

Spirit vs. Flesh

by Stephen Kaung

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, essential for a deep understanding of the gospel, and plays a crucial role in convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Duration: 1:13:29

Scripture: Galatians 3:2-3, Galatians 3:5-6, Galatians 3:14, Galatians 3:29, Galatians 5:5, Galatians 5:16-18, Galatians 5:22, Galatians 5:25

Topics: "Flesh"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the conversation between Jesus and His disciples recorded in John chapters 14, 15, and 16. The disciples were feeling lost and sorrowful as they sensed that Jesus was leaving them. Jesus comforted them by giving them a powerful promise. The sermon then delves into the letter to the Galatians, which highlights the essential elements of the gospel: grace, faith, and the Holy Spirit. The speaker emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit in leading believers into truth and reality, and how the Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Transcript

The letter to the Galatians shows us the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That letter deals with the basics of the gospel and in the basics of the gospel of Jesus Christ There are three essential elements. Number one is grace, number two is faith, and number three is the spirit.

And the opposites of grace is law, the opposite of faith is work, and the opposite of the spirit is the flesh. Grace gives us the substance of the gospel, faith substantiates the substance, and the spirit is the supply. Now before we go into this letter to the Galatians, I think we will like to consider together a little bit on the truth of the spirit.

I think there is a lack of understanding among God's people concerning the Holy Spirit. We do not know too much about him. We know of the Father, God the Father, because in this world we have a father image.

So it is relatively easy for us to imagine God the Father. We know somewhat of God the Son, because he came into this world and he lived the life of a man just as we are. So we know the Son somewhat.

But I think with believers we do not know too much about God the Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. Somehow we do not have an image, we do not have a concept. When we mention the Spirit of God it

tends to be a little bit vague, almost nebulous to us.

And this is one of the reasons why our understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and our enjoyment of the gospel and our spiritual life is so weak and feeble. Now for instance with the Galatian believers, at the time they believe in the Lord Jesus, they receive the promise of the Spirit. They have the Holy Spirit, and yet because they do not know him, he is with them, he is in them, and yet they do not know him.

So instead of depending on the Spirit of God to lead them into the reality of Christ, in their pursuit for perfection, they turn away from the Holy Spirit, and they depend upon the works of their flesh. They think that in order to be perfect they have to work out their perfection. They have to apply the energy of their flesh.

There is no other supply, there is no other support. That's the reason why you find they turn away from the Spirit and they go back to their flesh. And the result was they were enticed into another gospel, which is not a gospel at all, because they were led back into bondage, into condemnation.

So dear brothers and sisters, it is very important for us to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, the place of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Now you remember, on the night of his betrayal, our Lord Jesus had a lengthy conversation with his disciples. And this is recorded in John chapter 14, chapter 15 and chapter 16.

The disciples somewhat sensed that the Lord was leaving them. And of course they were at a loss. They had left everything to follow the Lord.

And during those three years and a little over, the Lord was everything to them. They depended upon the Lord. The Lord taught them.

The Lord protected them. The Lord provided for them. The Lord solved their problems.

The Lord was their very life. The Lord was everything to them. They were like little children, just under the wings of our Lord Jesus.

But now they know the Lord was leaving them. And they were very sorrowful. How was the Lord to comfort these people? The Lord could not comfort these people with vain words.

Words can never comfort a real sorrow. In comforting these people, the Lord gave them a tremendous promise. The Lord said, I'm going, yes.

I have to go. It is for your benefit that I go. I go to the Father.

But I will beg the Father and He will send you another comforter. And this another comforter is the spirit of truth. He shall be with you and He shall be in you.

He will never leave you nor forsake you. So here you'll find before the Lord left His disciples, He promised us that He will send another comforter to them. Now the word another here is a different Greek word from the another gospel in the letter to the Galatians.

You know in Greek there are two different words translated in English as another. The another gospel in the letter to the Galatians is heteros, which is another of a different kind. And because it is another of a different kind, it has a bad connotation.

And actually that another gospel is no gospel at all. But the another in John chapter 14, I will send you another comforter that word in Greek is elos. It is another of the same kind.

