

New series

"THE Fruit OF THE SPIRIT is nothing less than the practical reproduction of the character and the conduct of Christ in the lives of the people." FF Bruce. Could we spend nine Sunday evenings thinking about anything more important than that? As well as exploring what these nine character traits in Galatians 5:22-23 actually are, we'll also be helping one another take practical lifestyle steps to "keep in step" with the Holy Spirit as he brings this amazing crop (Ernte) to fruition (Reifung) in our lives.

A. Introduction about the fruits of the spirit

B. Background about the situation in Galatia

C. Reading: Gal 5,13-15 (NIV)

1. Called for Freedom / so live the relationship

2. Love each other

3. Finished the dispute

D. Conclusion & preview

A. Introduction about the fruits of the spirit

Good evening. My name is Veit Claesberg and I am a German guy. The last 12 years I have worked as a youth pastor all over Germany. At the moment I make a four-months-sabbatical and stay in the UK with my family.

A few years ago I met John Allan because he was the speaker at our youth conference in Germany. I asked him, if it's possible to make an internship at Belmont. And He said: "Sure, it is." So I have spent the last four weeks as an intern here at Belmont.

And brothers and sisters let me say this: You are a big and a vibrant church. It is a pleasure for me to learn from you. God blessed you so much. He has given you not only the one talent, not only the two talents. He has given you the five talents, indeed. This is great. But you also you have a great responsibility. Continues to live in this responsibility. I promise you that I pray for that.

You have allowed me to speak tonight. Thank you very much. It's a great experience for me. Not only because I preach for the first time in English. Also I hope that God will speak to you through his words.

The next 10 weeks we are going to talk about the fruits of the spirit. This is a great theme. Every follower of Jesus got the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lives in us. It's like a miracle. But in this very moment, when we give our life to Jesus and become a Christian, the spirit of Jesus comes into our life. And he wants to change our life step by step and make it more like the life of Jesus.

And normally we want to grow. Every normal Christian wants to be more and more like Jesus. We want to bear good fruits. We want to think like Jesus. We want to act like Jesus. We want to love like Jesus. We want to serve like Jesus. We want to know Jesus more and more. We are on fire for Jesus.

Is that's your wish, too? Then you have come to the right place tonight.

¹ My theme: A relationship of freedom and love

But sometimes there are periods in our life and we don't want to be like Jesus. Following Jesus is very strange or boring or tiring. Sometimes we are in the deep dark valley and not on the sunny meadow. And even if your relationship to Jesus looks like this at the moment, you are on the right place. Because you could renew your relationship with Jesus. Everytime. You have the chance to light your fire for Jesus again.

I think these situations also knew the early Christians in Galatians. The letter from Paul help us to understand how to life a Jesus-Lifestyle. Paul wrote to the Galatians in **chapter 5, verse 22-26: pp²: film or scripture**

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature 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.

Tonight we talk about the basic for bad and good fruits. Next week we talk about the rotten fruits and after that we talk seven evenings about the good fruits. So what is the basic? What is the soil for good fruits? How can we live a life like Jesus? What is a Christian lifestyle?

B. Background about the situation in Galatia

Let`s look how the situation in the churches in Galatia was.

Paul founded the churches a few years before he sent this letter. They had a brilliant start and they lived very closely with Jesus. They wanted to be good Christians. They lived with the Holy Spirit.

But then something happened. Paul writes (**Gal 3,1-3**): **pp**

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Have you suffered so much for nothing- if it really was for nothing?

Wow, that's sound hard. This is very straightforward, isn't it? OK, I'm a German and I also come from the Ruhr district. In this region people are very direct. So I love to be direct. But I think Paul is very blunt, isn't he? There must be some very bad things happened.

Of course. The Galatians had a good start. They receive Gods grace.

But then a few people came into the church and said: "The grace is not enough. You must do more for your salvation. Didn't Paul talk about the law? The law is very important for new Christians. You must be circumcised. You can not longer eat everything. Pork isn't good. And look, there are some important dates. You must celebrate these dates. It's important for you, because only you fulfill Gods holy law, God will save you. And only then God loves you, because you do what he wants." And the Galatians thought: This sounds good. Perhaps it's even a little safer to do something more than just receive the grace. It feels good. Let's do it. It can not hurt.

