

Small Group Guide: Walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-26

Sermon Summary

Pastor Jerry walked us through Galatians 5:16-26, explaining the practical application of living in Christ. He contrasted walking in the Spirit versus fulfilling the desires of the flesh, using the illustration of a garden that naturally produces weeds (flesh) but requires intentional cultivation to produce fruit (Spirit). The key message: we must actively pursue Jesus through His Word and the Holy Spirit's guidance while crucifying our fleshly desires.

Key Takeaways

1. **Walking in the Spirit requires intentional effort** - The Holy Spirit lives in us, speaks to us, and we must pattern our lives after His influence.
2. **We cannot serve two masters** - We can't simultaneously please the flesh and walk in the Spirit; we must choose.
3. **The same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in us** - We fail not because of lack of power, but lack of willpower to follow Him.
4. **Three essential actions:**
 - Walk in the Spirit (pursue God with everything)
 - Crucify the flesh (put to death our selfish desires)
 - Walk in humility (love others genuinely)

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. Read Galatians 5:16-18. What does it mean practically to "walk in the Spirit" in your daily life? What does this look like on a Monday morning or during a stressful week?
2. Pastor Jerry mentioned that walking in the Spirit means being "open and sensitive to the influence of the Holy Spirit." When was the last time you sensed the Holy Spirit speaking to you? How did you respond?
3. Look at the list of the works of the flesh (verses 19-21). Why do you think Paul says these are "evident"? What makes them so obvious?

Going Deeper

4. The sermon used the garden illustration—weeds grow naturally, but fruit requires cultivation. What "weeds" tend to grow naturally in your life? What specific steps do you take (or could you take) to "cultivate" spiritual fruit?
5. Read Romans 7:14-25. Can you relate to Paul's struggle? Share a time when you wanted to do right but found yourself doing wrong. How does understanding this battle help you in your walk with Christ?
6. Pastor Jerry quoted Gary Hamrick, who said, "We fail not because of lack of power supplied by the Holy Spirit, but because of lack of willpower." Do you agree? What's the difference between depending on the Spirit's power and exercising our willpower to follow Him?

Personal Application

7. Look at the fruit of the Spirit listed in verses 22-23. Which fruit is most evident in your life right now? Which one do you struggle with most? Why?
8. The sermon emphasized that we can't be "top secret Christians." How visible is your faith to those around you—at work, in your neighborhood, with your family? What might need to change?
9. Verse 24 says, "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." What does it mean to "crucify" something in practical terms? Is there something specific God is asking you to crucify right now?

10. Read verse 26 about not becoming conceited or envious. Which temptation do you face more—looking down on others or putting others on a pedestal? How does humility address both?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge:

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Daily Spirit Check-In

- Each morning, pray: "Lord, help me walk in Your Spirit today. Show me where my flesh wants to take control."
- Each evening, review: "Where did I walk in the Spirit today? Where did I give in to the flesh?"

Option 2: Weed Your Garden

- Identify one specific "weed" (work of the flesh) in your life
- Share it with an accountability partner
- Take one concrete action this week to "pull that weed" (remove yourself from temptation, replace a bad habit, etc.)

Option 3: Cultivate Fruit

- Choose one fruit of the Spirit you want to develop
- Find three Scripture verses about that quality
- Memorize one verse and look for opportunities to practice it daily

Option 4: Love in Action

- Identify someone in your life who is difficult to love (a "sandpaper person")
- Pray for them daily
- Perform one specific act of kindness toward them this week

Memory Verse

Galatians 5:16 - "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."