Another of the same kind. In other words, the Lord said I was your comforter when I was with you. But after I left, there will be another comforter with you.

It is of the same kind. And this another comforter we know is the spirit of truth. When the Lord was with them, He was alongside with them.

But He could not be in them. Sometimes He sent His disciples out and He went somewhere else. They were not together.

And suppose something happened, the disciples had to hurry back to the presence of the Lord and try to find their questions answered. But here the Lord said, I'm going to send you another comforter and He shall be with you and He shall be in you. Because He is the spirit.

The Lord when He was on earth, He had that physical body with Him. And with that physical body He was restricted by time and space. And He couldn't enter into the disciples.

He could be with them but not in them. But thank God after He died and accomplished the work of salvation, after He was resurrected and ascended up to upper high to the Father, He sent us another comforter, the spirit of truth. And because He is the spirit, He can live in us.

And because He is in us, He will never leave us nor forsake us. No matter where you go, He goes with you. You may grieve Him.

You may quench Him. But you cannot drive Him out. You know in Old Testament time, David prayed in Psalm 51, Take not thy spirit from me.

In Old Testament time it was possible. But in the New Testament time, under the new covenant, this is impossible. The Holy Spirit who dwells in the believers will never leave you nor forsake you.

He is always there. Now the word comforter in Greek is parakletos. The word means someone who comes to your side to help.

Unfortunately modern English has changed much, some words have changed much of its meaning. You know when John Wycliffe translated the English Bible in the beginning, in the 14th century, it was he to translate that Greek word parakletos into comforter. But then today with us, comfort, comforter.

Now what does it impress you when you think of comfort and comforter? It almost like someone who comes by your side and pat you by your shoulder as everything will be all right. Don't worry. This almost is the impression of comfort and comforter.

Or whatever you do. It's okay. It doesn't matter.

It's all right. That's comfort. Almost vanity.

But the word comfort or comforter in original Greek and in ancient English has a very different meaning. The word comfort or comforter in the original Greek and also in ancient English has more of the meaning of strength than of consolation, of conflict, more than conflict. How do we know? Suppose in English first.

You know when John Wycliffe, when he translated the New Testament from Greek to English in Philippians chapter 4 verse 13, is the same word comfort. I can do all things through him who comforts me. But the word comfort we know.

It doesn't mean someone who is just there you know patting your shoulder and try to hush you up and say well everything is okay. You know not like that. We know the word comfort there means I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

He gives me the strength. He is the power and he is there to strengthen me that I may do all things to the glory of God. So you know immediately that in ancient English it is more a matter of strength than of consolation.

And if you still are not convinced. All right you try to read the few places where the word comforter occurs in the New Testament. We know that in John chapter 14 to 16 the word comforter is used in four different passages.

And as you read these four different passages you find in John chapter 14 verse 16 and verse 26. John chapter 15 verse 26 and John chapter 16 verse 7. You find in these four places there is not one instance where the comforter is connected with comfort consolation. It always connected with strength.

He is the spirit of truth. He shall lead you into all truth. Now dear brothers and sisters when you come to the matter of truth there is conflict there.

Do not think that you can enter into truth without any conflict. The whole world lies under the wicked one. The whole world is a big lie.

It is very comfortable to live in the lies of the world. But when you want to enter into truth there is tremendous conflict involved. And the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth.

He is here to lead us into truth. That is to say to lead us into reality. How the people in this world live in a dream.

Live in a lie, a falsehood, a pretense, a counterfeit. But when the spirit of God comes he will lead us into reality. And we know reality is Christ.

Tremendous conflict there. And that's the reason why you'll find in chapter 16 it said when the comforter comes he shall demonstrate to the world. He shall convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

That's power. And in chapter in the same gospel you'll find the spirit of God that is the comforter comes. Then he shall bear witness, bear witness of the Lord Jesus.

That's power. So every time that word is mentioned you'll find it carries with the meaning of conflict and strength. Of course comfort and consolation are included.

But that is secondary not the primary meaning of it. Now the same word is translated advocate in 1st John chapter 2 verse 1. We have an advocate with the Father. Even Jesus Christ the righteous.

