

The Sermon

Welcome

Good morning!

My Name is Pastor Jonathan, and I have the joy of serving as The Lead Pastor here at Harvey.

And I am so grateful that each of you are here today.

Everyone is welcome at Harvey!

Opening Illustration

Now I never grew up around cows...

I always knew people that had cows...but I didn't know anything about them.

And then a couple of years ago we moved out to the country, and suddenly we found ourselves with some cows...

And what I've come to learn about cows...is they need fences...

One day, one of our cows got out when a fence was down that we didn't realize was down...

So I had to spend a whole morning taking down a fence the rest of the way...so I could get a cow back across it and then repairing the fence...

And I learned quickly.....cows are stubborn...

See, fences may sound like more freedom.

- Go wherever you want
- Whenever you want....
- No boundaries,

But I'll tell you what I learned that morning...

- ***That cow wasn't happier out there.***
- ***She was lost AND Screaming for her mother...***
- And she was in a place where there wasn't food being provided for her...there wasn't any water...
- And if she kept on going, she could have gotten hit by a truck...

See, that fence wasn't there to trap her...

- It was there to protect her...
- To keep her exactly where she had everything she actually needed.

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

Transition

I think a lot of us today can think about freedom the same way that the cow thought about that fence.

- We think freedom means no boundaries.
- Go wherever you want, whenever you want, do whatever you want.

But is that actually freedom?...

- Or is that just a cow standing in the middle of a road telling herself she's never been more free in her life?

And that's the exact tension Paul is wrestling with this morning in Galatians chapter 5.

Recap

Last week we saw in Chapter 5, vs. 1: FOR FREEDOM CHRIST HAS SET YOU FREE.

And we discovered:

Freedom Isn't Something You Earn; It's Something You Stand In.

But when we keep on reading...Paul does something we might not expect.

He doesn't just keep celebrating freedom.

- He gives a warning about it.
- In the very next breath, he tells the Galatians: ***don't let the freedom, God gave you, become the very thing that destroys you.***

Transition

So, if you have your Bibles, take them out and turn to the book of ***Galatians***, and we're going to be in ***Chapter 5, vs. 13-26*** today.

And I'm going to begin by reading vs. 13-15

I. A Warning About Freedom: Don't Walk In The Flesh (Galatians 5:13-15)

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

A. You Were Called To Freedom (vs. 13a)

Paul begins in **vs. 13**, by saying you were **CALLED**.

Back in **Chapter 1**, Paul told the Galatian believers that they had been **CALLED** in grace...

AND NOW...Paul says God **CALLED YOU TO FREEDOM!**

- Paul doesn't say, you **worked** for your freedom.
- Or you **earned** freedom
- Paul says **CHRISTIAN: GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO FREEDOM...**

B. Don't Use Your Freedom To Sin (vs. 13b)

Therefore, **DON'T USE YOUR FREEDOM AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FLESH!**

Now the Bible uses this word “**FLESH**” a lot...

What does The Bible mean by this word **flesh**....

Well, it's referring to our old sinful desires **BEFORE JESUS...**

- things that are not of God...
- things that are for our self-gratification...

The book of Colossians tells us to take the old self off and put on the new self...

- That's what Paul is talking about here...

And so Paul says... don't use your freedom...that you've been called into...as an **OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE IN YOUR SINFUL DESIRES!**

Charles Spurgeon said this:

Do not make license out of your liberty.

*Remember that liberty **FROM** sin is not liberty **TO** sin.*

See, in Christ there is freedom...

And Paul just told the Galatians last week...don't let the Judaizers' legalism be a threat to your freedom....

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

But there is also another threat to our Christian freedom...**and that is license....**

Philip Ryken put it this way:

Whereas legalism demands responsibility without freedom, license grants freedom without responsibility.

In other words....***God has called you to freedom...but that freedom doesn't mean no responsibility...***

We as believers, still have to fight our fleshly desires...

We have to be continually “taking off our old self” and “putting on our new selves”...

