

“The Flesh vs. The SPIRIT!”
Galatians Chapter 5:16-26

➤ **THREE KEYS TO SPIRITUAL VICTORY:**

KEY #1 – WALK IN THE SPIRIT! (v16-17)

(v16) Christians are “born again” (Jn. 3:3-8) of the *Holy Spirit* and believers are called to “walk in the Spirit,” this speaks of a continuous action, a habit of life; an outflow of your will after God’s will. The Christian is to walk in newness of life, Romans 6:4, after the spirit, 8:4, in honesty, 13:13, by faith, 2 Corinthians 5:7, in good works, Ephesians 2:10, in love, 5:2, in wisdom, Colossians 4:5, in truth, 2 John 4, after the commandments of the Lord, v. 6.

- “and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” - The word “lust” is *epithumia* (Gk.) which speaks of a longing or desire for what is forbidden by God. We are not to lust after the flesh, Romans 8:4; after the manner of men, 1 Corinthians 3:3; in craftiness, 2 Corinthians 4:2; by sight, 5:7; not in the vanity of the mind, Ephesians 4:17; not disorderly, 2 Thessalonians 3:6.

(v17) Here Paul reveals a spiritual battle between the flesh and the Spirit.

KEY #2 – BE LED BY THE SPIRIT!

(v18) Literally, “But if you are willingly led by the Spirit, then you are not under the Law.” Wiersbe writes, “The Holy Spirit writes God’s Law on our hearts (Hebrews 10:14-17; see 2 Corinthians 3) so that we desire to obey Him in love. “I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy Law is within my heart” (Psalms 40:8.)” How does the Spirit lead us? Answer: By following the life of the Son of God our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (i.e. prayer, the Word, His love, His life).

(v19-21) What are “the works of the flesh”? (17 works are listed plus the “like”.)

Jesus said in Mark 7:20-23 - “What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”

- Let’s define “the works of the flesh”:

- ADULTERY** - Willful sexual intercourse with someone other than one’s husband or wife. In the Ten Commandments God emphatically prohibited adultery when He said, “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14). Under Mosaic Law, when a couple was caught in the act of adultery, both parties were to be killed (Deuteronomy 22:22). Observe the grace and mercy displayed by Jesus in John 8:1-11.
- FORNICATION** - (Gr. *porneia*). Used of illicit sexual intercourse in general (Acts 15:20,29; 21:25; cf. 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:13,18; 7:2; etc.). The Gr. word is *porneia*, from which the Eng. word “pornography” comes. It refers to all illicit sexual activity, including (but not limited to) adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, bestiality, incest, and prostitution.
- UNCLEANNESS** - to live immorally; to live an impure life.
- LEWDNESS** - Undisciplined and unrestrained behavior, especially a flagrant disregard of sexual restraints.
- IDOLATRY** - The worship of false gods and images.
- SORCERY** - The Gr. word *pharmakeia*, from which the Eng. word “pharmacy” comes, originally referred to medicines in general, but eventually only to mood- and mind-altering drugs, as well as the occult, witchcraft, and magic. Many pagan religious practices required the use of these drugs to aid in the communication with deities. (See Revelation 9:20-21.)
- HATRED** - Strong dislike, disregard, or even indifference toward someone or something. As such, hate may be seated in a person’s emotions or will.
- CONTENTIONS** - To be quarrelsome, to be at strife, to be at variance with God and man.
- JEALOUSIES** - Suspicion of a wife’s purity, one of the strongest passions (Numbers 5:14; Proverbs 6:34; Song of Solomon 8:6); also an intense interest for another’s honor or prosperity (Psalms 79:5; 1 Corinthians 10:22; Zechariah 1:14).
- OUTBURSTS OF WRATH** - Bursts of uncontrolled anger.
- SELFISH AMBITIONS** - Ambitious for self, not for God and not for others.
- DISSENSIONS** - Discord or strife that arises from a difference of opinion.
- HERESIES** - False doctrine, or teaching which denies one of the foundational beliefs of the church such as the Lordship or deity of Jesus.
- ENVY** - A feeling of resentment and jealousy toward another person because of his possessions or good qualities.
- MURDERS** - The unlawful killing of one person by another, especially with premeditated malice.
- DRUNKENNESS** - A drugged or deranged condition, which results from drinking intoxicating beverages.
- REVELRIES** - Generally speaking of feasts and drinking parties that were protracted into the night and during which people indulged in revelry (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3).