² or in other words: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJA9kqu8jOA> (30.09.2012)

Do you know such thoughts? I know such thoughts. Sometimes it seems better to have something like a collection account in heaven. I want to collect points. Like the Nectar Card from Sainsbury or something else. And if I do good things, for example I go every Sunday to church - maybe to every service: 9:30, 10AM, 11:15 and 18:30 - than I get points. And if I read the bible every day, I get more points. And if I worked in church as a volunteer I get extra points. That sounds great, right?

Or sometimes I think: Jesus must love me more after I read my bible. And if I don't read my bible Jesus loves me less. So I better read my bible. It's safer. I better pray 10 minutes then 5 minutes every day. It's safer.

This is called the "Jesus + System": Jesus plus service, Jesus plus Quiet Time³, Jesus plus no alcohol, Jesus plus no smoking, Jesus plus every other thing,... Jesus plus seems better for salvation. But this thinking is nonsense.⁴

The other problem of the Galatians was that some people couldn't handle their freedom. Some people recognize that they only have been saved by the grace of God. So they think: "Because I have been saved by grace, I could do everything I want. I could still sin. And I could do every sin I like." And some sins are very attractive. The fruit on the tree in Eden was very attractive. This is the problem with sin. Normally sin is attractive. And because there's enough grace let's sin. The grace is for free, isn't it? So let's paint the town red. Who pay for the fourth round of pints? Look, what an interesting website with naked people. And so on...

Do you know such thoughts? I know such thoughts. Sometimes I don't fight enough against sin in my life (Hebr 12,4). And this is not good. Paul argue against such thoughts in **Romans 6,1f: pp**

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning, so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

By the way: this bible passage is a good argument to get baptized.

But normally we hate such kind of thoughts. And so we make borders. We don't want to live such a lifestyle. So we better forbid everything, every kind of alcohol, except the wine by the communion.⁵ Some people throw the television and the computers out of their houses.⁶ And is better to live a boring and grey life. We live very carefully, because we want to do nothing against God's will. So we have better more rules, than fewer rules. In Germany we say: "Some Christians go in the cellar, if they want

³ http://gregscouch.homestead.com/files/Quiet_Time_Guilt.htm (30.09.2012)

⁴ original: "...Bullshit. Ohh... Sorry, I'm too outspokenly now..."

⁵ siehe http://joerg-sieger.de/predigt/jahr_c/c_13d.htm (29.09.2012): „Ganz ähnlich, wie es Paulus im Galaterbrief beschreibt. Als dem Apostel klar geworden ist, dass ich mir durch die Befolgung von unendlichen Gesetzesvorschriften und Geboten das Himmelreich nicht erkaufen kann, als ihm klar geworden ist, dass Christus keine engherzige Gebotsmoral verkündet hat, dass Gott uns die Vollendung aus Liebe schenkt, das kam einer regelrechten Befreiung gleich. Ohne diese Einsicht, die der Völkerapostel seinen Gemeinden weitergegeben hat, wäre das Christentum eine Sekte im hintersten Winkel des römischen Imperiums geblieben. Aber Paulus hat begriffen, dass Christus uns zur Freiheit befreit hat. Immer aber, wenn Menschen begreifen, dass alles, was Leben eng macht und in Zwänge führt, letztlich vom Bösen ist, immer dann, wenn Menschen spüren, wie weit Leben sein kann, immer dann melden sich ganz schnell, die ewig gestrigen, die das Rad am liebsten zurück drehen wollen. In den Gemeinden des Paulus haben sie für Wirbel gesorgt und den Menschen weiß zu machen versucht, dass man sich kein Jota von den überkommenen Gesetzesvorschriften entfernen dürfe, dass Gott keine Freiheit sondern allein Gehorsam wolle, dass es ihm nicht um das Leben sondern die Unterwerfung gehe."Lasst Euch nicht von neuem das Joch der Knechtschaft auflegen", ruft Paulus seiner Gemeinde zu.“

⁶ Quote of Benjamin Franklin: „Wer die Freiheit aufgibt, um Sicherheit zu gewinnen, wird am Ende beides verlieren.“

to laugh.” So nobody can see it. It’s better. And also we must look like a watchman in our church that there is no evil. No laugh, no dance, no clapping hands... But is this really a Jesus-Lifestyle? I don’t think so.

So we must learn and also the Galatians to handle the freedom in Christ. We must learn to live in freedom without the law only by the grace of God. And this is difficult. This is a process. And sometimes we forget it and struggle.

