

“Returning to God by the Spirit”

Galatians 5:15-26

Introduction

Walking in the Spirit is the key to living a victorious Christian life. The Holy Spirit is the presence of Christ inside believers and the power of Christ for us. Our flesh often prevents us from walking in the Spirit because it is driven by our sinful desires. The goal of the flesh is to satisfy itself independently of God; therefore, the flesh is diametrically opposed to the Spirit. (Galatians 5:17) To overcome our flesh, we must decide to have a spiritual approach to our lives and the issues we face each day. This must be an ongoing, daily decision. This choice to walk in the Spirit is a prerequisite to having victory over the flesh. Once we choose the Spirit over our sinful desires, the Spirit empowers us to not yield to the flesh. Being empowered by the Spirit changes our mindset and orientation completely. Still, it requires us to depend fully on God rather than our human ability. When we walk in the Spirit, He will lead us in the direction of God’s will and destiny for our lives.

We know we have transitioned to walking in the Spirit when our conduct, character and communication are transformed. As we walk in the Spirit, we should become more fruitful and productive, exemplifying the fruit of the Spirit in our actions and attitudes. Our thinking should begin to resemble Christ’s way of thinking. Instead of being argumentative and having conflict with others, we should be able to communicate better because we are looking at situations spiritually. If we do not see these changes in our lives, then we have to ask ourselves hard questions. Are we focusing on our sinful desires or are we choosing to set our minds on the things of the Spirit so that we can have life and peace? (Romans 8:6) Are we hostile and rebellious toward God (Romans 8:7) or are we allowing His Spirit to guide us into truth (John 13:16)? If we want to return to God, we simply need the power of the Holy Spirit, who is waiting to help us.

Getting Started

1. What do “the deeds of the flesh” look like in our lives today (Galatians 5:19-21)?
2. What does “the fruit of the Spirit” look like in our lives today (Galatians 5:22-23)?

Let’s Get Personal

1. What sinful desires keep you from following God and doing what you know is right?
2. How have you been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit?
3. What new truths did you learn from this message about the flesh, the Holy Spirit and how to walk in victory?

Take the Next Step

1. In what areas of your life are you still yielding to the flesh? How can you surrender those areas to God and begin to walk in the power of the Spirit?
2. Which fruit of the Spirit do you find the most challenging to live out? Pray for God to transform your thinking, attitudes and actions so that you can embody the fruit of the Spirit.
3. Consider the conflicts you have with others. Are you looking at those situations spiritually? Search the Scripture this week to reframe your mindset. Challenge yourself to step back and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit before you enter into any conflict.
4. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: Galatians 5:15-26; John 7:38-39; Romans 8:1-13; John 16:5-15; John 14:16-18; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 1 John 2:20; 1 John 2:27; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Galatians 3:1-5.
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Renew Your Mind

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

Galatians 5:16
