Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Walking by the Spirit, Part 2
Scripture: Galatians 5:19-21
Code: 1669

We're continuing our series tonight in the book of Galatians and I draw your attention to Chapter 5 for our study, and this is part two in the look at walking by the Spirit. Galatians Chapter 5 and we'll be looking at verses 16-25 in the subject of walking by the Spirit. Now the passage that we are looking at Galatians 5 is the primary passage in the Scripture on the subject of walking by the Spirit, which is, of course, a very, very basic concept to the Christian life. And as we come to Galatians 5 and as we are introduced to the idea of walking by the Spirit, that is not to say that we are introduced to the concept of walking. For the idea of walking in the Christian life is frequently discussed in the New Testament.

I notice when Ralph shared his testimony he made reference to his walk as a Christian and we talk about the walk of the Christian. Because this is a very familiar term in the New Testament. Now the word walk or walking is used in reference to the practical daily life of the believer. If you wanted to use a contemporary synonym for walk, you could call it lifestyle. The believer's lifestyle. The believer's walk, his daily pattern. Now as I started to think about this and getting into the whole subject, I got stuck on the word walk at the very beginning of verse 16. And I decided well, I'm going to trace that word all around the New Testament and see if I can come up with a sort of a mini theology on walking. A guide of walking theology, what does it mean when it talks about the Christian walk? And I found some very interesting things that are very, very basic and very important.

First of all, and we'll cover several items, but first of all this is all introduction and we may never get passed it so don't worry. But anyway, first of all, in the concept of walk there are some general commands in the Bible in the New Testament. And I say general insofar as they simply exhort us to walk. In 1 Thessalonians, for example, verse 12 of Chapter 2, the Bible says, "That ye should walk worthy of God who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory."

Now as a general statement that you are to walk worthy of God who has called you. In Colossians 1:10, it says, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing." And again, you have this general idea of walking worthy. In Ephesians, and you may be more familiar with this, Chapter 4, verse 1. "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation to which you're called." Three times generally the Holy Spirit tells us to walk worthy of our calling. And what that simply means is let your practice match your position. If you are a new creature in Christ, if you are uniquely set apart unto God, if you are holy, if you are all things become new, then you ought to act like it. So walk worthy, that is walk in accord with who you are. If a man is a king, we expect

him to act like a king. If a man is a dignitary, we expect him to act like a dignitary. That's the same idea.

Because of who you are this is how you are to behave, walk worthy. So there are general commands that the daily pattern of the believer, his lifestyle is to be at least the equivalent or as close to it as is humanly possible in the strength of the Spirit to his position as is possible. Now secondly, in addition to some general commands, there are some very specific commands about our walk. And this gets into the idea of specifically what we do. Now as long as you're in Ephesians 4, let's stay there for a minute. Look at verse 2.

Now he says "walk worthy." Well, what does that mean? Well, let me give you a little walking theology. If you've got a pencil you can jot these things down. Here's a little theology of the Christians walk. First of all, walk in humility. Walk in humility. Our lifestyle is to be characterized by humility, verse 2. "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering forbearing one another in love." That means you don't get angry at other people. You tolerate them lovingly. "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace." Now there's only one thing that makes for unity and that's love, and there's only one that makes for love and that's humility. And we've seen that time and time again.

So a worthy walk then is to walk in humility. To walk in humility. Secondly, walk pure, walk pure. Not only walk in humility, but the New Testament exhorts the believer to walk pure or to have a pure lifestyle. Romans 13:13 says "Let us walk honestly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy." He's talking about purity. Walk in the purity. Walk pure.

Thirdly, the Christian's walk is to walk content, to walk content. Now this is most interesting, but to illustrate this to you and this is only an illustration of walking content, and we could illustrate that a lot of ways and whatsoever state you are to be content. But the idea of walking is interesting, because it's used in 1 Corinthians 7:17. Now any of you that have gone through any marital trouble or recently been married or any kind of marital counseling, you probably wound your around to 1 Corinthians 7. Because 1 Corinthians 7 is all about marriage and the believer and the marriage between two believers and a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever and unmarried women and a lot of things are talked about there.

But a most interesting statement is made in verse 17 of 1 Corinthians 7 says this. "But as God as distributed to every man, as the Lord has called everyone so let him walk." And in that passage it has direct relation to marital status. And what it's saying is this, so you get saved and you've got an unsaved spouse. That is no grounds to dissolve the marriage. But you are to be content to walk in the very way which God has called you or the very way that God has dealt with you. If you are married to an unbeliever, you become saved, you continue to be married to an unbeliever. You don't

violate the marriage on a spiritual basis or a so-called spiritual basis, which would be unspiritual.

And so as an illustration he is saying be content even in that union, for God has dealt that to you. God knows that when He redeems you, you have an unsaved partner. So you are to be content in one sense with your marital status and that illustrates to me the idea of walking content. And another point, we are to walk in faith. We are to walk in faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by," what, "faith and not," what, "by sight." So the believer is not to judge the things that are happening by what he sees happening, but he is to judge all things in terms of his faith in God. He sees all things from the heavenly side.

He interprets everything celestially. He sees God at work. Has the circumstances. So we are to walk in faith. Another thing about our walk, we are to walk in good works. We are to walk in good works. I just read you Colossians 1:10 which says we are to walk fruitfully unto all good works well pleasing in His sight. But Ephesians 2:10 perhaps gives us another look at it. "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that you should," what, "walk in them." So the lifestyle of a Christian is good works.

