

Walking by the Spirit, Part 3

Galatians 5:22-25

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Continuing in our series tonight in the book of Galatians, I draw your attention to Chapter 5 again. And to continuing thoughts in our study of walking by the Spirit, walking by the Spirit. Now we have been looking at verse 16-25, Galatians 5:16-25. Now as we have seen, and this really amounts to part three in that particular study, but as we have seen in our study, the only way that the Christian life can be lived successfully is walking by the Spirit. The Christian cannot walk independent of the Holy Spirit. He cannot generate his own energy, his own resource, but success in the Christian is directly related to the Spirit walk.

There are three reasons, just beginning tonight. Why walking by the Spirit is the only way to fulfill God's plan for the Christian. Three reasons, number one, because of the impossible standard that God requires. And by that, I mean this, God's standard for the believer is so high, in fact, to simplify it all, Jesus put it this way, "Be perfect as my Father in heaven is perfect." The standard is so high, that there is no way humanly speaking that a Christian could ever meet the standard. So because of the impossible nature of God's standard. The only way that it could ever be fulfilled is when we walk by the Spirit. For example, just to show you a few Scriptures, John 13, and don't follow in your Bible. Just write them down if you want them, John 13:34. "A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you." Now does that sound slightly impossible?

In John 15, verse 12, "This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you." He repeats it again. In Ephesians Chapter 4, verse 30, "And grieve not the Spirit of God by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption, let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice. Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." And again the standard is you are to be what Jesus was. You are to forgive like God forgives.

In Chapter 5 of Ephesians in verse 20 it says "You're to give thanks always for all things." Again, an impossible standard, just from the standpoint of our humanness. And as we saw last time and that's just an illustration, and you can go on and on and on with verses, but as we saw last time, the Christian is to walk and we looked through all the features of the walk in the New Testament. He is to walk in humility, in purity, in contentedness, in faith, in good works, in newness, in separation, in love, in light, in wisdom, in truth, and all of these things are enjoined upon the Christian.

In fact, in 1 John 2:6, it simply puts it all in perhaps the most obvious and yet impossible terms, "He that saith he abideth in Him are also to walk as He walked." You're to be like Christ. You say it's an impossible standard. Yes, it is. And that's precisely why the believer to accomplish the Christian life must walk by the Spirit, because it is impossible on his own. And as we read last time in 2 Corinthians 6:16, God says, "I will dwell in them and walk in them." That's the key. It is God who dwells in the believer, who walks in the believer. There's the power. There's the energy. There's the

resource. There's the accomplishment and our task is to walk by the Spirit to align ourselves with the footsteps of the living God in our lives.

Walking by the Spirit then is important because of the impossible standard which God has set. It is only attainable by God Himself. And so God Himself lives in you attaining that standard and as you walk in Him, it's fulfilled in you. Second reason that we should walk in the Spirit is because of the formidable foe that we have. We could never possibly fight Satan in our own strength could we? We can't do it. There is no way that humanly speaking we can handle Satan. Now it's interesting I think to keep in mind that the battle going on in the universe isn't between Satan and Christians. It's between Satan and God. We just get in the middle of it. In fact, Satan is actively against God and it's when somebody becomes a partaker, as Peter put it, a partaker of the divine nature. When you get saved, it says you become a partaker of the divine nature that automatically you put yourself in the middle of the battle. But Satan's battle is against God and it has to be at that level that he is handled. You see?

You can't handle him, and I can't either. That's why at the end of the book of Ephesians, very simply Paul says this in Chapter 6, verse 10. "Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of," what, "His might." Can't do it on your own. And the reason is because we wrestle not against flesh and blood. So you're flesh and blood, you can't handle an enemy that is principality, power, rulers of the darkness, and spiritual wickedness and high places and all of those angelic beings are out of your realm of combat. So you have to be strong in the Lord.

Now it is true that in James, you say what about James? Let's see, I think it's 4:7 where it says, "Resist the devil." Can't we do that? Yes, but you know what it says before that? It says, "submit yourselves to God and resist the devil." You've got to have both there. You know even Michael the super angel, Michael was super angel, champion angel, warrior angel, the greatest fighting angel. It says this in Jude verse 9. "Even Michael, when contending with the devil, dared not bring a railing accusation but said the Lord rebuke you." Even Michael who was at the very level of Satan as an angel didn't bring a rebuke against Satan personally. He said the Lord rebuke you.

Now, it is clear to us then that because of the formidable enemy that we face, we cannot fight in our own strength. In His strength yes, 1 John 4:4, "Greater is He that is in you than he that is," what, "in the world." It's nice to know that God's strength is as available as right here because he lives in me and dwells in me.

Third reason that we must walk by the Spirit is because of the power of the sinful flesh. We are all victimized by our own flesh. And you see, for example, Romans 7, here's a good man. A good believing man, the apostle Paul, and he's even good enough to love the law of God. In fact, he makes the statement that I love the law of God. "I delight in the law of God." Verse 22 or Romans 7, but in verse 18, "I know that in me, in my flesh dwells no good thing for to will is present with me. I have all the right desires, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Why? Verse 23, "I see another law in my members warring and it brings me into captivity to the law of sin oh wretched man that I am."

You see, he's saying I can't subdue my flesh. The only way the flesh will ever be subdued becomes simply clear to us as we read the statement of the Galatians Chapter 5, verse 16. Remember it? What does it say? This, "Walk by means of the Spirit and you shall not," what, "fulfill the lusts of the flesh." The only way you can ever conquer the flesh is to walk by means of the Spirit. You can't

handle the flesh in your own strength. That's what Paul is saying in Romans Chapter 7.

That's what he's saying Galatians to the Judaisers who are saying you've got to keep the law and grit your teeth and grunt and groan and try to be obedient and try to subdue the flesh. And he says, you can't do it in your own strength. So because of God's impossible standard, because of our formidable foe and because of our hopelessly sinful flesh, we must walk by the Spirit. Now we saw in our last study together that walking by the Spirit being filled with the Spirit, letting the word of Christ dwell in you richly putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, being Christ conscious is all the same thing.

