

Walk By the Spirit (sermon)

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[0 : 00] One of the realities of the Christian life is that true Christians sometimes act as unbelievers.

! So, that is a sad and a sober reality.! And it points to another reality.

The reality that those who have been born again by the Spirit of God experience an ongoing conflict between doing what is right and doing what is wrong.

It's what the Bible refers to as the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. And sometimes true Christians yield to the desires of the flesh.

And this could be discouraging. Very discouraging. When as a Christian, we yield to the desires of the flesh.

[1 : 07] But the good news this morning is that God does not leave us on our own and to ourselves in this battle of desires. He tells us in His Word that we can have victory and we can live lives that are marked by evidences that we belong to Christ.

And the way we experience this victory is this. Walk by the Spirit. Walk by the Spirit.

And this morning, we started last week with what I considered New Year's advice for us. This morning, I want to add a second bit of New Year's advice to us. And again, I wish to offer it from God's Word.

And it is walk by the Spirit. Last week, we talked about see godly wisdom from Psalm 127. This morning, the advice from God's Word for us as we embark upon a new year is walk by the Spirit. And the basis of this advice doesn't come from my own head, but it comes from God's Word. And it's in Galatians chapter 5, verses 16 through 26.

[2 : 20] So if you have not yet turned there, please turn there in your Bible. If you need a Bible, there should be one under the chair in front of you somewhere nearby.

Please feel free to use that. I hope to leave some time for questions and answers at the end of the sermon. But please follow along as I read Galatians chapter 5, starting in verse 16.

I'm reading from the English Standard Version. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now, the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

[3 : 48] I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things, there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you this morning for your word. Lord, we thank you that you have, in your word, given us the recipe for victory in the Christian life over the desires of the flesh. And I do pray, Lord, that you would cause us to hear your word this morning. And those of us who have trusted in Christ, that we would heed the call to walk by the Spirit.

[5 : 18] And those who have not yet trusted in Christ, Lord, help them to see that you have called them as well to walk by the Spirit, by putting their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord, we need your help this morning. I pray you'd help me as I preach your word. Help all of us as we hear and as we heed your word. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. What is clear from this passage of Scripture and elsewhere in Scripture is that believers in Christ are called to be led by the Spirit.

Now, some people believe that being led by the Spirit is what you may call super-spirituality, hyper-spirituality. They believe that it is about a feeling of feeling spiritual.

But whether or not we are led by the Spirit is not proven by our feelings. Instead, it is proven by the fruit we bear.

[6 : 22] And so the question is, how can we know if we or someone else is led by the Spirit? How can we know that? Here's how.

Those who are led by the Spirit will manifest the fruit of the Spirit and not the works of the flesh.

That's how we know those who are led by the Spirit.

They will manifest the fruit of the Spirit and not the works of the flesh. And this is the inescapable truth that we find in these verses that we just read.

Those who are led by the Spirit will manifest the fruit of the Spirit. They will not manifest the works of the flesh.

I have two simple points this morning from this passage, and they are, number one, two competing desires. And number two, two contrasting results.

[7 : 25] So first, two competing desires. Now, in order to better appreciate the burden that the Apostle Paul has, the argument that he is seeking to make, we really need to read what he says prior to the verses that we just read.

And they're found in verses 13 through 15. So if you would just follow along as I read. He writes, For you were called to freedom, brothers.

Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

Paul's concern is that believers who have been called to freedom, and notice how he addressed them. He says, brothers. These are people he is identifying as being a part of the family of God, calling them brothers.

[8 : 42] But he is aware that they are able to act and live in a way that's contrary to being a brother, contrary to belonging to Christ. And so he says to them, yes, you're free, but don't use your freedom as an opportunity to gratify or to please your flesh, but you are instead to use your freedom to love and serve one another.

That's the context in which we find these verses this morning, that Paul is raising this very real issue. And see, this is not something we need to be in denial about.

It's not something we need to try to gloss over. We acknowledge it, and I think by acknowledging it, it sobers us to the concern that is present.

