

CHRISTIAN WARFARE

SPIRIT AND FLESH

Today's Passage: Galatians 5:16-26

For the week of May 26th

MAIN POINT

We glorify God when we demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit in compassion for others rather than indulging our selfish desires.

COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Use these questions to learn more about others in your Life Group.

When you were young, who had the most power over your behavior? Why were they so influential, either positively or negatively? Who or what influences you the most today?

Describe a time when you believed confidently that the Holy Spirit directed you to take a specific action. What does that mean? How does the Holy Spirit direct a person?

Kids don't understand many things. They learn some things just by watching and observing the world. But there are other things (like world history, science, math, etc.) that need to be described for them. In a similar way, we need the Holy Spirit to reveal God's truth to us. As believers, we need God to work in us to shape us into the people He has called us to be.

SCAN HERE FOR ADDITIONAL
COMMENTARY ON TODAY'S LESSON



GROW TOGETHER

Read Galatians 5:16-21 (ESV).

5:16 *“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.”*

How would you define the term “sinful nature” in your own words (v. 16)? In contrast, what does walking (or living) by the Spirit mean?

What characterizes a life guided by the sinful nature? By the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit leads us to do what God wants, not what our sinful natures want. The imperative “walk” is a Hebrew expression for “live,” with the idea of conduct or lifestyle. Its tense conveys continuous action. The phrase “by the Spirit” can be rendered “in the Spirit”—in the sphere the Spirit governs. To keep on living in the Spirit is to continually live by His power—to go where He is going.

If we are made alive by the Spirit, why do we still struggle with sin?

At the moment when we place our trust in Christ, our sinful nature no longer has control over us. Control now belongs to God and His Spirit. However, we live in a fallen world and remain in a battle against sin even after we become Christians. As long as we live, we will continue in this battle. Yet because we are in Christ, sin no longer dominates us. In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul presented a catalog of “the works of the flesh” (v. 19) so these believers could be forewarned. The sins listed in these verses are the result of twisting God’s gifts into ungodly behaviors and not following the Spirit.

Why do you think Paul chose these specific sins to mention? Do you see any commonalities among the sins in these verses?

What makes these sins “obvious” (v. 19)? How are they “contrary to the Spirit” (v. 17)?

How would our world be different if Christians let the Spirit lead in all their actions?

What is the significance of Paul’s warning in verse 21?

Read Galatians 5:22-26 (ESV).

***5:22** 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 keep in step with the Spirit. **26** Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.*

How does the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22-26 compare to the works of the flesh mentioned in verses 19-21?

What do each of the fruits of the Spirit have in common with each other? Where do you see the Holy Spirit bringing out these characteristics in your life?

If verse 26 describes the attitude of someone not in tune with the Spirit, what's the attitude of someone who is?

Paul called for the Galatian believers to follow the Spirit's leadership and avoid destructive attitudes and behavior (see 5:25-26). The Spirit's presence in our lives gives us the power we need to live out our faith. He replaces those sinful works with His fruit, and as a result we're able to love and serve others rather than ourselves.

MAKE AN IMPACT

Discover how you can apply today's lesson to your life so you can impact the world.

What is one way you can remind yourself of who you were before Christ without feeling a sense of judgment or condemnation?

Who is someone in your life that you have judged but instead need to look on with mercy?

How does understanding the gravity of the human condition change the way you are going to approach sharing the gospel this week?