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Doctrinal Studies Bible Church  
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Study: Book of Galatians

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Gal.5:13-15  
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### **OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE**

Paul introduced **Spiritual Freedom** as the theme of chapter 5:

(Gal.5:1) "It was for freedom that Christ set us free."

We divided (Gal.5:1-26) into two sections based on this theme (Gal.5:1, 13).

(Gal.5:1-12) Spiritual freedom from slavery of legalism (Law).  
(Gal.5:13-26) Spiritual freedom from slavery of flesh [Old Sin Nature] (OSN).

We are dividing (Gal.5:13-26) into four sections for study. Each of these sections shows how the flesh (OSN) attacks Spiritual Freedom in Christian Way of Life (CW).

(Gal.5:13-15) Deployment of flesh (1cc) [1 class condition] 'if' = and it's true  
(Gal.5:16-18) Desires of flesh (1cc) [1 class condition] 'if' = and it's true  
(Gal.5:19-23) Deeds of flesh  
(Gal.5:24-26) Death to flesh (1cc) [1 class condition] 'if' = and it's true

Deployment of the flesh comes from the Greek word aphorme (a starting point, occasion, opportunity). As a military word, aphorme refers to the base of operation from which an attack is launched.

(Gal.5:13) Launch  
(Gal.5:14) Love  
(Gal.5:15) Loss

The call to spiritual freedom is the starting point, the occasion, or the Opportunity to Serve other believers either for fleshly (OSN) gain or through love. The fruit of love comes by walking by means of Indwelling Holy Spirit (**Gal.5:16, 22; 1 Cor.6:19-20**).

**Today's lesson will study three aspects of Opportunity to Serve.**

#### **1. In our lesson text, Paul introduced a call to SERVE (douleuo/ p.a.impv.2pl) others with God's Love. It is a key doctrine of spiritual freedom (Gal.5:1, 13).**

Paul issued two present active imperatives 2pl in our lesson text.

- Serving one another with love is positive command (spirituality).
- Take heed of consuming one another is negative command (blepo) [carnality/ flesh] (1Cor.3:1-3).

Spiritual freedom brings an opportunity for the spiritual service of love amidst conflict (Gal.5:13, 14, 16, 22) and (**Gal.2:4-5; 2 Cor.6:14-16**).

Spiritual freedom also brings an opportunity for the flesh (OSN) to bite and devour and consume amidst conflict (Gal.5:13, 15, 19-22, 26) and (**Gal.4:15-17; Eph.4:29-32**).

## 2. Paul issued important standing commands (present imperatives) to the spiritual advancing believer in chapter 5.

In (Gal.5:1), Paul issued two commands:

- “stand firm for spiritual freedom” (positive/ do this)
- “do not be subject to the yoke of slavery” (negative/ don’t do this)

In (Gal.5:13), Paul issued two commands:

- “But through love serve one another” (positive)
- “take care lest you be consumed by one another” (negative)

**Here is Paul’s point:** Stand your ground for grace liberty under assault, but express it with a servant mentality of God’s love serving others amidst conflict.

It is possible to defend grace doctrines and still serve others with God’s love by walking by means of Indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal.5:16, 22).

## 3. Paul describes serving others with God’s love amidst conflict as a calling within spiritual freedom.

(Gal.5:13) “For you were called (kaleo/ a.p.ind.2pl) [**20 status privileges**] to (epi+loc.of divine purpose) freedom, brethren.”

(2 Tim.1:9) “Who has saved us and **called us with a holy calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.”

The grace churches of south Galatia were under assault by legalism. It was causing division and internal conflict (Gal.4:15-16). The conflict had become viciously carnal (1 Cor.3:1-3). It had become flesh biting, devouring and consuming flesh (Gal.5:15). Flesh cannot consume Spirit; but Spirit can consume flesh (Gal.5:16-17).

(1 Pet.4:8) “Above all, keep (echo/ p.a.ptc. nplm) fervent (ektenes/ unfaithful) in your love for one another, because (WHY) love covers (kalupo/ p.a.ind.3ps) a multitude of sins.”

(1 Pet.4:8) “Above all things have intense and unfaithful love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins [forgives and disregards the offense of others]. [Prov.10:12] (Amplified Bible)

This is contrary to the flesh (carnality) but compatible with the Spirit (spirituality).

(Eph.5:2) “And **walk** (peripateo/ p.a.impv.2pl) in love, **just as** Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

God’s love is both the objective side to salvation (Rom.5:8) and the subjective side to the Christian Way of Life (CWL).