



A Growing Responsibility

Matt Garvin ~ March 12, 2017

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Galatians 5:1 NIV

Religion (or legalism):

The idea that you must obey a set of rules, or do a particular thing, in order to be loved or accepted by God.

- Paul's _____ is quite different from what we have come to understand _____ to be

"Modern individualism seems to be producing a way of life that is neither individually nor socially viable... In some sense... freedom to be left alone is a freedom that implies being alone."

Robert Bellah

- Pushing against Religion can lead to being trapped by our own Flesh

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

Galatians 5:13-15 NIV

The Flesh:

The part of you that wants to minimize pain and maximize pleasure.

- Paul is envisioning a radically different kind of freedom

A Christian is now free to obey God in a radical fashion by serving his fellow human beings in selfless love.

E.J. Epp

St. Albert Alliance Prayer Goal #2

"An increased sense of ownership for one another in relationship, leading to a greater experience of biblical community."

- True freedom requires the _____ to face both sides of you

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

Galatians 5:16-17 NIV

The Spirit:

The Holy Spirit who guides us towards "all the truth". (John 16:13)

The spirit:

The human spirit, created in the image of God, which gives us understanding (Job 32:8)

Flesh	Spirit
- Sexual Immorality - Impurity - Debauchery - Idolatry - Witchcraft (<i>pharmakeia</i>) - Discord - Jealousy - Fits of Rage - Selfish Ambition - Dissensions - Factions - Envy - Drunkenness - Orgies (excessive feasting) - and the like	- Love - Joy - Peace - Forbearance - Kindness - Faithfulness - Gentleness - Self-Control

- Paul's guide to the two sides:

...Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

Galatians 5:23-26 NIV-WS

The three responsibilities of life in the Spirit

1. We get to carry each other.

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:1-2 NIV

2. We need to carry our own weight.

If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load.

Galatians 6:3-5 NIV

3. We are responsible for the people we ask to serve the church.

Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

Galatians 6:6 NIV

■ We have a clear choice every day

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:7-9 NIV

■ Are you a _____ member or a houseguest?

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

Galatians 6:10 NIV

Find out more about membership:

<http://staalliance.org/get-to-know-us/membership/>

A Growing Responsibility Small Group Questions

1. What did you find most engaging about Pastor Matt's sermon?
2. If Religion is "the idea that you must obey a set of rules, or do a particular thing, in order to be loved or accepted by God," have there been times when you have found yourself following religion? Share what you have learned on your own journey.
3. Sociologist Robert Bellah's research points to a common belief that freedom is "being left alone by others." Do you think this is true? Is it an underlying belief you have held? Discuss what real freedom is for you.
4. St. Albert Alliance's Prayer Goal #2 is "An increased sense of ownership for one another in relationship, leading to a greater experience of biblical community" ... what can you see that you could simply do to help that goal happen for you or others?
5. Paul outlines 15 kinds of behaviour that come from the flesh... take some time and explore the life of Jesus as recorded in the gospels to see where he modelled a different way to each one of those 15 behaviours.
6. Paul outlines 9 Fruits of the Spirit. Where in the gospels do you see examples of Jesus acting in each one of these ways?
7. Pastor Matt shared three responsibilities that are ours... the first one is to "Carry each other's burdens." Have you experienced this? What does it mean for you to be in a place where people know you well enough for this to be possible?
8. The second responsibility is that we are to carry our own loads. Talk about the load you believe Jesus is currently asking you to carry.
9. The third responsibility is to share with those we ask to serve us in the church. Take some time in listening prayer to ask Jesus whether he is inviting you to be responding any differently to how you are currently doing this?
10. Pastor Matt talked about the difference between a family member and a house guest. Are you a member of the St. Albert Alliance Church family? What is it you appreciate about the church? In what way, might Jesus be inviting you to do good to those who belong to the family of believers?