And that’s why Paul gave us some very important information in his letter.⁷ Let’s read:

C. Reading: Gal 5,13-15 (New International Version)⁸

13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. 14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbour as yourself. 15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. 19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

These thoughts from Paul seem very deep and complex to me. I tried very hard to understand him. I want to share my insights with you. Here is a little overview: **pp**

- ☞ **13: Use of freedom in a good way**
- ☞ **13+18+Gal 3+4 : Bondage: Try to serve the freedom with the law**
- ☞ 13+19-21: Misuse of freedom 1: personality misuse
- ☞ **14+15: misuse of freedom 2: against the neighbor (even 19-21)**
- ☞ **14: todo: live in love and in a relationship**
- ☞ 13+16-18: todo: fight for freedom against the flesh through the Holy Spirit
- ☞ 21: sharp warning: don’t sin

Tonight we talk about the bold verses. Next week we will talk about the other ones.

1. Called for Freedom / so live the relationship

read: *13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.*

Paul writes that we were called to be free. But what kind of freedom is it?

Paul mentions in his letter a few words before, that everyone needs freedom, freedom from sin and guilt and freedom from the law that shows us our sin and guilt.

The Old Testament law told us, what we have to do and not to do. The law is so strict, that every person must break the law. Paul says that our sinful nature can’t hold the law. So the law show us that we all need forgiveness of our sins. And the only way is Jesus Christ our Lord and savior. The Law of Moses was just an interim solution. Paul write this earlier (Gal 3,22-25). And Jesus Christ is the fulfiller of the whole law (Mt 5,17). Everyone who is in Christ is a new creature (2Kor 5,17). And he is free. Paul says this in **Gal 5,1: pp**

⁷ „Darum ist dieser letzte Teil unseres Briefes die Krönung. Hier wird deutlich warum Paulus das Gesetz nicht mehr braucht - und dennoch keineswegs gesetzlos lebt. Hier spricht er vom Wunderwerk des Heiligen Geistes.“ (Brandenburg: 113) // “It’s about the freedom we can experience in Jesus - freedom from sin and religion, freedom to live lives of joyful service.” (Jones: 16)

⁸ Mit diesem Abschnitt wird Paulus praktisch, nachdem er vorher die theologische Grundlage gelegt hat.

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.

23 years ago happened something unbelievable in Europe. In Eastern Germany and some other Eastern European countries people go out on the street and shout for freedom. A few years earlier the Russian leader Michael Gorbatschow started a liberal politics in the Soviet Union.⁹ This was the beginning of a new epoch in Europe and in Germany too. Also for the UK. Over 50.000 British soldiers come back home from the continent after 1990.¹⁰ The cold war was over.

In every Eastern European country you could feel the spirit of freedom and liberty. That was a great time. I was a young man, 18 years old, and I felt the pulse of history like I never have been felt it before and after.¹¹

But the freedom was also a big challenge for every country in Europe, particularly for Germany¹² and for the Soviet Union. Every country had to manage the freedom. It was not easy. Some countries found a good way, like Germany. One year after the fall of the wall we celebrated the German Reunion. On next Wednesday this is 22 years ago. **pp → pictures**

But other country struggled. Like Yugoslavia. Some countries have struggled till today. In Russia we have a dictator now. Every country must find its own way to manage the freedom. And some ways were good and other ways were very bad. To manage freedom is very difficult, because you must define freedom. And you must define the place where freedom is. If you define this bad, then you have a dictatorship or an anarchy. Freedom is a risk. Sometimes you must jump into the freedom.

And this is similar to our life. We were called to be free. The wall of sin is fallen down. We are free of sin. We got the Holy Spirit. And now we must use this freedom.

But our sinful nature wants to misuse the freedom. We want to sin again, because sin seems so attractive. Our sinful nature wants to fill freedom and wants to rule over our freedom as a dictator. But the misuse of Christian freedom is like to spit in Jesus' face. Paul warns us: *But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature;* Our new nature fight against our old nature. This fight can be horrible. We can only win this fight with the Holy Spirit. (→ more next week)

However he shows us a better way to use our freedom. He shows us that we are free to love. Freedom is where love is. Love guarantees freedom. Paul says: You need no law. The law is good, but it's not good for life. Only the love is good for life. So the challenge for us is to manage the freedom. And Paul forbid us to manage the freedom with the law and forbid to exploit the freedom. Instead he shows us a third way. A life that roots in a **relationship**. We have a **relationship to Jesus** and to our brothers and sister. This is a big difference.

And so he can say: Love each other.

