

Flesh

VS

Spirit

Self-examination:
Flesh vs Spirit

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*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God;
but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Romans 7:25

Flesh

VS

Spirit

Introduction

You may have heard the Cherokee tale of a grandfather talking to his grandson about life. He explains there is a terrible battle going on within him, describing it as two wolves. One is evil, full of *the works of the flesh*. The other is good, full of *the fruit of the Spirit*. The boy asked his grandfather, “Which wolf will win?” The grandfather replied, “The one you feed.”

I “Christianized” it a bit by using the terms “flesh” and “Spirit” in relation to the text we will be discussing in this work, because it goes much deeper than the inherit evil and good of an individual. It is true that if you desire and strive to do more good (or evil) than the other, you will most likely do more good (or evil). However, if one is spiritually dead (i.e. no new birth, no repentance, no faith in Christ), there is really only one wolf within that person. The wolf of the flesh. Therefore, there is no battle, except with possibly the conscience; for their “spirit” (with whom the Spirit bares his fruit) is dead.

This is not to say that one who is not a Christian cannot do good works. Non-Christians perform good works, and Christians can do (and have done) evil acts. The scope of Paul’s words are much deeper than man’s view of whether one is good or bad, or performs good or evil acts.

So, whether you have experienced conversion or not, I kindly ask you to walk with me through the following pages. This is not meant to serve as an exhaustive study on the topic, but to simply get you to consider what the Bible says about the ***works of the flesh, the fruit of the Spirit***, and where you (and I) currently stand as we are (in our flesh, in our spirit).

All of us should be willing to examine ourselves, to discover how we can be a better person, perhaps even a Christian or better Christian. I am prayerful this small work will aid in that purpose.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 01

If you have a Bible, please read Galatians 5:16-26. The following comes from notes used in a small group setting and is not meant to be exhaustive. All or most of the definitions are from Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language, and the primary source of Scripture is the King James Bible.

Paul states in Galatians 5:16:

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

Notice the capital "S" in *Spirit*, signifying the *Holy Spirit*. We are talking about God—the third person of the Trinity.

To walk: to advance by steps moderately repeated.

[Webster's 1828]

We could say to—*Walk in the Spirit*—is to:

Advance moderately in the Spirit by repetition or repeatedly advancing in the Spirit. To be done daily, not only once.

We did not (or should not have) simply asked Jesus into our hearts (as some say), some 5, 10, or 20 plus years ago—or in haste or haphazardly—only to walk away from the "experience" unchanged, never talking to him again. Unless, that is, we find ourselves desperate, seeing no other way, calling out to him in our last and final plea. Rather, there should have been, and still should be, within us a sorrow for sin, a faith and purpose, out of love and obedience toward God on a continual basis.

We are to *walk in the Spirit*, **and**... We have all learned that "and" is a conjunction. What do conjunctions do? It is a connector and joiner of words, phrases, sentences, etc.

What is Paul connecting here in Galatians 5:16?

A. *Walk in the Spirit*

Even if there were no “*and*,” we would still have this command from Paul under the influence of the Holy Spirit: *Walk in the Spirit*.

B. *ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh*

Paul joins *Walk in the Spirit* [AND] *ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh*.

Notice Paul does NOT say:

Walk in the Spirit and do not fulfil the lust of the flesh, as if they are two separate things. He joined them: meaning, *IF we walk in the Spirit, we will NOT fulfil the lust of the flesh*. One does not sin while walking in the Spirit. We sin the moment we stop walking in the Spirit.

So, with this statement—or rather the command, the promise—“*ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh*”—we may draw a few questions:

1. *What is lust?*

What is usually the first thing that comes to mind when you see or hear the word lust? Most of the time it is a reference to something sexual, but that is only part of what lust is.

Webster 1828 defines *lust* as:

1. *Longing desire; eagerness to possess or enjoy; as the lust of gain.*

2. *Unlawful desire of carnal (not spiritual; merely human; temporal; worldly) pleasure.*

Another word for *lust* could be *covet*.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

[Exodus 20:17]

Notice the sensual or sexual aspect of lust is included as “thy neighbour’s wife,” but equally part of the command is the neighbor’s workers, assets and belongings, or “any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

[James 1: 14-15]

Sexual lust is not the only lust that brings forth sin, thus bringing forth death. Notice James says one is “drawn away of his own lust.” That is similar to Paul’s command to *walk after the Spirit*, thus to not fulfill the lust of our own flesh. Different people have different lusts; or rather succumb to different lusts. What may tempt you may not tempt me, or what may tempt me at a high degree you may scarcely even acknowledge.

Notice in 1 John 2:16, it is joined with the *lust of the eyes* and the *pride of life*, and associated with the world.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

1 John 2:15 admonishes:

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

Now, everybody reading this probably understands, but just to make sure. In John 3:16 it states **God so loved the world...**

However, this is a redemptive love for creation, as seen in:

...that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Man's love of the world in 1 John 2 is for self-gratification, and not redemptive in nature. These might use similar words, but they are two completely different concepts. Genesis 3 gives us an example of this from the very beginning with Adam and Eve.

Eve saw the tree:

- was good for food ➤ the lust of the flesh
- pleasant to the eyes ➤ the lust of the eyes
- to make one wise ➤ the pride of life

Adam and Eve chose the world (creation) over obedience (i.e. walking with God). They listened to the words of the serpent over the words of the Creator.

James 4:4 is straightforward about it:

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

This is spiritual adultery, which is what we do when we “cheat” on God with the world, the flesh, and/or the devil.

To love the world, to adhere or obey:

- the lust of the flesh
- the lust of the eyes
- the pride of life

This is not merely sin, but rather a hatred of God and his Word. We may not want to admit that or believe that, but:

- Is it because the Bible does not really say that?
- Is it because we do not want to see ourselves (or humanity) as sinful as we really are?

Not much has changed since the Garden:

- Humanity still loves the world.
- Humanity still works to fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Humanity has the idea *if it feels good, do it. Who has the right to judge me? It is my body, my happiness. No one has a right to tell me I am wrong.* Unless it is us judging others. (Right?)

Interestingly, we do not believe God has that right either. *God wants us (rather ME) to be happy. If you disagree, I really do not want to hear about it.* Right? *I know what God **really** means.*

When God made Adam and Eve, they were perfect. Their flesh was sinless and their spirit was alive. However, in the moment they disobeyed God and ate of the fruit: (actually not until the head, Adam, ate the fruit)

- Their flesh became corrupt:
 - “sin entered into the world, and death by sin” [Romans 5:12]
- Their spirits died:
 - “dead in trespasses and sins” [Ephesians 2:1]

So, think about this...

