

The Spirit-Filled Life: God's Presence in You

Galatians 5:16-26

INTRODUCTION

We continue our study on revival. Lest we forget...

Revival is *“the extraordinary movement of the Spirit of God in the hearts of _____ producing extraordinary results.”*

Revival is the Reviver at work in the life of His own, the church. **When revival hits a church, she gets her life in order!** This means that revival impacts both the **vertical** aspect of our relationship with God as well as the **horizontal** aspect of our relationship with each other.

As we continue to explore the implications of revival on our relationship with others, please realize that this is not about greater resolve or willpower. It's about relying on the presence of God in your life to mold your lifestyle.

Please turn in your Bible to **Gal 5:16-26**.

If Christ's summary of the law — *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength”* and *“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (see **Matt 22:34-40**) — provides the goal of the Christian life, then what provides the motivation and strength to do it? Paul's answer: Live by the power available through the Holy Spirit.

In **Galatians 5:19-26** we are invited to consider two different ways of life. One is called the *“acts of the sinful nature”* or the *“works of the flesh.”* It describes what life looks like without God. The other way of life is called the *“fruit of the Spirit.”* It describes a life filled with supernatural power and dominated by qualities that could only come from God.

We are invited in this passage to consider the way we are living. Which path are we following? Flesh or Spirit? Life or death? Supernatural power or continual self-indulgence? As we shall see, living by the flesh is natural and even easy in the sense that we are all pulled in that direction. If we want to live in the Spirit, we have some tough choices to make.

Let's begin...please take note of...

I. The works of the flesh: a catalog of _____ (5:19-21)

This long and discouraging list serves several purposes. A close examination reveals that the various sins seem to fall into **four** categories.

First, there are the _____ sins: sexual immorality, impurity and sensuality (NIV-debauchery). **The first term** refers to any sexual activity outside of marriage and includes premarital sex, extramarital sex, homosexuality, and all forms of pornography. **Impurity** speaks to the inner desire to experiment in these areas. It is what many people would do if they thought they would never get caught. **Sensuality (Debauchery)** is sometimes translated as “lewdness.” It describes a brazen attitude that says, *“I'm going to flaunt my sexual behavior in public and I don't care what anyone thinks of it.”*

Second, there are the _____ sins: idolatry and sorcery (NIV - witchcraft). **Idolatry** is a broad term that refers to anything good that becomes more important than God. It could refer to an inordinate love of money or possessions or of your career or even of another person who becomes more important than God to you. **Sorcery (Witchcraft)** translates a Greek word related to our English word *“pharmacy.”* It covers drug abuse, sorcery, black magic, necromancy, reincarnation, voodoo, etc.

Third, there are the _____ sins: enmity (NIV-hatred), strife (NIV-discord), jealousy, fits of anger (NIV-rage), rivalries (NIV-selfish ambition), dissensions, divisions (NIV-factions) and envy. Here we see sins that highlight the breakdown of interpersonal relationships. **Hatred** describes a settled hostility that distorts all human relationships. **Strife (Discord)** means you can't get along with people; a contentious temper. **Jealousy** means you want what they have. At the root of jealous is ingratitude toward God. **Fits of anger (rage)** means you lose your temper and then make excuses for it. **Rivalries (Selfish ambition)** describe a person who wants more and more and when he has it, is not satisfied. **Dissensions** speak of those who enjoy causing trouble. **Divisions (Factions)** are created by talented troublemakers.

Envy is an ugly sin that says, “*I want what you have and I wish you didn’t have it.*” Wherever these sins appear, human relationships are marred and broken.

*Fourth, there are sins of _____:
drunkenness and orgies.*

Drunkenness speaks not only of the abuse of alcohol but of its dominating, destructive control in a person’s life.

Orgies is a word sometimes translated by “*revelries.*” You might call it “*wild parties.*”

In **verse 21** Paul adds the phrase “*and things like these,*” which means that this list is suggestive, not exhaustive. There are many other “*works of the flesh.*” But however long the list may be, these sins are “*obvious.*” **Living by the flesh always produces bad results.** If you decide to leave God out of your life, you won’t be able to hide the consequences. What is in the heart will reveal itself in your life (for better or for worse) sooner or later. Everything that is covered will one day be made plain. You can hide the flesh under a veil of religion and morality, but it won’t stay veiled forever.