And so Paul is giving this warning in verse 15. He says, if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

He's talking to those who are in the assembly of the church. So in verses 16 through 26, what Paul is doing is he is further addressing this concern, and his burden again is that we who belong to Christ would bear the fruit of what it means to belong to Christ.

[10 : 15] And this is done by walking in the Spirit, being led by the Spirit. And so Paul begins by explaining these two competing desires that believers have.

The desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit. Notice again how he says it in verses 16 and 17. But I say, walk by the Spirit, that you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

And one of the first things we should see is Paul is reminding us, in essence, that we have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

That is the only way that we're able to walk by the Spirit. And the point is that conversion, when we come to Christ, when we are saved, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us.

[11 : 21] And the command then is, walk by the Spirit. Walk by the Spirit who is within you. Do not gratify the desires of the flesh. And when Paul talks about flesh, he's not talking about the flesh on our skeleton.

What Paul is talking about is the sinful nature that all people are born with. And again, from the very outset, we see the issue.

The issue is that our sinful nature, when we come to Christ, doesn't die. It doesn't go away. Our sinful nature is very much with us, has to be dealt with, but our sinful nature will be with us until the day we die, or until the day the Lord returns.

Christ coming into our lives helps us to deal with our sinful nature, but does not do away with our sinful nature. And actually, what Paul is addressing here is a unique battle.

It is unique to Christians. It is unique to those who belong to Christ. Those who do not belong to Christ do not experience what the Apostle Paul is addressing in this passage about these two competing desires.

[12 : 45] Only those who have come to Christ have any desire for the things of the Spirit. Any desire to do the things of the Spirit. And that then comes against that born desire that they had, the desire of the flesh, and these two are competing.

So it's a unique battle that those who are born of the Spirit actually experience. Now this is not to say that unbelievers don't sometimes wrestle between what is right and what is wrong.

Yes, sometimes they do. But it is nothing compared to this conflict, this battle, that believers face between these two competing desires.

Listen to how deceased British pastor John Stott put it in his commentary on the book of Galatians. He writes, We do not deny that there is such a thing as a moral conflict in non-Christian people. But we assert that it is fiercer in Christians because they possess two natures, flesh and spirit, in irreconcilable antagonism.

[13 : 56] And that is essentially the reality for everyone who has come to Christ. We have these two natures and they are in irreconcilable antagonism.

But it's not a hopeless situation. It's not a hopeless situation. We're given the promise in verse 16. The promise is, if we walk by the Spirit, we will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

We're not hopeless. Victory is possible. But the opposite is also true. If we don't walk by the Spirit, we will gratify the desires of the flesh. And we, though belonging to Christ, will live as if we don't belong to Him.

And so he says the way that we win in this battle in an ongoing way is we are to walk by the Spirit.

Notice in verse 18 that Paul says, But if you're led by the Spirit, you're not under the law.

What is he saying by that? He's really laying out for us two different ways to live. He's laying out before us to be led by the Spirit or to be under the law.

[15 : 26] And essentially what it means is that if we're led by the Spirit, if we're led by God's Holy Spirit, we don't need to have the law, which the Bible says is like a schoolmaster, to keep us under control and to tell us don't do that and don't do this.

When we're led by the Spirit, the Spirit leads us. And he will lead us into what is right. He will lead us into what is true. He will lead us into all that the law has as a goal.

He will lead us in that way. And Paul is saying when we are led by the Spirit, we're not under the law. We don't need the law in that particular way. But again, the opposite is true.

When we're not being led by the Spirit, we do need the law to say don't do that. And so we have these two ways that are laid before us.

The Spirit becomes the restraint of those who are being led by the Spirit. And those who are not being led by the Spirit, which would certainly include unbelievers, they're the ones who have to be under the law and to be dictated to by the law.

[16 : 47] But being led by the Spirit, again, is only a part of it. We must walk by the Spirit. The Spirit will lead, but he doesn't drag.

He doesn't say you're dragged by the Spirit. The Spirit doesn't drag us into truth and drag us into doing what is right. He leads us. And we must follow where he leads us.