Made perfect, without sin, Adam and Eve still chose to “*fulfil the lust of the flesh.*” Now imagine a person—man or woman, boy or girl—with a corrupt flesh and dead spirit.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

[1 Corinthians 2:14]

That *natural man*—one who walks in the flesh, because their spirit is dead and the Holy Spirit is not in them—**cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God**. Thus, we conclude, they **will not** and **cannot walk in the Spirit**; therefore **will fulfil the lust of the flesh**.

Even if they show EXTERNAL signs (whether short-term or long-term) of walking in the Spirit, the lost/natural man is only a *hypocrite*—portraying what he/she is not. Just like the religious crowd in Jesus’ day.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

[Matthew 23:27]

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

[Hebrews 11:6]

A lost or natural man does not put faith in God nor Jesus Christ. A lost person can only walk in the flesh. This is why Paul is speaking to Christians here in Galatians 1.

He says:

- Verse 1— Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made **us** free
- Verse 5— For **we** through the Spirit
- Verses 11, 13— he calls them **brethren**

Therefore, we should not be surprised when lost people act like lost people. This includes our children, family members, friends, co-workers, politicians and others.

The reality is they are:

- *“dead in trespasses and sins”*
- cannot receive *“the things of the Spirit of God”*

That is why we must pray for them and witness to them, that the Spirit may open their eyes. There is not enough “good” in them for them to obey Paul’s words to *“Walk in the Spirit.”* This is why it is dangerous to tell someone to “follow your heart.” We are telling them to trust in the flesh, their sinful flesh.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?

[Jeremiah 17:9]

How can a lost person know if their heart is being deceitful or not?

1. They cannot or do not walk in the Spirit.
2. They cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God.

All the lost person has is a conscience. [John 1:9] A conscience that can be *seared* and/or *hardened*. The more one sins, the less the conscience will convict them. How many times did Pinocchio disregard Jiminy Cricket?

People sometimes wonder why their heart led them here or there, and now they are heartbroken.

I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.

[Jeremiah 17:10]

Many times—though we may not realize it or want to accept it—our condition or current state of our lives is in direct relation to the fruits of our labor (i.e. the wages of sin). During the longsuffering and mercy of God, we usually forget that he is still holy, just, and does not tolerate sin. Too often, we want to say or believe that Satan is the problem, not really us.

Like Eve: we blame Satan

Like Adam: we blame our spouse, family, friend, the world

Or perhaps: we really blame God

In Scripture, we have accounts of devils/demons entering people making them do things. We also have the account of Judas, where Satan entered him to do as he willed. However, unless we have been possessed or are now possessed by devils or Satan, ultimately we have decided ourselves to fulfil the lust of the flesh—regardless of reason or by what influence—simply because we desired to, even if only in that very moment it took place. Even in possession, the host makes themselves available.

The war between the flesh and the Spirit (the flesh and our quickened spirit) is real and one we cannot win ourselves. Paul cried out, as should we:

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

[Romans 7:24]

Suicide is not the answer. The Holy Spirit, by faith in Christ, is.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 02

We have discussed Galatians 5:16:

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

We discussed the corruption of man's sinful flesh is so bad that:

- We cannot walk in the Spirit.
- We cannot receive the things of the Spirit.
- We have a heart that is desperately wicked, that we cannot even know or trust it.
- Our conscience can be seared or hardened, thus destroying our only means of constraint against sin (in and of ourselves).

We talked about how we cannot please God—even if we do outward religious acts—if we have no faith.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

[Hebrews 11:6]

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

[Matthew 7:21-23]

Our only hope is OUTSIDE of ourselves, outside of our flesh. We would be foolish to think otherwise.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing:

[Romans 7:18a]

This is from Paul, **a saved, born again, Apostle**. Imagine the lost man or woman, boy or girl. Sometimes we may imagine God overlooks our children walking in the flesh rather than in the Spirit (whether saved or lost). Not so. We will not discuss an age of accountability or such here, but our children (along with us) will give account to God for everything they do.

For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

[Romans 14:11-12]

This scares me! Not only for me but also for my children. I do not want my child living a life under the judgment of God, or to go to hell! The judgement seat of Christ is not going to be a fun time. Just read 2 Corinthians 5:10-11.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

HOWEVER, in this same Christ—the Son of God, our Saviour—we can have forgiveness of sin.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[1 John 1:19]

Jesus said he came to call “sinners to repentance.” [Luke 5:32]

Paul and Silas told the prison guard, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” [Acts 16:31] when he asked, “What must I do to be saved?”

Perhaps the Baptists’ favorite verses [Ephesians 2:8-9]:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

What about verse 10:

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

What are the “good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in”? To walk in the Spirit. [Galatians 5:16]

The good works are not fleshly based, but spiritual. Although, they are expressed outwardly. So how is a man or woman, made of flesh, supposed to be able to walk in the Spirit? Remember, a lost person is “dead in trespasses and sins.” Are they physically dead? No, they are spiritually dead.

The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

[1 Corinthians 15:45]

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

[Ephesians 2:4-5]

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

At conversion:

1. The Holy Spirit seals our soul.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

[Ephesians 1:13-14]

2. The Holy Spirit quickens (makes alive) our dead spirit.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

[1 Corinthians 15:22]

We are born in Adam in the flesh and born again in the Spirit in Christ. However, at conversion (the moment we call salvation) is not where it ends. We don't simply accept Jesus Christ into our hearts, then go back to living the same ole' life the same ole' way.

So begins the battle within ourselves...

Let us begin with Galatians 5:17:

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

We have two distinct statements here. Both are true:

- A. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.
- B. The Spirit lusteth against the flesh.

Remember we spoke about *lust*, how one usually thinks in the sexual sense of the word. However, we found that was not the only definition or meaning of the word lust. Here we have another use of the word.

If the shortest meaning of the word is *to desire* whatever or whoever then to *lust against* must mean *to desire against* whatever or whoever.

Therefore, we have:

- A. The flesh's DESIRES ARE against the Spirit.
- B. The Spirit's DESIRES ARE against the flesh.

They “are contrary the one to the other” as the verse says. In fact, they are so contrary (so polar opposites) “that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Why would the flesh of a saved person fight or lust against the Spirit of God?

The same Spirit that:

- Seals us unto the day of redemption. [Ephesians 4:30]
- Dwells inside of us. [1 Corinthians 6:19]
- Helps our infirmities and maketh intercession for us. [Romans 8:26]

The same Spirit we are to:

- Not resist. [Acts 7:51]
- Not grieve. [Ephesians 4:30]

Answer:

Because the flesh is not (yet) saved, not (yet) glorified.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

[1 Corinthians 15:50-54]

UNTIL THEN, we are to:

- “Deny” oneself—that is to deny one’s flesh. [Luke 9:23]
- “Mortify the deeds of the body” through the Spirit to live. [Romans 8:13]
 - Mortify: *to destroy, subdue (humble) or bring into subjection.* (Webster 1828)
- “Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” [Romans 8:4]
- “Live in the Spirit.” [Galatians 5:25]

How is our walk lining up with our talk, or with our confession of having put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ? Is the flesh or the Spirit controlling us? We may proudly claim we have the free will to excise choice in what we do, but unto which are we heeding?

