

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Spirit vs Flesh
Galatians 5:16-26

Last time...we are called by God to

1. Liberty – free to say “No” to sin and “Yes” to God
2. Love – the fulfillment of the Law

This time...now freed to think and live differently, walking in the Spirit vs walking in the flesh
More instruction is righteousness to...believers

We are in Gal 5

v16-17 Walk in the Spirit...flesh...contrary:

We who have been

- liberated by the righteous of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ
- set free from the condemnation of the Law and the impossible burden of “being good enough” to be pleasing to God
- set free to say “No” to sin and “Yes” to God

have a “dual nature” (neither a split personality nor bi-polar)

1. flesh – our sin nature
2. Spirit – the nature of God the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ

We cannot live both natures simultaneously and the conflict between them
hinders the child of God from living as they should – Christ-like

Living with both natures is an “either/or” proposition because those two natures
are NOT friends, they are uncompromising opponents...
co-resident but NOT on friendly terms of Coexist

One of those two natures is in the driver’s seat (on the throne of our heart) at any
moment in time...and the other is striving against it

The Spirit seeks to dominate the flesh and the flesh seeks to dominate the Spirit
Like Esau (type of the flesh) and Jacob (aka Israel, type of the Spirit)
wrestling in Rebekah’s womb, the children of God in this world
have an inner civil war raging every day, all day

The Apostle Paul also found he could not do the things he desired or determined
to do (live Christ-like always)

Rom 7:14-25

Who cannot relate to Paul exasperation?!

I distinctly remember our oldest son Brian, standing in our kitchen with his Bible in hand reading these verses and saying to me,

“This is so true! This (the conflict between Spirit and flesh) is so hard for me!”

Which means, in his struggle, he understood and believed these words!

Personally, my most frequent contradiction is when I am driving

I do not turn the radio on because in the silence I am able to clearly hear the small still voice of God speaking to me;

usually a very sweet time of fellowship with the Lord

But I also find myself talking to the drivers around me!

Not swearing, for the Lord took away my potty mouth immediately upon saving me

but not blessing them

Oh, bless your soul for not paying attention and nearly crashing into me!

PTL you are driving so slowly!

We all know the inner struggle...and the Lord knows

Matt 26:38 Then saith he unto them, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.*

Matt 26:41 *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Ps 103:8-14 The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth (love, compassion, mercy) *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

Since we have been set free by Jesus Christ, how then should we live?

According to His indwelling Spirit and NOT according to our insatiably lustful Self from which we were set free

i.e. Live saying “Yes” to God and “No” to sin,

obedient to our loving Father rather than to a self-serving and self-destructive taskmaster

How we should live is clear, but how do we live?

It depends on which nature we feed/make strong

Do we daily feed the Spirit?

- Praying without ceasing...talking AND listening
- The Word...the Bread of Life
- Meditation on the Word...pondering, chewing, listening to the Teacher
- Worship...an attitude by which we act

Do we daily feed the flesh?

- Food and drink
- Things that please the eyes or ears (gateways to the mind)

Which ever nature we habitually choose to nurture will be the dominate nature by which we live our day

The only way to John 3:30 is to feed the Spirit and starve the flesh

Toward that end, our God has a reminder, an exhortation

v18 led...not under:

In the moment when our flesh says one thing and the Spirit says something exactly opposite, be led of the Spirit...submit the will of the flesh to the will of God, letting the Holy Spirit sit on the throne of our heart while constraining the flesh and bringing it into subjection (1 Cor 9:27)

The Father has gifted us the Holy Spirit, Who does faithfully

- teach of all things
- remind us of what Jesus has said, including Matt 16:24
(the flesh suffers when it is dominated by the Spirit)
- guide us into all truth

that we might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Peter 1:4)

And as such, we are not under the Law but rather are freed from the condemnation of the Law by Jesus Christ...freed and empowered to say "No" to sin and "Yes" to God

Jesus says to disciples, "Follow Me."