The lifestyle of a Christian then is humility, purity, contentedness, faith, and good works. Let me give you another interesting one. Turn in your Bibles to Ephesians 4, if you're not still there, verse 17. And we'll jump in at this point. In Ephesians 4:17 we find that the Christian is to walk, now listen to this one, "to walk differently." We are to walk differently. Look at verse 17. "This I say therefore and testify in the Lord that you henceforth walk not as heathen walk." The word other doesn't appear in the best manuscripts. And Gentiles ethniccan be translated pagans or heathens or Gentiles or Greeks or any of those terms. "But you are to walk not as heathen walk in the vanity of their minds."

So you're to walk differently. You are not be like the system. You're not to be like the world. It's a different walk. And he goes on to contrast it. You look at the old walk and the new walk contrasted in the passage. Let me just give you an idea of what I mean. At the end of verse 17 it says that the old walk was in the vanity of their minds, self-centered, vanity, pride in their own thoughts. The old walk self-centered. Look at verse 20. The new walk "You have not so learned Christ." Christ never taught you self-centeredness. It's a Christ-centered walk.

The old walk is self-centered, the new walk is Christ-centered. Secondly, the old walk is ignorant, verse 18. Having the understanding darkened. Be alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart. The old walk is ignorant. The new walk is in knowledge. Look at verse 21, "If so be that you have heard Him and been taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus." Here's knowledge. We have heard, we have been taught the truth. So the old walk is ignorant, the new walk is knowledge.

Thirdly, the old walk is shameless, verse 19. "Who being past feeling," no longer sensitive conscience, "have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness." They chase after uncleanness, they're greedy for it. Shameless. The new walk is with a sensitivity to sin. Verse 22, "You put off concerning the former manner of life," the former lifestyle. "The old man corrupt according to the deceitful lusts."

It's different, it's not shameless. It's sensitive to sin. Then fourthly the old walk is a reprobate mind. It's the kind of mind that is completely given over to evil at the end of verse 19. To work all uncleanness with greediness. It's just gone. There's no bounds anymore. There's no limits on it. Whereas in verse 23, it's a new mind. "Renewed in the Spirit of your mind." So the old walk and the new walk are diametrically opposed. We walk differently.

Let me give you another concept in our mini theology on walking. We are to walk separated. We are to walk separated. And to illustrate that I draw your attention to 2 Thessalonians 3, verse 6 and here we're not talking about apart from the world. We're talking about apart from other Christians. Did you know that there are times when you separate yourself from other Christians? Yes, 2 Thessalonians 3:6, "We command you brethren," this isn't an option. "We command you brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly and not after the tradition which you received of us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us. For we behave not ourselves disorderly among you."

In verse 11, he says, "And we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly working not at all, but are busy bodies." That's one good illustration of disorderly being a busy body. You're to walk separated from Christians living in sin. It's a separated walk. Let me give you another one. You're to walk in love. Are you still in Ephesians? Look at Ephesians 5:2. You're to walk in love, the lifestyle of love. Verse 2 of Ephesians 5 puts it very clear. "And walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us an offering an sacrifice to God." Now you say what kind of love? The kind of love that sacrifices itself. That's the kind of love. You're to walk in terms of self sacrifice, not physical love.

That's verse 3. "Not fornication and uncleanness and all that. That's what the world thinks love is. You're to love as Christ loved in the sacrifice of yourself. Same Chapter, look at this. You're to walk in light, verse 8. "For you were once darkness, but now are you light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." So we're to walk in light as well as in love. He's not done. Look at verse 15. You're to walk in wisdom. "See then that you walk circumspectly." The word means exactly or carefully or accurately, meticulously.

You are to walk carefully, meticulously following the Christian principles, not as fools, but as wise redeeming the time because the days are evil. And that same injunction is repeated in Colossians 4:5. So you're to walk in love, in light and in wisdom. Let me give you one more. You're to walk in

truth. And here you get to the depth of the study of the word of God and this is in the little Epistle of 3 John. And listen, this is such a beautiful little statement here and I can certainly read the heart of John as he wrote and sympathized with his feelings. In 3 John, that's just a couple of pages before Revelation, verse 3. "For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee even as thou walkest in the truth." He rejoiced because they walked in the truth and he expresses it in verse 4. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

I'll tell you if you're a teacher or a discipler of others you can understand that can't you? The greatest joy that you have is to find out that your children in the faith are walking in the truth. The greatest disappointment is to find out they're not. So we're to walk in truth. Well, there you have just a general and then a more specific statement on the Christian walk or the Christian lifestyle.

Now, to give some...and you say well, that's...you know that's good and those are presets and those principles and they're there and I read them and I see them and maybe I wrote them down, but if you're like I am, it's nice to have a handle on some of these things. It's nice to say well, that's good, but I need something more concrete. Something more physical that I can grab onto and pattern myself after. And so if that's what you and that's what I need and the Holy Spirit must have known you can come with me to Philippians Chapter 3 and you can look at verse 16.

And Philippians 3:16 it says, "Nevertheless as to that which we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule. Let us mind the same thing." Now he's saying we ought to walk consistent with what we've learned. Now we've learned these basic truths. Everything I just told you I've taught you before in detail, that's why we didn't go into it. Now you need to be walking in that pattern. Now in case you need help, verse 17. "Brethren be followers together of me and mark them who walk even as you have us for an example."

Now here Paul says you can pattern your walk after my walk. And you can also see those who walk in an ungodly fashion whose end is destruction, verse 19. So Paul says there are concrete patterns for you. He's one. There are spiritual men. There are men of God that you can look to in terms of a pattern of godliness. So walk and walk after godly patterns. You say well that's good. Then I'm supposed to sort of be like Paul. That's easy.

