

Let us Walk in the Spirit and Win the War!

Galatians 5:16-26 ¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

❖ Introduction

- **Foundational Verses:**
 - Some of the most well known verses in the Bible.
 - They are like a litmus test for examining who you are
- **We do not believe doing good things saves us.**
 - The Bible is clear that it doesn't...
 - But once salvation comes, we are to be different...
 - And these fruits listed here will be a natural part of who we are...
- **Therefore....**
 - I began to write down some of the fruits that I want God to grow in me
 - And I began to write down the works of the flesh that I want eliminated in me...
- **Look Deep and Evaluate**
 - Your turn to do the same thing...
 - Please open up your hearts this morning and examine yourself
- **Sanctification:**
 - These verses are about Sanctification...
 - And that is a process that all Christians go through...
 - Sanctification is: _____

❖ Preview Summary:

- 1) A War Waging Within
- 2) The Spirit frees us
- 3) Works of the Flesh
- 4) Fruits of the Spirit
- 5) Christians are Actively Living and Growing in the Fruits

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

❖ A War Within

- **Flesh is:**
 - Not our skin and muscle...

- **Rather...** As John Piper defines it: *The flesh is the ego which feels an emptiness but loathes the idea of satisfying it by faith, i.e., by depending on the mercy of God in Christ. Instead, the flesh prefers to use the legalistic or licentious(immoral) resources in its own power to fill its emptiness.*
- **The Spirit**
 - This is in regards to the Holy Spirit of God...
 - But also our spirit that has been made alive in Christ and has a new nature... seeking to conform us to the image of God...
- **Every Day we are battling within our self.**
 - This is not some simple little: *I want to do this, not that... ok.. we do this..*
 - It is a battle... it is intense
- **Their desires are against each other...**
 - Mathew Henry puts it this way...
 - The flesh strives and struggles with strength and vigor against the Spirit....
 - It is Strong, and it is cunning... The flesh, powered by satan....
 - Wants to destroy you.... And keep men from coming to Christ... and to keep those that do come to Christ... Inactive...
- **Keeping you from doing the things you want to do...**
 - Warning: Do not use this as an excuse to fail in your walk with God....
 - Paul is writing this so that you will NOT fail...
 - He is simply stating that: The reason we struggle and do not do what we know we ought to do...
 - Is because there is a great battle going on inside of us...
- **Example: It is like a country with two types of people in it**
 - **It is like a nation that existed and brought terror upon its people...**
 - There was slavery and everyone doing what was right in his own mind
 - And there was death everywhere...
 - No place to live
 - **But, one day the country is liberated by a powerful source**
 - And the people within it are set free from slavery and death
 - But not everyone in this country wants this freedom
 - ◆ Because the benefitted from the slavery and death...
 - **So,**
 - One group wants the country to be peaceful and free
 - The other group wants control over the nation
 - A nd they want to put the other people under slavery
 - **So they are locked in a bitter civil war, fighting against each other...**
 - **The side that wants control and slavery has some outside help**
 - They have some other countries that love war and bloodshed and slavery
 - **But, the side that wants peace and freedom has some help too**
 - They have the strongest nation in the world lending its resources...
 - Lots of resources and power
 - All they have to do is use it...
 - Put on the gear, and drive the tanks, and use the weapons...
 - And they will win, and they will win in a decided and easy manner
 - Their weapons and defenses are much stronger than the other side...
 - **This is kind of like the battle going on inside the person that comes to know Jesus**
- **Paul gives us instruction on how to win....**
 - He says.... Walk in the Spirit...
 - **And you will not gratify the desires of the flesh**

- Practical Answer: Comes later

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

❖ The Spirit Frees Me From the Law

- **What does it mean to be under the law?**
 - That you will be judged by the law...
 - That you must walk in the law to be in right standing with God
- **But those who come to Christ live by the Spirit, in Faith, Under Grace...**
- **Does that make sense?**
 - **Let us take this to the day of judgment... so as to explain it**
 - Those who die under the law without Christ... will be held up to it...
 - and found to not have been perfect... so they will be condemned
 - Their legal status would be guilty
 - **Those Not under the law.... Are under grace**
 - They will not be perfect... but they have been given grace, and their legal status is innocent
 - Not because they were perfect and innocent
 - But because the one they have faith in (Jesus) is innocent.
- **There is a Connection b/w the Law and the Works of the flesh**
 - Here Paul says... walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh
 - He then says if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law
 - There is a sense that thriving under the law is dependent on the flesh...
 - But the flesh can not do it...
 - The law is good... but the flesh is weak...
 - Romans 8:3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,
- **So Paul tells us here...**
 - Let's be led by the Spirit...
 - And not be under the law... striving with your flesh to walk in the law