It's having your mind saturated and dominated by the things of the Spirit of God and the person of Jesus Christ. So this is basic to the Christ life. There's nothing more basic than this. Now I gave you four points and I'll run by them quickly and then we'll get to the one we're going to look at tonight. First of all was the command. The command was in verse 16. We just read it. "This I say then, walk by means of the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." Now he means here you're daily style of living, your lifestyle, your daily conduct should be walking by the Spirit. It means to be led into all things under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is again a perfect example of this in Matthew Chapter 12, just to pinpoint one particular passage in which this becomes clear. Matthew 12:24, "The Pharisees heard it. They said this fellow doesn't cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of demons." Jesus casts out demons, so they said He does it by Satan. Well, after a little discussion there, finally, verse 28 He says, "But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come unto you." And here Jesus infers that His power is the power of the Holy Spirit. That He is, now watch this, that in Jesus' incarnation when He became man, it says in Philippians He emptied Himself. Of what did He empty Himself? He emptied Himself of the prerogatives or the right to exercise the things that were His in terms of deity. He didn't empty Himself of deity or He wouldn't have been the God man, right?

But He released the prerogatives to use those things and He sublimated Himself to the will of the Father through the power of the Spirit. And so when they said you do things by Satan, He didn't say you've blasphemed me, He said, what? You've blasphemed the Holy Spirit, because it was the Spirit of God doing the works through Christ. Christ yielded His life in His incarnation to the will of the Father expressed through the power of the Spirit. And I think in measure He did that as a perfect illustration to us of what it is to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit worked through Him.

Anything less than this is anarchy in the household of God. In your life as a Christian, anything less than walking by the Spirit is personal private anarchy, rebellion. Jesus Himself said, "Not my will but thine be done," Luke 22:42. In Hebrews Chapter 10, there's a couple of verses that perhaps again will illustrate the submissiveness of Jesus Christ, which stands for us as an example. "Wherefore," verse 5 says, Hebrews 10, "when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me, in burnt offering and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure. Then said I, lo I come in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will oh God."

Now that was what Christ came to do and that's basically what the Spirit filled life is all about. John 8:29, Jesus said, "I do always those things that please Him." Paul said as he shared tonight that the verse which seems to captivate his own thinking is the one that says in whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.

Now that's the pattern and it's illustrated to us graphically by Jesus Christ. The command, allow the Spirit of God to control your life and yield to His control. We've covered that. Secondly, to the command was the conflict and in Galatians 5:17 and 18, we saw the conflict. The command sounds simple enough, but it isn't because of the conflict, right? As soon as you start to walk by the Spirit, wham, you get belted by the adversary. That's verse 17, "For the flesh lusts against the Spirit." You see as soon as you start walking in the Spirit, you're old flesh is going to stick up it's ugly head and start yelling back at the Spirit and you've got a fight. And the Spirit against the flesh, these are contrary the one to the other so that you can't do the things that you would.

It becomes difficult because there's a battle that you're all of a sudden embroiled in. Verse 18, "But if you be led by the Spirit, you're not under the law." No longer under the presence, the power, the penalty of the external law, even though the battle is on, even though you may lose an occasional struggle, you still are not subject to the penalties and the powers of the law. Judaisers are trying to pull these Christians back under the law. That's no way to conquer the flesh. That'll never work. The conflict is there. The only solution, walk in the Spirit.

So the command and the conflict, thirdly, and we'll dwell some measure on this point tonight is the contrast. The contrast, verses 19 to 23. Now here he shows each lifestyle. What happens when a person lives in the flesh and what happens when a person walks by the Spirit? Boy, I mean, they're opposites, aren't they? Life under law is lived in the flesh, self-effort. And the results of it? Read them, verses 19-21.

"Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strife, jealousy, wrath, factions, seditions, heresies, envies, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and the like." That's what happens under self-effort. When you try to reform the flesh on your own. You can't do it. The works of the flesh, they're listed there. And in case you want another list, there's one in Romans 1, verse 29. "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, whispers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents without understanding covenant breakers without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

You say who's that? Who's that? That's everybody, verse 28, who didn't like to retain God in their knowledge and God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not normal. Which are not normal in the sense of seemly or sensible. The works of the flesh are listed again for us. 2 Corinthians Chapter 12, verse 20. "I fear, lest, when I come I shall find you such as I would and that I shall be found unto you such as you would not, lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strife, backbiting, whispering, conceit, disorders. And lest, when I come again my God will humble me among you and that I shall bewail many who have sinned already and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed."

There's the same list basically. These are the things that spring out of the flesh. And you can take that same flesh. Now watch, you say well, that's a guy who lives his whole life, you know, in a gutter, reading crummy books and thinking dirty thoughts. I mean, that's not normal nice guy who checks into the office in his grey flannel. That's a normal nice guy, yes. Those are the deeds of the flesh, whether it's atheistic or theistic. Whether it's religious or irreligious, that's what the flesh produces. I don't care who you are. You say, but I don't do that. Well, it doesn't necessarily always result in deed. Sometime it never gets passed your brain.

You know, this is doing what comes naturally. Watson, Thomas Watson, an old puritan said, and I quote from him, "A counterfeit of sanctification is restraining grace. When men forebear vice," that is they hold back from vice, "though they do not hate it, this may be the sinners motto. Fain I would dare I not. The dog has a mind to lust, but conscience stands as an angel with a flaming sword and affrights. They have a mind to revenge, but the fear of hell is a curb to check them. There's no change of heart. Sin is curbed, it is not cured. A lion may be in chains, but he is a lion still."