We either follow Him/His Spirit, or we follow our flesh and its lusts

Where does our flesh lead us?

v19-21 the works of the flesh:

It is obvious, apparent to all, where the flesh leads us:

1. Adultery: self-serving sexual sin, marital relations with someone else's spouse
2. Fornication: whoredom, any self-serving sexual activity outside the God-ordained boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman
3. Uncleaness: any and every moral impurity
4. Lasciviousness: unrestrained sexual behavior, filthiness in a deliberate disregard of God's constraints (given for our well being)
5. Idolatry: covetousness of the things of the world (Col 3:5), image worship
6. Witchcraft: sorcery, magic, drugs, etc that open the door to the darkness in the spiritual realm
7. Hatred: an intense hostility toward God and man
8. Variance: arguing, quarreling, contention
Ever know someone who just loves to argue?
Even sharing the Gospel and it becomes a debate, an argument to be won, becomes carnal/fleshly
9. Emulations: envy, jealousy (corrupted)
10. Wrath: fierce indignation (unrighteous outburst)
A fit of rage
11. Strife: intrigue, self-promotion by the destruction of others
e.g. climbing the Corporate ladder on the backs of others
12. Seditions: divisiveness, dissensions
To weaken or destroy
13. Heresies: opposition to sound doctrine/Truth, the belief of lies
14. Envyings: ill-will
15. Murder: shedding of man's blood/life

16. Drunkenness: drinking alcoholic beverages unto intoxication

17. Revellings: rioting, carousing

Is anyone uncomfortable?

Conviction is uncomfortable, not a warm-fuzzy ear-tickling ego booster

We are all guilty of many/most/all of these

The Holy Spirit says 1 Cor 6:9-11

Want to feel good? Feel good about the Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit!

“Oh, I never murdered anyone or committed adultery!!!”

Really?

Matt 5:21-22

The Spirit

Matt 5:27-28

of the Law

But Jesus also said John 8:10-11

Who accuses us? The devil (Rev 12:10)

And the Holy Spirit also says Rom 8:33-34

What do we see in our nation today?

- Promotion of homosexuality and all sorts of sexual perversion
- Murder of babies
- Rioting and lawlessness...crime pays!
- Racial tensions...everyone is a racist!
- This entire list
- Sin, the flesh/heart of unregenerate man on display for all to see

And, as in the Days of Noah and the Days of Lot, these are increasing

- rebellion against God...no fear of God
- violence and lawlessness
- racial tensions
- sexual perversions/abomination
- hypocrisy
- demonic activity...drug culture
- pride, haughtiness
- abundance of idleness...collect unemployment vs work
- unawareness of impending judgment

because we “legislated” the Living God (prayer and the Bible) out of our public school system in the early 1960s (60 years ago)

The chickens have come home to roost!

Ps 66:7

He (God) ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves

But...it is not too late!

There is still hope for this nation and all of our lost loved ones!

Evil is still being restrained...by the Spirit-indwelling Church (2 Thes 2:6-7)

1 Tim 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou ought to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar (witness) and ground (support, basis) of the truth

Heb 12:1-3 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Jesus is the answer to all that ails this land and our lost loved ones, if the nation and they would but repent

Rom 2:4b the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance

We were drawn to the Father and to Jesus Christ by His love and grace...
not His condemnation and judgment

He did not and does not condemn and judge...yet

We are witnesses of God's love and grace in our spheres of influence

And we should be praying fervently for repentance and revival in this nation and families because those that do the works of the flesh will never enter into the kingdom of God but will be cast into outer darkness where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth (per Jesus Himself) when God does stand up to condemn and judge

Now, back to those (all?!) of us who are uncomfortable by the works of the flesh

Keyword in v21: "do", which occurs 15x in NT out of 416x of "do"

"repeatedly, habitually practicing"...given over to it,
wanting to do vs do not wanting to (matter of the heart)

For example, the long list of the works of the flesh judged by God in Rom 1:18-31 ends with