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

❖ Works of the Flesh

- **Are Evident:**
 - They are the product of a corrupt and depraved nature
 - They Are clear He says
 - They are from three general areas: Sex, religion and human relationships
- **Sexual Immorality** – from the Greek word *porneia* which is where we get pornography
 - referring to all illicit sexual activity-especially, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, and prostitution.
 - Jesus teaches that Lust is the same thing as adultery
- **Impurity** –
 - means unclean – used as a medical term referring to an infected oozing wound
 - its reference here is in the sexual realm
- **Sensuality** –

- Originally referred to any excess or lack of restraint but came to be associated primarily with sexual excess.It is unrestrained sexual indulgence
- **Idolatry** – Worshipping man made images... Or earthly things
- **Sorcery** – comes from a word that we get Pharmacy from
 - Originally used for all medicines but came to refer to any mind or mood altering drugs
 - These things would be used in certain religious ceremonies
- **Enmity** – hateful attitudes
- **Strife** – conflict between people (a result of enmity)
- **Jealousy** – a form of anger and resentment caused by coveting what someone else has.
- **Fits of Anger** – Any need for explanation? (outbursts)
- **Rivalries** – trying to put yourself in front of the other person
- **Dissension** – discord b/w people
- **Divisions** – being divided
- **Envy** – a feeling of discontent or covetousness in regards to another person
- **Drunkenness** – Getting drunk
- **Orgies** – modern day equivalent would be drunken parties... Where sexual immorality occurs...
 - On a grand scale it is Bourbon Street at night
 - On a lesser scale it is a teenage party
 - And everything in between
- **Things Like these:**
- **You want to look at these things... and run from them...**
 - Resist the devil and He will flee from you

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

❖ **Those Who Live by the Works of the Flesh Will Not make it to Heaven**

- A Grave Warning: If you do not inherit the kingdom of God, Your lot will be in hell
- **Those who do such things...**
 - Better translation may be: Practice or to be busy with...
 - It is the continual habitual practice of such things...
 - It is not that the person has stumbled into sin, and wants to get out of it.... He lives there.
- **The Example of two places to live:**
 - The Christian lives in the high country.... Being led by God ... and they are to stay in the high country
 - The Non-Christian (who relies on his own self or something besides God for his saving) lives in the low country...
 - From time to time the Christian wanders down into the low country but He realizes it and comes home
 - The Non-Christian spends his time in the low country, but sometimes visits the High Country with a good deed here or there
 - But most good deeds they do are marked with self righteousness or an attempt to use the deed to earn them favor with God, or some false god...
- **What a Warning Right?**
 - Paul goes as far to tell them...
 - Hey, if this is who you are... I am warning you again like I warned you before...
 - You will not inherit the kingdom of God.
 - No matter who you think you are, or what you think you believed.
 - If you life looks like this: You live by the flesh.
 - You have never been born of the Spirit

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

❖ **Fruit of the Spirit: This is a singular fruit... not separate fruits, but a whole fruit (explain)**

- **I will consider them separately and in a plural sense as well, since they are different characteristics of the fruit we bear**
- **Love** - *Agapē* love
 - is the form of love that most reflects personal choice, referring not simply to pleasant emotions or good feelings but to willing, self-giving service.
 - Dominant Fruit
 - Greatest Love... by Christ... mimicked by Us
- **Joy** - *Chara* (**joy**) a feeling of happiness that is based on spiritual realities.
 - **Joy** is the deep-down sense of well-being that abides in the heart of the person who knows all is well between himself and the Lord.
- **Peace** - (*eirēnē*) refers to the tranquility of mind that comes from a saving relationship with God
 - The verb form has to do with binding together and is reflected in the modern expression “having it all together.”
 - Everything is in place and as it ought to be.
- **Patience** - *Makrothumia* (**patience**) has to do with tolerance and long-suffering that endure injuries inflicted by others,
 - the calm willingness to accept situations that are irritating or painful.
- **Kindness** - *Chrēstotēs* (**kindness**) relates to tender concern for others.
 - It has nothing to do with weakness or lack of conviction but is the genuine desire of a believer to treat others gently, just as the Lord treats him.
- **Goodness** - *Agathos* (**goodness**) has to do with moral and spiritual excellence that is known by its sweetness and active kindness.
 - Joseph was a man of goodness when he learned his wife Mary was with Child
- **Faithfulness** - *Pistis* (**faithfulness**) is the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit that pertains to loyalty and trustworthiness.
- **Gentleness** - *Prautēs* includes the idea of **gentleness**, but is usually better translated *meekness*.
 - It is that humble and gentle attitude that is patiently submissive in every offense, while being free of any desire for revenge or retribution.
- **Self Control** - *Enkrateia* (**self-control**) has reference to restraining passions and appetites.
- **Paul says...**
 - **Against Such things there is no law**
 - There is no law that can teach these things... there is no law that can stop these things.
 - These things are a product of the Spirit... not a product of the fles

❖ **Works vs Fruits**

- **Interesting use of words in my opinion**
- **Works seem to put the emphasis on what we do**
 - The works of the flesh come from a mentality that I deserve something....
 - I should get something because I have earned it...
- **Fruits –**
 - Come from a heart of a person who.... In faith depends on grace....
 - They do not think they have earned anything....
 - It has been given by God.
 - They are what we bear...

