



World Christian Fellowship

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Galatians

Lesson 48- Walking in the Spirit and lead a Powerful Christian life

Galatians 5:16-22, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷For 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. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹envy, 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. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness*

Walking in the Spirit.

The heart and soul of understanding the process of sanctification and the living of our Christian lives.

What is someone like when they walk by the Spirit?

John 17:

Our Lord prays His prayer to the Father, and He is praying on behalf of all who will ever believe on Him. Jesus praying for us.

John 17:17, *Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

Jesus is praying for the sanctification of His people through all of church history.

The Word of God is the means by which God will answer the prayer of Jesus and sanctify His people.

John 17:18, *As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*

Jesus parallels His commission with our commission. He was sent into the world; we are sent into the world.

John 17:19, *And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

We need a perfect model/example of sanctification.

Our Lord sanctified Himself in every way!

Jesus was

✓ holy,

- ✓ innocent,
- ✓ undefiled,
- ✓ never did anything wrong,
- ✓ never violated any command, and
- ✓ never disobeyed any of God's will or law.

To sanctify essentially means "to set apart from sin." That is exactly what defines the Lord Jesus.

Here Jesus prays that His people will be like Him, that as He sanctified Himself, we will be sanctified, we will be made to become as much like Him as possible.

The essential reality of perfect sanctification is this:

- ✓ Perfect love and
- ✓ Perfect obedience.

Perfect love toward God and perfect conformity to God's will and Word.

So, Jesus was sanctified by His adherence to the truth, the revealed will of God and He prays that we will be sanctified by our adherence to the truth, the revealed Word and will of God.

Let me sum it up:

- Perfect sanctification is perfect obedience out of love to God's holy will as revealed in His Word.

- Scripture is the revealed character of God.
- Perfect conformity to Scripture.
- Perfect conformity to the character of God, and manifest particularly in Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Jesus had perfect love for the Father. He loved the Father in a perfect way.

John 17:4, *I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.*

His love for God was so perfect that His obedience.

Life of Jesus Christ.

Let us look at what a perfect person is like from the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 4:34, *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.*

Food speaks of the single greatest necessity of life. Without food you die. The Lord's great necessity in life was to "do the will of Him who sent Him and accomplish His work.

Doing only the will and work of God is the food of our Lord Jesus. **John 5:17**, *But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."*

This happened to be on the Sabbath. Jesus is saying that My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.

So, He not only does the Father's will, obeys the Father's word, but He does the Father's work.

John 5:18-19, *Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. ¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.*

Jesus does only the will of the Father,
only the word of the Father,
only the work of the Father, and
He does nothing but what the Father is doing, and
He does it exactly as the Father does it.

This is perfect love!

Consequently, perfect love leads you to perfect obedience conforming to God.

John 5:30, *I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.*

Whatever it may be, I don't do anything on My own initiative, including judging. I listen to the voice of God and take all My orders from Him and obey Him perfectly!

John 7:18, *He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.*

Jesus says, "I seek only the glory of the One who sent Me."

John 8:28-29, *Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things."²⁹ And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."*

Jesus always did what pleased God. He never did anything that did not please God. He rendered out of His own divine perfection perfect love and perfect obedience.

John 12:49-50, *For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak."⁵⁰ And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."*

John 14:31, *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.*

Loving obedience marks perfect sanctification.

This is obviously demonstrated only in Jesus Christ!
Only Jesus was perfect in His love and obedience.

That is why at the baptism the Father said, *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”*

Again, perfect sanctification is flawless obedience from a heart of love to the will of God, revealed and manifest in Scripture.

We then are sanctified in the same way Jesus was by our loving conformity to the will of God, to the word of God, to the work of God.

We live to follow His example. Now you will know why I always preach about this subject more than anything about being like Christ.

Be like Christ in the sense that we are sanctified, we are holy, we are lovingly obedient to God.

By what power did the Lord love and obey?

Because when He came into the world, He set aside His own prerogatives to use His power. He chose not to use His power.

Philippians 2:5-8 says that He emptied Myself.

Jesus repeatedly told His disciples that He doesn't know when He will return.

When Jesus was crucified, He said that I do have the power to call legions of angels to My defense, but I do not use that power.

He didn't lose His power,

He didn't lose His understanding of things in the future,

but He willingly set them aside and took on the form of a slave to God for the purpose of doing the will of God.

But the question remains what power did He render this perfect loving obedience?

The answer comes to us initially from the Old Testament prophecy of Isaiah chapter 11.

Isaiah 11:1-3, *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. ³His delight is in the fear of the Lord, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;*

There will come a Messiah from the line of Jesse through David. Jesus, of course, the New Testament says, is the son of David.

The answer: "The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him."

Since Jesus set aside His own independent use of His attributes, He had to depend on someone else to empower His perfect sanctification.

It is the Holy Spirit who is then defined for us in the richness of His nature.