I remember when I first got my driver's license...

I had freedom!

Well, I was leaving the church where my dad led the music, driving myself home for the very first time...

And there was one road into that church and one road out of that church...

And the speed limit just so happened to be 25 mph....

But when I left that church parking lot on Sunday morning...I gunned it and was doing 55 before I ever got to the main road...

And wouldn't you know...there was a cop sitting there clocking as people were leaving church... trying to keep the church people honest...

So I got pulled over...on a Sunday morning...after church...and every single person that left that church saw me...

- They were either laughing at me or shaking their head...

And the last car that came by....was my dad and mom...

- And my dad just got out of the car...
- walked straight past the cop
- To the window of my car
- And held out his hand...
- and took the keys...

See, I had ***LIBERTY...but not a license to do whatever I wanted with no responsibility...***

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

It's the same in the Christian life...

We are free...but not free to sin however we want...

C. Love Others (vs. 14)

So...in vs. 14...Paul says...we should use our freedom as an opportunity to serve one another through love!

Don't miss that word.... "Serve one another."

- That...is the word for being a SLAVE.

See, Paul has just spent five chapters telling these people they are FREE...

- ...and now he tells them to go be slaves to each other.

Martin Luther said it like this:

"A Christian is perfectly free...subject to none."

And Yet...

"A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

That sounds like a contradiction...but it's not

- You've been set free FROM sin...

- ***SO THAT*** you can freely bind yourself TO one another in love.

In **Matthew 22:37-39** Jesus was asked by the Pharisees...What is the greatest commandment in the law....

And Jesus replied...

37"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

38 This is the great and first commandment.

39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

See as Christians...our new self...***is evidenced*** by our ***LOVE FOR GOD AND FOR OTHERS!***

So Christian, you were called ***TO FREEDOM...***

- Not to satisfy your sinful self...

- But to love God and love others!

But what happens when we don't love others?...

D. When We Don't Walk In Love, We Devour One Another (vs. 15)

Vs. 15 says that we consume one another.

Paul uses this imagery of a wild animal...

...You know...Wild animals will devour one another for survival...

- It's about ***their*** hunger
- It's about ***their*** survival

So they consume one another...

Paul says...if you don't love one another....

Watch out!...

Because just like wild animals that are only looking out for themselves...

YOU TOO WILL DEVOUR ONE ANOTHER!

And notice here...out of everything Paul could have named as a “***work of the flesh***”...., ***THE ONE THING HE NAMES...IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CHRISTIANS DON'T LOVE ONE ANOTHER***

HEY TODAY:

We still struggle with our freedom in Christ, don't we?

- We still struggle with our Christian freedom leading us to ***ONLY*** consider ourselves...and not others...
- So we would do well to listen to the words that Paul wrote to the Galatians...
- Don't use your freedom in Christ to satisfy your sinful self...because that is going to lead to people devouring one another...
- Rather use your freedom to ***LOVE ONE ANOTHER...***

Maybe you've been to that church....and I pray you haven't...

But that church where you see a whole bunch of Christians who are power hungry...

- And it looks a whole lot like an African safari with wild animals...
- Where everyone is just waiting for someone to have their back turned so they can devour them, so they can get some of the perceived “power”...

HEY Christians, that shouldn't be so...

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

- We're not called to freedom to **SELFISHLY** devour one another....
- We're called to freedom to **SELFLESSLY** love one another!

Paul has just told us...

- You're called to freedom...don't use it to sin...
- You're called to freedom....don't devour one another....

Maybe after hearing this...you're thinking...maybe rules aren't so bad....

- But the law, the rules, were never the fix...
- We've seen throughout the book of Galatians over and over...
 - The law can't save you...
 - We can't earn our own salvation....

See, the danger has always been walking in the flesh...

- And the fix isn't more rules....
- The fix is **WHO** we're walking with....

And that's the whole point of what Paul is about to say.

