



Sermon Series: Thrive: Living on Purpose

To be used with Session 4: Purpose Lived

Sermon Title Possibilities: Living on Purpose

Scripture: Galatians 5:16-26

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the Bible study “Thrive: Living on Purpose” this sermon highlights the practice of walking in the Spirit, emphasizing its role in guiding and restoring our souls, and redeeming the evils of this world. As we dive into the essence of spiritual guidance, we will explore how being led by the Spirit also serves as a preventive measure, nurturing and healing relationships, and steering them towards the cross of Christ. Through this sacred walk, we discover a path of divine restoration and guidance, providing a deeper connection with our Lord.

Introduction: Walking is often underrated. It is a simple act that we gradually master from birth, providing stability and momentum to our lives. While life without walking is possible, most would agree that the ability to walk is a standard and expected milestone for individuals over the age of two. However, if someone who normally walks suddenly encounters difficulty, it signals that something is amiss. It could be an issue with their equilibrium, such as dizziness, or an unknown problem that requires diagnosis. Regardless, when walking is impaired, something is wrong. This principle holds true in our spiritual lives as well. Walking in the Spirit is a foundational aspect of the Christian faith. The expectation to know, yield to, and walk in God's Word is crucial for believers and serves as a marker of true fellowship with Christ. Our text, particularly from the Book of Galatians, underscores this by revealing elements that can either help or hinder the Christian walk. The measuring stick for a full life in Christ is evident as Galatians exposed both the aids and obstacles to walking in the Spirit.

1. Living With Conviction (Galatians 5:16-18).

To understand the Book of Galatians, one must grasp the perspective of the Apostle Paul. After leading and guiding new converts to the faith, he took on the responsibility of founding a new church in the region. Paul felt deeply responsible for their spiritual well-being and was shocked to discover that this church was quickly falling away from the faith (Galatians 1:6). His frustration mounted as he became aware of the confusion and strife among the people, who were

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distorting the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul firmly reminded them that if anyone was preaching a gospel other than what they had learned from him, they should be under a curse (Galatians 1:9).

It becomes immediately clear that the letter to the Galatians is highly intense. Paul's commitment to restoring this church to good standing with the foundational teachings of their faith is evident. In verse 16, Paul continues discussing righteous living, emphasizing the significance and importance of the Spirit, which guides and satisfies in ways that fleshly desires cannot. He makes it clear that living according to their own desires is unacceptable. Paul then tells them to be led by the Spirit. Though this may seem elementary, Paul is adamant that they master the basics of the faith. These basics are crucial, as they enable the newly founded church to discern what is contrary to Christ and communion with God is the only reward for a true believer.

2. Living With Awareness (Galatians 5:19-21)

The desires of the flesh are significant hindrances to inheriting the kingdom of God (v. 21). Paul addressed his concerns by listing these desires explicitly. By reviewing what might have been considered societal normative behavior, Paul delivers a comprehensive warning. As believers, we must be mindful of the things that can derail us from what God is doing in our lives. The items Paul lists are not confined to the first century; they are rampant even in the twenty-first century. Remaining vigilant is crucial, and Paul gets specific about topics that can derail one's faith.

First, Paul addresses sexual immorality and impurity, which are especially relevant given the societal and religious practices of the time. These behaviors are not just morally wrong but can also lead to the next tier of Paul's discussion: idolatry and witchcraft, emphasizing the improper focus of worship misaligning them against Old Testament principles about serving no other gods.

The selfish nature of discord, jealousy, rage, and ambition highlights the importance of unity and fellowship within the family of faith. Paul concludes with a stark warning about the consequences of following the path of destruction: the absence of inheriting the kingdom of God. There are consequences to sin, and to live on purpose, one must align with God's purpose rather than our own. This adherence to God's purpose is essential for a life of true fulfillment and spiritual integrity.

3. Living With Boldness (Galatians 5:24-26).

Despite the many warnings, Paul offers good news for the church in Galatians and for all believers. There are ways to nurture and feed the Spirit within us, leading to a victorious life. The best news is that the Spirit leads and empowers us. Paul reminds the Galatian church that those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires, enabling them to walk victoriously (Galatians 5:24). Paul emphasizes that living by the Spirit is not merely about avoiding sin but actively pursuing a life guided by the Spirit's power and wisdom.

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This guidance provides believers with the strength to overcome the temptations and challenges of the flesh. The Spirit cultivates virtues such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, which are the fruits of a Spirit-led life (v. 22-23).

Moreover, Paul assures the Galatians and us today that by staying connected to the Spirit, we can experience ongoing renewal and transformation. This divine guidance is not a one-time event but a continuous journey of growth and sanctification. In the same way Paul encouraged the Galatians, he encouraged us to remain steadfast in our faith, trusting in the Spirit's leading, and embracing the freedom and victory that come from living in Christ. Through this commitment, we can rise above the struggles of the flesh and experience the fullness of life that God intends for us.

Conclusion: We have the luxury of reading Paul's letter in the comfort of our homes, churches, small groups, or cafes. Although this message is centuries old, it has endured through history to remind us of the standard set by Jesus, who came from heaven to earth to grant us access to eternal life. Paul's commitment to the fruits of the Spirit did not come without his own hardships, which qualify him to hold all believers accountable. He was wounded for the cause of Christ and understands the joy and peace that come with fulfilling all the requirements he teaches. The whole point of the Gospel message is to point back to Jesus—His death, burial, and resurrection. Without it, we are left to our own devices, which will result in not inheriting the Kingdom of God. Let's not waste Jesus' sacrifice. Live on purpose!

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