

WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:16-26

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

This message is one that some of you may think, "ya, ya, I've already heard that, I know that." But it is a message that each of us should be reminded of-every day. Each day when we wake up, we have to consider, who am I going to serve today. "Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (**Joshua 24:15**) But it's also a reminder to us to know, who is doing the work in us each day, if we let Him, if we choose to be obedient. Our passage of Scripture today includes what is well known by followers of Christ, that is, Christians, as we are called, to contain the passage of Scripture that spells out the fruit of the Spirit of "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." We'll get to that shortly. What this passage of Scripture is very similar to in context to the overall message, is Romans chapter 8. **Romans 8** starts off by saying, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are **in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.**" Then in verse 14 it says, "**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.**" Similarly then we have in **Galatians 5:16**, "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." In closing the chapter of Romans 8, the Apostle Paul says, "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is **in Christ Jesus our Lord.**"

Prior to our passage of Scripture in **Galatians 5:16-26**, Paul spent time explaining to the Galatians that, as a child of God, that is, one who has believed on Christ, that they are no longer under the law. Paul was mostly dealing with the issue of the "Judaizers" as they are called, who were trying to convince the new non-Jewish converts to Christ that they had to be circumcised. But overall, what was being pushed by the Pharisees can be found in **Acts 15:5** where the Pharisees were saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." Paul, earlier in Galatians chapter 5 actually said, "You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. [have you ever been there? I've been there, trying to please God trying to just do what I thought pleased God. But there is a difference between that and what Paul continues to say]]. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (**Galatians 5:4-5**) That's right we are no longer under the law but under the grace. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (**Ephesians 2:8-9**) No matter how good we try and be we cannot please God by following the law. So what then pleases God, as a child of God? "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (**Hebrews 11:6**) "The just [meaning the ones who are justified in the eyes of God] shall live by faith." (**Romans 1:17**) "For he who comes to God must believe that He is." Believe that He is what, one may ask. Three things primarily, that He alone is God Almighty, that He alone is our Salvation, and that He is our Deliverer. In **Deuteronomy 32:39** God says, "Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver from My hand." Then that God alone is our Savior. In **Isaiah 43:11** God says, "I, even I, am the Lord, and besides Me there is no savior." And we find God's provision for our salvation through, Jesus! "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) As the Apostle Peter was quoted as saying, "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (**Acts 4:12**) That name in our English language is translated to Jesus. In Hebrew, Yehoshua, in Aramaic, Yeshua, which means "[The Lord] Jehovah is salvation."

There is but one God, He alone is our Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and then He alone is our Deliverer. King David is quoted in **2 Samuel 22:2-4**, "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; The God of my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; My Savior, You save me from violence. I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy

to be praised; So shall I be saved from my enemies." (**Psalms 18:2**) There, we find some bonus blessings in God, through our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. He is our God, our Savior, our Deliverer, our Rock our Fortress, our Strength, our Stronghold, and our Refuge! "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" (**Romans 8:31**) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (**Romans 8:35-39**) So then what is the key to overcoming in this world? How can we overcome the battle between our flesh and the Spirit? "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish." Paul explained in **Romans 6:11**, "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." God gives us His Word so that we can know the will of God. That is how the Holy Spirit guides us, by His Word. Pretty awesome isn't it? Here's what is awesome about it. As the Apostle Paul explained in **1 Corinthians 1:30-31**, "But of Him [God] you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord." Once again, going back to **Ephesians 2:8-9**, Paul says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." But then he continues by saying, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:10**) "That we should walk in them." That is, the good works that God is doing in us, or at least that is what He is attempting to do, which IS based on our obedience. He is working in us His Wisdom, His Righteousness, His Sanctification, and then His Redemption, to where when we cross over to the other side of this lifetime, we will be with Jesus. "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (**1 John 3:2**) We will not be perfected until we see Jesus. I'm not there yet, nor are you, nor was even the Apostle Paul. Paul says in **Philippians 3:12**, "Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me."