And the word advocate is the same word translated comforter in John chapter 14 through chapter 16. Same word. We have an advocate with the Father.

He is there as our advocate, as our counselor, as our lawyer, as our guardian. He is there pleading for us with the Father. So here you'll find two advocates.

Our Lord Jesus is today the comforter, our comforter, our advocate, our pilot force with the Father. And the Holy Spirit is today the comforter, the advocate in us. The meaning of an advocate is fourfold.

What is the work of an advocate? What is the work of a comforter, a guardian, a patron, a counselor? Now what is his work? Number one, he represents. He is representing his client. Number two, he pleads the cause of his client.

Number three, he defends the name of his client. Number four, he manages the property possessions of his client. He represents, he pleads the cause, he defends the name, and he manages the property.

Now that's the work of an advocate, of a parakletos. He is there with you, representing, pleading, defending, managing. Whom does the Holy Spirit represent? Who is his client? Whom does the Holy Spirit plead? Whose cause does he plead? Whose name does he defend? Whose property is he managing? We often think of the Holy Spirit as our comforter.

He is here just to comfort us. Oh, just to comfort us. Yes, we have one with the Father.

That is what our Lord Jesus is. The Lord Jesus is our advocate with the Father. He is representing us with the Father.

He is pleading our cause with the Father. He is defending our name as it were, and he is managing our property, our inheritance with the Father. He is there with the Father and said, my blood has redeemed them.

Yes, they have failed, but my blood has cleansed them from all their sins and iniquities. They are my property and their inheritance, I have given them myself as their inheritance, and they should inherit their inheritance. So here you'll find our Lord Jesus is there with the Father, representing us.

But remember, the Holy Spirit is in you, representing. The Holy Spirit in you does not represent you. He represents Christ.

He is pleading the cause of Christ in you. He is defending the name of Christ in you, and he is managing the property of Christ because you are the property of Christ. You know, if the Holy Spirit is your advocate, you find oftentimes he pleads the cause of the opposite party.

Isn't that terrible? Suppose here is in the court, and you engage a lawyer, a defender for you, and when the case is presented in the court, your lawyer stand up, who is supposed to plead your cause, and somehow he speaks for your opposite party. Wouldn't that be a terrible thing to do? And do you experience what the Holy Spirit is doing in you today? The Holy Spirit is not pleading your cause. Suppose you do something wrong, and the Holy Spirit will just plead within you your cause? Not at all.

The cause of Christ. He is representing Christ in you, and he is there pleading the cause of Christ. He is in you, defending the name of Christ.

When we do something which is not becoming, which will reflect on the name of Christ, the Holy Spirit will work within us and start to defend that name. Right? And you are his property. God's possession.

And when you are leaving off, the Holy Spirit will try to get you back. He is managing that property. To see that property is well kept.

Until that day. So dear brothers and sisters, just remember that the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us today, is representing Christ. And he is there to perfect that possession of Christ.

That is his work. I think this should be enough just as an introduction. Now let's go to the letter to the Galatians.

First of all, our assignment. I forgot yesterday, and thank God somebody reminded us, but I surely remember this morning. You have read through, you have looked through the letter to Galatians.

How many times do you find the word Spirit is used? 18 times. How about you? You got 17. Alright, anybody got 16? You got 16.

Anybody got 19? You got 19. Alright, let's find them out. Now I think probably one difficulty is we may be using different versions.

I think that is a definite difficulty. If we really want to count the numbers, we have to go to the Greek original. Therefore, there might be a little difference of opinions, and we have to grant that.

Alright, let's look through these places first. Galatians chapter 3, verse 2. Are ye so senseless having begun in Spirit? Are ye going to be made perfect in flesh? Verse 3, or verse 2 first. We omit the verse 2. This only I wish to learn of you, have you received the Spirit on the principle of works of law, or of the report of faith? Verse 5. He therefore who ministers to you the Spirit, and works miracles among you, is it on the principle works of law, or of the report of faith? What's the next one? 14.

That the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations in Christ Jesus, that ye might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Next one. Verse 6. But because ye are sons, God hath sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying at the Father.