What's the next point? Well, if you think that's tough get this one. This is the epitome and I want you to look at it. 1 John 2:6, 1 John 2:6 summarizes everything about the Christian walk. Now if this doesn't get to you nothing will. Verse 6 of 1 John 2, "He that saith he abideth in Him," now stop right there. Now anybody who's a Christian claims to abide in Christ, right? So all of us would say that. I abide in Christ. Great. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as," what, "He walked." Now you thought Paul was tough. Who's the standard? What is God's great desire for the Christian? That his lifestyle be the equivalent of that of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself on earth. And if you say you abide in Him, then you should walk as He walked.

In other words, your lifestyle should match the lifestyle of Jesus Christ. You say oh that's just wonderful. Now all I have to do is be exactly like Jesus. That's right. That's right. But can I give you an encouraging word? One that encourages me? I think you'll get a new dimension of understanding. 2 Corinthians 6:16, now you say but it's impossible to be like Christ. I can't walk like He walked. You're right. First thing to do is to recognize it.

Look at 2 Corinthians 6:16, "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols." Now listen to this, "For ye are the temple of the living God. As God hath said," watch this one, "I will dwell in them and," what, "walk in them." Is that fantastic? Of course you can't walk like that. So God dwells in you and walks in you. And all you need to do is go along. That's why it says and you come right back to Galatians 5 walk by means of the Spirit. In the Greek, that's the instrumental case. Walk by means of the Spirit, not like Enoch. It says in the Bible that Enoch walked with God. That's nice. That's not what we're to do. He...we're not walking with God. There's a song like that. "I'll walk with God." That's...you can't do that. You can't go the places He goes. And if you did, you couldn't get back.

You can't walk with God, but God in the new covenant walks in you. So that wherever you are, He's there. And He is living through you the Christ likeness that He desires. That's a fantastic thing. You say boy does that take the monkey off my back. I mean, after you gave all those general commands to walk worthy and all those specific lists and then you told me to be like Paul and then to be like Jesus and now you say God will walk in me. That's the key to the whole New Testament. So we come full circle. We land right back.

Turn in your Bibles to Galatians 5 and the injunction of Galatians 5 is this simple. It says "walk by the Spirit of God." In other words, just stay in step with God who's moving in you. Simple concept. The Spirit of Almighty God is in us. He's alive and He's walking and we can fulfill all the worthy walk by walking by His power, by walking by His leading. And so in Galatians 5 when the Bible says walk by the Spirit, maybe it means something more to you than it did before we studied just that little introduction.

Everything, watch this now, everything then becomes ultimately possible to the Christian in the worthy walk, because it is the Spirit of God that is in us taking every step. And all we need to do is just go along in His energy. Go along in His power and He'll conform us to Christ. Now you can sit in the corner legalistically and grunt and groan and grit your teeth and try to be like Christ and it'll never happen. And that's what Paul's been trying to say through Galatians isn't it? That you cannot effect in your life the righteousness that God demands through legalism. Through law works.

The law can't save, the law can't sustain and the law can't sanctify you. The Spirit of God saves you. The Spirit of God secures you by the sealing. And the Spirit of God sanctifies you. It is not your works. You were saved by grace, Romans 5:1 says and you continue to stand in grace. It's all a

divine work. You didn't gain your salvation externally by works. You can't keep it externally by works. You can't live by external law works as the Judaisers tried to teach. You don't need any of that because you have the indwelling God. You don't need outward rituals when you have the indwelling God walking in you.

Now the immediate context as we draw our attention then to Galatians 5, the immediate context is Paul's reaction to the Judaisers. And in this immediate context, do you remember what we said? Paul came along and he said the Christian doesn't need to live under a legal system. It doesn't need to believe that what he does, what he does outwardly in terms of his deeds really causes the blessing of God. You know, it's one of the things that you see so often in this is the area of what is called tithing in the Old Testament. If a guy gives his ten percent, he feels he has bought God's blessing.

That's ridiculous. As I've told you before, we're not under the law. So if you're struggling around the law, why don't you give either nine percent or eleven percent, but not ten, because that's legalism. Don't think that because you gave ten percent, God is up there saying well, mark off Joel there he did his thing. No, some of us ought to give 50%, some of us perhaps less. That isn't the point. The point is that we're to respond to the Spirit of God directing us inside to give, not by our bank accounts. But that's one area where people very often are very legalistic.

We do not gain God's favor. We do not grow spiritually by keeping an external code, but by responding to the direction of the Holy Spirit. Now what happened here was Paul came along and he said you don't need any external laws any more and the Jews...the Judaisers just said wait a minute, if you remove the law, you have removed the only sin restraint. They felt that the law was the dam that held sin from busting loose. That the people who had the law and who knew the penalty for the law would keep themselves back from sin, because they wouldn't want to pay the penalty. And so when Paul came along and preached liberty, you're free in Christ, you know, you have this great liberty, you don't need the law any more. The Judaisers kind of grabbed their heads and said now wait a minute, if you do that and you remove the law, there's no restraint for sin.

And that's when Paul came along and said no, the restraint's gone internal. The Holy Spirit is the restrainer. And He's the one that restrains. He's the one that purifies. He's the one that becomes our conscience. He's the one that restricts us. He's the one that makes the God life reproduced in us. The external becomes immaterial, inconsequential, unnecessary. And believe me, the Holy Spirit will do a lot better job of restraining than the law ever did. The law only scared people into submission. Now let's look at verse 16.