There are some people who mask the vices even in the mask of religion, but they're there. Four categories of them. We told you sex, religion, human relations, and relations to objects. What about people who do those things? Look at verse 21. He says "of which I forewarn you," this is a warning, "as I have also told you in time past that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Now this is characterization of unsaved people. But Paul is saying look, this is all the flesh can do. Why would you want to go back and live in the flesh. Live under the law, try to keep the law in your own strength. All you can produce is that kind of stuff and that's characteristic of the unsaved not the saved.

You're saying to these Christians, don't be legalistic, don't put yourselves under law. You're only going to be cranking out the stuff that the unsaved do. Now you say, well now, we talked about this last time, and several people asked me questions so I'll stay with the point just briefly. They said does this say that if a Christian ever does these things he can't go to heaven. It says as I have told you in time past, "they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Now if you take that as a simple English statement, bang, paragraph that's it, it sounds like if you ever did those things you're finished. But if you look carefully at the Greek you see the word do, the word do is as I told you proso, it means to practice. It is a present durative action, speaks of habitual practice. Those who habitually do these things will not inherit the kingdom. It does not say those who infrequently and out of the ordinary times happen to do those things. No, those two are habitual in these things. That's a characterization of the ungodly. And the term kingdom of God has reference to the completeness of salvation.

The word of God, and I'll say what I said last time, the word of God bases it's estimation of a person's character, not on his infrequent, out of the ordinary action, but on his habitual action. And if you habitually do those things, if that was in error, you see the Greek can do things the English can't. In the Greek there are two possible kinds of action, which is what tense really means. There is point action, boom, bang and it's over. There is durative action, linear action. And the Greek can express precisely what is being said. If this was in error and it said in an error tense as I have told you in time past they who did error these things or do error, that would be it. Once you did it, boom, you're doomed. But God doesn't make mistake with grammar. And it's right in the right tense. They who habitually practice these things.

Now this is not saying that if a Christian ever does these things he's damned. No. I mean, let's face it. John said this in 1 John, "My little children sin not." That's good John. And in the next breath he said, "But if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." So he knew we were going to do it. Let me show you some other passages to support this concept.

1 Corinthians 6:9, turn to them with me if you will. 1 Corinthians 6:9, now watch this, "Know ye not

that the," what's the next word, "unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Now who gets left out of the kingdom? The unrighteous. You know who that is? Is there anything such thing as an unrighteous Christian? Not in a positional sense. The righteousness of Christ has been given to us. You read it, it's in Romans 3. We're not unrighteous. We may do sinful deeds, but the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.

Here he's talking about unrighteous. Do you know as a Christian you're as righteous as Christ before God because you stand right covered by Christ's righteousness. That's what salvation is. So he's talking about unsaved. These shall not inherit the kingdom. "Be not deceived." Don't kid yourself. "Neither fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, abusers of themselves with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." Now again you say well I know some people who did those. No, he's talking about unrighteous people. People who do not have the righteousness of Christ granted to them.

Verse 11, "And such," what's the next verb, "were some of you, but you are washed. You are sanctified. You are justified." Want to hear something interesting? Some of those washed sanctified, justified Christians who used to be like that were still doing some of those things. Have you read 1 Corinthians lately? They were doing most of those things. But he still says such were some of you. And his point is cut it out. It doesn't belong in your new life, you see? It has no place. Yeah, you can go back to 1 Corinthians 5 and you can find fornication and adultery and the whole thing right there and he's...that's still some of the such were some of you folks.

His appeal is, you're different. That's not your lifestyle anymore. Don't do those things. They're foreign and they're out of the ordinary. They have no place. Let me show you another one. Ephesians 5:5, "For this you know," Ephesians 5:5. "For this you know that no fornicator nor unclean person," that's pretty general and yet it's fairly specific, "nor covetous man who's an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Hmmm, you say is that talking about some Christians who do those things? You can't get into the kingdom? You lose your salvation, verse 6, let's find out.

"Let no man deceive you with vain words for because of these things cometh the wrath of God on the sons of disobedience." Is he talking about sons of God or sons of disobedience? Sons of disobedience. If you're a Christian are you a son of disobedience? You're a son of whom? Of God. Sure, "walk in love," verse 2, verse 1, "as dear," what, "children." You're sons of God, not sons of disobedience. Not children of wrath like Ephesians 2. No, no, he's talking about unbelievers here, whose life is characterized by these things.

Now, I'm not trying to say well you Christians can go out and do these things once in a while and you're okay. That's a different issue. I'm just trying to support the fact that the passage is talking about unbelievers, not Christians who happen to do these sins. Let me show you another one. Colossians 3, and I want you to understand this and since some of you did ask questions we want to cover it. Colossians 3, verse 5, "Mortify." or kill, "your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry, for which things sake," now he's talking to Christians here. He's saying don't do those things Christians. "For which things sake the wrath of God comes on the," whom, "the sons of disobedience," again. What he's saying is look, this is the stuff that God actually damns the unsaved for. Don't you be doing them. That's his point. It is again a characterization. It is not that Christians are perfect or he wouldn't have to say that to them. But it is that habitual kind of life that damns a man.

Now just to call your attention to two other very related verses at the end of Revelation, Revelation 21:27 and 22:15, perhaps wrap up our thought. 21:27 of Revelation has caused some people problems. "And there shall in no way enter into it," and that's talking about heaven, it's talking about the new Jerusalem described there. "No way enter into it anything that defiles," now watch this one, "neither works abomination or lies." You say oh I've lied. You mean, I can't go to heaven, I lied. Now watch, "But they who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life." You want to notice something interesting. It doesn't say liars don't go into heaven, non-liars do. Nope. It says habitual liars don't go there, but those written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

What it does is it contrasts a Christian with an unbeliever. Again, it doesn't contrast a liar with a non-liar, but the one who habitually lies with the one whose name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. What he's saying is this, if you're going to try to get into that city on the basis of your own morality, if you've ever told one lie, you can't get in. The only way to get in is if your name is what? Written down. Now the same thing is true in 22:15. "Outside are dogs, sorcerers, fornicators, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loves and makes a lie." Same idea, but in contrast to them, verse 14. "Blessed are they that have never lied." Is that what it says? "Blessed are they that have," what, "washed their robes in," what, "the blood of the Lamb." And again you see you have a characterization of ungodly person, as a liar, fornicator, sorcerer, all these things, and a godly person not someone who doesn't do that, but somebody's whose name is written in the book and their robes are washed in the blood.