Next. 29. But as then he that was born according to flesh persecuted him that was born according to Spirit, so also it is now.

Next. 5. For we by the Spirit on the principle of faith awaits the hope of righteousness. Next.

16. But I say walk in the Spirit, and ye shall no way fulfill flesh lusts. Next.

17. Christ, for the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these things oppose one to the other, that ye should not do those things which ye desire. Next.

18. But if ye are led by the Spirit. Next.

22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Next. 25. Christ, if we live by the Spirit, let us walk also by the Spirit.

Next. 6.1. Alright. That is probably some people have some difference because it is spiritual.

Well, we can count it in. Brethren, if even a man be taken in some ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, consider thyself lest thou also be tempted. So you can count it once or twice.

You know, if you put the spiritual there, there will be twice. Otherwise, just once. What's next? Yeah.

7. For he that sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh, but he that sows to the Spirit from the Spirit shall reap eternal life. What's next? 18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren.

Amen. Alright. How many altogether? Okay.

It's 18. Hmm? It could be 19. Alright.

Now the word spirit in Greek is pneuma and the transliteration in English will be p-n-e-u-m-a. This word primarily means wind or breath. Then especially the spirit which like the wind is invisible, immaterial, and powerful.

Now of course, in the New Testament you find this word spirit is used in many different ways. You have to read the context to know exactly what it means. But I think in the letter to the Galatians, the word spirit is used in three different ways.

So let's just limit ourselves to the letter to the Galatians. Now one thing you have to remember that in the original manuscript, the script will either all be in capital letters, or the script will all be in small letters. They do not make any distinction between capital letter spirit and small letter spirit.

It is either all capitalized, all the letters are capitalized, or all the letters are small. You know? Therefore, when you come to the word spirit, if you want to know whether it is the spirit of God, divine spirit, or it is the spirit of man, human spirit, it has to depend on the understanding of the context. And it is very difficult.

Why? Because the more you progress spiritually in the Lord, the less you are able to distinguish the Holy Spirit and the human spirit. And that's the reason why you find in the New Testament sometimes it is very difficult to point out specifically whether this is the Holy Spirit or if this means the human spirit. Sometimes don't.

Because the Holy Spirit dwells in our spirit and they grow into one. So it depends on the context, on the understanding of the translators. And sometimes the translator may not understand so fully.

So you cannot just depend on the capital letter and the small letter. You have to learn to know by yourself. But in the letter to the Galatians, which is not dealing with advanced spiritual situations.

It deals with fundamental, elementary, initial spiritual conditions of God's people. Therefore, you find the spirit there is very distinguishable. And I think you must have discovered that.

In the letter to the Galatians, most of the word spirit there refers to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, you find the translators to the capital letter in most of the cases. Now, only maybe in one or two cases there is some question.

It can be both. So first of all, you find the word spirit in the letter to the Galatians refers to the Holy Spirit, mainly refers to the Holy Spirit. And second, sometimes it refers to the human spirit.

And when the human spirit is referred to, you will find in your version it is in small letter. For instance, the last verse. May the grace of Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

And this is referred to the human spirit. And we know our human spirit was dead in sins and transgressions. But it was reborn by the Holy Spirit.

He that is born of the spirit is spirit. And with believers, we have a new spirit within us. And the Holy Spirit dwells in our new spirit.

Now, that is the second use of the word spirit in Galatians. There is a third use. And the third use is in Galatians 6.1. The spirit of meekness.

The spirit of meekness. Now, here a spirit of meekness. A spirit of meekness.

It speaks of a certain state of our spirit. You know, our human spirit, if it is normal, should exhibit a spirit, a spiritual attitude of meekness. When our spirit is abnormal, our spirit can be proud and haughty.

So it speaks of a certain condition of our spirit. You know, our human spirit is an organ. It can take up any color.

If the Holy Spirit rules over our human spirit, then our human spirit will take up the character of the Holy Spirit. Will exhibit a spirit of meekness. The spirit of Christ.