"This I say then walk by the Spirit." Cross out in if you have it there and put by. There's not a preposition in the Greek, it's just an instrumental case. "Walk by means of the Spirit." Walk by His power. It's not you in Him, it's what? It's Him in you. It's Him in you. So "walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Now that's his answer to the Judaisers. You don't need to worry

about sin. If the believer just walks in the Spirit, he doesn't need the external law because the Spirit will restrain sin. So walking by the Spirit is basic to Christian living. God dwells in you. His Spirit dwells in you, and as He said, "I will dwell in them and walk in them so God walks in you." And all you need to do is rest in Him, stay in step. It's His power and it's His direction. And it's only a question of submitting to that.

Now, as we look at the discussion in these verses 16-25, we see four parts to our attention we would really be able to pull these four parts together to probably get the main message of the passage. The command, the conflict, the contrast, and the conquest, and we looked at the first two last time. I'll review them briefly. First of all, the command. The command is clear in verse 16. "Walk by the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Walking implies as I said lifestyle, daily progress and it also implies effort on our part. The term by the Spirit implies power and direction on God's part.

And as we said last time, we're involved. It is the Spirit walking in us, but it is for us to walk as well or we would not need a command. Now let me give you a handle on this. You say well, walk by the Spirit, John, what do you mean? I mean, the Spirit is so intangible, you know. And I agree a lot of people have made a personification of the Spirit or attempted to in a dove and that's kind of become the identity that a lot of people have or sort of a floating blob that looks like an abstract dove. But basically the Spirit of God is a detached reality in the sense that He has no personal form. And since He has no personal form and had no earthly life, for us to say we're walking by the Spirit is somewhat abstract. And I think the Holy Spirit accommodates our thinking by making a very clear comparison repeatedly in the New Testament.

And let me give you an illustration. Turn to Ephesians 5:18, "And be no drunk with wine in which is excess, but be filled with the Spirit." All right? Be being kept filled in the literal Greek. It's a continuous thing. Be being kept filled in the Spirit. Now that's the same as walking by the Spirit. In other words, you're yielding the control of your life to the Spirit of God who permeates you and carries you along. The idea of filled is a word that is used in other places to speak of sailing. Where the wind fills the sail and it billows out and carries the ship. So be moved along by the Spirit. Be carried along by the Spirit. Open your sail, that's submission. Let the Spirit carry you His direction under His power. That's the same as walking by the Spirit, same concept, different terms.

But to help you get a concrete handle on that, notice this. In verse 19 it gives the results of being Spirit filled. It says, "Speaks to yourselves..." "Speak to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." One thing about a spiritual person is he happy, joy, sings, if he hasn't...can't carry a tune he sings to himself. Another thing about a Spirit filled person in verse 20, he gives thanks. You can always tell thankful people are Spirit filled people. 21, a Spirit filled person submits, then he goes into detail. Spirit filled "wives submit to their husbands." Spirit filled "husbands," verse 25, "love their wives." And you have Spirit filled children in Chapter 6, verse 1. They obey their parents, Spirit filled parents don't hassle their children, verse 4.

Apparently some of you can identify with that. And servants who are Spirit filled are obedient and masters who are Spirit filled are fair, verse 9. So you have all these results of Spirit filled life. Now watch this, go to Colossians 3:16, and you'll see something very interesting. If you've read Colossians and Ephesians, you know that they're almost identical, but listen to this. Verse 16, start in the middle of it. Colossians 3:16, "speak to yourselves was in Ephesians." Here is says "In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one psalms, hymns, spiritual songs, and sing with grace in your heart to the Lord. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks." There's thanks again. There's wives submits to your husbands, verse 18. There's 19, husbands loves your wives. There's verse 20, Spirit filled children. Verse 21, Spirit filled fathers. Verse 22, Spirit filled servants and so forth.

And masters are in Chapter 4, verse 1 or employers. They're all there again. Same bunch. Well, you say again does he say be Spirit filled and then all...no, no, look at verse 16. The very beginning, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly and all this will happen." Now watch, do you see a parallel here? Whatever it is to be filled with the Spirit is the same as letting the word of Christ, what, dwell in you richly because it has the same results.

Now, the Spirit filled life then is letting the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Now you know that gives me a handle on the Spirit filled life. You know what it is? It's being so saturated with the word of Christ that it fills me up and that's practical isn't it. Then when somebody says how are you Spirit filled, I don't say well, you go and you do some spiritual...no, I just say you take the Bible and you just keep studying Christ until He saturates your heart. That's a Spirit filled life.

You say you're confusing Christ with the Holy Spirit. Probably. But I've been confusing them for a long time. I also confuse God the Father with the same two. That's what's known as the Trinity. They're all one. In fact, in John 14...John 14:16, Jesus said, "When I go away, I'll send another comforter." And He used the word allas, heterosmeans another different kind. Allas means the same kind. He said I'll send the Holy Spirit who's exactly the same essence as I am. And the Holy Spirit's called the Spirit of Christ. So living a Spirit filled life, now mark this, is the same thing as letting the word of Christ saturate you till it dwells in your richly. What does that mean? Until it begins to cause your thought patterns. And I've said so many times, I used to enjoy sinning. But I don't enjoy it anymore. I can't even get five seconds into a good sin without thinking of 15 verses.

That's the truth. I mean, I've studied so many Bible verses that it's no fun any more. I'm guilty before I even do it. And that is being saturated by the things of Christ and that will issue itself in your life, being directed by the Spirit. When the things of Christ are there and they are the things that control your thoughts, your born along easily by the Spirit. Now if that helps you, then let me add this to it. You go to Galatians 5 and it says "walk by the Spirit and you'll not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

All right, now go to Colossians 2:6-7. You're already there if you haven't left. This is interesting. Listen to this. Colossians 2:6, "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so," what, "walk ye in Him." You say well now who do I walk in or by? Do I walk by the Spirit or do I walk by the Lord Jesus Christ? That's just the point I'm making. It's the same thing and if it gives you a handle on what it means to walk by the Spirit it means to pattern your life after Jesus Christ. That's simple enough my friend. All you need to do is open your Bible to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and spend the rest of your life in there and you'll see all that He was.

