

## "The Fruit"

*Galatians 5:13-26*

### Introduction

At the beginning of creation, man was at one with God, walking in His Spirit. After the fall of Adam and Eve, man's nature reflected the sin that entered the world. We continue to experience the results of that sin and flesh nature in our society today with divisions of race, culture, gender, class and otherwise. Because we fail to understand the fruit of the Spirit or walk in it, we see widespread bickering, arguing, fighting and other problems.

"Flesh" is defined as the desire to please oneself independently from God. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God within believers that seeks to please God. When we walk in the Spirit, we strive to satisfy God while the flesh yearns only to satisfy self without deference to God. However, both natures reside in every believer, causing a constant internal war between our flesh and the Spirit.

In Galatians 5:16, Paul gives us the strategy of how these two natures – flesh and Spirit – can co-exist: "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh." To be clear, Paul does not call us to stop the desires of the flesh so we can walk in the Spirit. Rather, he is saying that walking in the Spirit will cause His will to override the desires of the flesh.

To walk in the Spirit, we must first realize that our walking is active and not passive. We are actively headed toward a destination and God wants that destination to be His will. Walking in the Spirit also requires us to depend on the power of the Holy Spirit to do God's will. Just as we depend on our legs to take us from place to place as we walk, we are to rely on the Holy Spirit to govern our will. As we depend on the Spirit to take us to the destination of God's will for our lives, we must do so with dedication. We must dedicate our steps to God daily in faith so that we can reach His will.

Our job as believers is to develop an intimate relationship with the Spirit, and as a result, we will not be held hostage by our flesh nature. The benefits that God wants to bestow upon you can only be gained by walking by His Spirit.

### Getting Started

1. If the Spirit is full of fruit, how do you know a fruit tree is growing in your soul? What fruit have you produced in the Spirit or the natural?
2. In what ways do you find yourself being held hostage to the flesh? Do you find yourself constantly trying to get rid of temptations of the flesh?

### Let's Get Personal

1. When was the last time you actively appealed to the Holy Spirit to guide you toward the right destination? Share with your group your experience in receiving the Holy Spirit's guidance.
  2. Why do believers find it more difficult to depend on the Holy Spirit rather than their own human strength? What desires do you typically lean to in your flesh that you know are not in line with the Holy Spirit's guidance for your life?
  3. What keeps you from consistently activating the Holy Spirit in your life to empower you to walk in His will? What are the fleshly distractions that are getting in the way?
  4. What desires of your heart do you need God to shed so that you can make room for the Holy Spirit to fill it with His will?
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**Take the Next Step**

1. What steps can you take this week to operate in the power of the Holy Spirit?
2. When you are tempted to devour others with your fleshly Spirit, what Scriptures help redirect you to walking in the Spirit?
3. In what ways are you taking inventory of your life to ensure you are producing spiritual fruit? List the fruit of the Spirit from Galatians 5:22. Create a plan of ways to depend on the Spirit to keep these at the forefront of your mind.
4. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: 2 Corinthians 5:7, 17; Philippians 3:21; Romans 7:14, 24; 8:5; Psalm 51:5; Galatians 3:1; and Ephesians 5:17.

**Renew Your Mind**

*“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”*

*Galatians 5:16*

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