We must follow as he leads us. And this looks different over time. You come to Christ this morning, it's not going to look the same as it will look 10 years from now if you continue to be led by the Spirit, being sensitive to his voice, being obedient to his voice.

It's going to look different. But if we do not, in the moment of coming to Christ, yield to the Spirit and be led by the Spirit and guided by the Spirit, then 10 years from now it won't look any different.

And the way we do that, there are means by which we are led by the Spirit. Through the Word of God, through prayer to God, through godly fellowship that will spur us on to love and to good works,

God has given us means by which we can grow and we can be led by the Holy Spirit.

[18:15] And the interesting thing is, as we are doing that, what we're doing is, we're feeding the desires of the Spirit, and we're starving the desires of the flesh. Because the desires of the Spirit are in opposition to the desires of the flesh.

The desires of the flesh don't want to pray, don't want to read God's Word, don't want to fellowship with godly brothers and sisters. But we're led by the Spirit.

And it's more than just a letter, it's more than just in, I'm not going to murder that person. It's also at the level of, I'm not going to wish them harm.

I wish them no ill, and I will not be sinfully angry with them. That's the leading of the Spirit. The Spirit will lead us not even to go to the edge of murder, but to stay far away from it.

That's the way the Spirit works in our lives. And God doesn't just say to us, go do this. He doesn't say, go and manifest these desires of the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.

[19:29] No, He gives us grace to be able to do it. He enables us to do this. Walking by the Spirit is a grace-enabled walk. It is a walk that is only possible when God intervenes and God helps us to do it.

He doesn't, none of us are walked by the Spirit. We would all walk by the flesh, and we would gratify the desires of the flesh. And so my question to us this morning is, are you aware of the reality of these two competing desires, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the Spirit?

Are you aware of them? Even in the midst of life's severest temptations and severest trials, God's Holy Spirit is there beckoning us and calling us and leading us to walk in a path, a path that gives us victory over sin, and a path that will bring glory to God.

The faithfulness of God demands that He will do that, and He does that. He does that for us. In our fiercest temptations, in our fiercest difficulties, the Spirit is there helping us, calling us, leading us to say, this is the way.

Walk in it. And God gives us grace to be able to follow. Now, as we consider this, I'm sure that the natural question that comes up is, how can I know that I am being led by the Spirit?

[21:11] In other words, how can I know that I belong to Christ? Because again, those who are led by the Spirit belong to Christ. Or how can I know whether I'm under the law or I don't belong to Christ and I need the law to control me and to govern my conduct?

Well, the way that we know is that each of these options produces a particular result. Being under the law and gratifying the desires of the flesh will produce the works of the flesh.

and being led by the Spirit and yielding to the desires of the Spirit will yield the fruit of the Spirit. And so in verses 19 through 23, the Apostle Paul provides us with two contrasting sets of results so that we can evaluate whether we are walking by the Spirit or we are gratifying the desires of the flesh.

So that brings me to my second and final point that's considered the two contrasting results. The first out of results we find in verses 19 through 21.

Paul refers to them as the works of the flesh. And they're the results that happen when we yield to the desires of the flesh. Again, let's look at what he says.

[22:39] Starting in verse 19. Now the works of the flesh are evident, sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

Those are the works of the flesh that the Apostle Paul lays out for us. Now, it's very clear that he's not giving us a total list, an exhaustive list. There are more works of the flesh than what Paul has given here.

And he helps us to see that when he says, at the end of verse 21, he says, and things like these. And things like these. So there are other things that fit into the same category of this long list of works of the flesh.

and I'm not going to single them out except to just comment on them in terms of groups of sins that we actually see that Paul, no doubt, has particular groups of sins in view.

And the first, the first three of them, sexual morality, impurity, sensuality, these are all sexual sins. And what they have in common is they violate God's revealed will in Scripture about human sexuality.

[24:10] God's revealed will in Scripture is the only legitimate context that marriage is, sorry, marriage is the only legitimate context for sexual relations.

That's God's revealed will in Scripture. That the only legitimate context for sexual relations is within the boundaries of marriage between a biological man and a biological woman.