That's how it all begins. Jesus gets ahold of us, reveals to us that we have all have sinned against God (**Romans 3:23**) and that the wages of sin is death (**Romans 6:23**) but then that as he continues by saying, "but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) The Way to what? The Wisdom of God, the Righteousness of God, the Sanctification from God, and the Redemption from God! You may be thinking, "that is all good, praise the Lord, but what I'm going through is different, it's tough, I don't know how I can overcome in this world." Here's your answer. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (**John 16:33**) What He is saying to us then is that He has overcome the world and so IN HIM we too will overcome the world. God has already proven, in Christ, that He has already overcome the world. He was also saying that out time in this world is not going to be happiness and good times. You can try and make life a party but in the end you'll be picking up a lot of trash and broken pieces. For a review, He is our Wisdom, He is our Righteousness, He is our Sanctification, and He is our Redemption. He is our our Rock [when we stand on the Rock that is Jesus, though the storms howl around us, we will not be moved] He is our Fortress, He is our Deliverer, He is our Strength, He is our Stronghold, and our Refuge! God spoke to the Israelites in **Deuteronomy 30:20** saying, "that you may love the Lord your God, that you may obey His voice, and **that you may cling to Him, for He is your life** and the length of your days." How can one NOT love God when He is our all in all? The New Testament passage of Scripture that is similar to that passage in Deuteronomy is in **Hebrews 12:1-2**, "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Jesus went through all that so that we can be reconciled unto God, forgiven of our sins, that we will have eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." It is not by mistake that any of us are alive today, in this place right now. God has the perfect plan for each of us. "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him." (**Colossians 1:16**) Here's one more, "In Him [Christ] also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ **should be to the praise of His glory.**"

(Ephesians 1:11-12) So then, if we have been put on this earth for God's purpose and His glory, it seems to reason then, that as one who is called by God, and given His Spirit, then we must be led by His Spirit FOR His purpose. We need to be living according to God's plan, not trying to get God onto our plan.

"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." I'm not going to elaborate on what is in that list. It is not for me, or anyone else, for that matter, to judge another person. "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way." The best that we can do is be a shining example of the light that is in us through Jesus Christ our Lord. As Paul said, "now the works of the flesh are evident." Likewise the fruit of the Spirit is evident as well, in "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." One question that be asked is, are we provoking one another or encouraging one another in the faith that we have in Christ Jesus. And one thing that can be said about the fruit of the Spirit is that it is fruit of the Spirit not fruits. Meaning you're either operating in the fruit or you're not. If you're not, then something is certainly hindering the Holy Spirit, such as unforgiveness, bitterness, one of those things in the list that Paul says, "that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." Some one here may be thinking, "I can't be forgiven, my sins are too many or too horrible. Practically all of those things on that list I have done." My response to that is, join the club. But God...is greater than all of our sins combined. Think about that. Jesus took the sins of the world upon Himself. "[He] bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed." **(1 Peter 2:24)** God is greater than all of our sins! "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." **(Romans 5:8)**

I don't know where the demarcation line (or boundary line) is between being saved and unsaved but I do know how I AM saved, IN Christ Jesus. I will choose to cling to Him for He is my life, I will keep looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of my faith and I will continue to trust in God that He is my Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. That Jesus is my Rock and Fortress, and My Deliverer." So then, if God is for me, who can be against me. **(Romans 8:31)**

The entirety of the gospel of Jesus Christ has been presented to you today. We are to believe that God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus to die on a cross for our sins. He then was raised from the dead on the third day, conquering death, so that all who will believe on Him will be saved. Believing on Jesus means trusting Him with your life, from now unto eternity. God then gives of His Holy Spirit to those who are repentant, meaning they're changing their minds to no longer live in the sins of the flesh, but to live in the Spirit to where God begins working in us to be like Christ. Then when we are before God on judgment day, those who are in Christ, will be found to have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and from there we will be joint-heirs with Jesus for all of eternity. Just as Moses led the Israelites to the Promised Land and then Joshua led them into the Promised Land, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, alone is leading us to His eternal Promised Land. We are to believe on Jesus and receive His Spirit to lead us there. "But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name.**" (John 1:12)

Heavenly Father,
I confess that I have sinned against You. I ask that You forgive me of my sins. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins, I confess with my mouth that Jesus is my Lord, and I believe in my heart that You raised Jesus from the dead, so that I can have forgiveness of sins, and be reconciled to You, God, My Father. I now commit to You, that I will repent of my sins, and live in the newness of life, being led by Your Holy Spirit, in Christ Jesus, my Savior and Lord. Thank You Lord! Amen.