

Pastor Robert Rutta

Walk in the Spirit

Galatians 5:13-18

In previous studies we have looked at the commands "grieve not the Spirit" and "quench not the Spirit". They were both negative in nature telling us things that we, as believers, must not do if we are to be spiritual.

- When the Holy Spirit wants you to do something, don't quench the Spirit.
Don't hold Him back by only doing part of what He says.
Don't screen what He says, deciding which parts you will obey and which you won't.
- Don't grieve Him by allowing sin to remain in your life.
Grow into what He wants. Get rid of the old ways.
He is grieved also when we don't get along with fellow believers as we should. He loves them and wants us to also.

In this lesson we want to consider a positive command concerning the Spirit of God.
Walk in the spirit.

To walk in the spirit simply means walking by a definite reliance upon the ability and power of the indwelling Spirit of God.

It means that we are not walking in our own power and strength!

The result of our walk in the spirit will be obvious: "ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." V16

As we look at this passage in Galatians, Paul is trying to explain why they did not have to follow the Old Testament Law.

The Judaizers were trying to get them to combine Grace with the Law.

There are three ways that we can try to live the Christian life.

Two of them will not work.

1. Legalism
2. License.

Legalism is when you are trying to add works to your salvation – either working to get your salvation or working to keep it.

Romans 6:1-2

6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **2** God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Romans 5 finished with the great truth that though our sin has abounded, God's grace has abounded even more. 5:20

Paul asks, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"

The thought is similar to the modern thought that if we are saved by grace through faith, then we can go out and sin all we want. (License)

Or, if our salvation is secure, then we can continue in sin.

The reply is, "God forbid" ('let it not be').

"How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

The simple idea is that dead people don't sin anymore.

We are supposed to be dead to sin.

He also mentioned this in Gal 5:13.

We have liberty, but not liberty to walk after the flesh.

We are not bound by the Law, but that does not mean we can do anything that we want.

The problem is that some had abused the principle of Christian liberty turning it into license.

That license was manifesting itself in bitter division among them. V15

The profound solution to this problem was simple: **by love serve one another.**

Not only ought we to love one another, but also serve one another in the same spirit.

V14 "For all the law is fulfilled..."

The Christian life is not supposed to be Legalism or License.

Both of those are centred in the flesh – the things we do by our power and strength.

3. Liberty

The answer is simple.

5:16 "*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."

18 "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law."

Use the freedom that you have to decide to do the things that are right.

Instead of your flesh deciding what you will do, walk in the Spirit.

Have your heart close to Him and desiring to do what will please God.

There are at least three reasons why we are commanded to walk in the spirit:

I. God's Standards of Life for the Believer

A. Supernatural and superhuman.

Since we are born again, the Holy Spirit of God indwells us.

We are no longer "natural" men.

We are citizens of heaven, and God expects us to "walk worthy" of this calling.

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Note some of what God expects from each of us:

A. Love one another as I have loved you ... John 13:34

B. Give thanks always for all things unto God ... Ep. 5:20

C. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing ... 1 Th. 5:16-17

D. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God ... Ep. 4:30

B. It is impossible for us to do these things in the power of the flesh ... We must walk in the spirit.

John 15:5

⁵ I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: **for without me ye can do nothing.**

If we try to do these things in our own strength, then we will fail.

We can do nothing good through our own strength.

II. The Enemy We Face

Satan is actively doing his work!

He is real and he opposes God in every way that he can.

A. The unsaved person is not in conflict with Satan.

They are following after his wishes.

What they don't understand is that the devil destroys everything that follows him.

They end up with a life of no peace and no joy.

They are being harmed, but they are not in conflict.

He will wreck their lives, but he will do it by getting them to follow him.

B. But when we accept Christ, we become partakers of his divine nature. Then the attacks begin.

There is an ongoing conflict between the sinful old nature with which we were born and the new nature created in righteousness at regeneration.

What can we do?

Ephesians 6:10-12

1. The conflict is unceasing, and cannot be overcome by human strategy and strength.

2. To do battle and win the victory we must not depend upon works, but faith. Eph. 6:16

Ephesians 6:16

¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

3. God anticipated our helplessness before the enemy and provided victory through the indwelling spirit.

4. I John 4:4, "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

C. So we must walk in the Spirit because of God's standards for the believer, and because of the fierceness of the enemy.

III. The Existence the Old Nature of Sin

There are three terms in the scripture which deal with this nature.

The flesh, the old man, and sin.

1. When found in the Bible it has a greater meaning than just the physical body.

2. It carries a moral and ethical meaning.

3. It is the "self" nature and desires, and is opposed to the "spirit" which indwells.

The conflict.

1. Since there are two natures in the Christian, there is a conflict which will continue until these bodies are changed.

Galatians 5:17

¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

As in Romans 7:15-25, there is a continual battle between the corrupt, selfish, old nature and the holy new one (the spirit).
They are mortal enemies within.

The flesh, in particular, will prevent us from doing as we *ought*. Contrariwise, the new nature (the spirit) will prevent us from doing what we *want*.

The key is to walk in the spirit.

Because of this conflict between the two natures, it is imperative that we walk in the spirit.

Again the result: ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

That is accomplished through continual exposure to the Word of God, submission to the Holy Spirit, crucifixion of the flesh, and a determination to live in the new nature.

Conclusion:

We cannot meet tomorrow's problems today.

The walk is step by step and this demands a constant appropriation of the power of God.

The Christian life is not like a balloon ride where we ascend up and continue rising until we reach our destination.

It is a walk which speaks of continuation in this world, but in the power of the Spirit of God.