Sermon: The Believer's Battle for Freedom
Series: *Galatians: Gospel Freedom.*

Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26.
Date: November 15, 2026

OBSERVATION — As a group, talk through and summarize the passage. Think through who, what, where, when, how, and why questions together.

INTERPRETATION — Answer these questions together:

1. What does this passage teach us about humanity?

a. Read Galatians 5:16–17 again. Paul describes an ongoing battle between the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. Can you identify some of these competing desires in your own life right now?

b. In this context, Paul uses the word "desire" to describe an over-desire or craving, implying we often want too much of a good thing. What are some good gifts from God that you tend to let control your heart?

2. What does this passage teach us about God?

a. How does this passage point to God's presence, his power, and his patience in our lives?

b. Why do you think God still allows us to go through this spiritual battle in our souls after we trust in Christ? Thinking specifically about our desires, how does this struggle actually help us grow?

3. What does this passage teach us about grace and salvation? How does it point us to Christ?

a. Verse 17 says that the flesh keeps us from doing the things of the Spirit that we truly want to do (like the fruit in verses 22–23). How do you see this truth at work in your heart? How do lesser cravings—for things like money, power, approval, or comfort—actually point to a deeper need for Jesus?

b. In verse 24, Paul uses the past tense to say that those who belong to Christ *have* crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Even though the flesh is dying a slow, painful death, its defeat is already certain on Christ's cross. Why is believing this truth so vital in our daily battle against sin?

Application

a. Look closely at verses 19–23. Is your life currently characterized more by the "works of the flesh" or the "fruit of the Spirit"? Consider how hope in Christ, faith in Christ, and the love of Christ actually move us from the "flesh" list to the "fruit" list.

b. In the sermon, we looked at six ways to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit: 1) Sunlight: Stepping into the light of Jesus through His Word. 2) Water: Drinking in the Spirit through prayer. 3) Removing the obstacles of idols. 4) Trellis: Growing on the trellis of the church and community. 5) Pruning: Cutting away things that steal spiritual energy, like worry, guilt, and shame. 6) Sowing: Multiplying fruit by sharing it with others. Which one of these six practices stands out to you today as either an encouragement or a challenge?

Prayer

Praise God for dwelling in our hearts through the Holy Spirit and actively fighting against the fleshly desires that remain in us.

Confess the specific ways you still try to find fulfillment in the "works of the flesh."

Thank Jesus for crucifying our old self with Him (Galatians 2:20) so that our sinful nature no longer owns us.

Ask the Holy Spirit to steadily grow His fruit in your life this week, especially the foundational fruit of love.