⁹ Ronald Reagan: Tear down this wall: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjWDrTXMgF8>

¹⁰ vgl. http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Britische_Streitkr%C3%A4fte_in_Deutschland

¹¹ witzig: Davids Hasselhofs Song: I've been looking for freedom, wurde wegen dem Wort freedom damals zufällig ein Hit, obwohl der Text eigentlich in eine andere Richtung geht. Vgl. dazu http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Looking_for_Freedom (29.09.2012)

¹² Some people fear the freedom. Joachim Gauck said: «Verantwortung ist dem Untertan meistens fremd. Was er am besten kann, ist Angst haben.» (1999 über Furcht vor der Freiheit bei Menschen im Osten Deutschlands). Aus <http://www.zeit.de/news/2012-02/20/bundespraesident-zitate-von-joachim-gauck-20144002> (30.09.2012)

2. Love each other¹³

pp: *rather, serve one another in love. 14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbour as yourself.*

This sounds like the Jesus-Lifestyle, isn't it?

Loving, serving, doing good things, loving each other, loving your enemy. This is a fruit of the spirit, indeed. The fact that we are free means responsibility for our life. Freedom is responsibility.¹⁴

This is a responsibility to serve. This is like Jesus as he was washing the feet of the disciples, although he was the Lord and King of all heavens. And Jesus said in **John 13,14f: pp**

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

We are free to do the work of love to our neighbor. And this could be the men who cross my path next. (Good Samaritan in Luke 10,25). In that case we fulfill the law.

But this sounds paradox, isn't it? Paul just said that we were free from the law and now he says that we fulfill the law through love. So do we need the law yet again? What does he mean?

I think: Jesus set us free from the law, because he fulfilled the law. But the law describes God's will (Mt 5,17). And God's will is love, because God is pure love.¹⁵

The scholar Ronald Y.K. Fung says: **pp**

„In other words, the believer who is free from the law is at the same time one who fulfills the law; only the way he fulfills the law is not by punctiliously observing the rules and regulations of an external code, but by the new way of love, which is generated within the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Fung: 247)

And of course it does mean the ceremonial law, too. Because Jesus is the great sacrifice.

So we must understand again that we don't need the law anymore. The law robs the freedom (2Kor 3,17). The law told us what to do and what not to do. It's like a fence. And our sinful nature wants to climb over the fence. But Jesus said that we have to walk close to him. We are on the good way with Jesus. We are not by the fence. We live in a **relationship**. This is a big difference. **We have a relationship to Jesus, our Lord and savior.**¹⁶

We are on the way with Jesus. We are on his side. And we are not alone. We go together with our brothers and sister.¹⁷ So finished the dispute.

¹³ „Christ set us free so that we can become slaves of one another and thus fulfill the heart of the law through living by faith.“ (Jones: 109)

¹⁴ also compare 1.Petr 2,15f: “For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God. Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king.” And also 1Kor 6,12. Jung: “...the goal of her freedom is mutual service through love.“ (Jung: 245)

¹⁵ Adolf Pohl: „Sofern das Gesetz auffordert, sich tätig selbst das Leben zu erwerben, ist Christus sein Ende. Sofern es aber zur Liebe auffordert, ist Christus seine genaue und auch sehnlichst erwartete Erfüllung. Darum geht es hier.“ (:214). Ich denke das gilt nicht für das Zeremonialgesetz (den Jesus ist das Opfer), sondern für die ethischen Gesetze.

¹⁶ “So with respect to Paul's statement here, “Galatians 5:14 is not itself a command to fulfill the law but a statement that, when one loves one's neighbor, the whole law is fully satisfied in the process” (ibid.).” (Longenecker: 243)

¹⁷ another aspect comes from Karl Sendker. He says in his sermon: “Und so ähnlich ist das auch bei Gott. Die Sorge, ob wir oben ankommen, die hat Gott uns genommen. Und darum hast du alle Hände frei, um den Menschen in Liebe zu dienen...In diesen Zusammenhang passt einen Definition von Christsein, die ich gelesen habe bei dem Theologen Helmut Gollwitzer. Er sagt: Christenleben bedeutet: „Für mich ist gesorgt.“ Aber es kommt noch ein Satz dazu: „Weil für mich gesorgt ist, habe ich alle Hände frei, mich um Andere zu sorgen.“ [http://www.karl-sendker.de/13__sonntag_c.htm#Gal 5,1.13-18](http://www.karl-sendker.de/13__sonntag_c.htm#Gal%205,1.13-18) (29.09.2012)

3. Finished the dispute

read on pp: *15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.*

It seems that the atmosphere was not the best in the churches in Galatians. Paul is a realist. He knows that conflicts are possible in every human communion.