- ✓ He is the Spirit of the Lord,
- ✓ He is the spirit of wisdom,
- ✓ The spirit of understanding,
- ✓ The spirit of counsel,
- ✓ The spirit of strength,
- ✓ The spirit of knowledge, and
- ✓ The Spirit of the Lord.

That is seven characteristics that are referred to there. There are seven references to the Holy Spirit, which is why the menorah has seven candlesticks, because it is representative of the sevenfold power of the Holy Spirit here in Isaiah.

The full power of the Holy Spirit – that is including wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, and fear or worship of God – will rest on the Messiah.

When we come towards the end of Isaiah's prophecy there is another familiar messianic prophecy speaking of the coming Christ.

Isaiah 61:1-2, *“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor;*

He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; ²To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

How is the Messiah going to do this?

By what power will He do this?

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”

So, the answer to the question is that the sanctification of our Lord was accomplished in Him by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus could not have done anything if it hadn't been for the power of the Spirit. He began teaching, was praised by all. He goes to the synagogue in Nazareth and He stands up to read, and the passage is Isaiah 61.

Luke 4:18-19, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

Luke 4:20-22, *Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²²So all bore witness to Him, and marvelled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

What Jesus said was this, "I am that Spirit-filled, Spirit-anointed Messiah that Isaiah promised."

We know what happened on that day?

Luke 4:28-30, *So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, ²⁹and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*

Our Lord said He did what He did by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 10:38**, *how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*

Peter's preaching, and he says that for God was with Him in the form of the Holy Spirit.

God was with Him in the form of the Holy Spirit.

How did Jesus do the will of God, the work of God in the way that God did it?

How did He render perfect love toward God, perfect obedience toward God?"

The answer, "By the power of the Holy Spirit."

The very person who empowered the perfect obedience of Christ is the very person that takes up residence in our lives as believers.

So, Jesus obeyed the word of God perfectly in the power of the Holy Spirit.

1 John 2:6, *He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*

How did Jesus walk?

- ✓ He walked in the Spirit.
- ✓ He walked in the power of the Spirit.

Colossians 2:6, *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,*

How did He walk?

How do we walk?

How do we walk in Him?

In the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now someday we will do that perfectly.

1 John 3:2, *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.*

That someday we will be like Him, and so we will have perfect love and perfect obedience.

But now we are striving to walk like He walked.

We have been given the Holy Spirit; the power is there.

We are being led by the Spirit.

If you're led by the Spirit, then walk in the Spirit. There is no such thing as a Christian who doesn't have the Spirit. There is no such thing as a Christian not being led by the Spirit.

So, follow and walk in the Spirit.

Romans 8:3, *For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,*

The law makes demands and pronounces judgment if you violate them. So, we are all under the law and basically guilty of breaking the law (talking about God's moral law) We are all then sentenced to death and punishment.

- The law has no power.
- The flesh has no power.

The law can't help us, it can't empower us;
It's outside of us, what the law could not do, weak as it was
through the flesh.

The law can't help us, and we in our flesh can't help ourselves.
But what the law could not do, because it's weak to the flesh,
God did, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.

Romans 8:4, *that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*

How then is the law fulfilled in us?

By walking according to the Spirit and not walking according to
the flesh.

Do you want to fulfill the law of God?

Walk in the Spirit.

This is so very important, because these legalists had come to
the Galatian church and said, "You need to conform to the
external rituals and ceremonies and rites, including
circumcision, of Judaism. You can't be saved without that, and
you can't be sanctified without that."

Paul has been saying, “No, you are free from all of that. You have been set free from all of that.”

The question then comes,

“If I don’t keep those rules and rituals, how do I please God?
How do I do the will of God?”

Answer:

“You walk in the Spirit.”

Legalism isn’t going to work.

Legalism cannot overcome evil desire,

Legalism cannot restrain the flesh.

Legalist may appear to be moral, but it is hypocritical morality because they have no ability in their flesh to conform to the law of God or the will of God.

The only way that happens is when there is a new nature and the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Romans 8 says, Holy Spirit is able to do what the law and the flesh could never ever do.

The Holy Spirit alone can save us through belief in the gospel. The Holy Spirit alone has the power to conform us to the Word and the will of God.

We want to be transformed into Christlikeness, which means that we want more and more to walk as He walk.

How did He walk?

He walked in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us come to Galatians 5:16,

Literally, present tense imperative: “Keep on walking. Continually be walking.”

- It implies effort.
- It implies consistency.
- It assumes difficulty because we have to be commanded to do it.

That is evidence that there’s going to be resistance, that there’s going to be conflict – we’ll see more about that next time.

V17 says that the flesh and the Spirit are in opposition to each other.

The flesh is producing all the horrible sins in verses 19-21.

The Spirit is producing all the virtues in verses 22-23.

Both of those things reside in us because we still have unredeemed humanness, which is our flesh, as well as the indwelling Holy Spirit. Which is why we are in a war, battle, conflict, and we must be commanded to walk in the Spirit, because there is so much resistance.

Walk

What does “walk” mean?

