

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Have a Spirit-Controlled Life

SERMON REFERENCE: Galatians 5:13-23

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Many of us have lives that are out of control.
 - i) A lot of us are out of control and don't even know it.
 - ii) To be out of control is what the Bible describes as the "works of the flesh."
 - iii) Either the flesh or the Spirit will control our lives.
- b) Galatians 5:19-21
 - i) When the Bible says "the flesh", it does not mean hide, hair, skin, or bones.
 - ii) The "flesh" is the old nature that we get from our parents.
 - (1) They got it from their parents, and they from theirs.
 - (a) It goes all the way back to Adam.
 - (2) It is the part of our nature that craves something that is wrong.
 - iii) The word "adultery" means "sexual union with anyone other than your marriage partner."
 - (1) Someone who is living a life of adultery is controlled by the flesh and is out of control.
 - iv) "Fornication" means "any sexual activity before marriage."
 - (1) The Bible teaches pre-marital chastity and marriage fidelity.
 - (2) Anyone who lives a life of fornication is living a life of the flesh and a life out of control.
 - v) "Uncleanness" has the idea of wrong thoughts.
 - (1) It deals with thoughts that are impure.
 - (2) A person who reads pornography and who entertains himself with licentious literature or movies is living a life of uncleanness.
 - (a) It is the life of the flesh and a life out of control.
 - vi) "Lasciviousness" literally means "a lack of restraint."
 - (1) It is what we call sensuality or living by the senses.
 - (2) It may be overeating or having an inordinate desire for comfort or laziness.
 - (3) It means letting your five senses dictate what you do.
 - vii) "Idolatry" is mentioned.
 - (1) An idol is anything more important to us than God.
 - (a) Anything we love, fear, or serve more than God is an idol.
 - (b) This could be business, family, recreation, or hobbies.
 - (2) If we're living a life of idolatry, then we have a life controlled by the flesh.
 - viii) The word "witchcraft" is sometimes translated "sorcery."
 - (1) It comes from a Greek word that has to do with the use of drugs.
 - (a) This refers to recreational drugs; an instant heaven that leads to everlasting Hell.
 - (2) Sorcery and drug use are linked together.
 - ix) "Hatred" is mentioned.
 - (1) Are you nursing a grudge?
 - (2) Do you carry around hatred in your heart?

- (3) If we have bitterness in our hearts toward another person, then our lives are out of control and in the control of the flesh.
- x) “Variance” is the idea of divisions.
 - (1) It has the idea of strife.
 - (a) Some people love to start arguments.
 - (b) They cannot get along with anyone.
 - xi) The word “emulations” literally means “jealousy.”
 - (1) Jealousy is rooted in selfishness.
 - xii) “Wrath” is a desire for revenge; a burning desire to get even.
 - (1) When we get even, that is just what we do.
 - (a) We come down to their level.
 - xiii) The word “strife” means “factions.”
 - (1) It is a spirit that divides.
 - (2) These people of the flesh are those who split churches, homes, neighborhoods, and communities.
 - xiv) The word “sedition” literally means “to stand apart.”
 - (1) There are people who separate themselves into clicks.
 - (a) They think that they are better than other people.
 - (b) Sometimes they belong to cults.
 - xv) “Heresies” are false doctrines.
 - (1) People do not adhere to the Word of God because they are controlled by the flesh rather than by the Spirit.
 - xvi) Then, the Apostle Paul mentions “envyings.”
 - (1) An envious person is a person who is dissatisfied with what he has.
 - (a) He has a spirit of covetousness.
 - (b) He does not have a spirit of thanksgiving.
 - (c) It is not primarily just wanting more, but it is wanting what somebody else has.
 - xvii) Then, Paul mentions “murderers.”
 - (1) Jesus said that if we hate our brother, then in God’s eyes, we are guilty of murder.
 - xviii) “Drunkeness” is a mind that has been desensitized.
 - (1) There is an impairment of judgment caused by the use of alcohol, drugs, or something else.
 - xix) “Revelings” are the people who are always saying, “Let’s party.”
 - (1) They are trying to kill and stultify their conscience.
 - (2) They are trying to escape reality by constant indulgence in entertainment.
 - (a) They cannot think a serious thought.
 - (3) Another word for “revelings” is “carousing.”
 - xx) Paul goes on to say, “And such like...”
 - (1) He lists seventeen things, but this is not a complete list.
 - xxi) All of these are signs of a life that is not Spirit-controlled, but a life that is out of control.