- God didn't set you free and then hand you a longer list of rules to keep you in line.
- **HE GAVE YOU HIS SPIRIT.**

In fact our big idea for today is this:

BIG IDEA:

You Are Free In Christ, Not To Walk In Sin, But To Walk In The Spirit.

- God's not looking for you to use your freedom to walk in the flesh.
- He's looking for you to walk, step by step, with His Spirit.

Let's see exactly what that looks like in vs. 16-21.

II. The War Within: Flesh Against Spirit (Galatians 5:16-21)

Keep in Step with the Spirit

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

17 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 the things you want to do.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,

21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

A. A Command And A Promise (vs. 16)

Vs. 16 says...RATHER than using your FREEDOM as an opportunity for THE FLESH...

WALK IN THE SPIRIT!!!

Now what does that mean?

Well, walking is a continuous action.

- This is not something that you're ever done doing...
- This is a habitual way of life...
- Something that we **MUST DO and KEEP ON DOING**

BUT what is walking in The Spirit?

Well put simply...it's walking with God...with His Spirit that resides in us...

Look at the second half of that verse...because there are actually two things happening here...

"walk by the Spirit, AND YOU WILL NOT gratify the desires of the flesh"

SO THE FIRST PART IS A COMMAND...

- **Walk with God...and His Spirit that endwells every believer!....**

BUT that second part is not a second command.

This verse doesn't say **"walk by the Spirit...and also try real hard not to sin."**

NO!

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

There's a promise there!

- **THE COMMAND** is: Walk by The Spirit.
- **THE PROMISE** is: AND You will NOT be doing what your sinful nature craves.

SEE:

- One of those is YOUR JOB.
- AND One of those is HIS PROMISE!

Your job isn't to defeat the flesh.

Your job is to WALK.

And when you walk with Him...HE handles what you never could.

I picture this as a YOUNG SON following his dad everywhere...

- His dad wears boots and jeans...so he wears boots and jeans...
- His dad works on fences...so he works on fences...
- And maybe even as a little child...he studies exactly how his dad walks, and he tries to imitate him in every single way....
- Until one day...that little boy is grown up...and he looks just like his Father...

HEY In the same way...in our lives....

- Walking in The Spirit
- Is studying how Jesus walked...
- And letting The Holy Spirit inside of us lead us and guide us....

It's trying to stay in step with God the Father...

- Until slowly...after years and years...
- we look more like Him...than we did before...

It's the opposite of the son who has a Good Father and says...

- I'm going to ignore everything my father is doing...
- and do it my own way...

No...when we **WALK IN THE SPIRIT**...we are walking with The Holy Spirit guiding us...and learning to imitate the character of God The Father!

And the result of this is we are not doing what our sinful nature is craving!

B. The War Within (vs. 17-18)

Paul continues telling us there is a war going on inside each one of us...

- We have a sin nature...that we gotta be fighting against...
- Because the desires of our flesh **are against** the desires of The Holy Spirit
- And the desires of The Spirit are against our sinful fleshly desires...

And so each one of us has an internal war going on inside of us!

Maybe you've seen cartoons where a devil sits on one shoulder of a person, and an angel sits on the other...and they're at war with one another...

- **But a better picture for a Christian** is the sinful flesh against the Holy Spirit in our lives....
- **AND They are at war with one another inside each one of us!**

BUT when we walk in The Spirit...

When we're walking trying to imitate Jesus Christ...

- we are slowly by slowly...training ourselves...disciplining ourselves for godliness...like we see in **1 Timothy 4**

Maybe for you today...

- You feel the weight of your flesh and The Spirit being at war...
- You recognize that the flesh often keeps you from doing the things that you want to do...
- And you feel just like Paul in **Romans 7:15** where he said:
 - *I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. (NLT)*
- I'll just be honest...I feel like that often...

And I believe it's a good thing that we feel that way...

- Because the very fact that you have grown in hating your sin...
- Shows you that you have grown in your desire to **WALK IN THE SPIRIT**

And my prayer is that FOR US every day...

WE would grow in The Spirit, keeping us from doing the things we desire to do in the flesh!

