



## **The Way - Walking By the Spirit**

### **Key idea:**

The Spirit enables us to walk in the way of righteousness, enabling us to overcome the flesh in a way the law never could, so that we can become more like Christ.

### **Key text:**

Galatians 5:16–26 NIV2011

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. <sup>19</sup> The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup> idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup> and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

### **Key points:**

1. This text describes two different ways of life, and these are the same ones described in Psalm 1 and Psalm 2.
2. The way of the flesh is the way of wickedness and it leads to death. Those whose life is lived by the flesh and who therefore walk the way of wickedness will not inherit the kingdom of God.
3. The way of the Spirit is the way of righteousness and life. Those whose life is lived by the power of the Spirit will not be characterized by a pattern of wickedness but rather growing Christlikeness.
4. The Law (God's Torah) accurately describes the way of righteousness, but it has been short-circuited by our sinful nature and can not empower us to avoid the path of wickedness and walk in the path of righteousness.

5. The Holy Spirit is the One Who empowers us to say no to sin and to walk in obedience to God's Torah, being conformed more and more to the image of Christ.

### **Questions for discussion/application:**

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?
2. How do I know that the word 'flesh' does not refer to my material body? When I look at the sins Paul lists as works of the flesh, which of them are external actions? Which are internal sins of my heart and soul?
3. What is the problem with viewing the 'flesh' in these verses as my body? How would that change my understanding of sin and sanctification?
4. When I consider the list of sins and vices in verses 19-21, which ones do modern culture view as wrong? Which ones does modern culture say are not wrong?
5. When I consider the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22-23, which ones do modern culture view as true virtues? What other virtues would modern culture add to the list as virtues? Do I agree with these additions? Why or why not?
6. Why can't God's Law (Torah) provide the power for my sanctification? Is the Law of any use to me as a Christian? How?
7. Is there any difference between walking by the Spirit, being led by the Spirit, living by the Spirit, and keeping in step with the Spirit? How would I describe each of these?
8. Under the New Covenant, how is my relationship with the Spirit and the Law different than it was for those under the Old Covenant?
9. Who will I call or see to encourage this week?

### **For Further Study:**

[Walking By the Spirit](#) (April 10, 2005)

[The Law and the Spirit in Sanctification](#) (August 7, 2011)

[The Fruit of the Spirit](#) (October 26, 2008)

[Keeping In Step With the Spirit](#) (May 1, 2005)

[Authentic Regeneration and Its Effects](#) (July 5, 2015)

You may also look at Questions 67 and 68 of the [BRCC catechism](#) for further information of the role of the law and the Spirit in our sanctification.

**Preview of next week: The Way: Trusting In God's Sovereignty (Psalm 1 & 2)**