And when the word concerning Christ dwells in you richly, you will walk in Him as you walk by the Spirit. So it's the same thing and I only point that out and use those two passages so that you can have a handle on this concept. Walking by the Spirit is living a life that is Christ-like, Christ-centered. Saturated with Christ. Christ conscious. Your whole life should be centered upon Jesus Christ.

And believe me what is the Spirit's work? To point to whom? Christ, so if you're really a...walking by the Spirit, you're going to be focusing on Christ all the time. So you can simplify the whole idea of the Spirit walk by saturating yourself with Christ. Now that's the command, but let me say hastily that it won't be easy to do that because secondly there's a conflict.

Just as soon as you begin to do that there's an enemy that's going to come and clobber you. Galatians 5, get back there now. And this is verse 17 and 18. And the conflict...you know, this is similar to Romans 7 passage that talks about the conflict. But you see here in verse 17 immediately as you begin to walk by the energy of the Spirit, by the power of the Spirit, you find in verse 17 this statement. "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and these are contrary to one to the other so that you can't do the things that you want." Isn't that interesting? You got all figured out now, just how you're going to do it, and you find out you've got an adversary. You have an aggressive enemy. You say it's the devil again. No, it is not the devil. You didn't read it. The devil didn't make you do it. It is the what? The flesh. Good old all American flesh.

You know, I get tired of everybody blaming the devil and demons for everything. The flesh, the word sarx, the flesh is the beachhead to sin. It's the weak helpless self effort oriented lower nature of man. It's a sin propensity. It's the landing place where the troops land, the troops of temptation to storm the country. It's the point at which the world attacks and the world, of course, is generated in its system by Satan so Satan is directly related as Satan generates the world, the world attacks you at the point of the flesh. We studied it in detail last time. We won't go in it again, but the flesh is the part of man's nature which is weak and helpless and which is the beachhead for sin.

And immediately we find out that where there's the command to walk by the Spirit, there's the conflict and the flesh lusts or struggles against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and the battle goes on. The flesh fighting the Spirit and the Spirit fighting the flesh. And that's the Holy Spirit in view

here. So we're in on the war. Verse 18, but if you be led by the Spirit, you're not under the law. Now here Paul goes back to his main thesis. All Christians are led by the Spirit. Is that true? Is it true that all Christians are led by the Spirit? Yes. Romans 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit, they are," what, "the sons of God." So all Christians are led by the Spirit. You don't have to pray Spirit lead me. That's superfluous.

But all Christians do not follow the Spirit. They do not walk by the Spirit, but they're led. Now all Christians being led by the Spirit, watch, prove that they're not under the law. Let me hasten to say this, you don't this...and this will draw backwards some of the things we studied. You don't need the law and the Spirit, right? The law becomes unnecessary when the Spirit comes inside. Now if you haven't been here for the last few weeks, you might not get all of that in just one shot, but if you're interested you can pick up the tapes and listen to the whole idea, but if you have the Holy Spirit as the restrainer inside, as the energy of God to fulfill a righteous life, then you don't need any external thing, because at best the external law is going to be less adequate than the Holy Spirit, right? So that renders it useless.

And he's saying simply this, that if you have the Spirit that proves you're not under the law anymore, because there are two kinds of people in the world. The ones under the law and the ones in the Spirit or walking by the Spirit. Christians are led by the Spirit. And consequently not under the law. Now what's he saying by saying this? Well, he could be saying of three things, two of three things or all three of these things and I don't know which one, but I'll throw out the options that I thought of. First of all, he could be saying here that if you're a Christian, that is if you're led by the Spirit, you're a Christian, you're not under the law in the sense in the presence of the law.

In other words, as a Christian I don't need the law any more. I don't need a list of rules and regulations and rituals. I don't need external laws. Why? If I'm led by the Spirit the law is ridiculous superfluous, it has not point at all. It has no purpose. You know Paul said that in Romans 13 didn't you? He said "In a essence that I don't need all this thou shalt not, thou shalt not because the whole law is fulfilled in love. The Spirit produces a new love within me and fulfills the law as it relates to my neighbor."

So in the sense of the first point, if we are Christians led by the Spirit, we're not under the law in terms of its presence. We don't even need the law, the ritual, the routine, the external written law. Secondly, I think we're not under the law in terms of the power of the law. What do you mean? I mean, that the...for an unbeliever the only thing that can prevent sin is the law, but not any more for us. It's an ineffective restrainer anyway. You can see that, you know, everybody is not saved is living under God's law. But it's...it doesn't really do the job, because there's no change in man's nature. All the law does according to Romans 7 is make sin obvious. It flares up, but now the war is not between you and your flesh. You know, if you're under law you're fighting against your flesh. I'm not going to do this. I'm going to be a good man. I'm going to be ethical. I'm going to be moral.

And your flesh, you know, that's a rough battle. But all of a sudden when you become a Christian, you're not fighting with your flesh against the law, you're fighting your flesh against the Spirit and there's victory possible there. So you're not in a sense under the power of the law any more, but under the power of the Spirit.