- “those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” - The Greek verb *practice* describes continual, habitual action. John MacArthur writes, “Although believers undoubtedly can

commit these sins, those people whose basic character is summed up in the uninterrupted and unrepentant practice of them cannot belong to God." 1 John 3:7-9 says, *Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins (this phrase means "who habitually practice sin") is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin (this phrase speaks of not continuing in sinful practices), because he has been born of God.*

KEY #3 – BEAR THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (v22- 23) (9 are listed)

Let's make our goal to bear fruit:

- **LOVE** – (*Gk.*) **Agape** - Is the noblest word for love in the Greek language and is found 320 times in the N.T. **Agape** is not kindled by the merit of worth of its object, but it originates in its own God-given nature. **God is love.** **Agape** delights in giving. This love keeps on loving even when the loved one is unresponsive, unkind, unlovable, and unworthy. It is unconditional love. **Agape** desires only the good of the one loved. It is a consuming passion for the well being of others. Wiersbe writes, "We are to worship God, love people and use things, but too often we use people, love self, and worship things." **JOY** - Is a positive attitude or pleasant emotion; delight. Many levels of joy are also described, including gladness, contentment, and cheerfulness. But the joy, which the people of God should have, is holy, pure and distinct from mere happiness. **This joy rises above circumstances and focuses on the very character of God.** **This kind of joy looks beyond the present to our future salvation.** **PEACE** – In the New Testament, peace often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ. **The peace that Jesus Christ spoke of was a combination of hope, trust, and quiet in the mind and soul, brought about by a reconciliation with God.** **LONGSUFFERING** - Is literally, "long of mind or soul" (regarded as the seat of the **emotions**), **opposed to shortness of mind or soul, irascibility, impatience, intolerance.** The purpose of God's longsuffering is to lead people to repentance, (**Rom 2:4 - Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?**). **KINDNESS** - God's loving-kindness is offered to His people, who need redemption from sin, enemies, and troubles. **Man exercises KINDNESS toward various units within the community — toward family and relatives, but also to friends, guests, employers, employees, the stranger.** **Kindness** toward the lowly and needy is often specified. **In Titus 3:4 - we read, But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,** **GOODNESS** - This goodness is in the sense of what is upright, righteous, in the sense of kindness of heart or act. It signifies not merely goodness as a quality; **rather it is goodness in action, goodness expressing itself in deeds.** (1) We are to be "**full of goodness.**" (Rom 15:14); (2) We're to **fellowship "in all goodness, righteousness and truth"** (Eph 5:8-14); (3) We are to **PRAY** for "**goodness**" according to 2 Thess 1:11-12. **FAITHFULNESS** - Speaks of being faithful, loyal, constant, staunch, steadfast, and resolute. God's faithfulness should be so deeply reflected in the lives of His people (Gal 5:22) that they can be called simply "**the faithful.**" This term was used in both the Old and New Testaments, listen to Psalm 31:23-24 - **Oh, love the LORD, all you His saints! For the LORD preserves the faithful, and fully repays the proud person. Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all you who hope in the LORD.** **GENTLENESS** - Is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly towards God. It is that temper of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting; it is closely linked with humility. **ANTONYMS** for **gentleness** would be **harsh, cruel, violent, wild, and unruly.** Let's look to **JESUS** for **gentleness** in **Matthew 11:28-30.** Our Lord and Savior calls us to **LEARN** of His **gentleness**, for this is His own disposition. **SELF-CONTROL** - Speaks of the control of one's actions or emotions by the **will**, the act of denying yourself, controlling your impulses, the trait of resolutely controlling your own behavior. Self-control is to exercise self-discipline, to engage in self-restraint, to have willpower, to maintain levelheadedness.

(v24-26) Let's challenge ourselves: Have we crucified the flesh? Are we living and walking in the Spirit? Let's GO FOR GOD and bear FRUIT 30, 60 & 100 fold! (Matthew 13:23; John 15:1-17)