




THE SIMPLE GOSPEL



discussion guide

WEEK 8: WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read the Text

Galatians 5: 16-26

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

Main Point

What does organic farming and mechanics have to do with the Gospel? In this passage, Paul explains that ***we essentially have two choices as we go through life's trials, temptations, and sin: we can get through mechanically or we can go through***

organically. Mechanically is where we rely on our own strength and try our hardest to get through life based on our own rules, methods, and white-knuckled hard work. Organically is where we rely on the Spirit to give us what we need because we know that we can't do this alone. ***The mechanical path leads to slavery and the organic path leads to freedom.*** When we mechanically try to earn our salvation by working hard to please God, we are operating our spiritual life as though it's a machine; whereas when we receive God's grace freely and walk with the Spirit, we realize that we don't need to do the daily grind because the resources we need are actually outside of ourselves. So what does it look like to walk by the Spirit, and how do we know if we're doing it? A good indication is how you respond to your own sin and failures – do you try to mechanically conquer it on your own with rules, methods and strategy, or do you invite the Spirit in to help you? When you make decisions, are you more concerned with pleasing God, or with pleasing yourself and others? ***Walking by the Spirit boils down to letting go of our self-focus and instead embracing self-forgetfulness.*** We become so enamored with Jesus, His ways, His Word, that our desires change from fulfilling our fleeting wants, to desiring more of Him and abiding in Him. This is true freedom. When we walk by the Spirit instead of our own desires, we become free to serve over impress, free to be content over anxious, and free to listen rather than defend.

Reflect Together

- 1. *Who is God?*** Sometimes the Holy Spirit can seem mysterious, elusive, and a little nebulous. Who is the Holy Spirit and why is He important?
- 2. *What has He done?*** How have you seen or experienced the Holy Spirit in your life?
- 3. *Who are you?*** Where do you see your spiritual walk operating mechanically where it's dependent on you and your strength? Where do you experience it organically where you are relying on the Spirit to guide you? How do you know when you're operating mechanically vs. organically?

4. *What are you to do?* What is one way you would like to grow in abiding by the Spirit and trading self-focus for self-forgetfulness? What do you need to give up in order to get more of the Spirit?

Abide Together

Practice listening prayer together. Have someone read today's passage out loud and then sit in silent prayer for five minutes. After five minutes, share what you felt, experienced, or thought. It may feel like nothing, and that's okay! Remember – the point is not mechanical results, but to rather allow the Spirit to do His work. All you need to do is be still and listen.