

Book of Galatians

The Battle Between the Spirit and the Flesh



Kerrville Bible Church

April 28, 2024

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But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh (Galatians 5:16)

The Battle between Spirit and Flesh

Introduction



- ❑ Our Christian life is a constant battle between the Spirit and the Flesh
 - ❑ Galatians 3:3, “Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?”
- ❑ Spirit has given us all we need to defeat sin
 - ❑ Regenerated us ... Lifted us ... gifted us the FRUIT
 - ❑ Then 2 Peter 1:3, “... His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of HIM who called us by His own glory and excellence.”
- ❑ So, if we know ... then, **WHY?**
 - ❑ Rom 7:24, “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free ...?”

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The Flesh



- ❑ Does this thought “torture” you?
- ❑ Sin is our biggest problem – What causes Sin?
- ❑ Flesh (*sarx*) – Body, mind, feelings, human effort. Unredeemed humanness.
- ❑ John MacArthur: “The FLESH is at the root of all sin of every form: all wrong emotions, all wrong attitudes, all wrong actions, all wrong reactions, all wrong thoughts, all wrong words, and all wrong deeds. All come out of the FLESH”.
- ❑ Because FLESH is the Cause of our SINS
 - ❑ We must find a means to subdue the Flesh
 - ❑ And that means is the Holy Spirit

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1. The Command



- ❑ The Command – with its POWERFUL Promise:
 - ❑ Galatians 5:16, “But I say, walk by the Spirit ... and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”
- ❑ Can this be the answer to our problems?
 - ❑ “Walk” ... keep on ... one step at a time ...
 - ❑ “By the Spirit” ... follow His lead ... His Trail ... in submission
 - ❑ How? In the Word and in Prayer
 - ❑ Putting OFF the old ... Putting ON the new
 - ❑ Being Sanctified more like Christ ... less like world
- ❑ John MacArthur: “This little 16th verse is monumental. You can take all the commands of the NT and reduce them to this. **WALK BY THE SPIRIT** and you **WILL NOT** carry out the lusts of the flesh. That’s **Victory!**”

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2. The Conflict



- ❑ Easy? NO! Galatians 5:17 tells us, "*For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another*".
 - ❑ Desire – *epithumia* means "evil yearning".
 - ❑ Flesh wants to conceive and bring forth sin – Spirit wants to prevent that. Whatever Spirit wants to do – Flesh endeavors to stop. The war is on. That's the Conflict.
- ❑ Flesh has two powerful allies – the world and the devil
 - ❑ Constant barrage ... and we fall for it ... AGAIN!
 - ❑ Yet ... no sin ever delivers on its promise
- ❑ Sadly, we know, many times too late, The Holy Spirit is stronger than the FLESH ... world ... devil

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3. The Contrast



- ❑ Paul contrasts life lived both ways:
 - ❑ Galatians 5:19-21 Deeds of the Flesh:
 - ❑ Each is a sin
 - ❑ “... *those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God”*
 - ❑ Galatians 5:22-23 Fruit of the Spirit:
 - ❑ “... *love, joy, peace, patience ... self-control ...*”
 - ❑ “... *and against such things there is no law.*”
 - ❑ These nine virtues are God’s will for man
 - ❑ No law can produce these virtues by self-effort
- ❑ Everything wrong in life (sin) is produced by Flesh
- ❑ Everything right in life is produced by the Spirit

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4. The Conclusion



- ❑ Galatians 5:24, "*Those that belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*"
 - ❑ Past tense – already done positionally
 - ❑ Power is broken – You can say No!
- ❑ Galatians 5:25, "*If we live by the Spirit, let us also Walk By The Spirit.*"
- ❑ Your SELF is your own Worst Enemy
 - ❑ Matt 16:24. "*... he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*"
- ❑ Only source of Spiritual Transformation is the Holy Spirit
 - ❑ No Human Solution can defeat Sin
 - ❑ You want the abundant life? WALK BY THE SPIRIT!

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Thoughts on the self



Our whole culture is all about self-love, self-esteem, self-discovery.

As long as there is self – there will be problems.

Scripture teaches us to move from self to Savior,
from self-discovery to self-denial,
from self-esteem to self-sacrifice.

Our eyes are to be on Jesus, not on our self.

If self was the cure, Jesus would be unnecessary.

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