

Theme: The Spirit is at work in believers to enable them to resist the desires of their fallen nature and to be conformed to Christ.

I. Intro – Freedom of the Gospel

- A. Paul has been defending the Gospel
- B. We are saved by grace, faith, Christ ALONE
- C. Our works have no part of justification
- D. Any other ‘gospel’ is anathema – accursed
- E. But what about ethics? Law or Spirit?

II. Free to Serve One Another – Not Self

- A. Called to freedom by the Gospel (v13)
- B. Not freedom to indulge fallen nature (v13)
 - 1. Discuss meaning of σάρξ - fallen nature
 - 2. σάρξ produces biting and devouring (v15)
- C. Freedom to serve others in love (v13-14)
 - 1. Rather serve one another in love (v13b)
 - 2. Sums up whole law – v14 (Lev 19:18)

III. The Power to Change – Spirit or Law?

- A. Power from the Spirit (v16)
 - 1. So I say – this is how change comes (v16)
 - 2. Live by the Spirit – lit. walk by Spirit (v16)
 - 3. Outcome – not gratify fallen desires (v16)

- a. Double negative + subjunctive – absolutely not
 - b. Gratify desires of σάρξ - fallen nature
4. Reason: Spirit and σάρξ in conflict (v17)
- a. Contrary/against; conflict/opposed one another
 - b. So that you do not do what you want (v17b)
 - i. What I want – of flesh – no longer do
 - ii. What I want – of Spirit – but keep sinning
 - iii. No neutral ground – must choose sides

B. Law is no help in this struggle (v18)

- 1. Led by Spirit – not under law (v18)
- 2. Law can not help in this struggle (Rom 8:3-4)
- 3. Power comes from Spirit – now law!

IV. Two Sources, Two Lifestyles, Two Destinies

A. The fallen nature and its works (v19-21)

- 1. Both evil actions and attitudes
- 2. Flesh expressing rebellion to God
- 3. Central group deals with communal schism
- 4. The destiny of this lifestyle is destruction

B. The Spirit and His fruit (vv22-23)

- 1. A description of Christ’s character
- 2. These are the fulfillment of the law

- C. God's provision for our growth in character
 - 1. The fallen nature **has been** crucified (v24)
 - 2. We have been made alive by the Spirit
 - 3. We must now learn to keep in step with Spirit
 - 4. The Spirit empowers us to be like Christ

- D. Communion – drawing strength from the Spirit

The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:13-26

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Communion

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

V. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see communal nature of Christian character?
 - 1. The whole passage focused on community
 - 2. Fallen nature is divisive – Spirit is unity
 - 3. Community means of grace for sanctification
- B. Do we see solution not law – but Gospel & Spirit?
 - 1. Christian character is not produced by law
 - 2. God must change the heart – Gospel
 - 3. As believers fallen nature has been dealt with
 - 4. The secret is walking with Spirit
 - 5. Doesn't mean no plan/rules – power from Spirit
- C. Are we keeping in step with the Spirit?
 - 1. Regular in Word, means of grace?
 - 2. Close relationships in local church?
 - 3. Drawing strength from him daily?

³For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁴in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Romans 8:3-4