

Galatians Chapter 5 (Part 2)

by Chip Brogden

Walking in the Spirit means graduation from the law and fulfilling the law through love.

Duration: 29:56

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, Chip Brogden continues his study in the book of Galatians. He emphasizes the importance of living under the new covenant and experiencing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. He contrasts this with the Old Testament era, where many people struggled to truly experience love, joy, and peace while trying to live under the Mosaic law. Chip encourages viewers to fully surrender to Jesus and allow Him to have preeminence in their lives, leading to transformation and conformity to His image. The sermon concludes with an invitation to join next week's teaching to wrap up the study in Galatians.

Transcript

Voice and be glad in it. Hello again everyone, this is Chip Brogden welcoming you to another edition of our weekly webcast. We are streaming online at www.watchman.net and we are drawing very close to the end of our study in the book of Galatians.

Last week we left off with Galatians chapter 5 and verse 16 and let's just see how far we get today as the Spirit of the Lord leads us. If you would grab your Bibles, we're going to pick up again in Galatians chapter 5 and while you're turning there let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to bless this time that we have together in the Word. Father God, I thank you again for this time that we have and for your Word.

Holy Spirit, quicken this Word to our heart that it would be encouraging, that it would be strengthening to our inner man. I thank you that the entrance of your Word brings light and as we meditate and study upon your Word, I thank you for light breaking forth in Jesus' name and scattering the darkness, scattering the confusion. I thank you for the freedom that is ours in Christ Jesus and I thank you Lord that as we have digested these truths each week that we are not the same, we are being changed and conformed to the image of Christ just as your Word says and I thank you for that Lord.

I thank you for everyone who is listening and I pray Father that you would help us all to see and to hear and to understand what the Spirit wants to teach us. So thank you Lord for this time we have together and let it be a blessing and encouragement to all who listen. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Praise the Lord. We are in the book of Galatians and for the last several weeks now we've been discussing the issue of the law versus grace. Is a Christian who is saved by Jesus Christ through faith under the law or is he or she under any obligation to the old covenant in so far as the Mosaic law is concerned.

Now this was the issue that faced the Galatians and it was in this context that Paul wrote this epistle to the Galatians and so why don't we begin reading in Galatians chapter 5. We left off last week with verse 16. Let's begin there again and pick up where we left off. Paul says, I say then, walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Walk in the Spirit. Now he has given them a lot of teaching, a lot of correction up to this point and the basic premise behind what Paul is teaching them is this. Christ has saved you.

Christ has redeemed you from the curse of the law. He has redeemed you from trying to please God on the basis of works. He has redeemed you and saved you by grace and now as you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in Him.

Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free. We come to Galatians 5 and we see that Paul is saying that love is what pleases God. Love fulfills the law and if we will love God and if we will love one another we will fulfill the law and we are not going to fulfill the law by trying to obey the rituals or the feasts or the ceremonies.

Paul very abruptly and in a somewhat confrontational manner says if you become circumcised Christ will profit you nothing and so we do a correlation between circumcision and tithing or circumcision and keeping the Sabbath day whether you believe it should be Saturday or Sunday is really not the issue. The issue is are we going to walk in the Spirit? Are we going to walk in love? Or are we going to measure ourselves and judge and measure other people by whether or not they are obeying the outward commandments. So if you are at all confused I strongly urge you and encourage you to go back to the beginning of this series and really listen and see the difference the difference between trying to please God according to the Old Covenant.

You know there is a reason why folks it is called a New Covenant. It is a New Covenant Hebrews says that is established upon better promises and whereas in the Old Testament in the Old Covenant we had types and shadows and figures and parables and representations of Christ in this New Testament in this New Covenant of Grace we don't have to deal with the shadows and with the parables and with the representations and the symbols. We have the reality.

We have the substance. We have the person of Christ right living within us and because of that according to Scripture it is a step backwards to look back to the Old Covenant to try to put ourselves or put other people into bondage beneath the law. Now that is not to say the law is not useful.

It doesn't have any worth. It is certainly valuable as we said before. It is very interesting to go back and study all of that as long as you understand it and you interpret it in the context of Christ.

If you use the Old Covenant and all of those ceremonies and those rituals you can see Christ in that but you certainly don't want to cling to those ceremonies and rituals and commandments when you have the substance right available to you and abiding with you. Circumcision for instance. What does that represent? Well in Romans Paul says that circumcision represents the cutting away of the flesh.

It is a circumcision of the heart Paul says that circumcision represents in the Old Testament. Now we are not going to make a case that says you should or should not be circumcised. Paul says the point is getting the lesson that circumcision is trying to teach us.

What is circumcision trying to teach us? It is trying to teach us of what it means to have the flesh cut away. I will take away your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. Paul says that is circumcision of the heart and that is a lot more important.