But if our spirit allow our soul life to invade our spirit, our spirit can take up some of the colors of our soul life. We can be proud, we can be haughty, we can be jealous, and so on and so forth. So just remember this.

Our spirit is just an organ. The life of our spirit should be the Holy Spirit. But if we allow the soul life to invade our spirit, our spirit can exhibit some manner which is not becoming.

You remember one day our Lord Jesus passed through the villages of Samaria, and the Samaritans were not receiving Him, because He was going to Jerusalem. They were so deadly against the Jews. If anyone were going through Samaria, going to Jerusalem, they would have nothing to do with Him.

They would not receive the Lord. And you remember the two sons of Zebedee, the two sons of Thunder. Oh they began to thunder.

They came to the Lord and said, Lord do you want us to call upon heaven to cast down fire, to burn these people up, because they do not receive you. And the Lord said, you do not know what manner of spirit you have. The Lord was going to Jerusalem.

The Lord was going to Jerusalem with the spirit of a lamb. He was to offer Himself as a sacrifice. The spirit of meekness, of humility.

And here these two disciples who follow the Lord, they exhibit a spirit of hatred, the spirit of jealousy, the spirit of pride, an opposite spirit. That was self. Their soul life.

So our spirit can be affected either way. Either way. Sometimes we say, if it comes from the spirit it's bound to be all right.

Well it depends on which spirit. If it comes out of the Holy Spirit, yes. But sometimes it can come out from our corrupted spirit.

Corrupted by the evil spirit. So that is something just by the way. But anyway, these are the uses you find in the letter to the Galatians.

Now a little analysis of these verses. Number one, the spirit is promised to us by our Lord Jesus. This is in John chapter 14 through chapter 16.

The Lord promised to give us the Holy Spirit. The spirit of truth. As another comforter to be with us and in us.

And we receive the spirit by the report of faith. We do not know there is the spirit. But after we have heard the report of faith, then we receive the spirit.

You remember an instance in Acts chapter 18. Paul came to Ephesus and he met 12 disciples of John. And he noticed something, something was lacking in their lives.

So he asked them, have you received the spirit? They said we haven't heard that the spirit has come. They haven't heard the report of faith. And here you find Paul was able to tell them of the finished work of Christ.

And it is on the report of faith that they received the spirit. Number two, it is by the Holy Spirit that we are born again. Now sometimes Christians do not know the meaning of regeneration, of being born again.

What is the meaning of new birth? And if you go to John chapter 3 you'll find the Lord said, he that is born of the spirit is spirit. The first spirit is the divine Holy Spirit. And the second spirit is the reborn new spirit, human spirit.

So what is new birth? New birth is a rebirth. It's a new birth. It is not a reformation.

It is not an improvement. It is a born from above. How? By the Holy Spirit.

So in Galatians you find they that are born of the spirit. We are born of the spirit. And the spirit that we are born with is the spirit of the Son of God.

We are born of the spirit. And the spirit of God who begets us is the spirit of God's Son. Now this is very important.

Why? Because he is the spirit of the Son of God. Therefore we cry out, Appa, Father. The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

And we cry out, Appa, Father. We are born into the family of God. We become children of God.

And not only children, but he is the spirit of the Son of God. Therefore through him we receive sonship. Sonship.

Now of course it will be, it will take a long time to explain it. But I just like to mention this. And that is we are born into the family of God by the spirit.

And because the spirit is the spirit of God's Son, therefore through him we receive sonship. Sonship means placing of sons. Not only just children, but the children will grow up to a maturity that can be placed in the position of sons as heirs and co-heirs with the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

And that is what the Holy Spirit is doing. Number three. So the Holy Spirit being the spirit of God's Son, he is working in us towards the hope of righteousness.

He is working in us to complete us. That we may arrive at sonship. You know the Galatians made a tremendous mistake.

They began with the spirit, but they were thinking of completing with the flesh. As if the Holy Spirit just beget them and then left them like what we call the cluster bird, ostrich. We often say the ostrich will lay the egg and then leave the eggs in the sand and the ostrich will go away and leave the eggs there.

No. Now the Holy Spirit is not like that. He does not beget us and leave us behind and we have to see to it.

