

Galatians 5:5-15

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 ⁵ For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves
2 eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶ For
3 in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor
4 uncircumcision counts for anything, but only
5 faith working through love.

6 ⁷ You were running well. Who hindered you
7 from obeying the truth? ⁸ This persuasion is not
8 from him who calls you. ⁹ A little leaven leavens
9 the whole lump. ¹⁰ I have confidence in the Lord
10 that you will take no other view, and the one
11 who is troubling you will bear the penalty,
12 whoever he is. ¹¹ But if I, brothers, still
13 preach circumcision, why am I still being
14 persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross
15 has been removed. ¹² I wish those who unsettle
16 you would emasculate themselves!

17 ¹³ For you were called to freedom,
18 brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an
19 opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve
20 one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in
21 one word: “You shall love your neighbor as
22 yourself.” ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one
23 another, watch out that you are not consumed
24 by one another.

25

How would you explore this passage?

- To understand it yourself?
- To explain it to someone?
- To lead others through it?

The questions on the back provide ideas for observation, interpretation, and application..

Observation (What does it say?):

What do you notice in this passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage, what questions do you have?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

How might the passage affect you? How might you help others see application to their lives?

Additional questions for thought and discussion:

- Why the proverbial warning about leaven in verse 9?
- How does Paul's "confidence in the Lord" (v. 10) affect your thinking about speaking into the lives of others?
- Why would Paul even suggest the idea that he was advocating ("preaching") circumcision (v. 11)?
- Is verse 15 a generic warning about being nice, or might Paul have in mind a particular type of biting, devouring, and consuming one another?
- How might a Soul Care approach help avoid the biting and devouring in verse 15?

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)