So when we go back now to Galatians and we read what the apostle says in reference to those who commit such things not inheriting the kingdom of God, he is characterizing the ungodly. And he's saying look Christians you can't put yourself back under law and do anything other than crank out the garbage that the ungodly do and they're the ones who aren't citizens of the kingdom and you are. What do you want to do those things for? So all the flesh ever does is mess up everything. Now Christians are going to sin, but they're going to be restrained from habitual sin. I believe that with all my heart. I believe that if a person is truly a Christian, there is restraint from sin.

A person came to me this morning and said well, I have a friend who claims to be a Christian, been a Christian such and such and now she's going into a wholesale commitment to sin. What do I do? Well, my question is back up from that is I don't know whether that person is even a Christian or not. Because in Romans 8:9 it says, "But yet are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Now does the Spirit of God dwell in every believer? Yes, then you're not in the flesh, you're in the Spirit. That's got to be some kind of change. It's got to be. Has to be.

The Spirit must be doing things in my life to restrain sin. The habitual practice of sin in the unbeliever is not broken though. In verse 8 it says, "Then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Can't be done in the flesh, can't be done. Only walking in the Spirit. All right, so we see the contrast then, first of all, and all that's just kind of review. Walking in the Spirit in contrast now to walking in the flesh. Now what happens when you walk in the Spirit. Verse 22, you produce the fruit of the Spirit.

Look at it, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control against such there is now law." As the repulsiveness of the deeds of the flesh should deter us from yielding to the flesh, so the attractiveness of the fruit of the Spirit should cause us to yield to the Spirit. When you walk by the Spirit, beloved, and when I walk by the Spirit, two things happen. One is a negative, one is a positive. When I walk by the Spirit, first of all, the works of

the flesh are not produced. That's verse 16. Secondly, the fruit of the Spirit is produced. So positive, negative results. Now notice another interesting little deal here. You see verse 22, it says the fruit, singular, not fruits. Singular, fruit, but you notice verse 19, the works of the flesh. Multiple works, singular fruit. You say what's that all about?

Watch, the flesh, now hang on to this stuff. The flesh may manifests itself in one, two, three, four, five, or half a dozen ways. Not everybody who is cranking it out in the flesh is doing all of that stuff all the time. Right? You'd agree to that. I mean, you couldn't do it. You'd be a wreck. There's no way to keep up with it. The list is too extensive. So some people try but it's tough. So the idea that the flesh will produce a multiple of works. Any one, two, three, or half a dozen of which you may see functioning in your life. On the other hand, the Spirit produces a single fruit. And when you walk by the Spirit, you will see in your life not one, two, or three of those, but what? All of them. So you can't say well, I'll tell you man I've got love and joy licked, but I'm hung up on peace. No, no. No, no.

You can't say I've got it all except self-control. You're in real trouble. No, the fruit of the Spirit is singular. You either have all of it or what, none of it. That's interesting. This is one fruit. All comes in the Spirit walk. And you know what's so beautiful about the Christian life, is it all reduces itself to this. You don't need to run around trying to generate love and generate joy and...you just need to walk by the Spirit and He will do it all in you. Fantastic simplicity. Thank God for simplicity. Some of folks would be in real trouble if we didn't have that.

God reduces everything to the common denominator for us here. Basic, the walk of the Spirit produces the fruit. Now this is the characterization of a Christian. This is the pattern that ought to be seen in a believer. This is the habitual character of a Christian. Now there are, let's face it, in our lives times when we don't see that, right? There are times when we don't walk in the Spirit, when we break the pattern. But this is to be the norm. This is to be the pattern and the characterization of a Christian. Jesus characterized really His followers, His disciples, those who believed in Him and loved Him, the children of God, in these words. Listen to this.

Mark 7...well, let's see. Let's start at 7:17. "And when He was entered into a house before some people there, His disciples," He was...came in from talking with some people. "His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. He said unto them are you so without understanding? Don't you perceive that whatever thing from outside enter unto the man can't defile him?" In other words, a man is not defiled by what comes in from the outside. It enters into His...not into His heart. What you eat doesn't go into your heart. What you consume it has...it goes into his stomach and goeth out into the draft. That means it goes through the bodily functions. It's relieved and down through the system of drainage and out of the body, purging all foods. And He said, "That which comes out of the man, that defiles him." It isn't what you put in that messes you up, it's what comes out of you.

"For from within out of the heart of men proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murder, theft, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, evil eye, blasphemy, pride and foolishness, all these evil things come from within and defile the man." And that's why I've said so many times, the philosophy of Jesus is not the philosophy of sort of shape up a guy's environment and you'll make him a better man. No, no, he's the guy that contaminates his environment. Comes from the inside. The characterization of the Christian then is what's issuing from the inside of him is of the Holy Spirit.

And fruit is extremely important. The Bible talks an awful lot about fruit. Twenty-four of the 27 New Testament books talk about fruit. It appears the word 70 times in the New Testament, 106 times in

the Old Testament. God has a lot to say about fruit in the Christians' life. Fruit is the indicator that a man is saved. If there's no fruit in your life, something's wrong. It's, I think, Matthew 7 where it says, "By their fruits," what, "shall know them." And God is the source of all that fruit. So if you see fruit in a man's life, you know God's at work.