- (1) The result is wasted time, weakened bodies, warped thinking, and wretched lives.
 - c) Galatians 5:22-23
 - i) Notice the word “but.”
 - (1) On one hand there are the works of the flesh, and on the other hand there are the fruits of the Spirit.
 - ii) The word “temperance” means “control.”
 - (1) It is sometimes translated “self-control.”
 - (a) It can be translated “Spirit-control.”
 - (2) It literally means “to be in control.”
 - d) Today’s message will discuss how to live a Spirit-controlled life.
- 2) THE STANDARD FOR THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE (GALATIANS 5:13-14)
- a) The standard is the law of God.
 - b) Galatians 5:13-14
 - i) Don’t let the flesh have its fling just because you’ve been called to liberty.
 - ii) If you want to know if you are living a life that meets God’s standard, then ask yourself if you love others as you love yourself.
 - iii) The standard for the Spirit-controlled life is the law, and the measurement of this is love.
 - c) There are three relationships that we can take toward the law of God.
 - i) Some people see the law as their enemy.
 - (1) The flesh does not want anything to do with any kind of law.
 - (a) The flesh wants to do its own thing.
 - (2) This is called license.
 - (3) Rivers and men get crooked by following the path of least resistance.
 - ii) Some people see the law as their master.
 - (1) Paul preaches against this.
 - (2) Some are trying to live under the law, and they are struggling and failing.
 - (a) This is called legalism.
 - (b) Their lives become a big list of don’ts.
 - (i) 10,000 don’ts will not make us more like Jesus.
 - (3) The Christian life is not a legal relationship.
 - (a) It is a love relationship.
 - (b) Mark 12:31
 - (4) Some of us are living lives of negativism.
 - (a) Don’t do this, and don’t do that.
 - (5) Galatians 5:1
 - (a) “The yoke of bondage” is sometimes translated as “the yoke of self-effort.”
 - iii) Liberty is seeing the law, not as our enemy or as our master, but as our friend.
 - (1) The Bible says that we have been called to liberty.

- (a) Galatians 5:13
 - (b) Galatians 5:1
 - (2) Liberty is not doing our own thing.
 - (a) No one is truly free or liberated until he knows control.
 - (3) Psalm 119:54
 - (a) On the back of every law is a song.
 - (4) When the Bible says that we have a life of liberty, it means that by being controlled by the Spirit, we are free.
 - (a) Discipline does not restrict us; it frees us.
 - (b) We bring that control and discipline into our lives by liberty.
 - (i) It is not by license or legalism, but by liberty.
 - (ii) By the Spirit of God, we will be made free.
- 3) THE STRENGTH TO LIVE THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE (GALATIANS 5:16-18)
- a) We need the strength to live the Spirit-controlled life.
 - b) Galatians 5:16-17
 - i) Strength comes from walking in the Spirit.
 - ii) In this passage, the word “lust” means “has strong desires.”
 - iii) There is a part of our nature called the “flesh” and a part of our nature (of someone who is saved) called the “Spirit.”
 - (1) These two are struggling against each other.
 - (a) The old flesh wants to be in control.
 - (b) The Holy Spirit and the human spirit want to live for God.
 - iv) In ourselves, we do not have what it takes to do the things that we should do.
 - (1) We cannot do it by self-effort.
 - (2) Galatians 5:16
 - (a) He does not say, “Don’t fulfill the lust of the flesh, and then you’ll be walking in the Spirit.”
 - (i) That is backwards, and that is legalism.
 - v) We do not become more like Jesus by doing all of these particular things.
 - vi) Holiness is not the way to Christ.
 - (1) Christ is the way to holiness.
 - (a) Paul does not say that if we do not walk in the flesh, then we will be in the Spirit.
 - (b) He says that if we walk in the Spirit, then we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.
 - c) Where do we get this strength?
 - i) Galatians 5:18
 - (1) “Be led by the Spirit” means “to be willingly led of the Spirit.”
 - (a) There must come a time when we are willingly led of the Holy Spirit.
 - (b) To be led of the Spirit is to walk in the Spirit.
 - (i) This is an act of our will.

