

The welcome verse for this week is 1 John 4:18a: “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out all fear.”



The Law of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-7; Galatians 5

The Bottom Line: We have been liberated in love, for love.

Introduction:

Have you ever been around someone who loved well?

Have you ever been around someone who didn't know how to love well?

When you consider your experience with other Christians, would “loves well” be near the top of your list of descriptors?

The New Testament is clear: The supreme mark of spiritual maturity is *love*.

Tension:

It's hard to love people who are hard to love.

How can I love someone who thinks differently, acts differently, or even believes differently than I do?

Truth:

The people of the church at Galatia wrestled with the same tension that we do. Some were caught up in the old covenant law and some were living in a cheap perversion of grace. **Read Galatians 5:1-6; 13-26.**

Paul speaks against both extremes that have become present within the church, both legalism and licentiousness. Paul instructs them not to look to circumcision/uncircumcision, but to “faith working through love.” Paul also charges them not to use their freedom for satisfying fleshly desire.

Paul, challenging two unhealthy perceptions of the law, sums up the entirety of the law in one instruction – love your neighbor. We have been liberated in love, for love.

If you will walk by the Spirit, you will learn love and will not be condemned by the law. You will bear the fruit of the Spirit, none of which have to do with giftedness but with your character.

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” – 1 Corinthians 13:1

I could be successful but impatient, gifted but unkind, clever but irritable. It never helps to be good at everything except the one thing that matters: loving well.

Application & Conclusion:

Love is what changes the world. Love is what changes you and changes me. Love saved me, wretched man that I am. Walk by the Spirit and learn love and you can find salvation too.

Next Steps:

- ☐ Work toward reconciliation with a fellow believer or neighbor whom you’ve harmed or has harmed you.
- ☐ Lean into the Spirit and serve someone this week who thinks, acts, or even believes differently than you do.

Discussion questions for group this week:

1. **What does this teach me about God?**

2. **What does this teach me about me?**

3. How do I apply this to my life?

4. If I could ask a question about this it would be....