians 5:13b

B. Controlling Ourselves—“but”

- Parental control
- Peer control
- Principle control

C. Damaging Others—Galatians 5:15

“If you keep on biting and devouring each other”

III. **The USING of Freedom**—Galatians 5:13c-14

“. . . serve one another in love”; “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

A. What Are We to Do? “Serve”

B. How We Are to Do It—“In Love”

Conclusion:

- The Law of Reversed Effort—the way not to do the wrong thing is to do the right thing.
- A Guiding Principle—“Freedom is not the power to do what we **want** but the ability to do what we **ought**.”