- They are a natural part of who we are...
- **When we are joined into the vine:**
 - **John 15:4, 5:** "Abide in me, and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit."

❖ **The Backdrop of these Verses...**

- These verses were written so that we might love one another better....
- I purposely waited until last to share that part...
- There are all sorts of practical applications for these verses...
- **But He writes these verses directly after saying:**
 - **Galatians 5:13-15** ¹³ For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.
- **Do you get it? Do you understand what He is saying...**
 - These verses should flow into every Relationship you have...
 - Focus on this.... Ask yourself if the fruits of the Spirit show up in these relationships...
 - Parents
 - Children
 - Friends
 - Co-Workers
 - Acquaintances
 - Spouses! (Let your spouse answer this one) Ask them.
- **A Call to Love:**
 - The first fruit mentioned was love...
 - And it is not a separate one from the others...
 - It is one through which all others flow
- Here... The overriding behavior of the person in the Spirit, is one who
 - Walks in love... loving his neighbor as himself

²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus **have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

❖ **Christians are Actively Living and Growing in the Fruits of the Spirit**

- **Have Crucified the flesh with its passions and desires...**
 - Have we? What does He mean?
 - I will answer this last....
- **If we live by the Spirit,**
 - We have been given life by the very Spirit of God.
 - He has come into our spiritually dead lives and raised us up from the dead...
 - We were dead in our trespasses and sins....
 - But now we are alive in Christ....
 - So if we live by the Spirit...
- **Let us also walk by the Spirit**
 - In our daily lives... let us walk and bear the fruits of the Spirit....
 - The Spirit is like the head of a Train....
 - And when we are hooked up to Him.... We are led along by Him...

- **How do we walk in (be led by) the Spirit....**
 - I could take the time to explain how I get to this conclusion...
 - But it would take another sermon....
 - So I will just give the Answer
 - ***You walk in the Spirit by: Digging into the Word of God (the 66 books of the Bible) and trusting in and applying the promises you find there. (Repeat)***
- **All sorts of applications:**
 - The Bible will supernaturally feed your hungry soul and attack your flesh...
 - **Struggling with :**
 - Being Anxious, sexual immorality, anger, envy, laziness, apathy....etc.
 - ◆ Go to the Bible and read God's word about those things...and how to overcome them...
 - ◆ And trust and live by it...
 - **But how do I find those verses....?**
 - ◆ Read the whole thing, and mark them as you go...
 - No Battle is won without proper preparation
- **How have we crucified the flesh, with its passions and desires?**
 - Isn't it still working... and active in us at times...?
 - When Paul writes this, He means it is something we the believer are doing.
 - We are killing our flesh... we are to be fighting against it.
 - It is part of our progressive Sanctification
 - And the passion and desires of the flesh want to rise up...
 - And we have to strike them down... continually
- **A Great Illustration of how we crucify the flesh is given by John Piper**
 - This is an analogy, not a vision he had...
 - He is just likening our crucifying of the old self to the slaying of a dragon
- **John Piper wrote:**
- *Picture your flesh—that old ego with the mentality of merit and craving for power and reputation and self-reliance—picture it as a dragon living in some cave of your soul. Then you hear the gospel, and in it Jesus Christ comes to you and says, "I will make you mine and take possession of the cave and slay the dragon. Will you yield to my possession? It will mean a whole new way of thinking and feeling and acting." You say: "But that dragon is me. I will die." He says, "And you will rise to newness of life, for I will take its plan; I will make my mind and my will and my heart your own." You say, "What must I do?" He answers, "Trust me and do as I say. As long as you trust me, we cannot lose." Overcome by the beauty and power of Christ you bow and swear eternal loyalty and trust.*
- *And as you rise, he puts a great sword in your hand and says, "Follow me." He leads you to the mouth of the cave and says, "Go in, slay the dragon." But you look at him bewildered, "I cannot. Not without you." He smiles. "Well said. You learn quickly. Never forget: my commands for you to do something are never commands to do it alone." Then you enter the cave together. A horrible battle follows and you feel Christ's hand on yours. At last the dragon lies limp. You ask, "Is it dead?" His answer is this: "I have come to give you new life. This you received when you yielded to my possession and swore faith and loyalty to me. And now with my sword and my hand you have felled the dragon of the flesh. It is a mortal wound. It will die. That is certain. But it has not yet bled to death, and it may yet revive with violent convulsions and do much harm. So you must treat it as dead and seal the cave as a tomb. The Lord of darkness may cause earthquakes in your soul to shake the stones loose, but you build them up again. And have this confidence: with my sword and my hand on yours this dragon's doom is sure, he is finished, and your new life is secure."*