So you see the New Covenant is dealing with the inward and not so much concerned with the outward. God's way is to save someone and redeem them and recreate them from the inside. And then what has begun in the spirit will be completed by the spirit and it will eventually work itself out into the conduct of the person, into the behavior of the person.

And that is the conclusion we are coming to as we get down here to Galatians 5. Paul is saying basically walk in the spirit and you will not disobey the law. You will not run afoul of God's commandments or his moral law. You will love one another.

You will love God and in so doing you will fulfill all the law. How do you do it? You walk by the spirit Paul says. He says you began in the spirit.

Now walk in the spirit. I see so many Christians they begin their spiritual life walking in the spirit. That is they trust.

What does it mean to walk in the spirit? Let's go ahead and define it. To walk in the spirit means to walk out of your relationship and your union with Christ. Paul says the secret we have already covered it in Galatians 2.20. He says that it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.

Not I but Christ and that is the secret of the Christian life. As we walk in the spirit Jesus says that the spirit will come and will testify of me. He will reveal things to you.

He will show you things to come and he will lead you into all truth. And we know that Jesus is the truth. So basically to walk in the spirit is to walk according to the heavenly man.

According to the new creation. To walk out of who we are in Christ and to be conscious of the fact that we are abiding in him and he is abiding in us. How does he abide in us? By and through and because of his spirit that has been poured out.

Folks I don't think we really appreciate just how great and how wonderful and how awesome a thing it is that we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. You and I and all of us who belong to Jesus Christ. All who are saved by grace.

Paul says don't you know to the Corinthians. He says don't you know you are the temple of the Holy Spirit and God lives in you. See in the old covenant you are relating to God way up on a mountain.

Separated from everyone. Only Moses could go up. Only Moses could enter into the Holy of Holies.

Only the high priest could enter into the Holy of Holies. And there was a barrier, a separation, a veil literally as well as figuratively. Between the presence of God and God's people.

They didn't enjoy direct access and direct communion and direct fellowship with the living God. Why? Not because God was unwilling folks but because they were unwilling. You'll recall that when God gave them an opportunity to see his glory there on Mount Sinai.

Basically they went to Moses and said Moses you go and you commune with God and you hear from God. And you come back and tell us what God tells you to tell us and we'll obey it. But we can't stand this thunder and this lightning and this fire and smoke and we're frightened and we're afraid.

And it's too much of a commitment to have a relationship with the living God. So Moses was their mediator. Well here in the new covenant you remember that when Jesus was crucified.

And a lot of things, an earthquake happened. But in addition to all of these other signs there was one peculiar sign. And that is that the veil in the temple, that thick curtain that separated the Holy of Holies from the rest of the temple.

It says it was torn in two from top to bottom. Well what does that represent? It means that the presence of God which before had been shut up into that Holy of Holies. That barrier that has separated God from his people had been broken and been torn in two by the cross of Jesus Christ.

And because of his death now not only do we have access to God but God has direct access to us. The most profound, most incredible earth shaking, earth shattering event to happen apart from the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Was some 50 days later when the day of Pentecost had fully come in Acts chapter 2. And it says that the spirit descended upon them and filled them.

That friends was the most significant thing to happen in the history of this world. Apart from the birth and the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ himself. It was Christ coming in spirit to live among us.

And not just to live among us but to live within us. And what a powerful thing that is. And I tell you folks we don't appreciate the significance of that.

We just don't appreciate the significance of the Holy Ghost coming to live on the inside of a person. Yes, coming to live on the inside of you even though you fail, you make mistakes, you sin. Not because you mean to but nevertheless we make mistakes.

We are led astray. We easily backslide and we easily lose our first love. But you know what? God does not withdraw his spirit.

When Jesus comes to live within a person, he comes to live and he makes his residence there. And he abides in that person. And that is the key folks.

The key is not trying to regulate yourself according to some outward standard. And certainly not trying to regulate yourself or measure yourself against some religious standard. Well good Christians do this and good Christians don't do that.

And here's what you're supposed to look like. And here's how you're supposed to behave. How you're supposed to act.

What you're supposed to do and not do. You know what? You've got something that's so much more powerful and so much more life changing than any kind of religious outward manipulation can do for you. It is the spirit of the living God living on the inside of a person.

And that's what sets this new covenant apart and makes it so superior to the old covenant. No one in the old covenant had the spirit of the living God living on the inside of them. Now what you see is that some people who walked with God and pleased God and were used by God.

What does it say? It says that the spirit came upon them. Yeah the spirit would come upon them just as he came upon Samson. Just as he came upon Saul.

These people weren't perfect. But the spirit of God would come upon a person and they would be empowered to do a certain thing. And then that glory would kind of fade away and they would be back to living their normal life.

Do you realize that in this new covenant we're living in, the spirit of God does not come upon you. The spirit of God comes to live within you. Comes to dwell within you.

