

# Do Be Do Be Do

**Big Idea:** Starting with the first church plants, Christians have been doing the same song and dance - bouncing between an emphasis on “doing” and “being”. Somewhere between these two extremes of legalism (an overemphasis of doing over being) and license (an overemphasis of being over doing), is liberty - the freedom to live with integrity and to love others just like Jesus does!

Two extreme groups began stirring unrest in the church. Early on, the Judaizers tried to impose their legalistic grid on Gentile Christians, emphasizing the letter of the law over the Spirit of the law. Later, the Gnostics came from the other extreme, disassociating their actions from their faith. Paul, James, and the other New Testament writers called the church back to that critical balance between faith and works, being and doing. The church Paul planted in Corinth illustrates the dangers of living in either extreme and Paul’s letter to that church calls them to a life of freedom characterized by love.

## 1. Legalism

*Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus. Acts 15:10,11a*

Before Paul’s second missionary journey and the planting of the Corinthian church, the Jerusalem Council provided the definitive answer to those who placed an unhealthy emphasis on Jewish laws. Unfortunately, this kind of judgmentalism did not end then. In fact, it continues today and many avoid the church because of a perceived “holier than thou” attitude. How is NorthRidge perceived by those inside and outside our church?

## 2. Licence

*But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 1 Cor. 8:9*

Corinth was known as one of the most corrupt cities in the world. Instead of being an influence in their city, the church became influenced by their city. The freedoms enjoyed by a once gifted and growing church soon turned to license. Compromise with worldly thinking quickly crept into the church: partisanism, divisions, insubordination, immorality, lawsuits, marital problems, freedom flaunting, unloving love feasts, unspiritual spiritual gifts, uncontrolled services, and unbiblical theology. How has worldly thinking influenced our church?

## 3. Liberty

*For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more. (1 Cor. 9:19). All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor (1 Cor. 10:23,24). For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another (Galatians 5:13).*

The hinge point of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians is chapter 13, known as the love chapter. A decision to love unconditionally precludes the judgmentalism associated with legalism and the thoughtlessness of flaunting your freedoms at the expense of others. How well do we harmonize the song of the church - Do Be Do Be Do?