Or not? How it is in an English church? I'm just here since five weeks and I can't judge whether it is so at Belmont. Do you have sometimes bit and devour each other? In Germany we do this sometimes. However not in reality just with words. I can tell you. But I learned that English people are very polite. So I can't imagine that you bit and devour. Or is there a polite way to do this? Anyway.

It's a challenge for everyone to be kind to brothers and sisters which we see every week and maybe every day. And we'll see us for a long time. We know each other perhaps 20 or 30 years. And of course, in such a long time we will be guilty to each other. We know how we can provoke each other. We know the weaknesses of each other. And we know the life standard of each other. And maybe Paul thinks about this fact, when he mentions some behaviors on the end of this section in **5,26**: *Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

But there is another true. In churches, which are very lawfully, there is a tendency of biting and devouring. And sometimes the brethren movement is very lawfully. The German Baptist Scholar Adolf Pohl writes in his commentary about this verse: **pp with his picture and the German lyrics:**¹⁸

„Especially in statutory circles we found this kind of theological knife fight, such unrefined methods. Let us take verse 26, too. Boasting, to get personal, inability to hold an objective discussion. The superior calls for a showdown, the loser is embittered. In the end everybody has lost.“ (Pohl: 216)

I think he's right. So if there is some biting and devouring in my or in your church: Let's stop it. It comes from our sinful nature. But we were called to be free.

D. Conclusion & preview

So we learn many things tonight. The scripture challenges us. But this is what we want. We want to bring good fruits. And if we really want it, we cannot bypass the cross. Never ever.

- ☞ We can't go over the cross and take the law in our hands because our old ego needs more safety than just only the grace. It's forbidden. Paul said: Jesus fulfills the law. So we don't need the law anymore. Just grace.
- ☞ And we can't go under the cross because our old ego wants to live in a selfish way and do sinful things. It's forbidden. Paul said: Jesus called us to be free from sin and from the law. Now we are servants of love. We are free to love each other and to bear good fruits.

We need to understand that we live in a **relationship** with Jesus. We believe not in a religion. We are not just a denomination or just a part of the Christendom, with some cultural habits. We don't "must to do this & what".

¹⁸ "Gerade in gesetzlichen Kreisen gibt es diese theologische Messerstecherei, diese unfeinen Methoden. Nehmen wir gleich V.26 hinzu: Prahlen, Persönlichwerden, Unfähigkeit, die Sachdiskussion durchzustehen. Der Überlegene fordert zum Kräfteressen heraus, der Unterlegene verbittert. Am Ende haben alle verloren." (Pohl: 216)

We “want to do this & what”. **We are in a lively relationship with Jesus. We are close to Jesus. We are in love with Jesus. And so we want to live as a follower.**

We have called to live in freedom. We have called to live in love. This is a great call. And this is the basis. This is the soil on which good fruit will grow.

If we don't have this soil and live a life by ourselves we will bring rotten fruit. Next week we are talking about this. And we will also see that a Jesus-Lifestyle means to live with the Holy Spirit.¹⁹

Amen

¹⁹ Rettung durch Gnade/Tod Jesu = **Freiheit vom Gesetz**, **weil Geist** = Liebe // Diese Woche ist der Focus mehr auf der Freiheit. Nächste Woche ist der Focus mehr auf dem Geist. Beides hängt unmittelbar zusammen, aber ich muss es unterscheiden.

Kurz-Exegese // Gal 5,13-16

Die Anmerkungen zu den einzelnen Versen (Vers-für-Vers-Kommentar sind direkt in die Predigt mit eingeflossen)

a. Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater²⁰

Paulus schreibt den Galaterbrief an von ihm gegründete Gemeinden in der heutigen Türkei. Er schreibt ihn zwischen 48-57 nach Christus. Es ist eine Art Kampfbrief, weil die Galater vom Glauben abzufallen drohten. Es gab in den Gemeinden einen Einbruch von Irrlehren. Judenchristen forderten die Einhaltung des mosaischen Gesetzes (Jesus und...), was die Beschneidung, das Feiern von Festen (4,10) und das Essen von Speisen anging (2,12). Paulus wehrt sich vehement gegen einen Rückkehr zum Gesetz und zeigt auf, dass Jesus allein genügt und ein Leben in Freiheit aus dem Heiligen Geist heraus ermöglicht. Paulus will keinen Kompromiss zwischen Gesetz und freier Gnade. Jeder Rückfall in die Gesetzlichkeit wäre wie ein Dienst der Welt (4,8f). Er will nur die freie Gnade (sola gratia). Und fordert einen Lebensstil aus der freien Gnade heraus.