By the Holy Spirit who works in us towards sonship. He is to complete us. This is why he is in us.

He is the comforter. He is there to reveal Christ to us. He is there to conform us to the image of God's Son.

That we may receive sonship. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Not the work of the flesh.

Number four. Number five. Number four.

Being born of the Spirit we need to live by the Spirit. We must walk by the Spirit. We must be led by the Spirit.

And in doing that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. We will explain that probably later. In other words if we walk by the Spirit you will find that the Holy Spirit will always lead us to the cross.

And because he leads us to the cross therefore we are not able to fulfill the lust of the flesh. The Holy Spirit and the cross are inseparable. It is by the eternal Spirit that our Lord Jesus the Son of God offered himself as a sacrifice.

The Holy Spirit led Christ to the cross. And after Christ died and glorified the Holy Spirit was given. So you find the Holy Spirit always leads us to the cross.

And the cross always gives us the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is working in your life, if you are walking by the Spirit, then how do we know that we live by the Spirit? How do we know that we walk by the Spirit? How do we know the Holy Spirit is leading us? Remember if he is leading us he always leads us to the cross. Always.

And there at the cross the lust of the flesh is not able to be fulfilled. Because it is crucified. Number five.

By walking by the Spirit we are sowing to the Spirit. And what we sow we shall reap. And of course sowing to the Spirit will result in the fruit of the Spirit.

And of course that is a familiar verse in Galatians. The fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy and so on and so forth. Everybody knows about it.

And by being led by the Spirit then in degree we will grow up to be spiritual. Now what is meant by spiritual simply means the degree of the rule of the Spirit over your life. It doesn't mean that you know more doctrines or teachings than anybody else.

It simply means that your life is more under the control of the Holy Spirit. So then you will become spiritual. And as you become spiritual then you will be able to help those who are weak.

The spiritual is not for your own purpose. It is not for your display. See how spiritual I am.

The moment you try to display it you are carnal. You are not spiritual. But spirituality is for the purpose of ministry.

Then you are able to minister to those who are weak. But while you are ministering you minister with a spirit of meekness. Lest you too may fall.

In other words not because you are spiritual you will always be spiritual. You may be spiritual but if Christ should enter into your mind you fall into carnality. There is no guarantee.

There is no guarantee. And finally how our spirit needs to be strengthened always with the grace of our Lord Jesus. The more we are strengthened in our spirit by the Holy Spirit then we will be able to know the breadth and length and width and height and to apprehend with all the things the love of God which is beyond speaking.

And we will be filled with all the fullness of God. You know that Ephesians chapter 3. So these are the things you'll find in the letter to the Galatians concerning the spirit. The spirit as the third element of the gospel.

Without the spirit there can be no gospel. Why? Because the finished work of Christ cannot be communicated to us and become living experience to us if there is not the Holy Spirit. So the Holy Spirit is part of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately today the Holy Spirit is not preached as part of the gospel. And because of that we have to use human persuasion and human methods and try to get people convicted and converted. They are converted to Christianity but they may not be converted to Christ.

Only the Holy Spirit can do that work. How important is the Holy Spirit in the gospel? And he is from the beginning to the end of the gospel. In other words, not only he begins but he perfects.

All along our way he is the one, the sole agent of spiritual things. Now finally we will come to the other word flesh. All right.

How many times is the word flesh used in the letter to the Galatians? 17, 18, 16. How about 19? Nobody. Well, I don't know.

How many say it is 16? Please raise up your hand. Two. How many say it's 17? How many say it's 18? Well I think 18 wins.

Probably there are 18 times. Now the word flesh in the Greek is phos. The transliteration is s-a-r-x.

Now of course the word flesh is used in the Bible in many, many different ways. Now we will not go into all the different ways. Again we will limit ourselves just to the word it is used in the letter to the Galatians.

Now in the letter to the Galatians, the word flesh is used number one as mankind. Paul said I do not consult with blood and flesh. I do not consult with man.

With man, flesh and blood. Number two. It denotes our physical body.

I'm crucified with Christ. No longer live I but Christ who lives in me. I now live in the flesh.