Paul reminds these believers in vs. 18...

If you're walking with The Spirit...you're not under the law...

- See...when you're under the law...you're not in freedom...
- No, you're still living in the flesh...and in your own ability, just trying to do what is right....***and you have no solution for your sin problem....***

HOWEVER, when you're walking with The Spirit...

- YOU ARE FREE...
- Not because you're still not fighting your flesh...
- But because you now have a solution for your sin problem....***THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST***

So Paul says ***WALK IN THE SPIRIT...***

- And let The Spirit of God living within you, train your desires to oppose the things you want to do in the flesh...

C. The Evidence of The Flesh (vs. 19-21)

Look at vs. 19...

Paul, in case he wasn't clear...says...

HEY, THE WAYS OF THE FLESH ARE EVIDENT...

AND JUST SO YOU'LL KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT...HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES:

And Paul gives us ***17 words of example...***

- I'm not going to define each one of these for us this morning...
- But I want you to notice they fit into four categories...

1. Sins of Lust

2. Sins of False Religion

3. Sins of Relations

4. Sins of Appetite

And I want you to notice....

- The longest category...isn't the sexual sin at the beginning of this list...
- It's the ***RELATIONAL SINS IN THE MIDDLE...how we treat other people....***

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

- Enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy.

That's almost half the entire list.

WHY?

Remember what Paul just said back in **vs. 15...**

- Use your freedom as an opportunity **to serve one another through love!**
 - Love your neighbor....
 - If you don't...watch out because you'll bite, devour, and consume one another!

So Paul wasn't just naming some crazy sins about the worst person in the town...

Paul wasn't talking about "**that one person**"...that everyone looks at to feel better about themselves....

Paul was talking about **HOW THESE BELIEVERS...**

- **WHO ARE FREE IN CHRIST...**
- **TREAT ONE ANOTHER...WHEN THEY'RE NOT WALKING IN THE SPIRIT!**

In fact, this list isn't even everything!...

- Paul says in **vs. 21...AND THINGS LIKE THESE...**
- **IN OTHER WORDS: I could keep on going....**

A Puritan named **William Perkins** said:

This list of vices is a mirror to reveal the corruption of our own hearts

And we feel this, don't we?

- We read this list...
- and whether on all 17 sins...
- Or whether on 1 or 2 of them...
- each one of us reads it and says in our own hearts...

I AM GUILTY!

So when we come to the end of vs. 21...that's why it's so terrifying to read!

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

And we read that, and a lump just hits our throats, doesn't it?

Because we know...we ALL fall somewhere in that list....even if it's in
AND THINGS LIKE THESE

So we ask the question...does this mean that because ***I'M GUILTY*** of things on this list...that I'm destined for Hell?

ABSOLUTELY, THAT IS WHAT THIS MEANS!

- That anyone who commits these sins...and things like these...

DESERVES to go to HELL!

- We ***DESERVE*** to be eternally separated from God in His Kingdom of Heaven FOREVER...

There should be some heaviness to our sin because of the reality of what we are deserving of it.... WE DESERVE HELL...

I WANT YOU TO FEEL THE WEIGHT OF YOUR SIN THIS MORNING....

.....

.....

But I ALSO want to show you the weight of grace...

Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,

5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ...

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

We saw back in ***Galatians 4***...you are no longer a slave, but a child of God!

SO is there any need to be terrified of ***vs. 21 in Galatians 5***...

Yes...if you are not a child of God...

But if you are a child of God...

It's a reminder of the weight of our sin...and the cost of the cross...

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

And if you are a child of God and look on this list and you think to yourself, **I AM GUILTY...**

First, I would say...praise God...that we don't get what we deserve!

Second, I would remind you of what Paul has already said...

- You were called to freedom...
- Not a freedom to do whatever you want
- But freedom to walk in step with The Spirit...
 - Freedom to **LOVE ONE ANOTHER**
 - Freedom to **NOT DEVOUR ONE ANOTHER!**
- So don't settle in your sin....
- But Walk In The Spirit and **LOVE ONE ANOTHER!**

AND REST IN THE PERFECT GRACE AND FORGIVENESS OF GOD!