„...betont er im Galaterbrief, dass der Christ nicht mehr unter der Macht der Sünde stehe, sondern frei sei, durch den Besitz des Heiligen Geistes ohne das Gesetz als Mittler zwischen Gott und Mensch so zu leben, wie es der Liebe entspricht.“

(wikipedia) Offensichtlich hat er mit dem Brief sein Ziel erreicht, woraufhin 1Kor 16,1 hindeutet.

Einteilung des Briefes:

Gal 1,1-5	Eingangswort
Gal 1,6-10	Einleitung
Gal 1,6-2,21	apologetischer Teil: Der Apostel als Berufener des Herrn
Gal 3,1-5,12	dogmatischer Teil: Glauben statt Gesetz
Gal 5,13-6,10	Ermahnungen und Warnungen, Leben im Geist
Gal 6,11-18	Schluss

b. Textgliederung

1. Called for Freedom, so live in freedom

13 You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature;

2. Love each other

rather, serve one another in love.

14 The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbour as yourself.

15 If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

3. Live & Fight through the Spirit

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

4. Led by the Spirit

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

²⁰ vgl. auch <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galaterbrief> (29.09.2012) und Burckhardt, H., Lexikon zur Bibel, Artikel Galaterbrief, S.511f

Der mir zugewiesene Textabschnitt hat m.E. zwei Sinnabschnitte. In vielen Übersetzungen und Kommentaren wird daher **13-15** entweder als eigener Abschnitt gesehen (GNB, Pohl, Jones, WBC) oder dem vorherigen Abschnitt zugeordnet (ab 5,1), immer unter der Überschrift: Freedom in Christ (NLT, NIV), was ja auch zu 5,1 passt.

16-18 wird immer danach zugeordnet unter Überschriften wie „Leben ohne/mit Geist“. Da ich zweimal hintereinander predige entscheide ich für die erste Predigt, dass ich hier über 13-15 predige und nächsten Sonntag über 16-21, also der Sinneinteilung der GNB folge.

c. Skopus

Paulus erinnert an die Berufung zur Freiheit, und warnt gleichzeitig vor Ausnutzung dieser Freiheit, denn wir sind befreit, um unseren Nächsten zu lieben - statt uns zu streiten - und wir sind befreit, um durch den Heiligen Geist unser fleischliches Verlangen zu überwinden, und somit nicht mehr unter dem Gesetz zu leben.

d. Textthema

Berufen zur Freiheit, um dem Nächsten zu lieben // Leben im Heiligen Geist, um das Fleisch zu besiegen

e. Profil der Zuhörer

In der Belmont Chapel sitzen sehr gebildete Leute, meistens mit Universitätsabschluss. Das theologische Wissen scheint sehr hoch. Es gibt aber auch eine kleine Gruppe aus der Mittel- und Unterschicht. Außerdem gibt es viele Studenten. Zum Abendgottesdienst kommen meines Wissens eher der „harte Kern“ der Gemeinde, also die Leiter, die Aktiven, dazu einige Studenten und Menschen die traditionell in den Abendgottesdienst gehen. Sie wollen mehr über Gottes Wort wissen und im Glauben weiterkommen. Es ist ein Lehrgottesdienst.

f. Was mir der Text sagt

Paulus fordert die Galater auf ihre Freiheit füreinander zu gebrauchen. Dazu bin ich auch befreit. Ich darf und soll meinen Nächsten lieben.

Paulus fordert die Galater auf, aus dem Geist heraus zu leben und nicht aus dem Fleisch. Das will ich auch tun und somit geistliche Handeln und Denken und nicht meinem Fleisch nachgeben.

Ich will aus einer Liebesbeziehung zu Jesus, Jesus nachfolgen und meinem Nächsten dienen.

Links

- ➔ <http://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/bibelkunde/neues-testament/paulinische-briefe/galater/>
- ➔ <http://www.welt-der-bibel.de/bibliographie.1.4.galater.126.html>
- ➔ <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galaterbrief>

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- ➔ Studienbibel. Reihe NT, Band 10), Wuppertal: Brockhaus Verlag 1994
- ➔ Burkhardt, H. u.a., Lexikon zur Bibel, Artikel Galaterbrief, Seite 511f

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