The most important point to notice is that these sins mark an unregenerate life. When Paul says that those who do these things will not inherit the kingdom of God, he is referring not to an act but to an **entire way of life.** In the end, you can have the flesh or you can have the Kingdom of God, but you can’t have both. **They are mutually exclusive. Heaven will be inherited by every person who has heaven in their soul. Those who live like hell will one day live in hell.**

We have seen the dark side...now, please note...

II. The fruit of the Spirit: a catalog of grace (5:22-23)

But there is another way to live. Paul calls it the “*fruit of the Spirit.*” The nine graces here enumerated are like a cluster of ripe grapes. These are not “*fruits*” of the Spirit but simply the “*fruit*” of the Spirit. When the Holy Spirit has free reign in our hearts, these graces are the supernatural result of his work in us.

*First, there are three qualities that join us to _____:
love, joy and peace.*

Love speaks of a kind affection that reaches out to another person without regard to anything that might be received in return. **Joy** is godly optimism even in trying circumstances. **Peace** is godly contentment in spite of our circumstances. In the deepest sense, these graces come from God and lead us back to Him.

*The second grouping of qualities reaches out to those
around _____: patience, kindness and goodness.*

Patience might be better translated by the traditional phrase “*longsuffering.*” It speaks of courageous endurance over time in difficult circumstances. **Kindness** refers to a gracious disposition toward others. **Goodness** is love in action.

*The third grouping includes three qualities that describe our
_____: faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*

Faithfulness means something like “*dependability.*” The person with this quality keeps his word, his promises, and his vows. **Gentleness** is often translated “*meekness,*” which doesn’t mean “*weakness*” but rather “*my power under God’s control.*” It’s the ability to respond with kindness under provocation when you are sorely tempted to blow your top. **Self-control** is “*my desires under God’s control.*” It especially speaks to those moments of temptation when we want to go somewhere or do something or try something or look at something that we know would not be good for us. It speaks also of the times when we break a relationship that we know is not leading us where God wants us to go.

CONCLUSION/INVITATION

Where do we go from here? Time to make it personal...

Regarding these 9 qualities (fruit), let's take some time right now and assess how we are doing. Let's take a few minutes and consider the practical outworking of the graces in our lives. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the true inclination of our heart; let us ask Him to produce His fruit in and through our life.

We begin with...

Love (1 Corinthians 13:13:4-8; 1 John 4:7-12)

- *Do people feel they have to gain my approval, or do they generally know that I love them and that I will help them in any way I can?*
- *Am I more driven to give love or to receive it?*
- *Do I genuinely love those people in my life who are unlovable or who do not love me in return?*

Joy (Psalm 16:11, 32:11; John 15:11; Philippians 4:4)

- *Is my level of joy consistent, regardless of external circumstances or how others treat me?*
- *Do people see the joy of the Lord displayed in my life?*
- *Do I serve the Lord with gladness?*

Peace (John 14:27, 16:33; Philippians 4:6-7; Colossians 3:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:16)

- *When I'm under pressure, is my spirit generally calm, rather frantic or turbulent?*
- *Do I exhibit an inner tranquility of mind and a quite confidence that God is in control, regardless of what is going on around me?*

Patience (Colossians 1:11-12; James 1:2-4, 5:8)

- *Am I longsuffering when I am mistreated by others?*
- *Am I willing to accept and endure irritating and adverse circumstances?*
- *Am I willing to wait for God to vindicate me or to reward my labors?*

Kindness (Ephesians 4:32; 2 Timothy 2:24)

- *Do I treat others as I wish to be treated by them and as God has treated me?*
- *Do I demonstrate genuine concern for others?*
- *Am I thoughtful, considerate, and alert to the needs of others?*

Goodness (Romans 12:21; Galatians 6:10)

- *Do I manifest kindness by doing good works for fellow believers?*
- *Do I seek to overcome evil by actively doing good to those who wrong or hate me?*

Faithfulness (1 Corinthians 4:2, 15:58)

- *Am I committed to making choices that please God, even when I know others aren't watching me?*
- *Do I stick with a job or task until it is completed in the manner it should be?*
- *Am I dependable? Trustworthy? Loyal?*

Gentleness (Meekness) (Ephesians 4:1-2)

- *Am I easy to approach, even about difficult matters, or do others have legitimate reason to dread conversations with me?*
- *Do I endure misunderstanding and injustice without retaliating or being defensive?*
- *Do I have a yielded, teachable spirit?*

Self-control (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Titus 2:1-10)

- *Am I temperate and disciplined in the use of my tongue? In my use of time? In my reactions and responses to people and circumstances?*
- *Are my natural passions and appetites under the control of the Holy Spirit?*