Yes, Paul was crucified with Christ but he still lived in his body. And also he told the Galatians when I first came to you, I witnessed in the body. But you love me so much you didn't mind the weakness of my body and not because my body was weak.

You despise the gospel that I preach. Now of course we are told that because when Paul was traveling in that area, you know, it was an infested with malaria. So probably Paul caught malaria.

And that's the reason, one reason why instead of going west, he just go around in the Galatian cities. So when he was there, actually he had probably that malaria with him. And if you know malaria, I hope you don't.

If you malaria, sometimes you feel so cold, you know, you will shake all over. You can put all or many blankets over you and you are still shaking. And then in the next moment you will be so hot and warm, you know.

And malaria can weaken you so much, you get so weak. And malaria most likely affected Paul's eyes. He couldn't see very well.

And some people say maybe that was his thorn in the flesh, but we don't know for sure. But anyway you'll find flesh in the scripture in Galatians also speak of the physical body, that is the flesh. The flesh, physical body, number three.

But mainly in this letter to the Galatians, flesh speaks of the lower elements in a Christian. The lower element in a Christian. You know in the Bible we find, for instance, I think that's the first use in the Bible.

If I'm not right, just correct me. The first time the word flesh is used in the Bible, I think is in Genesis chapter 6. God said, man have fall, have become flesh, and my spirit will no longer strive with them. Will strive with them no longer.

So flesh in the scripture, well flesh means man, mankind. It means our body, but flesh mainly means soul and body without the spirit. That's the flesh.

The lower part of our human life. So you'll find in the book of Jude we are told, these are they who set themselves apart, natural, not having the spirit. Of course, the people in this world, they do not have the spirit.

They do not have the Holy Spirit. And even their human spirit is dead. They have it, but it's dead.

As if they do not have the spirit. And that's the reason why, you know, in English language, when I was a boy, a missionary stayed in our home from Virginia. And whenever something happened, he would just cry

out, oh my soul and body.

He never mentioned spirit. Oh my soul and body. You know, the world does not know the spirit.

Why the spirit is dead? It's dead. Without the spirit. It is just soul and body.

And that's flesh. That's flesh. But after we are saved, our spirit is renewed.

And the Holy Spirit dwells in our spirit. But if we do not walk by the spirit, our flesh will still try to regain its lost position. We can walk after the flesh, the lower element of a Christian life.

Instead of walking by the higher element within us. We ought to walk by the spirit. That is to say, led by the spirit of God.

Then we reap eternal life. But if we sow to the flesh, the lower parts of our body, of our soul, you know, then we will reap destruction. So we may say that the flesh in a Christian is the uncrucified man.

It is the uncrucified man in a Christian. It is the daily experience of the old man in us. Old man is our possession, position.

But then God is no longer is. But the flesh is our daily, a thing that we can daily experience. Number three, or number two.

That which is born of the spirit is spirit. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Underline the word is.

In other words, our flesh. You can never educate. You can never refine.

You can never improve this flesh and make it spiritual. And that's what many people are doing. But it cannot be.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh. In other words, the flesh will never change. Whether it is before you are saved or after you are saved.

Do nothing that because you are saved, so your flesh becomes holy flesh. No such thing. Your flesh remains as natural as it was before.

It never changes. Number four. The flesh profits nothing.

John chapter 6 verse 63. We have to learn this hard lesson. We have to see that the flesh profits nothing.

Do we believe that? Honestly? Oh, even the great apostle Paul had a hard time to learn that lesson. You remember the whole Romans chapter 7 speaks of the flesh. The good flesh.

Oh, Paul had lots of good flesh in him. Adam is not all bad you know. Adam had many good things in him.

So here you find this man Paul. His good flesh took over his life and said, I'm going to serve God. I'm going to keep the law of God.

I believe I can do it. And I'm going to try it. And here he is trying with all the power of his flesh.

And certainly Paul's flesh is pretty strong. But one day he came to the conclusion. He said, I discover in me that is in my flesh there is no good.