- d) The Spirit-controlled life is like walking.
 - i) The commencement of the walk:
 - (1) A journey begins with one step.
 - (a) If we are going to walk, then we have to decide to walk.
 - (2) The commencement of the walk is an act of our will.
 - (a) The Spirit-controlled life is not lived by will power, but we enter it by an act of our will.
 - (3) It is not lived by will power; it is lived by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) But we must choose to be led of the Spirit.
 - (i) Galatians 5:18
 - (ii) No one can choose for us.
 - (4) Ephesians 5:18
 - (a) This is not only for contrast but for comparison, because being filled with the Spirit is a lot like getting drunk with wine.
 - (i) A person must decide to drink.
 - 1. Once he decides to drink, then the liquor takes over.
 - a. He is under the control of the liquor.
 - (ii) By an act of will, we decide that we are going to be led of the Spirit.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit takes over, and we are filled with the Spirit of God.
 - ii) The circumference of the walk:
 - (1) Galatians 5:16
 - (a) This doesn't say, "Walk with the Spirit," or "Walk after the Spirit."
 - (i) It says, "Walk in the Spirit."
 - (2) We are to stay in the Spirit.
 - (a) The Holy Spirit of God is to be the element in which we walk.
 - (b) The Holy Spirit of God is the environment of our lives.
 - (c) The flesh says that outside of the Spirit, there are certain pleasures that we need that will make us happy.
 - (i) A person who has a Spirit-controlled life has come to the settled conclusion that there is nothing worth having outside of Jesus.
 - 1. If we do not come to this conclusion, then we will never live a victorious life.
 - (3) We have to walk in the Spirit.
 - (4) All things need to be in the context of the Holy Spirit of God leading and directing our lives.
 - (5) The Bible says that we are to let the peace of God referee in our hearts.
 - (a) Colossians 3:15
 - (i) In this verse, the word for "rule" is the word from which we get the word "umpire".
 - (b) If we step out of bounds, then the Holy Spirit tells us that we are out of bounds.

- (i) We repent and step back in.
 - 1. That is a Spirit-controlled life.
- iii) The continuance of the walk:
 - (1) Galatians 5:16
 - (a) The Greek verb that says, “Walk in the Spirit,” means “to keep walking.”
 - (2) Walking is a series of steps that begins with a decision but does not end there.
 - (3) The Spirit-controlled life is a crisis where we say, “I will.”
 - (a) But it is a crisis that is followed by a process, a step at a time.
 - (i) We keep on walking.
 - (4) Colossians 2:6 is a major verse to living the Spirit-controlled life.
 - (a) We receive the Lord Jesus by repentance and faith.
 - (i) We are to live the victorious life the same way we got it, by repentance and faith.
 - (5) A walk is one step at a time.
 - (a) It takes two feet to walk.
 - (b) When we walk, we are off-balance and will fall if we do not take another step.
 - (i) We take one step, and then the other step is necessary.
 - (6) The two feet of the Christian faith are repentance and faith.
 - (a) Repentance and faith are not just something that we do in order to be saved.
 - (b) This is the way we live the Spirit-controlled life.
 - (i) Colossians 2:6
 - (7) How do we walk?
 - (a) We put down the foot of repentance, and then we put down the foot of faith.
 - (i) Repentance is God’s way of revealing ourselves to us.
 - (ii) Faith is God’s way of revealing Jesus to us.
 - (iii) Repentance is where we see the bankruptcy of us.
 - (iv) Faith is where we see the glory of Him.
 - (b) When we are saved, we give all we know of us to all we know of Him.
 - (c) As we walk in Him:
 - (i) We learn more about ourselves.
 - 1. We learn more that we need to repent of.
 - (ii) We learn more about Him.
 - 1. We get more to trust.
 - (8) Sometimes a person may think that if they are saved, then they would not have a great conviction of sin.
 - (a) We have a conviction of sin because we are saved and because we are learning more about us and more about the Lord Jesus.
 - (i) It is not a sign that we are not saved.

- (ii) It is simply a sign that we are understanding what it is all about.
- (9) We turn from self, and we turn to Him.
 - (a) We realize that we are not in control.
 - (b) God is in control through the Holy Spirit of God.
 - (c) The flesh has been put out of business, and we are growing in the Lord Jesus.

4) THE SATISFACTION OF THE SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE (GALATIANS 5:22-23)

- a) The devil tries to tell us that we don't want to live this way.
 - i) But this is the only satisfactory life.
 - ii) Paul calls it "fruit."
 - (1) Fruit is luscious, beautiful, fragrant; but most of all, it is satisfying.
- b) Fruit is to be consumed.
 - i) It meets our basic hunger.
 - (1) We have a hunger for the Lord.
 - (a) That hunger will never be satisfied apart from the Lord Jesus.
- c) What a joy it is for a life to be controlled by the Spirit rather than controlled by the flesh.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) The flesh and the Spirit are warring within you, and it is up to you.
 - i) You can live a life of license and see the law as your enemy.
 - ii) You can live a life of legalism and see the law as your master.
 - iii) Or, you can live a life of liberty and see the law as your friend and the Holy Spirit as your strength.
- b) Make the decision to be willingly led by the Spirit.
 - i) Let the Spirit draw the parameters of your life, and find everything in Jesus Christ.
 - ii) Walk one step at a time by repentance and faith through this life.
 - iii) God will give you liberty.
 - (1) Galatians 5:1
 - (2) Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free.
- c) Don't think of discipline as restricting you.
 - i) No one is ever more free than a person who is living the life of control by the Holy Spirit of God.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16