Thirdly, I feel that what he could be saying is that if you're led by the Spirit, if you're a Christian, you're not under the law in the sense of the penalty of the law. The law requires death, but Christ died for you, paid your penalty, therefore, the law has no claim on you. So he's saying then even though the battle is going on, even though war is waging, and the lusting of the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit is warring against the flesh, and sometimes you're going to fall and sometimes you're going to fail and sometimes you're going to sin but you're still not under the power of the law. You're still not in need of the presence of the law and you're for sure not under the penalty of the law, right?

Christ removed all of it. And as long as you rest in the Spirit there's going to be ultimate victory. So we're commanded then to walk by the Spirit. We are in conflict in doing so, but even in our conflict, we are free from the law. And even when we lose, the law has no claim on us. The penalty of the law had was death and it's been paid. Now Paul in getting into this conflict develops further the concepts of the flesh and the Spirit and he goes into the contrast, point three.

The contrast, verses 19-25. Now Paul gives a detailed presentation of the differences in the life walked by the Spirit over one lived in the flesh. And I think the reason he makes this contrast and you can ask yourself the question and figure it out for yourself, but I think that the reason he makes the contrast is because the contrast to me is one of the greatest reasons for walking by the Spirit. But when I read these over and I say to myself, well, if you do what the flesh says, it's all that vial stuff in verses 19 to 21, but if you walk by the Spirit, it's all those beautiful things in verses 22 to 23. You know, that helps me make the decision to walk by the Spirit.

He strengthens his case for the Spirit walk by showing what each produces. The lifestyle of the flesh and the lifestyle of the Spirit. And the Judaisers certainly should have taken some note of this. If they had looked at what they saw when they arrived in Galatia, they would have already seen the fruit of the Spirit and they would have realized how stupid it was to introduce law and once it introduce law they would have begin to see the works of the flesh again and if they had any sensitivity at all, they would have recognized how in error they were.

All right, let's look first of all under the contrast at the works of the flesh, verse 19. Now you can get a good look at this, because this is what you are and what I am basically. This is what our flesh produces. And all that the law does is arouse sin, just stirs it up. Verse 19, "The works of the flesh are manifest." Now, when we say the works of the flesh, let me just mention that it's not just talking about sex. We have kind of assigned that concept to the term flesh, but it's more than that. It's a

much, much wider concept.

The lusts of the flesh are all the sinful desires of mans fallen nature, all of them. And this is not an exhaustive list, but only suggestive and we know that because in the middle of verse 21, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and the like. So that's like an etc. There's more than just this. But here is Paul's list of the typical products of the flesh. Let me just read it to you.

"The works of the flesh of are manifest which are these, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousy, wrath, faction, seditions, heresies, envyings, murderers, drunkenness, revelings, and the like." Nice list. That's it. In Mark 7, Jesus said in verse 20 something very important. He said, "That which cometh out of the man that defileth the man," that's original sin folks, that's depravity, "for from within out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the man." Did you know it is not your environment that messes your up? It's you that messes up your environment.

There's only two views in the world. There's only two views you could take in terms of any kind of doctrine of man. Any kind of anthropological view at all. Any kind of sociological view takes one of two views. Either man is corrupted by a dirty environment or man corrupts the environment because he's dirty himself, and that's the biblical one. And if you take that, it'll alter your world view drastically because you can see that nothing done externally is ever going to affect man ultimately.

Better housing, better transportation, better jobs, higher income, more welfare, better hospitalization is not going to change man one width, because whatever his environment is he'll foul it up, because his flesh produces the vial things that effect his environment in a negative way. So that's what Jesus said. And incidentally, Paul gave a couple of other lists if you'd like to read them, Romans 1:29-31 and 2 Corinthians 12:20-21. Basically the same thing.

You say, well, he certainly was a pessimist. I mean, a pessimistic view. He certainly looked at men in a negative way. Yes, true, but the writings of some pagan moralists are even more severe than Paul only if you read them, you'll find out that they can't understand it, because they say it's unnatural. Paul says it's natural, natural. The works of the flesh are manifest. The word manifest means open, evident, well know. What Paul is doing here is appealing to common knowledge. He's saying hey you guys know what goes on in the normal life of man. It's easy to tell. Here they are and he lists them.

Now, this list is divided into four parts, four categories of sin, sex, religion, relationships, and objects. You're...sex, religion, relations, that's human relations and objects and specific objects. First of all, let's look at the list of the things that involve sex. And the word adultery is not in the best manuscripts so we'll just go to the second one on the list, fornication. Now the word fornication, that's the first one,

it's involved in the area of sex, that's the word pornaiafrom which we get pornography. It's any illicit sex at all. Any immorality. The root word and there's some debate about what the real root word of pornaia is. It could be pernimi. And pernimi is an interesting word. It's intercourse with a prostitute for a fee is what the word actually means.

But that root word and the reflected in pornaia came to mean any kind of sexual vice at all. Now this is the work of the flesh. Left to itself, this is what the flesh produces, not the Spirit, the flesh. And throughout Scripture this very evident problem is raised. In 1 Corinthians 5:1 it is commonly reported that there is fornication among you and such fornication as is not so much as named among the pagans. That one should have his father's wife. Relationships with his mother or stepmother.

In 1 Corinthians 6:13, food for the body and the body for food, but God shall destroy both, they were living to eat. Now the body is not for pornography or fornication, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body. Verse 18, "Flee fornication." And so it goes in Scripture, Chapter 7, verse 1 "Concerning the things about which ye wrote unto me it is good for a man not to touch a woman." That's a good verse. You say yikes. And the reason is given in verse 2. It's avoid fornication.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, the Bible says that God's will is that we be sanctified. That we abstain from all sexual sin. Very clear. In Ephesians 5:3, as we mentioned earlier, the Scripture says that we are not to have anything to do with fornication or any of those kind of things. A Christian is to run from those things because those are the works of the flesh. And we see it in our world don't we? Boy do we ever see it.