Hosea 14:8, "From me is thy fruit found, God says." Whatever you produce of godliness is from me. And so as I abide and as I walk in the Spirit the fruit is produced. Now when you study the Bible, you'll find that fruit is a lot of different things. In the Bible, it talks about the fruit of your lips being praise in Hebrews 13:5. It talks about the fruit in terms of a contribution of money to the needy. It talks about fruit being blessed communication, 1 Corinthians 14:4. It talks about fruit being godly deeds in Colossians 1:10. It talks about fruit being winning people to Christ in John 4, for example, where Jesus saw that the fields were white unto harvest, you know, and all those things.

1 Corinthians 16:15, "First fruits being souls in Achaia." So the Bible talks about a lot of different actions and a lot of different deeds and a lot of different works being fruitful works. But now notice, all those things I mentioned to you, praise, a contribution to the needy, blessed conversation or communication, godly deeds, and winning people to Christ, watch, are all action. They're all acts aren't they? But behind them, now watch and here we come right to Galatians 5:22, behind action fruit is attitude fruit. Did you get that? Before you ever see the product of action fruit, there must be attitude fruit, because it is attitude that produces action. Because it is from within a man that the things come out of him that are productive and whatever is going on inside will produce outside.

You'll never have action fruit until you have attitude fruit. Because what happens on the outside happens in response to what's happening on the inside. And so here...you say well, how could you summarize the whole Christian life with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, etc., etc. We'll all be sitting around saying love, love, peace, joy, hmmm, see. And we don't do anything. You don't need to worry about doing anything because if all that attitude fruit is there, it will produce action fruit, right? It has to.

You can love in a corner all by yourself, you've got to find somebody. You can't have joy all alone, you'll find somebody and share your joy. And goodness isn't something that's self-centered. You...you see, that all is attitude food, but attitude food is the heart of everything because it produces action. So the Spirit produces all this attitude fruit and the flow just comes and responds.

God is the source. You know, we're commanded to be fruitful and to be fruitful means to depend and to lean on Him as the source. And yet there's a sense in which we've got to yield. We can't just stand there like a block and expect God to just produce. There is a yieldedness that is demanded of us. It's like in 2 Peter where he says you have all those things, now add to your faith, add to your faith. Do you know that he has almost the same list as you have here? Yeah, you go down 2 Peter 1:5-8 you'll find very similar terms to here and in 2 Peter it says you add to your faith this and you add to your faith this and you add to your faith and here it says this is the fruit of the Spirit.

What's it saying in 2 Peter then? He's simply saying you've got to lean on the Spirit. You've got to reside walking by His strength and His energy. It's not a contradiction. It's the mysterious paradox of the Christian life. That is my responsibility, yet it is his power. You see? I don't know how to...Fred Barshire and I, the other day, were talking about how you illustrate all these things and in my mind I say it would be like a guy who was picking fruit up on a tree and you were down below and you had your basket. And he was saying "hey I have some fruit here and I'm going to be dropping it. Just

follow me around and catch it." And the fruit keeps coming. Now if you've got your basket upside down, it's going to plop all over the place.

If you're paying no attention, it's going to be dropping all around you and you're not going to get it. All you're going to do is get your basket in the right spot, open it up and here it comes. And this is the way it is in the Christian life. The fruit keeps coming. God's Holy Spirit keeps producing. It's only a question of where your basket is. That's...you got it right? It's all about submitting yourself to the productivity of the Holy Spirit.

Well, and when you start with this attitude fruit, action fruit just flows. Well, let's look at the fruit. And all kinds of people have tried to organize these nine things into different categories and there's so much written on this, and three of these and three of those and three of the other and so forth. I supposed you could figure out an outline that would close to fit, but I couldn't. I've tried every way I could and you know how my mind functions in terms of how maledicts, but I just couldn't tie these down.

Some say the first three are for God. The second three are for me, and the third three are for yourself, but it doesn't fit. Nothing seem to fit except to say that they all relate to God to others and to self in some way. And I also would add that it's probably not necessarily a complete list. Now there are other things that could have been here, just as he said and the like in verse 21 in terms of the works of the flesh. He says at the end of verse 23, "against such." And the Greek says "against such classes of things there's no law." So it isn't necessarily an all inclusive thing here either. But let's look at them.

First of all, love. The fruit of the Spirit is love. Now remember we're defining a single fruit. So don't get the idea you just work on one. The fruit is, first of all, it is love, agape. The highest form of love. I want to use a fourfold pattern to try to explain to these to you. I'm going to give you four little deals on each one of them. The meaning of it, its example, its command, and its source. Okay?

The meaning, what do we mean by love here? Well, it's the supreme gift of all. Now 1 Corinthians 13, "And now abides faith, hope, love, and the greatest of these is," what, "love." Love. Now the supreme gift of all gifts is love. And one commentator says that this whole thing is just...love is the key and then everything else is just love manifest in a different way. I don't know that that's true, it may be. But love is the dominating factor. It's preeminent in human experience. In Romans 13:10, the Bible says, "That if a man loves, he fulfills," what, "the whole law." It's a supreme thing. The basis of the church age is love, verse 14 of Galatians 5. For all the law is fulfilled in one saying. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." You do that, you've filled it all. You say well, what is this love? It is the quality, now watch, it is the quality of self sacrifice.

And I've tried to teach this again and again and again. It is not emotion. It is self sacrifice. It is not saying oh I feel so lovey toward this person or that person. It is self sacrifice. It may not have any emotion connected with it. God proved His love toward us, Romans 5:8. "In that while we were yet sinners," Christ had a warm feeling toward us. Is that what it says? "n that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Self sacrifice. Self sacrifice, greater love hath no man than this than that a man lay down his life for his friends. Sacrifice, God always defines biblical love in terms of self sacrifice.

Listen to 1 John 3:16, "By this understand we the love." Want to understand love, here it is. Because

He laid down His life for us. You see that's love defined. Not a warm feeling, He sacrificed. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brother. You say I would, I would, I would I never have an opportunity. I've told God I'll die for somebody Lord and I just don't ever seem to have that opportunity.