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 03

So far, we have covered these two verses, these two thoughts:

1. Our flesh and the Holy Spirit are at odds.

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

[Galatians 5:17]

2. We are to obey the Holy Spirit over the flesh.

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

[Galatians 5:16]

We have covered both the lost and the saved individual:

LOST

- Cannot walk in the Spirit.
- Cannot receive the things of the Spirit.
- The heart is desperately wicked, that we cannot even know or trust it.
- The conscience can be seared or hardened, thus destroying our only means of constraint against sin (in and of ourselves).

SAVED

- The Holy Spirit has sealed our soul.
- The Holy Spirit quickens (makes alive) our dead spirit.
- The Holy Spirit dwells inside of us.
- The Holy Spirit helps our infirmities and makes intercession for us.

With this, we have a contrast of an old life (the lost person) to a new life (the Christian), works of the flesh verses fruit of the Spirit. In light of this, let us look into the text.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these;

[Galatians 5:19]

Adultery

There are at least three types of adultery spoken of in Scripture. A lost person can only commit two, whereas a saved person can commit all three.

The first two are in relation to infidelity or unfaithfulness to one's spouse.

1. Non-Physical:

- a. The heart (emotions).
- b. The mind (imagination).

But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

[Matthew 5:28]

This is the visual or emotional lusting or coveting of someone other than your spouse sexually or intimately. This could happen quickly, but most likely gradually over time within our mind.

This includes pornography, but is not limited to it. Both men and women partake in and purchase pornography. Therefore, it must have some type of appeal to women, just as it does with men (although, possibly different in nature). The shelves of romance novels, soap operas, and evening shows of drama with so-called "romance" but also countless sexual relationships (many involving adultery or fornication in some form) is appealing to many women—or at least they watch it.

Remember Eve was enticed by her eyes also in the garden. She saw the tree “that it was pleasant to the eyes”. This is not to bash or single out women, but to include them here. Such things put thoughts in the minds of both men and women. Have you noticed the increase of female teachers having sex with their young students? This is a human problem, not just a male problem. It starts in the emotions and imaginations, then progresses to the physical.

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

[James 1:14-15]

When we notice the temptation, what should we do?

- Flee youthful lusts. [2 Timothy 2:22]
- Endure temptation—not yielding to it. [James 1:12]
- Walk in the Spirit. [Galatians 5:16]

We are told to cast down: [2 Corinthians 10:5]

- Imaginations
- “Every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God”

AND

- “Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

[1 Corinthians 10:13]

Scripture promises a way of escape, and means to bear the temptation without committing sin, BUT what CAN happen, if we encourage, embrace, or refuse to flee sexual temptation with someone other than our spouse?

2. Physical:

- a. Two becoming one flesh.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

[Exodus 20:14]

Only a husband and a wife (1 man and 1 woman) are to become one flesh. Anything else is unbiblical.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

[Genesis 2:24]

This one flesh, this unity of husband and wife, is a picture of Jesus Christ and the Church (the body of believers).

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

[Ephesians 5:31-32]

Maybe this is one reason why adultery is #1 on Paul's list here: Joining ourselves to someone who is not our spouse destroys the picture of Christ and the Church. Jesus Christ will never cheat on us. The Church should never cheat on Christ.

For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

[Hebrews 13:5b]

We will bring in the second work of the flesh mentioned:

Fornication

Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid.

[1 Corinthians 6:15]

Harlot:

A woman who prostitutes her body for hire; a prostitute; To practice lewdness. (The unlawful indulgence of lust; fornication, or adultery.)

*What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. **Flee fornication.** Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.*

[1 Corinthians 6:16-18]

John Gill notes:

...but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body; not meaning his wife, which is as his own body; but his proper natural body, which is not only the instrument by which this sin is committed, but the object against which it is committed; and which is defiled and dishonoured by it; and sometimes its strength and health are impaired, and it is filled with nauseous diseases hereby.

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

[1 Corinthians 6:19-20]

Paul condemned sexual sin:

It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

[1Corinthians 5:1, 5]

Paul said to: *deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

[1 Corinthians 3:16-17]

It is very clear from Scripture that we should strive to keep our temple (the temple of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost) holy, pure. If we choose not to, then we are provoking God to destroy us.

3. Spiritual:

- a. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, over the things of God.

The lost person cannot commit spiritual adultery. To be lost is to be spiritual dead. Therefore, they already cleave to the world, the flesh, and the devil. However, the Christian commits spiritual adultery when our love is insincere or given to anything but God.

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

[Matthew 15:7-8]

*And thou shalt **love the Lord thy God** with all thy **heart**, and with all thy **soul**, and with all thy **mind**, and with all thy **strength**: this is the first commandment.*

[Mark 12:30]

*For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt **love thy neighbour as thyself**.*

[Romans 13:9]

When we walk in the flesh (to fulfill the lust thereof) instead of in the Spirit, we are cheating on God with the world, the flesh, and the devil. The enemies of God. Spiritual adultery.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 04

So, have been looking at the “**works of the flesh**” mentioned in **Galatians 5:19-21**:

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

We talked about three forms of adultery (fornication):

1. Non-Physical:
 - a. The heart (emotions), the mind (imagination).
2. Physical:
 - a. Two becoming one flesh.
3. Spiritual:
 - a. The love of the world, the lust of the flesh, over the things of God.

We talked about how adultery and fornication are sins against own our body. [1 Cor. 6:16-18]

We talked about how adultery destroys the picture of Christ and the Church. [Eph. 5:31-32]

We saw God’s judgment toward sexual sin in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17:

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? **If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy**; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*

We will now continue looking at the list.

Uncleanness

The first thing that came to mind for me was “the plague of leprosy.”

And the priest shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and when the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight be deeper than the skin of his flesh, it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him, and pronounce him unclean.

[Leviticus 13:3]

Of this plague, John Gill notes:

This was an emblem of sin, and the corruption of nature, which is an uncleanness, and with which every man is defiled, and which renders him infectious, nauseous, and abominable; and of which he is only to be cured and cleansed by Christ, the great High Priest, through his blood, which cleanses from all sin.

Matthew Henry notes:

That it was rather an uncleanness than a disease; or, at least, so the law considered it, and therefore employed not the physicians but the priests about it. Christ is said to cleanse lepers, not to cure them.

WebMD:

- Leprosy is an infectious disease that causes severe, disfiguring skin sores and nerve damage in the arms and legs.
- A slow-growing type of bacteria causes leprosy.
- It usually takes about 3 to 5 years for symptoms; however, some people do not develop symptoms until 20 years later.