If this is what it looks like when we're walking in the flesh...

Now, let's see what it looks like when we're walking in The Spirit in **vs. 22-26**

III. The Way Of The Spirit (Galatians 5:22-26)

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

A. The One Fruit of The Spirit (vs. 22-23)

Notice this...

Paul said in **vs. 19** the **workS** of the flesh...plural

But now in **vs. 22** we see the **FRUIT** of The Spirit...singular...

This means there is **ONE FRUIT**....it's not **THE FRUIT(S) OF THE SPIRIT** but **THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT**.

And you're like...okay Jonathan...why are you getting so technical....

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

Well, this matters more than it sounds...

Spiritual gifts are handed out differently to different people...

- Some teach...
- Some encourage...
- Some have discernment...

We are one body with many members...and we don't all have the same giftings...

***BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT...
IS ONE UNIFIED THING...***

The Spirit produces ***The Fruit of The Spirit in EVERY BELIEVER!***

THAT MEANS:

- We don't get to say...well, I've got the fruit of kindness...but the fruit of patience...that's for someone else...
- I wish it worked that way!...but it doesn't....

See:

- The Gifts of The Spirit are essential for ***Christian SERVICE!***
- The Fruit of The Spirit is essential for ***CHRISTIAN LIVING!***

See where you need the gifts to serve the church well....

YOU NEED THE FRUIT JUST TO BE A CHRISTIAN WELL!

Notice this too....

- This scripture doesn't say "***produce this fruit so that you can belong to Christ.***"

No...

- It says when you're ***FREE IN CHRIST...WHEN YOU WALK IN THE SPIRIT...THIS FRUIT GROWS!***

LOVE, JOY, & PEACE GROWS!

PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS GROWS!

FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, SELF-CONTROL GROWS!

It's God producing the fruit!

See, the fruit of the Spirit is NOT EARNED BY US...

But we receive ***THE FRUIT...***by walking with The Spirit!

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

Paul said earlier in **Galatians 5:14**,

For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

John Knox said: "Love is not one virtue among a list of virtues...but love is the sum and substance of what it means to be a Christian".

And Paul says in **vs. 23** against such things...there is no law...
See for believers who **WALK IN THE SPIRIT**...The Holy Spirit is producing fruit in them...

They don't need a system of laws to produce fruit...

The Holy Spirit is raising them up from within us!

ESPECIALLY LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER!

B. Be Killing Sin (vs. 24)

In fact, in **vs. 24**, Paul says for those who belong to Christ...they have put to death the flesh.

The Puritan **John Owen** famously said this: **Be killing sin, or it will be killing you**

That's exactly what **vs. 24** is saying.

And here's the thing about The Flesh...

- I don't care how long you've been following Jesus Christ...
- It's never fully put to death on this side of Heaven.

Sin is always raising its ugly head back up...

- You've gone 6 years without giving in to this one sin...and it pops its head up....

Dear Christian:

- If you see sin raising its ugly head back up in your life...
- Don't go giving it CPR...
- Don't go giving it FIRST AID...
- You crush its head, like the ugly serpent that it is!
- Put it to death once again!

AND I don't want to make that sound easy...cause it's not

- Killing sin HURTS.

- But so does letting it live.

C. Keep In Step With The Spirit (vs. 25)

Look at vs. 25

- ***LIVE BY THE SPIRIT***
- ***AND KEEP IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT...***

IN OTHER WORDS:

If The Holy Spirit is the source of our life, then let The Holy Spirit also direct the paths of our life!

Paul here is telling the Galatian believers:...***BECOME WHAT YOU ARE!***

You are saved by Christ Alone...***AND*** you are FREE with God's Spirit living inside of you...***so become who you are!***

Saved and Spirit-filled followers of Jesus Christ!

