

# Life Application Notes

Galatians 5:16-25 - 2nd May 2021

This passage continues on from the language from some of the earlier parts of Galatians, talking about the flesh. In this passage, Paul directly contrasts the Spirit and the flesh. Paul intimates three entities in this passage; our mind, which makes our conscious decisions, and the Spirit and the flesh that offer opposing paths.

The aim is to spend the majority of your time discussing the fruits of the Spirit (vv22-23). Try not to get bogged down in the “works of the flesh” section; while discussion of these is necessary for our growth as an example of what to avoid, Life Groups may not be the best format for this, and we can take this opportunity to focus on God and the benefits that he offers.

- **Read Galatians 5:16-25 together**

**Paul is very keen to stress the absolute opposites between the “works of the flesh” and the “fruit of the Spirit” - and the end result of each.**

## **Verses 16-17**

Paul immediately sets up the dichotomy between the decision to “walk by the Spirit” and “the desires of the flesh”, saying that the desires of each is “against” the other.

- Can anyone give an example of when they have had the option of two directly opposing courses of action, one in line with the Spirit and one of the flesh. How did you discern which was which?

## **Verse 18**

This brings back Paul’s earlier rhetoric about how living by the Spirit makes the law unnecessary - as the law can not provide salvation. The key point here is that the solution to avoiding the trappings of the flesh is not the law, but the direction of the Spirit.

## **Verses 19-21**

This is a scary list! It can be hard to imagine these in everyday life, but remember Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:21-30, saying that anger towards someone is equivalent to murder, and that a lustful look is the same as adultery!

- Paul says that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **How, when we maintain that our works do not earn and can not lose our salvation, can Paul say this?**
  - These are clear indicators that the Spirit is not working in their life and they have not fully accepted Christ into their lives.

## **Verses 22-23**

This list is obviously much nicer to read. **For each of the fruits of the Spirit listed, give an example of Jesus displaying these, and one way we can bear these fruits more in our walk this week.** Consider the English definitions below of the Greek words used for the fruits if you need starters.

Love	love, generosity, kindly concern, devotedness
Joy	joy, gladness, rejoicing, bliss
Peace	peace, tranquillity, safety, welfare, health
Patience	patience; patient enduring of evil, fortitude, slowness of avenging injuries, long-suffering, forbearance, clemency, patient expectation
Kindness	kindness, goodness, gentleness
Goodness	goodness, virtue, beneficence, generosity
Faithfulness	faithfulness, faith, belief, firm persuasion, assurance, firm conviction, ground of belief, guarantee, assurance, good faith, honesty, integrity, truthfulness
Gentleness	gentleness, meekness, gentleness of mind, kindness
Self-control	self-control, continence, temperance

#### Verse 24

Paul is keen to remind us that we belong to Christ, and this means that we have “crucified the flesh with all its passions and desires”. The use of the past tense is helpful, as it reminds us that the act of putting our trust in Christ is enough to crucify the flesh.

- **What do you think it looks like to have crucified the passions and the desires of the flesh?**
  - In short, purity, one-ness with Christ, and loving others as ourselves.
  - Remember the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, so the fruits of the Spirit are a good answer!

#### Verse 25

In verse 25 Paul instructs to “keep in step with the Spirit”. This suggests an active, not passive, response - to consciously evaluate how the fruit of the Spirit is growing in our lives.

- **What can we do to help one another to keep in step with the spirit and to continue to grow and see an increase in the fruit of the Spirit in our lives?**  
(Honest and encouraging discipleship, meeting together, praying for one another, being accountable to one another)

Take some time in your group to pray that we can live by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit, so that you can see the fruits of the Spirit more in your lives. Pray that God will help you consciously see where the desires of the flesh and Spirit differ in your everyday life, and to help us side with the Spirit.