The spirit of Jesus lives on the inside of you today. And if you are abiding in Christ, then you are in a place of fellowship and communion that no one previous to this new covenant that you and I enjoy. And I would say that you and I even take for granted.

No one in history has ever had that kind of relationship or that kind of an opportunity for a fellowship and a communion with God. God living in us. That's what it means to walk in the spirit.

Now verse 17 of Galatians 5. Now why is it that Christians have such a hard time with sin? Why is it that they have a struggle trying to put away sins of their flesh and take up their cross? Why is it a struggle? Because, and only because, and this will be encouragement to you. It's a struggle because they now have the spirit of God living on the inside of them and no more can they live for themselves. No more can they live for sin without that spirit of Jesus within them causing them discomfort.

And praise the Lord for that. Because if you don't have the spirit of God living on the inside of you, you just wouldn't care. You wouldn't struggle.

You wouldn't sweat. You would sin and say, so what? I don't care. I don't care about God.

I don't care about the Bible. I don't care about anything. I'm just going to live for myself.

And that's the situation you're in before you're born again. Hopefully after you're born again, if you really come to the Lord. If you really invite Jesus Christ to come and to live within.

And if you are really and truly giving your heart to him to be the preeminent one in your life. To have the preeminence and to have the lordship over you. You don't get from step one to step ten and from one level to the next overnight and all in one step.

But it is a beginning. And when he comes to live within, folks, he intends to conform you to his own image. He intends to make you into what you can be, what you could be, and what you should be.

And I guarantee you it's a lot better than the life that you had before you came to him. He is going to begin to teach you by the spirit. And so we have to walk in the spirit in order not to fulfill the lust of the flesh.

So very simply, without the spirit of God on the inside, you would have no conflict at all. But the very fact, this should encourage you again. The very fact that you are struggling with sin.

The very fact that you want to put away sin. The very fact that you become disappointed and frustrated because you keep falling into those same fleshly lusts. You know what? It's proof that Jesus really does live within you.

And he is going to complete the work that he has begun. All you have to do is just hang in there. All you have to do, Paul says, is walk in the spirit and you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh.

I get emails every once in a while and they want to know how can I overcome a particular sin. A particular habit. A particular lust that I can't let go of.

How can I get rid of that? And you know folks, really the answer is you can't eliminate it. You can't get rid of it. The only thing you can really do is get so focused on righteousness.

So focused on things of the spirit. So focused on Jesus Christ that by focusing on the things that are right, all of these other things just kind of get pushed out of the way. Because you can only focus on one thing at a time.

And the more you focus on what you are not supposed to be doing, the more you find yourself doing it. Now doesn't that bear out in your own experience and doesn't that make sense even by what the Bible says? He says, the flesh lusts against the spirit. The spirit lusts against the flesh.

And these are contrary to one another so that you do not do the things that you wish. Verse 18, but if you are led by the spirit, you are not under the law. Hallelujah! See, I am delivered from the curse of the law.

Don't come to me and tell me that I need to eat a certain thing because the Mosaic Law says so and so. And don't tell me that I need to keep the Sabbath day. And don't tell me that I need to be circumcised or I need to do anything in order to be saved, number one, or in order to please God and to really be super spiritual.

I have to understand and apply all of those commandments and laws. In the New Covenant, Scripture says that if we love God and if we love one another, we are fulfilling all of the law. And here is the other thing, if you are led by the spirit, if you are walking in the spirit, Scripture says you are not under the law.

Now, guess what? Guess who has to be under the law? People who are in the flesh. So, if you are under the law, you are in the flesh. Being filled with the spirit, receiving Jesus on the inside, living and walking in communion and fellowship in an abiding relationship with him, that is graduation day.

That is graduation from the law. It's graduation from having to live according to the flesh. Those who try to serve God and please God according to works of the law will always be under a curse, will always be in the flesh.

They will never achieve what they are hoping to achieve because they are going about it in a way that is contrary to the way that God works. The way God is working is he wants us to walk in the spirit and therefore we will go deeper into Christ. He will have more and more of the preeminence, more and more of the lordship over us and he will be changing us from the inside.

That is God's purpose and that is his will. And quite frankly, if you are not relating to God in that way, your life is mostly, I would say, motivated by fear. So many people tell me that they don't know if they should pay tithes to their church or not, but they are afraid, see there is that spirit of fear, they are afraid of what

will happen if they don't tithe.

Or you name whatever the particular commandment or the belief is, it is not motivated so much by loving God because see, if you love God and you love your neighbor, you are fulfilling the law. When you try to strive to please God according to the law, you are mainly, I would say, 95% of it is based on fear. Well, what will happen if I don't? And I get so many emails from people in a quandary and confused because should I do this or should I do that? And they are motivated by fear.