Rom 1:32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only **do** the same, but have pleasure in them that **do** them

The Holy Spirit is not speaking of the “surprising and grieving” stumbles in the flesh (sin) by a child of God who is a work in progress of

- being conformed by the Father into the image of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29)
- being purified by the Holy Spirit unto Jesus Christ, zealous of good (Godly) works (Titus 2:14)
- learning of Jesus...“Not my will be done but Your will be done”

Sitting around talking with some friends...and had a little too much to drink

Saw something that popped up on my phone or saw someone walk by...and took a long hard look at it

This guy made me so mad I wanted to punch his lights out!

Coveting some material thing

etc

1 John 1:6 – 2:3

But “do” refers to the “sold-out” lifestyle of the love of Self vs love of God

Rom 1:18-32

2 Tim 3:1-5

If v19-21 is where the flesh leads us, where does the Spirit lead us?

v22-23 the fruit of the Spirit:

fruit vs works...Jesus working vs Self

John 15:1-8

Fruit/evidence of being led of the Holy Spirit

1. Love: *agape*, not just *phileo* (an emotion, of the fickle flesh)
Self-less, self-last, sacrificial, unfailing
2. Joy: cheerfulness regardless of circumstances (John 16:33)
3. Peace: rest, end of rebellion against (Rom 5:1)
4. Longsuffering: patience, suffering long, fortitude (the mental and emotional strength to face adversity or temptation)
5. Gentleness: kindness, sweetness
6. Goodness: God-like-ness

7. Faith: Heb 11:1

8. Meekness: humility, Christ-like-ness

9. Temperance: control of Self/flesh...Self/flesh controlled by the Spirit

The fruit of the Spirit is, indeed, contrary to the works of the flesh!

The work of Jesus (Life) in our life is contrary to the works of the flesh (death)

The Law condemns the works of the flesh and its self-serving nature

But there is no Law against this nature, for it is God's nature!

Rom 7:1-6

Flesh: lawlessness

Spirit: dead to the law

Love is God's nature

Love is the fulfillment of the Law

Love is above the Law

The Law of Love is a higher standard

And if v21b, then those who do these things shall inherit the kingdom of God

v24-26 they that are Christ's:

Those who are

- "in Christ"
- purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 6:19-20)
- born of the Spirit of God
- given the power to be the children of God

("do") crucify the flesh...emotions and longing desires, and all (Rom 6:6-23)

So, if we live in the Spirit...

are alive spiritually, one with God, and Spirit-led (albeit not perfectly)...

let us walk in the Spirit...

"march, keep in step with" (a military term)

Rom 8:1-14

let us not live to glorify Self, self-centered puffing up of ourself, by

provoking/irritating one another

envying/jealous of another

i.e. compare and compete with each other...the way of the world

We surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ when we called upon His name
for salvation from the wages of our sin

Now we learn to continually surrender to the indwelling Holy Spirit guiding us
thru this world into the next world...the Spirit of Christ teaching us to live
like Christ

Summary

Believer

Be a good student of living “the Good Life”!

Feed the Spirit and starve the flesh

Love the Lord and others

Serve the Lord and others vs being self-serving

Be transformed by the renewing of our mind with the mind of Christ

Walk in the Light and not in the darkness

Live according to the nature of God indwelling us

Personally, what I say and do is to be determined by who I am by the Spirit of God

1. child of God, purchased by the blood of the Son of God
2. husband
3. father
4. helper of your joy
5. brother
6. friend
7. human being created in the image of God

Each of you have a similar priority of ministries

May we be faithful to our calling

1. Liberty – say “No” to sin and “Yes” to God
2. Love – the fulfillment of the Law
3. Walk in the Spirit, led of the Spirit

Unbeliever

Repent and call on the name of the Lord if you are not a follower of Jesus Christ

The wise man considers the end of the matter

The end of the matter is Rev 22:12-15

“do” = “abide”

If you want hands laid on you in prayer, come forward