D. How To Use Your Freedom (vs. 26)

And Paul ends vs. 26 right where he began...

- You Have been Called to FREEDOM
- ***USE YOUR FREEDOM THEREFORE...***
 - Not to be boastful...
 - Not to challenge one another...
 - Not to envy one another...
- ***BUT RATHER...***
 - ***TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER THROUGH LOVE!***

Christian: You Are Free In Christ, Not To Walk In Sin, But To Walk In The Spirit

Transition

That's what the word of God says and means today.

Now I want us to look at just a few ways how we can apply God's Word to our own lives today

Applications

1. How Is Your Love Going Towards Others?

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

We saw in God's Word today, that the evidence of our lives as believers of Jesus Christ is our love.

Jesus said in **John 13:35**, *everyone will know you are my disciples, if you love one another.*

But I wonder for us today...

If we took inventory of our lives...of how we feel about other believers of Jesus Christ...how much of our life is filled with love for other believers?

Maybe you've got it all figured out...

- You're perfectly loving all other believers...
- I wish I could say I am there...But I am not...
 - I can be rude...
 - I can insist on my own way...
 - I can be irritable...

I wonder if you think deeply, if you can think of a particular name of a person you're struggling to love right now...

- Someone that you've been short-tempered with
- Someone that you've insisted on your own way with
- Someone your heart is not filled with love for them...

HEY, remember that name...

- That's not a coincidence...
- That may just be The Holy Spirit bringing conviction!
- ***Revealing to you areas where you are walking in the flesh.***

So what is the solution?

- Just "try harder"?...
- ***NO!***
- ***It's Walk Closer!***
- ***With The Spirit.***

Church, when I find myself being rude, or insisting on my own way, or irritable...that's not a character flaw I gotta fix on my own.

- That's me, in that moment, walking in my flesh instead of walking with the Spirit.

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

- *And the fix isn't gritting my teeth and forcing out a smile.*

The fix is turning back to walking with The HOLY Spirit...

- Right there, in that moment, asking Him to do what I cannot do on my own...
- FILL ME WITH YOUR SPIRIT...
- Cause me to see them the way You see them...
- Change my heart O GOD!

So here's what I want to ask you to do..

- Somebody's name came to mind a second ago...
- Don't forget that name...because it might just be The Holy Spirit showing you exactly where He wants to grow fruit.

Ask the Lord to fill you with His Spirit...

- And to fill your heart with the same love He has for them.
- Ask God that He would allow you to walk step in step with Him this week...
- The same way that son walked in step with his father...

Ask The Lord...

- that instead of selfishly consuming one another....
- That He might allow this to be an opportunity to grow in selflessly loving one another...

2. How's Your Sin-Killing Going?

We saw in **vs. 24**, that those who belong to Jesus Christ are crucifying the flesh with its passions and desires.

Not that they will crucify someday...

But they ARE PRESENTLY and CONTINUOUSLY CRUCIFYING THE FLESH, EVERY SINGLE DAY!

John Owen, who I quoted earlier, said, *"Be killing sin, or it will be killing you."*

And that's not just a really good quote...

That's **Romans 8:13** where it says, *"if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live"*.

In other words, be putting your sin to death, or it's gonna crush you...

- For the Christian, there is no option to just leave our sin alone...

So let me ask you this:

How is your sin-killing going?

Is there a sin that has been raising its ugly head back up in your life?

- Maybe for years you went without it and thought you had broken free of it...but then here it is again...
- It's raised its head back up...

And here's what I see in my own life...

- Sometimes when that sin raises its head back up in my life...I have amnesia...
- I have forgotten the pain that it caused...myself and others...
- I have forgotten what it cost my Savior on the cross as he was nailed to the cross for my sin....
- So I'm passive about it...

I wonder if you, like me, can have spiritual amnesia when it comes to the sin in your lives?

But what this verse tells us is....we gotta be about some sin-killin' in our lives!

- **AND** When it raises its ugly head back up, like I said earlier...don't you go giving it CPR...