- The time between contact with the bacteria and the appearance of symptoms is called the incubation period, and Leprosy's long incubation period makes it very difficult for doctors to determine when and where a person with leprosy got infected.
- Without treatment, leprosy can permanently damage your skin, nerves, arms, legs, feet, and eyes.

In biblical times, people with leprosy had to tell others they were unclean. Could you imagine if we had to tell those around us that we were unclean (by whatever sin we chose to do by fulfilling the lusts of the flesh instead of walking in the Spirit)?

What if people (what if we) could see what our sin was actually doing to us by looking at our physical body? Sometimes we can but usually we cannot. What if we could see (as God does) the effects of sin on us? Would we tell our friends and family, "Get away, I'm unclean, I'm sinful?" Would we avoid them or try to entice them to be sick with us? Would we seek a cure?

The main reason why leprosy is talked about so much in the Bible is that it is a graphic illustration of sin's destructive power. In ancient Israel leprosy was a powerful object lesson of the debilitating influence of sin in a person's life.

(gotquestions.org)

*Then when **lust** hath conceived, it bringeth forth **sin**: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth **death**.*

[John 1:15]

Sin can start slow. It can start in the mind, in the heart, in the emotions, by what we allow to come in through our 5 senses (or gates which feed the heart, as some say).

- | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|
| • Taste | • Sight | • Hearing |
| • Touch | • Smell | |

As lost persons, we are unclean before a holy God. So, how do we become clean?

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[1 John 1:9]

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

[1 John 1:7]

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us of sin. Why would we want to return to the mire and filth of sin? Why would the leper return to their sickness after experiencing cleansing?

Remember the lepers of Luke 17:

13. **Ten** lepers cried out to Christ: “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

14. Jesus “said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.”

How many came back to glorify God?

15. And **one** of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16. And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

Notice, “he was a Samaritan.” He was not seen as one of the religious or one of God’s chosen people.

17. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?

18. *There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.*

19. *And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.*

We do not know what happened to the nine lepers. However, Jesus told the lame man he healed in John 5:

14. *Behold, thou art made whole: **sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.***

Recall the possibility of the destruction of our flesh (our temple), due to our walking in the flesh (i.e. sin) is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 3:16-17:

If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

Do we enjoying walking in the Spirit, or do we miss fulfilling the lusts of the flesh? Are we thankful to God and glorify his name in our new life or bring shame to his name by living in hypocrisy or drawing others into sin? Are we spreading leprosy?

The way to avoid getting leprosy is to:

- Avoid those who are not being treated for it.
- Avoid where those who are dying from it hang out.

The same with sin. Stay clean. Walk in the Spirit.

What do we usually do when we get filthy? When our hands are dirty? Clean them, wash them—right? What would we say of someone who never cleaned themselves? Dirty, nasty, filthy...?

This brings us to the next work of the flesh on the list.

Lasciviousness

Looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires; wantonness; lustfulness.

[Webster]

Lewd:

Given to the unlawful indulgence of lust; addicted to fornication or adultery; dissolute; lustful; libidinous.

Therefore, we could say that the first four works of the flesh (**adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness**) deal with sensual desires, even though I used uncleanness to describe sinfulness as a whole. [Romans 6:23] *For the wages of sin is death.* We destroy our flesh with these sins.

Do you think Paul is trying to say something here with telling people to get their sexual impulses in check? We cannot allow our mind (imagination) and heart (emotions) to flirt with sensual lust.

Consider those of Romans 1. [Romans 1:18-32] *God gave them over to a reprobate mind.*

Reprobate:

Abandoned in sin; lost to virtue or grace.

When we indulge (for that is what it is) in the sin of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, or lasciviousness, it is bringing reproach upon the name of God. Do we not call ourselves Christians?

How close are we allowing our children to get to it—sensual lust? How close is too close, without going over the line. How close can they (or we) get and remain pure? Why do we want to see how close we can get to sin rather than avoid it completely?

Better for a man not to touch a woman. Marry to avoid fornication.

[1 Corinthians 7:1-2]

We often giggle or scoff at such a thought (*for a man not to touch a woman*), but should we? Should we not try to keep our children from exciting the sensual desires of the flesh best we can? They are not ready to marry. How best to do this but to avoid **adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness** ourselves, and teach them to:

Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

[2 Timothy 2:22]

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 05

So far, we have spoken about adultery, fornication, uncleanness, and lasciviousness.

The next one on the list:

Idolatry

1. *The worship of idols, images, or any thing made by hands, or which is not God.*
2. *Excessive attachment or veneration for any thing, or that which borders on adoration.*

Exodus 20:1-6:

3. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
4. *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing...*
5. *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them:*

We can make virtually anything into an idol.

Idol:

1. *An image, form or representation, usually of a man or other animal, consecrated as an object of worship.*
2. *A person loved and honored to adoration. (love, esteem, respect, worship)*
3. *Any thing on which we set our affections; that to which we indulge an excessive and sinful attachment.*

The person or persons in which one commits the acts of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, or lasciviousness with—whether mentally, emotionally, or physically—can become an

idol. Something or someone in which one desires (or lust for) more than God.

We are to: [Mark 12:30]

*Love the Lord thy God with **all** thy heart, and with **all** thy soul, and with **all** thy mind, and with **all** thy strength: this is the first commandment.*

If anything or anyone is taking our affections away from God, it (or they) may be an idol to us. *Note:* We are to love our neighbor as our self and our wife as Christ does the Church, but we are not to love someone (or something) equal to or more than our love for God. [Luke 14:26]

If we are unwilling to give up something (or someone) for God (if God or righteousness requires it), it may very well already be an idol in our lives. Yet at the same time, it may not be an idol for someone else. The person or thing may not be an idol in and of themselves, but rather become an idol to us if we put them before or in place of God (and the things of God).

Where is your “heart” (as they say), your devotion? Is it in a person, a career, a hobby, a collection, yourself? Even things that are not sin can become sin if we make them an idol in our lives.

Now, the works of the flesh that come next, we may easily want to dismiss as something Christians would never do. However, as we will see, we may very well be partaking in such.

Witchcraft

The practices of witches; sorcery; enchantments; intercourse with the devil.

Witch:

A woman who by compact with the devil, practices sorcery or enchantment.

Craft:

Cunning, art or skill, in a bad sense, or applied to bad purposes; artifice; guile; skill or dexterity employed to effect purposes by deceit.

Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.

[Exodus 22:18]

*When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the **abominations** of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a **witch**, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.*

[Deuteronomy 18:9-11]

Saul came to the witch of Endor—a woman that hath a *familiar spirit*.

[1 Samuel 28]

A supernatural spirit or demon, often in the form of an animal, supposed to serve and aid a witch or other individual.

(dictionary.com)

Saul had her call up Samuel, and Samuel declared, “The LORD is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy.”

There is such a thing as witches and they may have supernatural power. However, it is not power from God, but rather power from the demons and devils of Satan. Even though, some witches claim their religion is not Satanism.