All right, verse 17 will help you out. "Whosoever hath this world's good and sees his brother have need and shutteth up his compassion from him how dwelleth the love of God in him? Since you can't die for somebody, how about helping out somebody needy. That's a little simpler. But look, if you don't do that, how dwelleth the love of God in you? It isn't emotion, it is self sacrifice, over and again the Bible defines it as self sacrifice. We know that we have passed from death unto life said John because we love the brothers.

And how do we define that? We see them have need. We meet his need. In fact, you know, it's clear that in John Epistle, he says that if you don't have this kind of love toward your brother that's reason enough to question your salvation, right? That's right. Reason enough to question your salvation, if you don't have love for the brothers. Let me give you a second thought. If you have misdirected love that's another reason to question your salvation. "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world," what, "the love of the Father is not in him."

So John says if you don't love your brother, that's reason to question your salvation. John also says if your love is misdirected toward the world, that's also reason to question your salvation. Love. You say well, why should you question my salvation? Because if you're a new creature and the Spirit dwells within you and the Spirit is producing within you the fruit ought to be there. Sooner or later it's got to be there. Because that's the pattern of your life. Yes, it'll be broken by sin, but it still won't be the flow of your life. Now what about an example. That's the meaning of it. It's example, who's the supreme example of love? Who is it? Jesus Christ Himself. What greater illustration of love in the words of Jesus. There's no greater love than this than a man lay down his life for his friends. And Jesus was so explicit about His love.

Let me just read you from John 11:33, "Jesus therefore saw her weeping and the Jews also weeping who came with her. He groaned in the Spirit and was troubled. Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus, saw Mary and Martha crying" and it just tore Him up inside, "He groaned, He was racked inside." You say what was the pain? The pain wasn't over a dead Lazarus. No, no. That was nothing to cry about. Why? Well, give him ten minutes and Lazarus is going to be alive. He wasn't crying over Lazarus. He stayed up there where He was to let Lazarus die. Yes, He wanted him to die, because He wanted to display His glory. So He wasn't crying about Lazarus. What He was crying about was the anguish and the pain when He saw the consequences of what sin did. It killed and created sorrow everywhere. And He knew that's what sin was going to continue to do until the kingdom.

And so He was pained and they looked at him and it says in 35, "Jesus wept then said the Jews behold how he loved him." Jesus loved Lazarus and He wept not because of what was going on in terms of Lazarus being dead, but because He saw the power of sin as it hit the life of somebody He cared about. He loved. He loved. In John 15, I read you "greater love hath no man than this than a man lay down his life for his friends," John 15:13. That's the example.

The command, did you know that you're commanded to love like that? You're commanded to love in the way that Jesus loved to sacrifice the way He sacrificed. I just read you a couple of them, 1 John. Let me read you another one. Ephesians 5...well, there's several here, 5:1. "Followers of God as

dear children and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us." So you see the meaning, the example, the command. You say well, boy I'd sure like to love that. How do I do it? Well, let the Spirit produce it in you.

Are you ready for this? Romans 5:5, listen, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us." The only way you'll ever see that kind of love generated in your life is through the Holy Spirit right? Source and power of everything, the Holy Spirit. He is at the heart of it. I love Colossians 1:8, a little verse you probably never thought about it. Paul is talking about personal friends. He says, "Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit." You see that? Isn't that beautiful? He recognized that they couldn't love him, but that the Spirit could love him through them.

Your love in the Spirit, it's a fruit of the Spirit to love like that. You can't do it on your own. Second, joy. You can't drum up joy either. You ever try to be joyful? Just somebody comes along and says rejoice and again I say rejoice and you got psst you know. You don't know my problems. That's easy for you to say fellow, rejoice. Seventy times the New Testament tells you to rejoice. What does that mean? The word chara, joy, what is it meaning? What is it's meaning? It is the heavenly joy. It is the joy of God passing through a Christian. It is not human joy stimulated by divine influence.

Nope. Nehemiah 8:10, you ever heard this verse? "The joy of the Lord is your strength." It's His joy in me. Chara as a Greek term is always used to refer to joy that is based on spiritual factors or religious factors. It's not a slap-happy sort of giddy kind of thing. It's a deep founded joy, and its founded not in circumstances, but in God. Oh that's so important.

1 Peter 1:8, isn't it, "Whom having not seen ye love and whom though now you see Him not yet believing. You rejoice with joy," what, unspeakable and full of glory." It's something inside. It isn't circumstantial joy. It's that deep joy that goes right pass circumstances. I love that illustration in John 16:20 where Jesus said, pretty soon you're going to have sorrow and you're going to cry a lot and all that. But He said, just hang on your sorrow's going to be turned to what? Joy. It's just being able to see in the same circumstance the joy. And you know, he uses that marvelous illustration. He says, "the woman has pain in giving birth to the child and she feels the sorrow and the pain and the same incident that brings the pain brings the joy when the child is born." Let God do what He's going to do through the pain. The joy is there.

And such divine joy, I think biblically has to be define as full joy. I mean, you can't add to it. What could you add to the joy of the Lord? I mean, what is there to add to that? So it's full joy. 1 John 1:4, "And these things right we unto you that your joy may be," what, "full." Full, and Jesus made the same promise in John 16:24. When He was going to give them all the things He was going to give them as He departed. He said, "Hither too have you asked nothing in my name ask and you shall receive that your joy may be full." Full of joy. It's joy in a relationship to God that is satisfying.

What about its example? Who's the greatest example of joy? Well, I think Jesus is again. You say well wait a minute, the Bible says that Jesus was a man of sorrows. Right? Isaiah 53, and acquainted with grief. Yes, but Hebrews 12:2 says "That He for the joy that was set before Him did," what, "endured the cross." Listen, if He had so much joy that it didn't destroy Him to take the sins of everybody who ever lived on Him and that never at one moment of time halted His joy, then He had some kind of joy.