Unbelievable sexual involvement. Jim Harris showed me article in the Times, you know, it was the other day where they now have a new kind of therapy called sexual therapy, which is just a psychological term for prostitution. And now you're problems are solved by one of these surrogate therapists who comes over and just acts as a prostitute and it's all under the direction of certain doctors and psychologists and psychiatrists and psychoanalysts. All of whom need to go and be put in a padded cell. And I doubt whether any one of them could figure out how to get the other ones out.

Second thing is uncleanness, and the word really means impurity. That word is used to speak in other writings of the puss that oozed from an unclean wound. It's that kind of uncleanness. In it's positive form, the word incidentally is akatharsia and the positive word is katharos from which we get catharsis which is a cleansing or purification. And katharos literally means pure. And it was used of a...not like, you know, you wash your hands kind of pure, but it was used religiously. It's a religious word. It was used to speak of the ceremonial cleanliness of a person who went to worship his god. In other words, if a man was katharos, he could approach his god. So akatharos or akatharsia in this form is the soiled life of one unable to approach God. A vile life unable to approach God.

It's a broader term than just fornication. Fornication talks about the deed. Uncleanness talks about the attitude of mind that led to the deed. And you have another interesting word in this sexual list, lasciviousness. That's really an ancient word. Some of you may have wantonness, which doesn't tell you anything else either. What means is no restraint, absolutely no restraint. And I think, you know, this catalog could certainly be put in the headlines of our paper and it wouldn't one wit out of character. Asulgai, it's the idea that somebody's has gone so far in lust and desire that they don't even care what anybody thinks.

I mean, I couldn't help but see the news the other night and that prostitutes convention in San Francisco, '74 The Year of the Whore was their motto. I mean, that's...you laugh at that, but that's...that is about as degenerate and unbelievably...there was a day when that kind of thing was something you didn't even talk about. And now it's something you put a banner across somewhere. Of course, the same thing just happened in terms of homosexuality. And all these things are really defined in their most gross uninhibited shameless character by the word lasciviousness or asulgai in the Greek.

It's what the flesh produces. And it marked Paul's day and it marks our day and it doesn't say much about changing does it. It hasn't changed, not a bit. That's the sexual area. Let me show you the religious area. The next little catalog has to do with religion. Let me hasten to say this. Religion is just as much the work of the flesh as is sex. Believe that, it is. Because, watch this, religion is all based on self, what, effort and that is the flesh.

We've talked to you in Galatians, there's only two kinds of religions. The religion of human achievement and the religion of divine grace, right? And if it isn't divine grace and Christianity, it's human achievement and that's the work of the flesh. And so religion is just as much a work of the flesh and in many cases infinitely more insidious than sex. And it says in listing these, verse 20, "Idolatry and sorcery." Now idolatry is pretty obvious. The word means worshipping an image or god. It encompasses any false religion.

But then you have the word sorcery. The word is pharmakeuo, which we get pharmacy. And it always meant a drug. And you know, drugs are always associated with false religion. Drugs aren't anything new. People think that drugs just came around 25 years ago. No, no. Drugs have been around for centuries of man's existence. Drugs were used as the common media in the practice of pagan religions. Pagan sorceries, they were occult practices. You read some of the things the Canaanites did. You read about some of the things that went on in Baal worship. There is no difference between what you'll read there and what you have read about going on in Satan worship today and some of the occult things. They're identical, even though they've bridge thousands of years of history, nothing's changed. Drugs, sex, and black magic, it's all the same.

And you can read about it if you go back to Isaiah, Ezekiel some of the other prophets. All of it was there. Even Aristotle, Palebius, and the Septuagint which was done before Christ's time used this word right here, this word pharmakeuo to speak of witchcraft, because witches always used drugs. Drugs and witchcraft and black magic and false religion always went together. Read Revelation 9:21 in the end time. When you have the whole religion of Satan, it's going to have the same thing. The word is there again, pharmakeuo, drugs, sorcery, magic, witchcraft, it means all of that. And drugs today are a big part in stimulating Satanic religious experiences counterfeiting the truth.

Well, faith in magic replaces trust in God and that's idolatry, and that's the flesh. So what does the flesh do? In our first point sex, flesh defiles a man's relation to himself, in sex sin. He defiles himself. It then defiles his relationship to God, the flesh does in religious sin. Thirdly, it defiles his relation to everybody else. Look at the sins of human relations, verse 20. "Hatred, strife, jealousy, wrath, faction, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders." The man himself is defiled. His relation to God is defiled, and his relation to everybody else.

Hatred the opposite of love, enmity, hostility. And here it's used in the plural, hatreds. Hatreds, strife, the word means fighting or quarreling. Hatred is the attitude, strife is the action. You hate so you fight. Sounds like James. Then you have jealousy. This is the anger produced by what somebody else has that you want. Zealous. Then wrath, wrath is the Greek word thumos. It's an outward outburst of hostile feelings, uncontrolled temper. And of those four that I gave you, hatred, strife, jealousy, and wrath, the first and third point to motives and the second and fourth point to their product.

Where there's hatred, there's going to be strife, the action of hatred. Where there is jealousy, there's going to be the outburst of temper. Human relationships are destroyed by the flesh. Then he says there are factions. And this is once you got the hatred and once you've got the strife and once you've got all the anxieties going, people start lining up on somebody's side and then you create terrible factions. And we see this throughout our world. People organizing for causes to fight against others. Then it says seditions, and this means divisions. Then heresies, and that's obvious. This is a whole group standing for their false doctrine, then envies and finally murders.