One might say, “I am not a witch.” However, do we put our trust or dabble in the sorcery of witches? Horoscopes, palm readings, etc. “Oh, just for fun,” one says.

Do we obey God?

One might ask what witchcraft has to do with obeying God. “None of us are perfect, we all sin.” Just because you may disobey God (here or there) does not mean you are a witch. Right? Not everyone is a witch that disobeys God.

*And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice**, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For **rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft**, and **stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry**. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*

[1 Samuel 15:22-23]

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.

Stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Are we rebellious toward God? What of those appointed over us? Rebellious to the Truth?

Are we stubborn toward God? What of those appointed over us? Stubborn against repentance?

Idolatry (*stubbornness*) is one of the reasons “the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.”

[Colossians 3:5-6]

*A man also or woman that hath a **familiar spirit** (witch, rebellious), or that is a wizard, shall surely be **put to death**: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.*

[Leviticus 20:27]

*So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against **the word of the LORD, which he kept not**, and also for asking counsel of one that had a **familiar spirit** (witch, rebellious), to enquire of it; And enquired not of the LORD: therefore **he slew him**, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.*

[1 Chronicles 10:13-14]

God sends forth his wrath and even may kill those who dabble in idolatry and witchcraft. He compares rebellion and stubbornness to them. I would say God is serious about these sins.

As seen above in 1 Samuel 15, rebellion and stubbornness lead to the rejection of the word of the LORD.

*If a man have a **stubborn and rebellious** son, which **will not obey** the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have **chastened him, will not hearken unto them**: Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is **stubborn and rebellious**, he **will not obey** our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou **put evil away from among you**; and **all Israel shall hear, and fear**.*

[Deuteronomy 21:18-21]

What happens when we (us Christians) do not obey the voice of our Father?

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

[Revelation 3:19]

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth

with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

[Hebrews 12:6-8]

Rebellion and stubbornness cause division, sin, the destruction or breakdown of relationships. Our relationship with God, our relationship with our children, our relationship with our spouse, or relationship with friends, and our relationship with fellow believers. This is why Scripture says to “be zealous therefore, and repent.” So why do we not repent BEFORE the chastening has to come?

The longer we rebel, the longer we remain stubborn, the harder it is to repent. Our pride and hypocrisy will fight against it. Our flesh will fight against it. Then we will reject even the Word of God and the Spirit, because they will convict us of sin.

Remember the religious crowd of Jesus’ day:

For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

[Matthew 13:15]

What did the religious crowd do with Stephen?

Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him:

[Acts 7:57-58]

The sins of idolatry and stubbornness can lead us down a road of destruction that cannot only destroy our fellowship with God,

but our testimony, our families, and even fellow believers.

“Be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 06

We are continuing our look at the “**works of the flesh**” mentioned in **Galatians 5:19-21**:

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

We have discussed idolatry and witchcraft in relation to how Scripture compares them with rebellion and stubbornness.

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.

Stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Following that thought, we will begin now with:

Hatred

- *Great dislike; hate; **enmity**.*
- *May spring from offenses or injuries done by fellow men, or from envy or jealousy, in which case it is usually accompanied with malevolence or malignity.*
- *Extreme hatred is abhorrence or detestation.*

When people (both lost and saved) become or continue to be rebellious and stubborn to the Truth (God’s biblical truth), yet still think highly (or desire to think highly) of themselves, they will eventual begin to hate both the Truth and possibly even the one who shares (or tries to share) it with them. Anyone and anything that confronts us with our sin—if we have no desire to repent and confess it—can become likened unto an enemy. Example: King Saul and David.

It can even develop into or out of another work of the flesh:

Strife

- *Contention in anger or **enmity**; contest; struggle or victory; quarrel or war.*
- *Opposition; contrariety; contrast.*

It can also develop into or out of another work of the flesh:

Envy

- *to look with **enmity***
- *To feel uneasiness, mortification or discontent, at the sight of superior excellence, reputation or happiness enjoyed by another.*
- *To grudge; to withhold maliciously.*
- *Accompanied with some degree of hatred or malignity, and often or usually with a desire or an effort to depreciate the person, and with pleasure in seeing him depressed.*
- *Springs up from pride, ambition or love, mortified that another has obtained what one has a strong desire to possess.*

Notice the definitions of hatred, strife, and envy include the word **enmity**. Where have we heard that word before?

Here are a few:

*And I will put **enmity** between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

[Genesis 3:15]

*Because the carnal mind is **enmity** against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

[Romans 8:7]

*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is **enmity** with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

[James 4:4]

Enmity is not just being upset or angry with someone.

- *The quality of being an enemy.*
- *A state of opposition.*

Hatred, strife, and envy can lead us to make God and man into our enemy.

We are sons and daughters of God in Christ [Ephesians 2:16]:

And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

So, if Christ has slain the enmity—the hatred, the enemy spirit—between God and us, why would we allow enmity to take root and grow within us?

This can be a seen or unseen hatred, which brings us to another work of the flesh:

Wrath

- *Violent anger; vehement exasperation; indignation;*

Wrath goes beyond anger. Maybe it is at the point where feelings of hatred are about to be demonstrated in acts of wrath, punishment. Read about the coming wrath of God.

What can it ultimately lead to, if we allow our hatred, strife, and envy to develop into wrath?

Murder

*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother **without a cause** shall be in danger of the judgment:*

[Matthew 5:21-22]

If we hate (are angry) with our brother without a **BIBLICAL** cause we shall be in danger of the same judgment as if you had killed them.

Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart:

[Leviticus 19:17b]

*Whosoever **hateth** his brother is a **murderer**: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*

[1 John 3:15]

Where does hate start? In the heart, in the mind, in the flesh. Why? Because we are NOT walking in the Spirit but rather fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.

Scripture **COMMANDS** us to love our neighbors, love the brethren, and even to love our enemies. Were we not the enemies of God, yet he still loved us? How can we hate others while expecting God to love us? Can we hate others while expecting them to love us?

To refuse to obey God is to be both rebellious and stubborn toward the Almighty. To be rebellious and stubborn toward God is to be a witch and idolater. If we cannot be obedient to God, do we really think we will love Him?

To hate anyone (without a biblical cause) makes us a murderer. If we cannot love God and be obedient to God, do we really think we can love others?

How many of us have seen our sin as minor things to God?

“Oh, I can’t help it, I’m just human, I’m going to sin.”

“Sorry God, please forgive me, thanks, catch you later.”

Yet we slay without mercy those who offend us, who sin against us.

There is a story about that in the Bible.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

[Matthew 18:21-35]

Look at the stories of Cain and Abel, of Esau and Jacob. Brothers.