That is their motivation. They are so afraid they are going to step out of God's will by accident. If they accidentally do something they are not supposed to do.

Or if someone comes along and tells them that just like these Jews from Jerusalem came to the churches in Galatia and told them that they were supposed to be circumcised and so they get in fear. Well, maybe we should be circumcised, you know. Folks, it is for liberty that Christ has set us free, so Paul says walk in the spirit and you won't be under the law.

It is just that simple. The law is for people who don't know how to obey God apart from it. We know how to obey God.

If we will follow the spirit and if we will be led by the spirit, we will not be under the law and we will be pleasing to God. Okay? Now the works of the flesh are evident, Paul says, verse 19. Works of the flesh are evident which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness.

Verse 20. Adultery, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies. Verse 21.

Envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like, of which I tell you beforehand just as I also told you in time past that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. So when we tell people about grace and we tell people that they are free in Christ from trying to please God according to the law, it is not a license to sin. It is not giving you permission to go out and do anything your heart desires.

Paul says if you're living according to this standard, and he gives quite a list there, doesn't he? I don't think we need to go through each one and spell it all out. I think you can gather exactly what he's talking about. He's saying if you're living like this, you're not in the spirit, you're living in the flesh.

Okay? So let that be very clear. But, verse 22, but the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

In other words, there is no law in the Old Testament or in the New Testament that you're going to violate if you will walk after the spirit. Do you understand? If you will walk after the spirit, you will obey God, you will please God, and you will not break any commandment in the Old or in the New Testament. Everything is summed up in love.

Now, when I look over this list of what the fruit of the spirit is, of love and joy and peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, do you know what the first observation I have is? I don't see many Christians showing this kind of fruit. And I say that with a chuckle, but it's also with a note of sadness. Why don't you see more Christians showing, and I don't mean showing it in a fake way, but I mean, why don't you really see genuine love in someone who says they're a Christian? Why don't you see genuine joy in more people? Why is it that we don't see so much peace and so much

long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and certainly self-control? Why don't we see more of that in people who say that they're Christians? I'll tell you exactly why.

I will reveal the secret to you. Why is it that people who say they're Christians do not exhibit the fruit of the spirit? Well, because they're not walking after the spirit. But why is it? Because they are into religion, not into a relationship with Jesus.

They may be religious, but religion never produced any of these fruit of the spirit. Religion never produced love. Religion never produced joy.

It never produced peace. Because if it did, the world would be full of people who are exhibiting these character traits. Instead, you have the exact opposite happening and the exact opposite personalities being displayed, all in the name of Jesus.

And so the world looks at that and they say, Wow, if that's what a Christian is, I'm better off just the way I am. Why would I want to join the church or have anything to do with Christians when they are the way they are? I can stay home, and who needs that? So, what does that tell us? It tells us, folks, that we need to learn how to walk in the spirit. And we need to let go of this religious baggage that we've been holding on to for so long.

That's the fruit of the spirit. Love, joy, peace, patience. And so few people exhibit that.

Why? Because so few people really have a relationship with Jesus. What they have is religion. And what does the church teach you? The church pretty much teaches you how to have a relationship with them, not so much how to have a relationship with Christ that is going to be fruitful and produce the kind of fruit that we're talking about here.

But it is the fruit of the spirit. My definition of fruit is, it is the outward manifestation of the inward life. See, when you look at a piece of fruit, there is life in that tree, and the life comes forth in fruit.

And then inside of that fruit, there is the ability to pass that life on. And so that, in a nutshell, is my take on the fruit of the spirit. And it's not something that we grit our teeth and we say, well, I'm going to try to be more loving.

I'm going to try to have joy. Once again, folks, it is not a work that we strive to do. Paul is not saying you need to be more joyful, you need to be more loving, you need to be more peaceful.

You can try until the cows come home, and you're never going to be able to make it happen. Instead, we walk after the spirit, and then this fruit of the spirit just begins to come forth. And what exactly is this fruit? It is simply the life of Jesus, who is already living on the inside of me, coming forth and transforming me from the inside out.

You look in the Old Testament. How many Old Testament people, how many Old Testament Jews, how many Old Testament folks trying to live in obedience to the Mosaic Law, how many of them were really full of love? How many of them really had joy? How many of them really had peace? Well, not that many. Well, you know what? We're under a new covenant.

It's a new day, folks. It is a new covenant, a new testament, a new understanding and a new relationship and opportunity that we have to really know God and really walk with Jesus and see the fruit of the spirit

happening in our life. Well, we're just about out of time.

We are going to finish up on this book of Galatians next week, so I encourage you to join me then, and we will wrap up this teaching. This is Chip Brogdon, streaming on www.watchman.net. Thank you so much for joining us, and we look forward to seeing you next week. God bless you.

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