It's simply the ordering of life. One step at a time in life, putting one spiritual foot in front of the other and doing it consistently.

The Bible talks a lot about walking. Walking is just the normal process of progressive sanctification one step at a time.

Walking is a big theme in the New Testament.

Spiritual progress is not a sprint, but a lifelong walk.

- Romans 6 walking in new life.
- Ephesians 5 Walking in Love.
- Ephesians 4 Walking in Light
- Ephesians 5 Walking in Wisdom.
- Colossians 1 walking worthily.
- Philippians 3 walking in unity.
- Ephesians 4 walking in humility.
- Romans 13 walking in purity.
- 1 Corinthians 7 walking in contentment.
- 2 Corinthians 5 walking in faith.
- Ephesians 2 walking in good works.
- 2 Thessalonians 3 walking in separation from sin and the world.
- 3 John, walking in truth.

We walk like Jesus walked.

- ✓ He walked in perfect divine life.
- ✓ He walked worthily.
- ✓ He walked in integrity,
- ✓ He walked humility,
- ✓ He walked purity,
- ✓ He walked in contentment,
- ✓ He walked in faith,
- ✓ He walked in good works,
- ✓ He walked in separation,
- ✓ He walked in love,
- ✓ He walked in light,
- ✓ He walked in wisdom,
- ✓ He walked in truth.

So, we are to walk the way Jesus walked. This assumes an effort. This isn't let go and let God.

Walk, put one spiritual foot in front of the other and do exactly the kind of walking Jesus did, which meant conform your life to the will of the Father, the word of the Father, and the work of the Father.

- Do what God wants you to do!
- Do what God has told you to do!
- Do what God Himself does.

Now the Christians in Galatia had been bewitched.

Galatians 3:1, *O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?*

This is a foolish bewitching that retarded their sanctification.

Galatians 4:19, *My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you,*

Galatians 5:7, *You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?*

Paul has rejected legalism in this book. It doesn't mean he rejects the moral law of God, but he rejects the fact that you in your own strength, or anybody, can earn salvation by keeping God's rules.

Paul rejected that any idea of your sanctification is the result of your own ability to obey laws, particularly external laws rather than laws for the heart.

False religion works up an external set of behaviors by which people supposedly are to please God.

But God said, even Israel was near to Him externally, but their hearts were far from Him.

Isaiah 29:13, *Therefore the Lord said: "Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men,*

You are free but no freedom for indulging the flesh.

The moral law of God is holy, just, and good.

The moral law of God is necessary if you want to honour God.

The moral law of God is His will, and His word, and His command.

We are not free to disobey.

We are transformed to love.

Romans 5:5, *Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

V16, *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

If you walk by the Spirit you will be sanctified.

The Holy Spirit is present in every believer to empower believers to live like Christ. The power is internal. The Holy Spirit is the energizer, the instructor, and the restrainer of evil.

Ephesians 5:18, *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

There were pagan religions where drunkenness and wild behaviour was essentially the way that pagans thought they were communing with deity.

They actually thought that if they were completely drunk somehow, they ascended into transcendent communication with their gods.

Paul says, “No, don’t be drunk with wine as if that’s some access to the supernatural; be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

The parallel is in Colossians.

Colossians 3:16, *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

When you are saturated by the Word and the Word of God takes over your life. It is similar to walking in the Spirit. Because the Spirit’s desire is to conform you to the Word, which is to conform you to Christ.

“You will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”

You want to defeat your flesh.

What does it mean?

Not just your body, but the complex of sin that still remains until your glorification.

You want to overcome, triumph, and want to defeat that, then walk by the Spirit.

There's a war going on in us. How do we win the war?

How do we triumph over the desires of the flesh?

Answer: Walk in the Spirit.

What does it mean again?

It means to be like Christ.

How is that possible?

You have the power in the Holy Spirit, and you have the pattern in the Word of God.

This is how we are to live.

Romans 6:12-13, *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

This is the Christian life, and Christian experience: walking in the Spirit.

It is not passive! Not at all!!

1 Corinthians 9:27, *But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Paul talks a lot about the soldier as the model for a Christian at war.

Ephesians 6, putting on the whole armor of God.

He talks about running a race.

Paul at the end of his life he says, *"I have fought the good fight."*

This is a battle.

This is a war our whole life long.

We are new creations, incarcerated in unredeemed flesh, which still has its desires. We know what the desires are, because they are manifest down.

Galatians 5:19-21,

So, what do we do?

Passively surrender?

No!

We fight the battle with all our might by walking in the Spirit.

You can only walk in the Spirit if you know the will of God, the work of God, the Word of God.

So, we learn the Scriptures, we think biblically, because that essentially fuels the working of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit cannot move us in a direction in which we are ignorant. So, to be saturated with the Word of God enables the Spirit of God to empower us to triumph over the flesh.

Walk by the Spirit.

That's what Jesus did.

He is our model of perfect love, rendering perfect obedience to His Father. If we abide in Him, we ought to walk the way He walked.