But you actively crush its head...just like the serpent that it is....

See, the reality is this...

- ***Most of us don't lose the fight to our sin in public...we lose it in private...***

Because it's easy to kill a sin that everyone else is going to see...

- Oh, I would never do that....

But it's a whole different fight when we're all alone, and we tell ourselves the oldest lie in the books...***NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW...***

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

So here's what I want you to do this week.

- Name your sin...out loud...to another believer...somebody ***you know*** loves you deeply...
- ***WHY?***
- Because a sin you only ever confess privately has a way of looking dead for a little bit and then coming to bite you in the back...
- Because no one else knows how to help you watch your back and pray for you...
- So bring it into the light...and let someone else help you keep that boot on that serpent's head!

And I want you to hear me...

- ***THIS IS NOT ABOUT DOING BETTER!***
- This is about walking in freedom...
- Walking in The Spirit...to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires...
- And letting the only one who can actually kill your sin permanently change your life day by day to look more like Him.

Christian:

- Don't fight your sin alone
- Walk in step with The Holy Spirit
- And Let The Holy Spirit do in you what you cannot do in yourself!

Hey, let's be about some sin killin' this week!

3. But God!

You remember vs. 21?

"I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

I told you earlier...each of us is ***DESERVING OF HELL!***

BUT GOD.

That's the whole Gospel in two words. BUT GOD.

So here's my question for you this morning:

- Have you had a "But God" moment?

Because Here Is The Truth:

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Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

GOD IS HOLY.

There is a God. He created everything that you can see, touch, and feel. God is Holy, there is none like Him.

Because He is Holy, He cannot be associated with sin.

HUMANS ARE SINNERS

But every single one of us has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God

AND THAT CREATES A PROBLEM.

Because our sin separates us from a Holy God...in this life and in the next...

And no amount of rule-keeping can fix it...YOU ARE A SINNER SEPARATED FROM A HOLY GOD...

BUT JESUS IS THE ANSWER.

But there is good news!

God, being rich in mercy and love, EVEN when you and I were dead in our sin, when we were separated from Him, HE MADE A WAY for us to be forgiven of our sins and reunited with Him!

God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to Earth as a baby.

- Jesus was fully God and Fully Man,
- He lived a perfect, sinless life here on Earth,
- Yet He went to the Cross and died for your sins, for my sins...
- But He didn't stay in that grave.

No, three days later, He rose from the grave, defeating sin and death.

YOU CAN BE FORGIVEN AND SAVED

This means!

There is a risen Savior who is sitting at the right hand of God, pleading on our behalf.

So today! Today, you can have salvation!

That Jesus got what He did not deserve, death on a cruel cross, so we can get what we don't deserve, salvation from our sins, and everlasting life in Heaven!

So that if we believe in Him, if we repent (turn away from your sins), and follow Him, we can and will be forgiven, we will be saved, and we will be in Heaven for all of eternity with God.

SO THIS MORNING...

- Maybe you've never had a **"BUT GOD"** moment...

Galatians 5.13-26 | The Flesh vs. The Spirit

- Maybe you're just hustlin' and hopin'...
- But I want you to know that you can walk out of here...resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ...
- **RESTING HE BORE THE WEIGHT OF THE WRATH OF GOD... FOR YOUR SIN...**
- **And today you can get what you don't deserve...because He took what He didn't deserve...**

TODAY: Would you turn from your sin...

- Confess Jesus Christ as both Lord and Savior...
- And believe that He is WHO HE SAYS HE IS?

Don't leave this room the way you walked in...

- Grab any member of this church...this week...any time...
- And we would LOVE to show you what it means to be **SET FREE by JESUS CHRIST...**
- **To be able to say...I AM A SINNER...BUT GOD!**

Christ ALONE is enough!

Today...**Won't you trust Him?**

Big Idea

You Are Free In Christ, Not To Walk In Sin, But To Walk In The Spirit.

Church, I Love You So Much.

Let's Pray.