

## LOVE FULFILLS THE LAW

**INTRODUCTION:** Paul once again questions the source of their hindrance to obeying the truth of the gospel. He's certain to point out, however, that they are not to utilize their liberty to indulge in fleshly desires. He encourages them to focus instead on the fulfillment of the law, which is to demonstrate love for one another, while avoiding fruitless disputes.

*Galatians 5:7-15*

### **I. THE HINDRANCE TO THE RACE vv.7-12**

A. Paul acknowledges they were "running well" and asks who distracted them from the truth. v.7

1. Initially, the Galatians were doing really well in their walk with Jesus. *Acts 14:21-23*

2. He's asking them to consider those amongst their ranks who could be hindering them. *John 14:6, John 1:17*

3. He's implying that they have in fact departed from the truth.

B. He warns how small compromises in doctrine can eventually corrupt the entire community. v.8

1. Emphasis is placed on the fact that disobedience to the truth does not come from Jesus. *Hebrews 10:10 NLT*

2. It just takes a small amount of deception to corrupt the entire congregation. v.9, *1 Corinthians 5:7*

3. The assertion is made that the troublemaker shall be rightly judged. v.10, *Matthew 20:11-12*

C. Paul argues that he is being persecuted because he is preaching the true Gospel.

1. First of all, he declares that he is no longer preaching circumcision.  
*v.11*
2. Preaching of the true gospel is accompanied by persecution.  
*John 15:20*
3. Paul's desire is for the deceivers to remove themselves completely from the church. *v.12*

## II. THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY *v.13*

A. Paul reaffirms that the believer's fundamental identity is one of walking in liberty and not legalistic bondage.

1. They had been divinely called by God. *John 6:44*
2. This calling was one of bringing them into the freedom offered by Christ. *Ephesians 1:4*
3. This meant that they were free from the curse of the law.  
*Deuteronomy 27:26 ESV, Galatians 3:13*

B. He cautions that this freedom is not an opportunity to fulfill the desires of the flesh.

1. The misuse of grace would be to fulfill the lust of the flesh. *v.13*
2. There is an internal struggle between the flesh and the Spirit.  
*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

3. Self-indulgence is to be rejected as a lifestyle for those who are walking in grace. *John 16:13*

C. The proper outlet for freedom is by serving one another in love. v.13

1. The true method of ministry is demonstrated by loving our brothers and sisters in Christ.

2. This is a voluntary bond with one another as we serve one another. *Romans 12:4-5*

3. The shift is from self-centeredness to that of other centeredness. *Philippians 2:1-4*

### III. THE PERFECTION OF THE LAW THROUGH LOVE vv.14-15

A. Paul echoes Jesus by stating that the entire law is fulfilled in the single command of love. v.14

1. This is a simple and straight forward emulation of what Christ has done for us. *John 13:34-35*

2. The standard is set forth that we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. *Matthew 22:35-40*

3. Our neighbors are the ones who afford us the opportunity to show mercy. *Luke 10:36-37*

B. He warns that legalism leads to strife among believers. v.15

1. Legalistic aggression is illustrated through the act of biting and devouring one another.

2. This brings about a loss of peace amongst believers.

3. The root of strife is found in finding faults in others. *Isaiah 26:3*

C. This strife leads to the mutual destruction of all involved.

1. Law minded people are focused on law breaking activities.

*Luke 11:52*

2. This leads to back-and-forth accusations and allegations, which never leads to the building up of the body of Christ.

*Romans 3:23, 27*

3. The goal should be edifying one another in Christ, which is our true act of love. *Romans 14:19*

**CONCLUSION:** This passage concludes that Christian liberty is not a license for self-indulgence, but a calling to mutual service. He argues that the entire law is fulfilled in the single command to love your neighbor as yourself, warning that a community defined by legalistic strife will eventually destroy itself.