It is not about what people deserve. If we got what we deserved, it would be hell, not Jesus Christ. We are supposed to be the light of Jesus Christ to the world, to both the lost and the saved.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

[Matthew 5:16]

Are we showing them the wrath of God, or the grace and mercy of God?

This is not to say that sin should not be exposed, called sin, and have consequences. However, how we go about it will show whether we are walking in the Spirit or in the flesh. Christ had the right to slay everyone, yet he chose not to.

What will we choose?

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

[Colossians 3:12-13]

Do not allow rebellion and stubbornness to hinder your relationship with God. Do not allow hatred, strife, and envy to hinder your relationship with man (saved or lost).

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 07

In the previous lesson, we discussed *hatred, wrath, strife, envyings, and murders*.

We talked about how hatred, strife, and envy can come from offenses (from without) or from jealousy (from within), and within their definition contains **enmity**—being an enemy. From this enmity can flow wrath and even murder, which can be committed both in the heart and physically. In this, not only is the person destroyed, but also family, friends, the church, and any possibility of leading the lost world to Christ.

We will now cover the remaining works of the flesh, namely:

Variance, emulations, seditions, heresies, revellings, and drunkenness.

Variance

- *At variance, in disagreement; in a state of difference or want of agreement.*

Now, who has not had disagreements before? How about debates over biblical truth, doctrine? It is not necessarily bad to disagree with someone, even in biblical discussions. Paul uses Romans 14 to discuss “doubtful disputations” and how we do not need to judge people too harshly (just because they disagree with us), or cause others to stumble by what we believe.

However, this goes much deeper.

- *In a state of dissension or controversy; in a state of enmity.*

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

[Matthew 10:34-36]

Here, Christ says:

- I came not to send peace, but a sword.
- I am come to set [family] at variance.

Christ's coming produces enmity, enemies. Why? Because the Truth—God's Truth—can be divisive. Especially for:

- Those who are unrepentant.
- Those who are stubborn and rebellious against the Truth.
- Those who are prideful.
- Those who are wolves in sheep clothing, or antichrist within the church.

It is no wonder the chapter continues with:

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

[Matthew 10:37-38]

God must be first in our lives. God's Word must have the preeminence in our lives.

Important fact:

If the entire family is not trying to love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, there is going to be division.

This is one reason Scriptures declares:

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

[2 Corinthians 6:14]

Variance (light vs darkness | truth vs anything else) can cause those who once professed love for one another to become sworn enemies (enmity).

It was Christ who said, [Luke 11:23] “He that is not with me is against me:”

Emulations

- *Contest; contention; strife; competition; rivalry accompanied with a desire of depressing another.*

Remember we talked about *strife*, how it included enmity in its definition. Here we see that *emulations* is strife or contention for/with the purpose of “depressing another.” In other words, desiring to harm another emotionally, spiritually, and maybe even physically or their character.

Maybe out of envy or jealousy, or pride, we desire to prove why we are the better Christian, the better parent, or maybe why we deserve a position that someone else has.

Maybe we are (or were) a “better” Christian, but we allow being hurt or seeing someone in leadership that shouldn’t be cause us to sin at our own hand rather than pray for God to work.

Seditions

- *A factious commotion of the people, a tumultuous assembly of men rising in opposition to law or the administration or justice, and in disturbance of the public peace.*

Do we cause a disturbance (an unruly destruction of peace) within the church? Do we try to get a group together to ostracize someone or out someone? Do we develop clicks (or committees) of power to oppose those that differ from our view?

These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

[Proverbs 6:16-19]

Heresies

- *A fundamental error in religion, or an error of opinion respecting some fundamental doctrine of religion.*
- *The Scriptures being the standard of faith, any opinion that is repugnant to its doctrines, is heresy.*

This is different from how we may view certain passages or ideas from Scripture. This would be rejection of the common core Truths of Christianity.

Probably two reasons Christians would believe heresies are (1) ignorant, new Christian or (2) lazy. Mostly, we are just too lazy.

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

[1 John 2:18-19]

To ensure we do not find ourselves believing heresies we must:

- Keep our relationship with God close by constant prayer and repentance.
- Give ourselves to reading and studying the Bible through the Holy Spirit.
- Be taught by Scripture, not use Scripture as a means to prove we are right.
- Read and study more than just books we already agree with, to test our beliefs.

Revellings

- *Feasting with noisy merriment; carousing (Drinking hard)*

Drunkenness

- *Intoxication; a state in which a person is overwhelmed or overpowered with spirituous liquors, so that his reason is disordered, and he reels or staggers in walking.*
- *Habitually intoxication.*
- *Disorder of the faculties resembling intoxication by liquors; inflammation; frenzy; rage.*

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways. For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. She also lieth in wait as for a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men. Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

[Proverbs 23:26-35]

Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

[Ephesians 5:14-21]

I shall let the above speak for itself.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 08

We have completed our look at the “**works of the flesh**” mentioned in **Galatians 5:19-21**.

Now we start our look at “**the fruit of the Spirit**” found in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

Within **the fruit** (not fruits) **of the Spirit**, we find 9 characteristics or attributes:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Longsuffering
5. Gentleness
6. Goodness
7. Faith
8. Meekness
9. Temperance

These are **communicable** attributes of God.

Incommunicable attributes of God include:

- Omnipotence | all powerful
- Omniscience | all knowing (knowing all things at once)
- Omnipresence | everywhere present (at the same time)
- Infinity | boundless
- Self-existence | inherent existence (based on his nature)

Incommunicable attributes of God are characteristic of God alone. However, man can possess and exercise the **communicable** attributes of God. **If man is walking in the Spirit and not fulfilling the lust of the flesh.**

Communicable means able to be imparted. So, what or who imparts the communicable attributes of God unto man?

The Holy Spirit, thus the **fruit of the Spirit**.

Therefore, aside from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, any evidence of these fruits within the lost person are temporal. Some people are what we may call inherently “good” but are still lost, dead spiritually, without the Spirit of God.

*But **without faith it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

[Hebrews 11:6]

A person’s false pious or hypocritical use or exercise of these attributes of the Holy Spirit (saved or lost, real or pretend) are not righteous nor counted as righteousness on their behalf.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

[Matthew 23:27-28]

Sadly, many times in America we appear to think of salvation in selfish motives.

- We focus on God’s love, but seldom his holiness.
- We ask God to come into our hearts, but seldom seek his lordship.
- We desire to go to heaven, but seldom walk in obedience.
- We want to experience happiness, but seldom speak uplifting words to one another.

What do we think about when we look at the fruit of the Spirit: *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*

Do we think about **how we can get** love, joy, peace, etc., or **how we can give** or display it? Do we simply worry about ourselves?

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

[James 4:3]

Do we seek the blessings of God selfishly? “Bless me God, whether I deserve it or not, while you are free to judge and condemn others by their words and deeds.”

