

Led of the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-26

- We'll find the key directive in this passage today is for believers to walk in the Spirit
- Not in the lusts of the flesh
- There are two different kinds of works in the world that are opposites
- They don't resemble one another
- The works of the flesh vs. the works of the Spirit

- Those apart from Christ will perform works of the flesh
- While those who have faith in Christ should manifest works of the Spirit

- No doubt, we have questions
- Like, what do these works look like?
- And, what are they?

- Our passage of the day provides examples
- As we strive by His power to be "Led of the Spirit"
- Which is our theme, from Galatians 5:16-26

- It should be noted from the beginning that for the believer in Christ
- Walking in the Spirit is the logical course
- All who are forgiven and transformed through faith in Him are indwelt by the Holy Spirit
- Walking in the flesh is "out of tune" with this reality

- As we still dwell within these sinful bodies
- Remaining influenced by all the pollutions of this world
- It remains possible for Christ's disciples to go back to our old ways of behaving
- But this will not be comfortable for us
- And it will not be right

- Let's read our entire text of the day
- Then have a closer look...

Galatians 5:16-26

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

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.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

- 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.
25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

- We see the dichotomy immediately
- These courses of action are opposites
- Living according to the dictates of sinful flesh is a "before Christ" lifestyle
- It must not be the manner of those who have God's Holy Spirit living within

- Let's identify some of the key points of the text...

Galatians 5:16-17

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

- Our course, as believers in Jesus, is to concentrate on a Spiritual walk
- Not merely to avoid living according to our own desires
- But to fully submit to God's control
- And take each step knowing His word and seeking to obey it
- Continuing our relationship with Christ, by following Him closely

- Because the flesh wars against a Spiritual walk
- And the desires that are built into the flesh are contrary to the Spirit's desire for us
- If we fulfill these natural desires, we will be disobedient
- Not pleasing God with our actions
- Adding complexity to our lives and interrupting our fellowship with the Savior

- There is something else to remember...

Galatians 5:18

- 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

- This is not about law-keeping
- It is about submitting to God's control - as one of Jesus' disciples
- Walking in relationship with Him
- It is not a burden to bear, out of duty
- This is why it is called a "walk," in which we are "led"
- By our Good Shepherd

- So, if one kind of work is based on our own desires
- And another kind of work is based on God's desires
- What do they look like?

- These examples should help make the point...

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

- A person that simply obeys natural desires, instead of rejecting them, often does these things to a greater or lesser degree
- Is unfaithful to their husband or wife
- Rejects sexual purity
- Is immoral
- Does not suppress their own passions
- Worships something or someone other than the One True God
- Hates
- Is given to angry outbursts - fighting and striving
- Is jealous
- Is ambitious and self-serving
- Involved in dissention and factions
- Getting drunk and carousing
- Or other things that are similar
- These are obviously not works of which God approves
- They are a result of giving in to natural desires
- Desires that destroy us
- And people that continue to do these things will not inherit the kingdom of God

- Spiritual works, on the other hand, are these...

Galatians 5:22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

- That which is produced by the Spirit is quite different
- The opposite, in fact
- The person, yielded to God, thinks of others and gives
- Loves them
- Has joy that is eternal, not temporal
- Lives at peace with God
- Is patient
- Is gentle and good
- And has faith
- None of these cross the line of any law established by God or man

- But notice how these works are different
- They don't resemble fleshly works

- They are established within by the Spirit of God to work their way out
- These verses don't mean, of course, that every lost man does all of the fleshly works
- Or that the lost man never displays any of the spiritual attributes
- Rather, they tell us that unchecked devotion to selfish desire leads down these terrible paths
- While consistent surrender to God leads down the path to life everlasting
- And the Spirit of God, within men based on their faith in Christ, makes all the difference
- The next three verses can leave us with no doubt...

Galatians 5:24-26

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

- If we are Christ's, the flesh has been crucified
- We must not longer be slaves to its desires
- We must yield to and walk by, the Spirit
- He is our Master
- He teaches us what we must know to be obedient to Jesus
- And to have a right relationship with others
- As we are confronted with these distinctions today
- We, who know Christ, must respond by asking ourselves
- Am I a slave to my own desires?
- Or a servant of the Living God?
- Full obedient to His desires, outlined in His word?
- Am I led by my own flesh?
- Or led by the Spirit?

Christopher Harper, Take Note 2023