If He could see in the cross joy, then He had a satisfactory joy, folks let me tell you. Greatest example of joy in the world. He never lost His joy. All the time anticipating the cross, what satisfying joy. That's why Jesus said in John 15:11, He says, "My joy I give you." My joy. It's command...are you commanded to rejoice? Yes, you are. Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice always." And in case you didn't get that. "Again I say rejoice." You say, but I'd like to try. How do I try it? You don't try it in your own flesh, because you can't do it. You say where does it come from? The Holy Spirit produces it. You say, you mean the Holy Spirit produces joy? Yes, Romans 14:17, "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace," now hang on to this, "and joy in the Holy Spirit." Holy Spirit gives us joy. Marvelous.

Third thing, peace. Eirene, from which we get the Irene, that means peace. What is this? This is a tranquility of mind based on a relationship to God. Again, it has nothing to do with circumstances. The verb form, I love this, the verb form means to bind together. Peace is when you got it all together. You see, nothing ruffles you. You've got it together. It's meaning, it's that inward calm confidence that no matter what happens everything between you and God is right.

You know when you stop to think that everything God is doing in this entire world in your life if for your good, I mean, shouldn't that produce peace? "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," Jesus said. Isn't peaceful circumstances, no, no, it's a peaceful heart. You carry a peaceful heart into a messed up circumstance and you'll have peace. It's example. Who's the greatest example of peace ever lived? Who is the Prince of peace? Again, it's Jesus Christ.

We would agree that confidence in the divine assurance of God and it is promise supplied Christ all through the temptation. Jesus continually came back to this, "The Father will supply in His own time all that I need." There's no threat on His life, because He's absolutely calm about the Father's care, fantastic. In Philippians Chapter 4, verse 9, there's a great statement. He says, "Those things which you have learned and received and heard and seen in me do and the God of peace shall be with you." And if that's true, verse 7 will be true. "The peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ." So you have the God of peace and you have peace with God. When the God of peace is yours.

And certainly Jesus Christ had that calm, that tremendous sense that God was there and God was working on His behalf. The illustration, the example. The command then comes to us in Philippians 4, "Be anxious for," what, "prayer and supplication let your request be made known to God and the peace of God shall guard your heart." We're commanded to be at peace and yet even though we're commanded, it's only the Holy Spirit who can produce these. And I just read you Romans 14:17, "The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit alone can produce peace in your heart.

Now do you see what I'm saying in all this. That's only three of them and do you get the point? There's a paradox in the Christian life. Here is a fruit, a part of the fruit. It is illustrated to us by Jesus Christ. It is commanded of us and yet it never can be produced except in the Spirit. So the command is always the same command. Rest in the Spirit. Yield to the Spirit. Appropriate by walking.

Look at the fourth one, longsuffering. It means patience or tolerance, slow to wrath. It's the absolute opposite of impatience. It's characteristic of God. Did you know God was patient? Ever read Psalm 86:15? "But thou oh Lord art a God full of compassion, gracious, longsuffering, plenteous and mercy." It's not just longsuffering sort of sounds like you endure pain for a long time. Longsuffering

doesn't mean that. It means you are patient and God is patient.

Read Romans 2:4, God is patient. Some people, you know, are misusing the patience of God. That's the point of Romans 2:4, "But God is patient." You know in 2 Peter where he says that some people are saying that because God hasn't done anything, He can't do anything. And he's saying no, "the Lord is longsuffering not willing that any should," what, "perish." He's patient. He's patient. And even before the days of Noah, God was longsuffering. 1 Peter 3:20, "The longsuffering of God in the days of Noah," and finally God just had enough and He brought the flood. But God is patient.

And patience is always connected with mercy. Patiently merciful, what a beautiful characteristic in the life of a Christian, who's patient. The example, Jesus Christ. You say, was Jesus patient? Oh patient, why with all the things He endured, how patient He was. 1 Timothy 1:16, "Nevertheless for this cause I obtained mercy that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all patience for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

You think Jesus is patient? I hope so. If you don't, remember the life of Paul. How patient Jesus was while Paul spent most of his adult life killing Christians and in great patience the Lord Jesus waited and waited accepted him, made him an apostle. And Paul says in 1 Timothy 1:16, I can't believe how patient He was with me. He's patient. He's the example. The command, you say am I as a Christian commanded to be patient? Yes, there are several passages that cover this. Colossians 3:12, it says there, "Put on therefore as the elect of God Holy beloved, tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, patience, makrothumia, longsuffering, patience." We could read Ephesians 4:2-3, 2 Timothy 4:2 and it would say the same thing, patience.

You say yes, I'm commanded to do that, but again, I bet you're going to tell me the only source is the Holy Spirit. That's right, that's right. Colossians 1:11, "Strengthen with all might." Ah-ha, strengthen...he's praying it should be strengthened with all might. How did he get strengthened with all might? You've got to go to Ephesians 3:16, "Strengthen with all might by the Spirit in the inner man." So the Spirit strengthens you with all might and produces patience and longsuffering. Colossians 1:11, only the Spirit can produce patience.

Fifthly, gentleness. This means tenderness. It is the characteristic of God that does not imply weakness. David said in 2 Samuel 22:36, "Thy gentleness has made me great." This is characteristic of God. God is gentle. God is tender. God is kind. It is characteristic of the apostle Paul, you remember, he said to the Thessalonians, "We were gentle among you." It's not a milk toast kind of thing. It's not a deal where you don't have any conviction. It's just a gentleness that comes along with conviction. There's time for indignation. There's time for tenderness. The example, Christ. In 2 Corinthians 10:1, Paul says, "I beseech you by the gentleness of Christ." Paul saw in Jesus tremendous gentleness. I see it in Him too when He picks up little children, tenderly touches them and blesses them. He says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." I hear it when He says "take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly and you should find rest for your souls."