The purpose of conversion (the indwelling of the Holy Spirit) is not merely so that we can RECEIVE and EXPERIENCE *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance* (from God and man), but so that we can GIVE and DISPLAY *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance* (to others) for the purpose of leading others to Christ.

The Spirit dwells inside of us, thus persons should see his fruit in and through us. What does our fruit (works) say about us?

Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

[James 2:18]

*For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. **For every tree is known by his own fruit.** For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out*

*of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil:
for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*

[Luke 6:43-45]

How does the good man bring forth the good treasure out of his heart? Because of the quickening (the making alive) of his spirit and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

What is God's purpose in forgiving and saving mankind?

*For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that **we should walk in them**.*

[Ephesians 2:10]

Ordained:

appointed, established

*For whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son**, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

[Romans 8:29]

God predestinated (foreordained, appointed, ordained beforehand) that all saved persons would be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christ is our example of a good tree bearing good fruit. In Christ, his focus was not on what he received of men, but rather the outpouring of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance upon mankind. Do you see these attributes in this statement of Christ, when he hung beaten, hated, humiliated, and alone on the cross: even forsaken by God. [Matthew 27:46]

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

[Luke 23:34]

Do we desire the fruit of the Spirit?
What is our purpose for desiring it?

The fruit of the Spirit is to make us like Christ.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 09

We had our introduction and now we start our look at “**the fruit of the Spirit**” found in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

As we look at the fruit of the Spirit, remember:

- A tree bares fruit, or is worthless (cut down).
- The fruit springs forth.
- The fruit is observable.
- The fruit is determined to be good or bad.

A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

[Matthew 12:35-37]

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

[2 Corinthians 5:10]

- Our fruit is evident through our words and deeds.
- The source of our fruit is either the Spirit or the flesh.
- We will give account for every bit of fruit (works).

The first fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 is:

Love

We can see that the word “love” can range from something as simple as loving the cool shade to loving God above all things.

[Webster’s 1828]

How do you define love? How one defines love will determine how one views love. Is love a feeling? An action? Both? Is it more important to feel love, receive love, or give love? Are they equally important? What is the basis of our feeling loved or giving love? We should ask ourselves these questions. Seeking wisdom from the Spirit as we walk through Scripture, not in the flesh.

God defined the marriage of Adam and Eve, not them by “falling in love.”

Genesis 2 declares:

- God formed Eve from the rib of Adam.
- God brought the woman unto Adam.
- Adam declared she was “bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh.”
- God defined marriage between one man and one woman, as they become one flesh.
- Adam and Eve are naked and are not ashamed (and in light of Genesis 3, they apparently did not realize they were *naked*.)

So we know their relationship was not based on “falling in love” or sensuality (lust). The basis was God putting them together and their acknowledgment that they were now one flesh.

Matthew Henry says of this original sin:

If man had not sinned, he would always have ruled with wisdom and love; and, if the woman had not sinned, she would always have obeyed with humility and meekness; and then the dominion would have been no grievance: but our own sin and folly make our yoke heavy.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

[Ephesians 5:33]

We see two things here:

1. The husband is told to **love his wife even as himself**, just as Adam declared, “this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;” acknowledging he was not actually commanded by God to love his wife in the text of Genesis 3.
2. The wife is told to **reverence her husband**, just as Eve was told by God, “I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”

According to Genesis 3 and Ephesians 5:

- Why is a husband to love his wife? (1) Obedience (2) Because they are one flesh.
- Why is a wife to reverence her husband? (1) Obedience (2) Punishment for sin.

One may wonder why I have mentioned Adam and Eve to begin a study on love. I hope that by the end of the lesson it will become clear.

What was the purpose of woman? [Genesis 2]

A helpmeet for man—and not just for procreation.

A helpmeet or helpmate is:

A helpful companion or partner.

Was Eve a helpmeet (by this definition) when “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat”?

Okay—hold that thought.

What does the Bible say is the order of authority in the home, the marriage?

1. God, the Father
2. Christ
3. Husband
4. Wife

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

[1 Corinthians 11:3]

Is Christ lesser than the Father?

- They are one. [John 10:30]
- Christ subjected himself to Father, humbled himself in obedience. [Philippians 2:5-11]

According to Scripture, what does marriage display?

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

[Ephesians 5:32]

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

[Ephesians 5:30]

Christ = the husband, the bridegroom

Does Christ have perfect love?

Church = the wife, the bride of Christ

Does the Church express perfect reverence?

How did God and Christ show love:

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[Romans 5:8]

Who did Christ show love to on the cross? Was the church (people), the future bride, worthy of God's love or Christ's sacrifice? Do you think Christ felt loved or revered by the church (or anyone) that day? Yet he still displayed love.

What of the church, the bride today? How do we express reverence to Christ? Does the church sometimes feel unloved, become dissatisfied with Christ because it does not feel a certain way, or believe it is not getting what it deserves or he is not doing what it expects?

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

[Ephesians 5:1-2]

How do we walk in love? By walking in the Spirit and displaying the fruit (the good works) of love.

When Christ was on the cross, he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Yet he still loved the Father and the church (his bride) enough to subject himself unto him.

When the people (the Jews, the chosen people of God) rejected and despised him (both God and Christ), the Father showed love in sending Christ, and Christ expressed love in his sacrifice.

Wife:

Subjecting yourself and reverencing your husband displays your love and obedience to God first and then to your husband. In addition, to your own self, as you are one flesh. Your reverence toward your husband is an act of love that can lead to their conversion and sanctification. [1 Peter 3:1].

Husband:

Loving your wife as Christ loved the church is an expression of loving God first and then your wife, but also yourself (as one flesh). Your love toward your wife can lead to their conversion and sanctification. [Ephesians 5:25-27].

“Warm fuzzy feelings” we often associate with love may or may not accompany acts of love, as emotions can vary with the way our flesh interprets inside/outside stimulation.

Christ died to cleanse sinners of sin. How many sinners feel the love of God and come to Christ? How many have “felt” something at the moment of conversion? Does that feeling remain always? Do we always get what we want as Christians? Does not Christ still love us even when he reproves or chastens, or tells us no?

We are told to love—to DO GOOD—to our enemy, to love the brethren (that they world may see we are God’s), to love God. Are we displaying love—the fruit of the Spirit—in our marriage, in our relationship with Christ and others? Are our children seeing love? What about the lost world?

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

[1 John 3:14a, 16]

The flesh demands love while the Spirit displays love.

Charity (LOVE) suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

[1 Corinthians 13:4-7]

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 10

Love

I used the love and reverence between God the Father and Jesus Christ, along with the love and reverence between Christ and the Church, the Husband and Wife to show that Love is not merely a feeling or emotion.

Love is also not something only received or only given when we feel a certain way, nor should it be a (false) means to get our way with others.

Love may be given but we may not accept it or feel it with what I called:

“Warm fuzzy feelings” we often associate with love may or may not accompany acts of love, as emotion can vary with the way our flesh interprets inside/outside stimulation.

