

# THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT AND THE PROBLEM WITH THE FLESH

Galatians 5:16-26

Even though we have been blessed so much by the Holy Spirit there is still a struggle to do what is right. We want to see the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, Self-control) in our lives.

What fruit should we see if we are truly being led by the Holy Spirit? If we are now Christians, why do we still have a desire to do what is wrong? How can we daily live a victorious Christian life over the sinful desires that we have?

## I. THE STRUGGLE WITHIN – FLESH VS. SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5:16-17)

1. **All people are born with a sin nature and are slaves to sin. The sin nature we are all born with is called the “old man”, “earthly nature” and our “body ruled by sin”.**

- i. *Psalm 51:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*
- ii. *Romans 6:6–7 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> knowing this, that our **old man** was crucified with Him, that the **body of sin** might be done away with, that we should no longer be **slaves of sin**. <sup>7</sup> For he who has died has been freed from sin.*
- iii. *Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> And you He made alive, who were **dead in trespasses and sins**, <sup>2</sup> in which you once*

walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the **sons of disobedience**,<sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were **by nature children of wrath**, just as the others.

**2. Christians are no longer slaves to the sin nature. The “old man” is dead! Unfortunately, we still have sinful flesh that entices us to sin.**

- i. Romans 7:18 (NKJV)<sup>18</sup> *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.*

**3. By the Holy Spirit we can choose to be victorious over the flesh. This is called “walking in the Spirit”.**

- i. Romans 6:11–12 (NKJV)<sup>11</sup> *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*<sup>12</sup> *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*
- ii. Romans 8:12-14 (NKJV) *“Therefore, brethren, we are debtors--not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will*

*die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”*

- iii. “To walk in the Spirit first means that the Holy Spirit lives in you. Second, it means to be open and sensitive to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Third, it means to pattern your life after the influence of the Holy Spirit.” – David Guzik

## **II. THE WORKS OF THE FLESH – A DESCRIPTION OF LIFE WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT’S INFLUENCE (GALATIANS 5:18-21)**

- 1. **The flesh is tricky. When we are in the flesh we trust in self effort and rule keeping more than in the Holy Spirit. Sometimes people in the flesh become more religious and legalistic. (Verse 18)**

- i. *Galatians 3:2–3 (NKJV)<sup>2</sup> This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?—<sup>3</sup> Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?*
- ii. “The legalists thought they had the answer to the problem in laws and threats, but Paul has explained that no amount of legislation can change man’s basic sinful nature. It is not law on the outside, but love on the inside that makes the difference. We need

another power within, and that power comes from the Holy Spirit of God.” - Wiersbe, W. W.

**2. A person whose life is defined by this behaviour is not saved.**

- i. 1 John 3:9 (NLT)<sup>9</sup> *Those who have been born into God’s family do not make a practice of sinning, because God’s life is in them. So they can’t keep on sinning, because they are children of God.*

### **III. THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT – THE EVIDENCE OF WALKING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5:22-25)**

**1. Love. The fruit that all others flow out of. “Agape” is a self-sacrificing love that Jesus has shown to us.**

- i. Romans 5:5 (NKJV)<sup>5</sup> *...the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

**2. Joy. True joy is an overflow of the life of love. It is independent of our circumstances.**

- i. Philippians 4:4 (NLT)<sup>4</sup> *Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice!*

**3. Peace. When your heart is no longer at war.**

- i. Philippians 4:7 (NKJV)<sup>7</sup> *and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

**4. Longsuffering. Courageous endurance without quitting.**

- i. *Ephesians 4:2 (NKJV)*<sup>2</sup> *with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,*

**5. Kindness. It means you are nice to people.**

- i. *Colossians 3:12 (NKJV)*<sup>12</sup> *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;*

**6. Goodness. “Love in action” Being good to all people.**

- i. *Galatians 6:9–10 (NKJV)*<sup>9</sup> *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*<sup>10</sup> *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.*

**7. Faithfulness. The character of one who can be relied on.**

- i. *1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV)*<sup>2</sup> *Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.*

**8. Gentleness. Meekness/gentleness is power under control.**

- i. *2 Corinthians 10:1 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup> *Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...*

**9. Self-Control. We have control over our desires and passions.**

**10. You are Christ's now! We have a new nature by the Holy Spirit. Let's live that way. (Verses 24-26)**