No good. Dear brothers and sisters, this is a very hard lesson to learn. Before we believe in the Lord Jesus, we acknowledge that we cannot be justified by the works of our flesh.

But after we are saved, somehow we think now our flesh has changed. So we can use this flesh to serve God. Formerly we use this flesh to serve sin.

Now we change our master so the same flesh begins to serve God. You try it and you'll find there is no good in our flesh. When you try to serve God with your good flesh, your bad flesh will take over.

The works of the flesh are manifest, are very manifest. But this is a hard lesson to learn. Number five.

Why is it that the flesh loves so much to do something? You know our flesh always is very active. He is an activist, not a pacifist. He is always, he's always desiring to do something.

Why? Because he wants to have something to boast of. So here you'll find with the Galatian believers they begin with a spirit, but they try to perfect with the flesh. What a deception.

Number six. We all have the flesh in us, but thank God we have the Holy Spirit in us. And the spirit strives against the flesh.

And the flesh strives against the spirit that we are not able to fulfill. We are not able to do what we want to do. Now remember this.

In Romans chapter 7 Paul said, I cannot do what I ought to do, and I do what I should not do. But in Galatians it is just the reverse. My flesh wants to fulfill its lust, but the Holy Spirit strives against my flesh and does not allow my flesh to fulfill its lust.

So Romans 7 and Galatians, I think chapter 5 is it? Galatians chapter 5 you find that it speaks of two different levels. In Romans chapter 7 the flesh is in ascendancy. Why? Because that man did not depend on the spirit.

He depend on his own will. So he failed. And he fulfilled the lust of the flesh.

But in Galatians if you discover the spirit, if you discover that the Holy Spirit is within you, and you find you are not able to do what flesh wants to do. Thank God for the victory. Isn't it the experience of us believers? You find a civil war within you.

You find within you the flesh strives against the spirit and the spirit strives against the flesh. And remember there is no need for defeat. Why? If you know the spirit, it is by the spirit that the flesh cannot fulfill its lust.

How? When the flesh begins to come up within you, immediately the Holy Spirit will remind you. The Holy Spirit will remind you saying that well, this is your flesh. And if you cooperate, you don't need to do anything.

But if you cooperate, you say yes, I am crucified with Christ. Two thousand years ago, this flesh is already crucified. Therefore, by the spirit, I deliver the deeds of the body to death.

In other words, just take a stand. Just take a stand with the spirit. And as you take a stand with the spirit, then Galatians 5 says, they who are of Christ have crucified the flesh with its lust and passions.

And this is the way of salvation. Number seven. Finally, the flesh is to be crucified.

The flesh cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Do not think that the flesh, you can carry your flesh or the works of the flesh into God's kingdom. No part.

Now if there is no part, better not do it. Because it will be all in vain. The flesh is to be crucified.

It's not to be glorified. The Galatian believers made a serious mistake. Because the Judaizers, they try to draw out the flesh of the Galatian believers in order to glorify over their flesh.

But Paul say now, I glorify in the cross. The flesh is to be crucified. I bear in my body the marks of our Lord Jesus.

The wounds of our Lord Jesus. So dear brothers and sisters, just remember this. The flesh is to be crucified.

We who walk after the spirit ought to have the marks of the cross in our lives. But turning our flesh crucified, our soul is purified and transformed. And that is what the scripture called the salvation of the soul.

And at the coming of Christ, even this body will be transformed into a spiritual body. That is the full salvation. So dear brothers and sisters, here in the letter to the Galatians we find grace versus law.

Faith versus word. And spirit versus flesh. And if we know more of grace, of faith, and of the spirit, then we will have the truth of the gospel.

Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, how we praise and thank Thee that grace has been given. How we praise and thank Thee that faith is Thy gift to us. As we look to Christ, Thou dost give us faith.

And we praise and thank Thee for the spirit who communicates and leads us into all truth. O Lord, how we praise and thank Thee for the gospel of Jesus Christ. We pray that by Thy grace we may never, never be distracted into another gospel which is not a gospel.

Never mix up law with grace. O deliver us from depending upon the works of the flesh. O Lord, make us understand there is no place for flesh in Thy kingdom.

We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

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