There's a gentleness about Him. The example is Jesus. The command, yes, we're commanded to be gentle. In 2 Timothy 2, I call your attention just a beautiful passage. "The servant of the Lord," verse 24, "must not strive, but be gentle unto all men." "The servant of the Lord is to be gentle." That's a command. You say, but the source and the power comes from the Holy Spirit again. Yes, it does. It James 3:17, it says, and I just quickly read this. "But the wisdom that is from above," that's from the

Spirit of God, from above, "is pure, peaceable, gentle." Gentleness comes from above again, through the Holy Spirit.

Well, you see there they are, all those divine characteristics so far are exemplified in Christ commanded of us, produced by the Spirit only as we walk by the Spirit. The same is true of goodness, the number six on the list. And incidentally, the word for goodness comes from a form of agathos which is where you get the name Agatha. So a couple of you ladies have probably found out about yourselves tonight. It means moral excellence, spiritual excellence, sweetness. And God is good, isn't He? Yes, the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Nehemiah 9 talks about His great goodness. David anticipated in Psalm 23:6, "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." And in Psalm 27:13, I love this, David said, "I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

Yes, God is good. Christ is the example. Remember they came to Him and called Him good master and He said, "why callest thou me good, there's none good but God?" And He was assuming really the character of God. You say are we commanded to be good? Yes, right there in Galatians. As long as you're there look at Chapter 6, verse 10 right across the page. You say, what does that say? It's simple isn't it? "As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men especially unto them that are the household of faith." So we're commanded to be good. And yet at the same time, it's produced by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit produces goodness. It can't be in our own flesh. Our own flesh cannot produce goodness because in our own flesh there is no, what, good thing. But in 2 Thessalonians 1:11 it says, "That God would fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness in us." Beautiful thought. Finally, last three graces, just quickly look at them. Faithfulness, that's the word faith. Faithfulness, meekness, self control. Faithfulness, you know what that means. It means trustworthiness, loyalty, steadfastness, and God is faithful.

Lamentations 3:22, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness." Christ is the example. You say was He faithful? Yes, we could talk about a dozen illustrations. Let me give you just one. When Jesus left the earth in Acts 1:11, the angels said, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you've seen Him go." Do you think He'll keep His promise? You go to Revelation 19:11 and it shows Him on a white horse and His name is faithful and true. He keeps His word.

You say am I commanded to be faithful. 1 Corinthians 4:2, "Moreover brethren it is required of stewards that a man be," what, "found faithful." You say, but I can't produce it can I? Nope, Holy Spirit alone can produce in you faithfulness. It can't be done any other way. Acts 6:5, "Find a man full of faithfulness and of the Holy Spirit." They go together, they go together. Meekness. You say, what's meekness? I want to show you something interesting about meekness. Meekness is the only one of the nine parts of the fruit of the Spirit that isn't characteristic of God. God is not meek. You can't find any Old Testament Scripture at all that says God is meek.

He is not meek. It means lowly, humble and God is not lowly and God is not humble. God is God. You say well, what does meekness mean then? Well, in the New Testament, it is used to describe three attitudes. One submissiveness to the will of God. Submissiveness to the will of God, Matthew 5:5. Secondly, teachable. A teachable person is said to be meek and that particularly is pointed in James 1:21. Thirdly, considerate person. 1 Corinthians 4:21. So meekness means submissive to

God's will, teachable and considerate.

The example is Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:1, He was meek. He himself...remember in Matthew 21:5, He rides in the city meek and lowly riding on an ass. Meek, humble. You say are we commanded? Yes, 1 Timothy 6:11, "Follow after meekness." Colossians 3:12, "Put on meekness." But only in the Holy Spirit, He's the only one who can produce it. Here it is, fruit of the Spirit, meekness.

The last one, self control. Self control again, the ability to keep self in check. The example, "Jesus Christ," Hebrews 13:8, "The same," what, "yesterday, today, and forever." The command to us, yes, Peter...2 Peter 1, "Add to your faith, self control, but it's only produced by the Holy Spirit." And there you see it don't you? All the fruit of the Spirit, the totality commanded to the believer, produced by the Spirit, exemplified by Jesus Christ. And then this little phrase and he closes, "against such there is no law."

I love that statement. What he's saying here is look, if you're in the Spirit, you don't need the law. Why? The law has one purpose to restrain sin, to restrain the thing that's being produced in the life. And in the case of the flesh it produces evil and the law restrains. In the case of a Christian, the Spirit is producing stuff that doesn't need to be restrained. So you don't need the law, because the law is to restrain and you don't want to restrain what's being produced by the Spirit.

The law is necessary to restrain sin only under law conditions. It is not necessary to have anything restrain the work of the Spirit. Well, there's the contrast. You can choose what you want in your life. I'll close with the conquest, just mentioning it, the last point. The conflict is there. The contrast makes the Spirit walk much more desirable. Look at the conquest. There are two parts, God's part. Verse 24, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Folks, is that a great verse? That's past tense history. If you're a Christian, if you are Christ's, you have already crucified the flesh. You say when did I do that? The minute you believed in Jesus Christ your flesh was crucified. That's a dead issue.

Paul said in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified," what, "with Christ." My whole life is gone, dead, set aside. That's God's part. He did it. He crucified my affections and lusts on the cross. Nailed them to the cross. And if He did that, here's my part, verse 25. "If I now live in the Spirit, then I should also," what, "walk by the Spirit." God's part? He crucified it all. He killed it all. He paid the penalty for it. I ought to be able to walk consistent with the life I live.

Let's pray. Father, we thank You for our time together tonight and we've tried to cover perhaps too much material and we just trust that maybe somehow through all of this and the patience of these dear folks that the Spirit of God has been able to really communicate some positive and straightforward things. If nothing else, Father, we know that this is accomplished in our hearts that we understand that we are to walk by the Holy Spirit and give our lives totally to Him. And if we don't do that there is no victory. There is no conquest. May it be true of us that we walk by the Spirit. Pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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