

Discussion Questions?

How are you doing at being led by the Spirit?

—are you trying following in your own strength?

—or have you tried in the past to follow in your own strength? Give an example.

—What is your strategy to staying connected to the Spirit? How do follow Him everyday?

—How can our cell group be better at encouraging and challenging one another to keep in step in the Spirit.

—How does my daily calendar reflect my walk with the Spirit? If I am following Him then He should be the one planning my calendar. How does my weekly schedule or calendar reflect his leading?

—What do you feel the Spirit is asking you to change to better keep in step with him?

—Who in this room can keep you accountable, and follow up with you on how well you are doing with these changes in you life from the Holy Spirit?

Summarized Sermon Text

What is Walk by the Spirit?

First, what is Paul is talking about when he says “walking by the Spirit”? There are two images in the context of this passage which shed light on the meaning of “walk by the Spirit.”

- (1) The first is in verse 18: “If you are led by the Spirit you are not under law.” 18 但你們若被聖靈引導，就不在律法以下了。
Paul emphasizes the Spirit’s work, not ours, when it comes to walking with Him.

- (2) The second image of our walk in the Spirit is in verse 22: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, etc.”
22 但聖靈的果子是仁愛、喜樂、平安、

Paul is describing a lifestyle of “walking by the Spirit” and it means to “bear the fruit of the Spirit.” His literal character. But once again, the Spirit’s work is emphasized, not ours. He bears His fruit in us.

Answer

So in answer to our first question, What is this walking by the Spirit? The answer: It is “being led by the Spirit” and it is “bearing the fruit (the character) of the Spirit, which is the very character of Christ.”

Why Is It Crucial to Walk by the Spirit?

We must make every attempt to stay connected to the vine.

—Connected to the Holy Spirit, who comes along side us and walk with us, makes us like Christ, and ultimately bring us to Christ.

Why is it crucial to walk by the Spirit? Paul gives two reasons, one in verse 16 and one in verse 18.

(1) In verse 16 the incentive for walking by the Spirit is that when you do this, you will not gratify the desire of the flesh. Paul makes this a promise not a command.

So the first reason we should walk by the Spirit is that when we do, the desires of our flesh are overcome.

What Romans 8:7 tells us very clearly is,

“The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law.”

Romans 8:7

因為以肉體為念就是與神為仇，既不服從神的律法，也的確不能夠服從；羅馬書 8:7

That is the basic mark of the flesh; it is unsubmitive. It does not want to submit to God’s absolute authority or rely on God’s absolute mercy. The Flesh would rather says, “I want to do it my way.”

It is not surprising, if this how the flesh is, that in verse 17 there is a war between our flesh and God’s Spirit.

A. God's Spirit Conquers Our Flesh

Verse 17 says,

"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing what you want to do." **Gal 5:17**

17 因為肉體的私慾和聖靈敵對，聖靈也和肉體敵對；這兩樣互相敵對，使你們不能作自己願意作的。加拉太書 5:17

Every Christian experiences bad desires. But a Christian is a person who is at war with those desires by the power of the Spirit. Even though we long for the day when our flesh will be utterly defeated and only pure and loving desires remain our hearts, there is something worse than the war within us. No war at all.

If there is no war within it is because the flesh controls the citadel and all the outposts of the heart. You are only serving the flesh. The Spirit has yet to indwell you... you're just trying to do it your way. Praise God for the war that is waging within us,

The Spirit has landed to do battle with the flesh. So take heart if your soul feels like a battlefield at times. That is the sign of the fact that you are indwelt by the Spirit, and it is not that you won't have any bad desires, but that you are at war with them!

But when we look at verses 16 and 17 together, the main point is not war. It is victory. It is victory for the Spirit.

How does the image of the vinedresser in John 15 help illustrate the Father and Holy Spirit's rule in making us fruitful disciples?

The vinedresser cuts away what would hinder the productivity of the vine, so God the Father, through loving discipline (cleaning, purging, purifying), removes things from the lives of believers that do not contribute to their spiritual fruitfulness.

- ▶ Verse 16 promises victory over the desires of the flesh — not that there won't be war, but that the ultimate winner of that war will be the Spirit, and we are going to be on his side.
- ▶ In fact, I think what Paul means in verse 24, when he says the flesh has been crucified, it's that the decisive battle has been fought and won by the Spirit. The Spirit has captured the capital and broken the back of the resistance movement. The flesh is as good as dead. Its days are numbered. But there are outlying pockets of resistance. It's almost like the flesh is holding out by using guerrilla warfare tactics.
 - ▶ The flesh will not lay down their arms, it won't surrender, and it must be fought back daily.
 - ▶ That is why Paul calls us to crucify the flesh... and keep it crucified, and not pull it off the cross or sympathize with it on the cross.
 - ▶

B. God's Spirit Creates Law-Fulfilling Fruit

The second reason to walk by the Spirit or be led by the Spirit is found in verse 18:

“If you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law.”