And the goal is to seek to bring glory to God and seek to bring mutual good to one another.

The next two sins he lists are the sins of idolatry and sorcery and these are sins that violate God's command to worship against worshiping any other gods except Him.

We are called to worship God and worship God alone. Idolatry, worshiping false gods and sorcery is dabbling in darkness, engaging in any kind of act to try to manipulate situations and outcomes to be what we want them to be instead of trusting God with them and leaving them to God and His sovereign purposes.

[25 : 33] And then the next group we have enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, and envy. These are all relational sins. These are all sins that happen in our dealings with one another.

Dealings between husbands and wives and brothers and sisters. and co-workers and neighbors.

These are relational sins that bring disruption and disharmony between individuals.

And what we see in such conduct are the works of the flesh and the evidence that we're yielding to the desires of the flesh.

and then the last two, drunkenness and orgies, that last one, the orgy that can be better defined as drunken parties.

These are works of the flesh that are marked by the absence of moral norms and restraints. Giving ourselves to drunkenness and giving ourselves over to unbridled desires and an absolute lack of accountability and control.

[26 : 43] Just feeding whatever our desires would want. Paul says, these kinds of things are works of the flesh.

And verse 21, he gives a most sober warning. And the reason the warning is sober is because it is spoken to the assembled church.

It's spoken to people who he would identify as brothers as we saw earlier in verse 13. And here's what he says. He says, I warn you as I warned you before that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

It's a sober warning, brothers and sisters. You know, sometimes there are things in Scripture where you can say, well, that's not addressed to me.

This is not one of those times. It's addressed to all of us. He warns us. And in the case of the Galatians, Paul is saying, I warned you before, I'm warning you again.

[28 : 06] Because it's a serious matter. Things that are not so serious, we kind of warn and we move on. But he warns. And the reason he warns is because he recognizes that there are people who will fall prey to the very warning that he is trying to avoid, help them to avoid.

And so he repeats himself. I told you before, I'm going to tell you again, those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul warned, and he warns because of deception.

because you and I can be deceived. Believe it, but we're different. Where we can hold on more strongly to some words we have uttered and ignore the reality of our lives if we are manifesting the works of the flesh.

Paul says you won't inherit the kingdom of God if you are living that way. And another, the word for kingdom of God is simply inheriting the king of God.

That's another way to talk about eternal life. You won't inherit it if you live that way. We will not if we live this way. Brothers and sisters, it matters not how we profess to know Christ if our lives are marked by such conduct.

[29 : 31] We will not inherit the kingdom of God. Now let's be clear of what Paul is not saying.

We know what he is saying. He's saying if you live like this, you're not going to inherit the kingdom of God. Let's be clear of what he's not saying. You can look at verses 19 through 21 and pick whatever sin you want to choose or you can choose some other sin that's not in this list.

And the question is, is Paul saying that if a person professes to know Christ and commits an act, one of these acts or one that you have chosen, whatever work of the flesh, he or she will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Is that what he is saying? He's saying that you do this, you're doomed. You commit one of these, you're done. That's not what he's saying. He's not saying that at all.

What he is saying is that if you profess Christ and your life is marked, that the predominant feature in your life would be these sins and not all of them can be one, it can be a pattern of sin, it can be a particular sin that is a pattern in your life, it's a work of the flesh.

[31 : 01] Paul is saying, you're not going to inherit the kingdom of God if you're living that way because it gives evidence to another reality and that is that you don't belong to God. And yes, we believe that those who truly put their trust in Jesus Christ for salvation cannot and therefore will not lose their salvation.

Scripture teaches it. God holds on to those who are his own to the very end. We finish the race not because we're holy, not because we're good, we finish the race because the one who started it promises he's going to complete it.

That's why we finish. That's the only reason we finish. But what Scripture also says is that when Christ comes into our lives, he brings about a real transformation, we are new creatures, we turn from death to life, from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness.

Not perfectly, but sufficiently. Not perfectly, but our lives are marked in a particular way as to where we stand, whether in our old life or in a new life that only Christ can bring.