And some perhaps would exclude murder in some lists, but if it's here, it's the climax. Totally wiped out human relations, the flesh. Destroys the relationship of a man to himself, to God, to others. And then man can't even get along with objects, fourthly. The fourth little area. He can't get along with objects. Drunkenness and wild carousing parties. You give him something like drink, which is just an object, it doesn't even argue. It just sits there. It doesn't say try me, try me, try me. It just sits there. But he can't handle objects, inanimate, dead objects, the flesh. It drunken sprees and revelings. Carousing likely refers to public orgies.

When we were in Baalbek in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, w went to the city that was where Baal worship began and then when the Romans came they built the temple to Jupiter and to Baachus. And we saw the temple to Baachus who was the god of wine where they had the wild orgies. It still stands there. And it's amazing to just stand there. And of course all the little grape vines are carved into the fasad of that building. And to realize that they held wild drunken orgies there. This was characteristic of Pagan life. This was nothing new and believe me nothing much different than what we have today.

Well, that's the work of the flesh. That's what the flesh produces. Now notice what he says. Verse 21, "Of which I forewarn, I forewarn as I have also told you in time past," and apparently earlier he had told them, "that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Now I've had people come to me and they run up and they say oh John, you know I wonder whether that means that if you ever do those you lose your salvation. Well, that's a good question. It ought to be answered, because it does those who such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Somebody who gets drunk isn't going to inherit the kingdom of God. Somebody who has wild parties isn't going to inherit the kingdom of God. Somebody who commits fornication, somebody who is angry, somebody who hates, somebody etc., etc., etc.

Somebody who envies, somebody who murders, whatever. Hmmm, they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Let me give you a little insight into it. The word fordo, in the Greek is prosso, prosso, it means to practice, to practice. It is what we call in Greek a durative in it's form. Durative action and it speaks of habitual practice. Those who habitually practice such things. And friends that indicates the character of the individual. Now watch this, the word of God bases its estimation of a person's character not on his infrequent, out of the ordinary actions, but on his habitual actions. Did you get that? The word of God always bases its estimation of a person's character. Not on his out of the ordinary, infrequent actions, but on his habitual actions. They show his true character and those people whose habitual action is to do these things, shall not inherit the kingdom because they are not God's people.

Now it may be true on the other hand that some Christians may do these, but if they are true believers, those things would be the infrequent out of the ordinary things in their lives and I think it important that the word do under the Holy Spirit's direction is a durative in the continuing habitual sense. And the idea of the kingdom of God means full salvation, complete salvation, all that's involved in it, now and forever.

People who do those things habitually whose lives are characterized by those things are not Christians, because the Bible says that when you become a Christian things change. Now you may do those things infrequently and as out of the ordinary patterns, but the Spirit of God affects the change in your life if you're a Christian. Listen kingdom people led by the Spirit are characterized by

the fruit of the Spirit.

Christians will sin, yes. But the course of their life will different and those kind of things will be infrequent. You say well, I know a guy who claims to be a Christian and they're not infrequent. Then I doubt if he's a Christian, because in the believer, the flesh is restrained and the unbeliever the practice of sin is unbroken. Now I saw this to you because if you fit this category and these things define your life, either in action, you may say well I don't ever commit fornication, I just think about it all the time. Well, Jesus said, "if you've lusted after a woman in your heart, you've committed adultery there."

And it's finally going to be out of the vileness of your thoughts that your deeds will come, Mark 7. When you get into the right circumstance it'll happen. You won't be any more vial by committing because you've already...it's already proceeded to conquer your mind. And I say that if you're characterized by any of these things, and this is the flow of your life, this is the continual pattern of your life, I'm convinced that you don't know Christ. You're not a kingdom person.

You'll never inherit the kingdom, not if that's the pattern of your life, because if you're a Christian, the Spirit is there restraining what, sin. Restraining sin. Kingdom people are different. They have to be different, that's the definition. Well, I think we'll stop. And next time we'll talk about the positives. Fruit of the Spirit.

Let's bow in prayer. Father, we acknowledge even as we exhort others to be pure and holy that our own life is not all that it ought to be. I thank You for the evidence of the Spirit's work I've seen in my own life through years. How I've seen the Holy Spirit give victory over sin and how I've seen the pattern of my own life become a pattern of the things of the Spirit. But even in the midst of that, there are those times, those out of ordinary thank God times when sin takes its place and the victory is lost. But thank You that there is forgiveness is grace in those times.

But Father, there are some probably here tonight whose lives are just characterized incessantly by sin. There's no diminishing of it. There's no break from it and we would ask from the depths of our hearts that Your Spirit would speak to those people. That they might truly come to know Jesus Christ. That they might receive Him by faith. And then Father, there are Christians here who've heard the command to walk by the Spirit. And tonight they know what it means to walk worthy in all the things it involves and they've heard the marvelous injunction to walk as Jesus walked and then they've heard that to make it possible God is going to dwell in them and walk in them.

And Father, I thank You that that's true in the life of every Christian, that you're walking there. But maybe in some Christians lives, the works of the flesh are a little bit too frequent. Father we would pray that they would not give into the flesh, but that they would truly walk by the Spirit. And we know that the Spirit is leading in paths of holiness. Give us the will to walk in His power, in His energy to

follow the things that He would have.

Father, when we know what the flesh produces, how foolish, how stupid to succumb to it, we pray that you would teach us to be diligent to pursue the things of the Spirit. That the fruit of the Spirit might be manifest in us for our joy in the blessing of others. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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