Therefore, with using **Love** from the **fruit of the Spirit** as our springboard, we will talk about:

Longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, and temperance.

We will come back to **joy** and **peace**.

Longsuffering

Bearing injuries or provocation for a long time; patient; not easily provoked.

Notice the definition says bearing (*that is enduring; to continue without perishing or without opposition*) for a long time. How long is “a long time”? Probably longer than we accept.

Longsuffering is to be *patient*:

Having the quality of enduring evils without murmuring or fretfulness; sustaining afflictions of body or mind with fortitude, calmness or christian submission to the divine will; as a patient person, or a person of patient temper.

This is in complete contrast to the works of the flesh, namely:
Hatred, strife, envy, wrath, and murder.

The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering...

[Exodus 34:6]

The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression...

[Numbers 14:18]

Every one of us have partaken in the longsuffering of God.

Within that longsuffering is:

Mercy:

That benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves; the disposition that tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than law or justice will warrant.

Grace:

Appropriately, the free unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits men receive from him.

Jesus Christ shows forth longsuffering. Are we not grateful for his mercy and grace in this? Why then do we not likewise show it to others?

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

[1 Timothy 1:15-16]

The longsuffering of God is why:

- The wicked are not immediately consumed and cast into hell.
- The backslidden Christian is not immediately judged and slain in the flesh for sin.

“The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation.” [2 Peter 3:15]

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

[2 Peter 3:9]

The longsuffering of God is based on HIS goodness not our goodness. It flows from love and a desire to cleanse and save undeserving, sinful, fallen man.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[Romans 5:8]

Remember:

1. As Christians, the Holy Spirit indwells us, thus we have access to the fruit of the Spirit.
2. As Christians, we are to be conformed to the image of Christ. [Romans 8:29]

Did/does Christ display longsuffering (mercy and grace) toward both the lost world and the Church? Then what trait should the Church likewise display?

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

[2 Timothy 4:2]

Why do we give the gospel, reprove and rebuke of sin, and urge people to repent and put faith in Christ? So people can be cleansed of sin and saved.

Notice 2 Timothy 4:2 says to do it with ALL LONGSUFFERING and DOCTRINE. It does not say with attitude, hatred, strife, envy, or wrath.

When we refuse to be longsuffering with people, we are doing two things:

- We are saying they are unworthy of mercy and grace.
- We do not care if they die in their sin or go to hell.

Do we forget that God may view us the same way we see others? Do we want God to forgive as we do, to withhold his mercy and grace as we do?

We are to display:

Meekness

In an evangelical sense, humility; resignation; submission to the divine will, without murmuring or peevishness; opposed to pride, arrogance and refractoriness.

Gentleness

Softness of manners; mildness of temper; sweetness of disposition; meekness.

Temperance

Patience; calmness; sedateness; moderation of passion.

We are told that God is longsuffering to the lost, Christ died for the lost, and we are to give the gospel to the lost “with all longsuffering.”

Remember what longsuffering means:

- *Bearing injuries or provocation for a long time; patient; not easily provoked.*
- *Having the quality of enduring evils without murmuring or fretfulness; sustaining afflictions of body or mind with fortitude, calmness or Christian submission to the divine will; as a patient person, or a person of patient temper.*

Are we longsuffering with the lost? What about our children or our spouse? Do we display the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh? What is more important—Others or Me?

Humility. Perhaps we cannot and do not display *meekness, gentleness, and/or temperance* toward others is because we are not a humble people.

Flesh vs Spirit | Lesson 11

We are continuing our look at “**the fruit of the Spirit**” found in **Galatians 5:22-23**. Previously we covered **Longsuffering, meekness, gentleness, and temperance**.

We discussed how Love (a love for God and love for man) is a springboard to help us be “conformed to the image of Christ,” as stated in Romans 8:29. Our love of God and man should compel us to walk in the Spirit, thus exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit indwells us, does he not?

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

[Romans 6:6]

[Colossians 3:1-17]

1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

10 And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

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.

17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Notice verse 15 says:

And **let the peace of God** rule in your hearts...

Peace

How many of us want peace? Peace in our lives, peace in spirit. Then we must stop fighting God, stop walking in the flesh.

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

[Colossians 3:13]

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one

*another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the **bond of peace**.*

[Ephesians 4:1-3]

Again we see “longsuffering, forbearing one another in love...with all lowliness and meekness.” There must be love and forgiveness toward humanity to have peace. There must be love and obedience toward God to have peace.

Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[Philippians 4:4-7]

Our hearts and minds are kept through Christ when? We stop worrying and trust/rejoice in God for everything. [Romans 8:28]

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

[Philippians 4:8-9]

How can we gain peace? By fixing our mind on the right things and by doing the right things.

This is the **goodness** of God, that we can have peace when there seems there is no peace and there seems to be no reason why we should have peace. The goodness of God is displayed when we do good to others, even when they don't deserve it.

Another thing that people want besides peace is happiness, or joy as declared in Gal 5:23.

Happiness vs Joy

Happiness is subjective. What matters is someone's perception of happiness. Scientists say this emotion can be studied and measured because people can reliably and honestly self-report their increases and decreases in happiness levels. Joy is a state of mind, a combination of emotions, and in the spiritual context is localized in our heart. Joy contains elements of contentment, confidence and hope.

Dr. Cheryl Ann MacDonald

There is a difference between happiness and the joy of which Scripture speaks. The term happiness tends to be broader than the term joy. Happiness tends to include a notion of contentment and satisfaction along with, perhaps, feelings of joy. Joy suggests something more intense—a strong feeling of gladness.

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However, some contend there is no difference between joy and happiness. Therefore, that might be something to study out, but for this lesson, we will stick with joy since that is what is in the text.

If we are serving God without joy, there is something wrong with that service. If joy is not characteristic in our lives, it may be a sign that we are not Christians at all.

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How can it they say this? Because joy is a fruit of the Spirit.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
[James 1:2]

Wait—what? Why should we have joy? Because we **know**, it will work toward our sanctification.

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

[James 1:3-8]

What is the basis of our joy? Faith in God. Deep seeded, unwavering **faith**. [Hebrews 11]

Our example is Christ.

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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

[Hebrews 12:2]

In Closing

Galatians 5 ends with these words:

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Have we crucified the flesh? This is not physical suicide, but rather a determination (by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit) to refuse to allow our lust of the flesh to live.

*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. **Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

[Romans 7:6-13]

This work has merely scratched the surface of a subject that one could further explore. However, what purpose does it serve if we read, ponder, or study such topics if we never follow through in obedience? Our flesh will continue to demand that we fulfill its lusts until the day we die. Yet, our spirit (by the Holy Spirit) will move us to serve God until the day we die. Which will we serve? We will be a servant to one or the other. Choose.