但你們若被聖靈引導，就不在律法以下了。

This does not mean you don't have to fulfill God's law. You do. But the Spirit enables us to fulfill the law's requirement.

- ▶ That's what verses 13 and 14 said, “Through love serve of one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 總要憑著愛心互相服事。因為全部的律法，都在“愛人如己”這一句話裡面成全了。

Therefore, not being under law does not mean we don't have to fulfill the law. It means that, when we are led by the the Holy Spirit, we cruising in his power to fulfilling the law as a joyful way of life. We are not under the punishment or the oppression of the law because what the law requires the Spirit produces in us; namely, love. Notice verse 22: the first and all-encompassing fruit of the Spirit is what? Love, which verse 14 says fulfills the whole law.

And to confirm that this is just how Paul is thinking, he ends the list of the fruit of the Spirit in verse 23 with the words,

“...Against such there is no law.”

是沒有律法禁止的。

So the second reason to walk by the Spirit is really the same as the first.

- ▶ Verse 16 says, do it because you get victory over the flesh when you walk by the Spirit.
- ▶ Verse 18 says, do it because then you are free from the oppression and punishment of the law, because the fruit the Spirit produces, fulfills the law.

How Do You Walk by the Spirit?

Five Steps Toward Walking by the Spirit

But here are five practical steps toward walking by the spirit:

1. Acknowledge

First, acknowledge that you need the Holy Spirit's help and apart from him you are helpless. This is what Jesus meant when he said in John 15:5, "Without me you can do nothing" 你們就不能作甚麼。 Of course we can do something without Jesus: we can sin! But that's all we can do. So, the first step of walking by the Spirit is: admit this fact. We cannot do anything to please God without the Spirit's influence in our lives.

2. Pray

Second, we need to pray. God promised in Ezekiel 36:27 that He will put his Spirit within us and cause us to walk in his statutes (or ways). So Church pray that he will do this in your life. That his Spirit will work in you to cause you to walk in his ways.

3. Trust

We must trust that we will walk by the Spirit. We must believe that since we are no longer under the law, and that Spirit will have victory over the flesh that through faith, "sin will no longer have dominion over us" (Romans 6:14). 14 罪必不能轄制你們，

We need to have confidence in the Spirit, and count on Him in our life.

He made us alive when we were dead in sin,
(that seemed impossible; he will continue to do what seems impossible to the world and sometimes to us.)
He's will for us is to be like Christ.
To walk like He walked.
and has He has the power to achieve what he wills.

God will cause you to be led by the Spirit. And the way we know this is because of Romans 8:14, where Paul says you can't even be a child of God unless you are led by the Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." 14 因為蒙 神的靈引導的，都是 神的兒子。

So rest and be embolden by this solid and unshakable promise that God has given you.

4. Act

Because of all that the Spirit has done...

ACT! and now walk like Christ.

Notice: this is not step number one. If this were step number one, all our actions would be works of the flesh, not fruit of the Spirit.

Now after the other steps, we can now work (in the power of Spirit) with all our might to keep in step with the Spirit.

Our goal should be to walk with the Spirit so after a lifetime we can declare the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:10:

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

然而靠著 神的恩典，我得以有了今天，而且他賜給我的恩典並沒有落空；我比眾使徒格外勞苦，其實不是我，而是 神的恩典與我同在。哥林多前书 15:10

Philippians 2:12 and 13 which says,

Beloved...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling because God is at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

我所親愛的，
就應當恐懼戰兢地作成自己的救恩。 13 神為了成全自己的美意，就在你們裡面動工，使你們可以立志和行事。

5. Give Thanks

The final step in walking by the Spirit is we need to thank God for for His grace which is at work in us. If it weren't for that we couldn't do anything right, let alone please God.

Just one example from 2 Corinthians 8:16. Paul says, *"Thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus.* 感謝 神，他把我對你們那樣的熱情，放在提多的心裡。” Titus loved the Corinthians. Where did that come from? God put it in his heart. It was a fruit of the Spirit. So what does Paul do? He thanks God. And Thanks be to our God and who puts the same Spirit in us and is working right now to produce the same love in our hearts that we might walk like Christ walked!