And I'm aware that a sermon like this can raise concerns. It could bring doubts in the hearts of some people who are genuinely saved. If you find that, if you find yourself in that category this morning, I want to encourage you to read the letter of 1 John.

[32 : 51] The letter of 1 John, especially the first three chapters, this letter is really designed to give believers assurance and to remove false assurance from unbelievers.

Here's something that 1 John chapter 3 verse 6 says. It tells us that no one who abides in Christ keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen Christ or known Christ.

Again, very similar thing to what Paul is saying. He is not saying no one who is in Christ sins. We all do. But the point is no one who is in Christ will keep on sinning in a pattern of sin that gives evidence that they don't belong to Christ.

That is the distinction that he seeks to make. That's the distinction. And this is why Paul addresses this issue about, yes, you're free.

Yes, in Christ he will hold on to you to the end. Yes, in Christ you are eternally secure. But because of that, we don't go out and say, well, man, hey, I'm going to just do whatever I want to do.

[34 : 14] I'll live however I want to live. because if that's your response, you have to question are you really transformed? Has your life really changed?

So Paul is addressing those who profess to know Christ but their lives are marked in an undeniable way that they're living contrary to that confession.

and if that's you this morning, I encourage you, hear the word of the Lord this morning. Turn from sin, turn to Christ and let your life be marked by the desires of the Spirit and being led by the Spirit.

But that's the first result, the works of the flesh. The second result we find in verses 22 through 23, Paul refers to them as the fruit of the Spirit. Paul says, in essence, here's the fruit of the Spirit that will be seen in the life of all those who are led by the Spirit, those who are walking by the Spirit.

And they are in no particular order. starting in verse 23, he says, sorry, starting in verse 22, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, against such things.

[35 : 51] Again, he's also helping us to see it's not an exhaustive list, but these kinds of things, against such things, there is no law. There's a law against all the things we shouldn't do.

There's no law that is related to these particular things. These come from the Holy Spirit. These are the fruit of the Spirit. And notice, it's not even the fruit of walking in the Spirit.

It is the fruit that the Holy Spirit who dwells within us produces in those who belong to him. this is fruit that comes from God and will be evident in the lives of those who belong to him.

I think it should be obvious to us that this is not a neat thing of well, I'm a Christian so I only manifest the fruit of the Spirit.

No. Sometimes as Christians, we also manifest the fruit of the flesh or the works of the flesh but not in a defining way, not in a way that marks us, not in a way that if somebody looks at your life they will say, yeah, they are marked by the works of the flesh.

[37 : 15] We are to be those who are marked by the fruit of the Spirit who in our fallenness and our weakness at times manifest the work of the flesh. And if our hearts belong to the Lord, that should bring us grief, that should bring us godly sorrow, we should repent, and we should turn away, and

we should seek to learn and grow, but not to continue in that pattern of sin.

so it's the Spirit's fruit. It is not our fruit.

Those of us who profess Christ, those of us who would say that we are led by the Holy Spirit, we need to consider this morning how evident is the fruit of the Spirit in my life.

How evident is the evidence that I belong to Jesus in my life. Those I live with, those I work with, those I interact with.

are the journey. It's an absolute journey, and we need to be reminded of it in so many ways. This week, as I am preparing this sermon, I arrive at church one morning, and there's this bus parked, full of, across the parking lot.

[39 : 04] Early, I guess he figured nobody was going to be here that early, so he just took up the whole parking lot. And I'm driving, I'm not like, who in the world is, and I was not a good Christian in that moment, in the car, all by myself.

I just had a bad attitude about the whole thing. And it wasn't manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. I was meditating on this text, but it wasn't manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. it. And sure enough, there's somebody who went across the street, and he came out after I was there, just maybe about 30 seconds.

And funny thing is, I recognized him, and so I just smiled, because I recognized who he was.

Someone who went to a church I grew up in many, many years ago.

But I was just reminded as I pulled into the parking lot, how easy it is to manifest the work, of the flesh, and not manifest the fruit of the Spirit.

I wish I could have said to you that I was just patient, and I was thinking the best, that maybe the person cut off, and they just left the vehicle there.

[40 : 15] I wasn't thinking any of that. But I was reminded of how much we need the Lord. We need the Lord to help us to walk by the Spirit. Let's consider this this morning.

How much is my life, your life, marked by the fruit of the Spirit? My prayer is that we would all grow in manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, because when we grow in manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, what happens is our assurance grows that we belong to Christ.

Our assurance grows, and to the extent that how we live can be seen by others, the assurance of others also would grow that we belong to Christ.

In verse 24, Paul says, at the same time, he gives us further evidence of what it is to belong to Christ.

He says this, and those who belong to Christ, Jesus, have crucified the flesh with his passions and desires.

[41 : 30] Here, Paul is telling us that those of us who belong to Christ are to seek to modify or to put to death the passions and desires of the flesh.

And when Paul is talking about this putting to death, crucifying the flesh and its passions, he's not talking about the same thing that he refers to in Galatians 2.20 when he says, I'm crucified with Christ.

In Galatians 2.20, when Paul is saying that, he's referring to something that's happening to us.

When we come to Christ, there's a work that is done that's separate and apart from ourselves where we're crucified with Christ.

We're passive in that. But here in Galatians 5.24, Paul is talking about what we are to do to our flesh, what we are to be actively doing to our flesh, and he says we are to crucify it.

We are to be actively crucifying our flesh. John Owen says, this Puritan pastor says, he says, be fighting sin, be killing sin, or sin will be killing you.

[42 : 56] Now, remember that crucifixion is not death. Crucifixion leads to death. It's a slow death, a sure death, eventually, but it is not death in and of itself.

The person who's being crucified on the cross, if you take them down, the person may live. But if you leave them on the cross long enough, the person will die. I find John Stott, again, very insightful on this particular verse in his commentary.

Here's what he writes. When we come to Christ, when we came to Christ, we repented. We crucified everything we knew to be wrong.

We took our old self-centered nature with all its sinful passions and desires, and nailed it to the cross. And this repentance of ours was decisive, as decisive as a crucifixion.

So Paul says, if we crucify the flesh, we must leave it there to die. We must renew every day this attitude towards sin of ruthlessness and uncompromising rejection.

[44 : 09] And then he goes on, he says, so widely is this biblical teaching neglected that it needs to be further enforced. The first great secret of holiness lies in the degree and the decisiveness of our repentance.

If besetting sins persistently plague us, it is either because we have never truly repented or because having repented, we have not maintained our repentance.

It is as if, having nailed our old nature to the cross, we keep wistfully returning to the scene of his execution. We begin to fondle it, to caress it, to long for its release, even try to take it down from the cross.

We need to learn to leave it there. Wise words from an experience in a godly man. brothers and sisters, we need to learn to leave our crucified flesh with all of his passions and all of his desires on the cross.

Paul concludes in verses 25 and 26, and he says, if we live by the spirit, let us also walk by the spirit, let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

[45 : 35] that's what we are called to, brothers and sisters. We are called to live by the spirit. And here Paul is summarizing what he has said to us in verses 16 through 24.

If we live by the spirit, for those of us who belong to Christ, yes, we do. Let us also walk by the spirit. Let us not become conceited because we can.

provoking one another because we can, envying one another because we can, but we will not if we walk by the spirit.

We will not if we live by the spirit. And to live by the spirit is to be humble, it is to walk by the flesh that we become conceited.

And so may the Lord help us in this new year to manifest the fruit of the spirit, giving evidence to the fact that we are walking by the spirit, that we are being led by the spirit.

[46 : 47] And as we do, we will give evidence that we belong to Christ and our assurance of our salvation will grow. Christ died not just so we can live more lives.

He died so that we may live our lives for the glory of God and having true and real victory over sin. May God help us to live that out.

Let's pray. Lord, thank you for your word this morning. Thank you that you know where each one of us is and I pray you would cause us to hear your word and respond to it.

Lord, we want to be people who are marked by the fruit of the spirit and not by the works of the flesh. We want to be those who walk by the spirit.

Would you help us? We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.