

Walk By The Spirit

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[0 : 00] To be continued...

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All right, faith family, if you've got a Bible, go to Galatians, the book of Galatians, Galatians chapter 5.

We are continuing in our series that we've been in this month on the Holy Spirit. Kind of the big idea of this series we've looked at in the last few weeks is how the Holy Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus that is both with us and in us.

The Holy Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus that is with us and in us. Now, yeah, the Holy Spirit is distinct from Jesus, and yet they are the same. And we've looked at that.

[1 : 40] That's the core doctrine of the Trinity. And we've pointed that out the last few weeks. But really seeing how Jesus, beginning in John 14, talks about how He's going to create a different dwelling place.

That in my Father's house, that is temple language, there were many types of dwelling places. But I'm going to leave. But in my leaving, I'm going to return.

And what He means by that is the sending of His very personal presence to be with us and in us in the Holy Spirit. And this is what Jesus means to Nicodemus when He talks about you have to be born again, or you have to be born from above.

That is this new life that is given by the very Spirit, the very Holy Spirit. So, Paul understands this. Now, last week, we began to look at how that concept the Apostle Paul understands, and he begins to apply that in specific ways.

For example, he writes to the church in Corinth that is dividing and fighting and splitting over jealousy and strife with one another. And his whole argument for getting along and being united is this.

[2 : 56] Do you not know that you are God's temple that, say it, God's Spirit dwells? dwells in you. Like, don't you realize you're destroying the temple when you destroy one another?

Because just as the body of Jesus was the temple, John 2, well, now His body is you. It's the body of Christ. You're the temple. Why?

Because His Spirit is in you. And so, why would you tear one another apart when you are the very temple of God? The Holy Spirit dwells with you.

And now, what I want to show you this evening is how Paul applies this in a different way. Not just temple language, but a different language that you are all familiar with.

In fact, you probably remember the little children's song that went along with this. Galatians chapter 5, and we're going to begin reading at verse 22.

[3 : 52] And I'll invite you, if you're able to do so, to please stand. As we look at Galatians 5, 22. You know this. Sing along if you want to, right?

And 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 walk by the Spirit.

Let's pray together. Father, thank you for this opportunity tonight to study your Word. Help us deepen our understanding of what it means to have the very Holy Spirit with us and in us.

The very personal presence of Jesus every day. Who is with us no matter where we go, no matter where we are. You are with us. And help us understand what that means and what that looks like as we live by faith.

[5 : 06] And we pray this in Jesus' name and God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. At one point in his career, Michael Vick was one of the most electrifying athletes in all of America.

He was kind of the face of the Atlanta Falcons and the star quarterback. He had endorsement deals and fame and all kinds of wealth, lots of influence.

Kids would wear his jersey. Sports commentators on TV wouldn't stop talking about him. I mean, I'm hardly old enough to remember it.

But, I mean, he was one of the most electrifying athletes. One of the greatest, like, mobile running quarterbacks there ever was, certainly up until that time.

I mean, he had it all until it all collapsed. Many of you will remember this. It was in 2007 that news broke that Michael Vick had been involved in an illegal dogfighting operation.

[6 : 11] Sponsors dropped him overnight. The public opinion of him turned in an instant. He lost his career, his reputation, and eventually his freedom, as Michael Vick would be sentenced to 21 months in federal prison.

Now, as people thought about Michael Vick when this happened, they thought it was wasted potential. A man whose life had become shaped by all the wrong influences.

That he had been influenced by the wrong environments, running with the wrong crowd. In fact, years later, Michael Vick actually admitted to that. He said that the people around him helped normalize his behavior.

Now, he still is the one that made the decisions, but he recognized that the influence, the presence that he kept, influenced the very behavior he engaged in.

But now listen, what was true that got him into prison was also true that got him out of prison. You see, while Michael Vick was in prison, there was a different presence that entered into his life.

[7 : 31] His name, bet you've heard of it, is Tony Dungy. Tony Dungy, a Super Bowl winning coach. Now he's like a TV commentator on NBC.

And most of you will know him as an outspoken Christian, an enormous leader in the Christian community. When Michael Vick was in prison, Tony Dungy reached out to Michael.

He began to visit him in prison, talk with him, counsel him. In fact, when Michael Vick got out of prison, Tony Dungy started mentoring him.

And Michael Vick said that Tony Dungy became one of the strongest influences in rebuilding his life and getting his life back on the right path.

Literally, this is a quote, Michael Vick said, Tony Dungy saved my life. Listen, what saved Michael Vick wasn't punishment.

[8 : 35] What saved Michael Vick was having the right presence. Think about that. It wasn't punishment. It was having the right presence.

Having someone in his life of great character and conviction changed Michael Vick's entire life direction.

Now, that story illustrates something I know every single one of you here tonight knows is true. You know this. This is our big idea. Our behavior is influenced by the presence we keep.

Amen? Now, we still make the decision, but our behavior is influenced by the presence that we keep. Proverbs actually says this.

This is why we know this is a biblical idea. Proverbs says, whoever walks with the wise will be what? Wise. But the companion to fools will suffer harm.

[9 : 38] We are influenced by the presence that we keep. And you know this is true in your life. How many of you, and please don't point. All right? How many of you have ever been around a negative person?

Do you know a negative person? It's just like everything is Eeyore, right? And if you've noticed, like after being around them for very long, it starts to impact your mood.

Does it not? Yeah, because their influence impacts your behavior. Some of you might say this about your spouse. You make me want to be a better man.

Isn't that so sweet, right? I mean, is there anyone more romantic than Jack Nicholson? I mean, come on, right? Come on. But you might actually say that about your spouse.

Like, you know, just being around them makes me a better person. You might say the opposite about your spouse. I don't know. But sometimes, like, maybe they leave town, and you, like, resort back to the college student eating ramen, you know?

[10:45] Like, they influence you. They make you better. How many of you have that boss? And when they walk into the room, like, they just have this presence that inspires you, right?

Are you inspired to go out and sell and be an expert in business? Anyways, how many of you have that friend? And, like, every time you're around them, like, you just feel so lighthearted.

You laugh. You just enjoy being with them. Is anybody with me, right? Like, you know this. You have other examples in your life, and this is what we all know is true, that our behavior is influenced by the presence that we keep.

Listen, that's the idea that the Apostle Paul has here for us in Galatians chapter 5. And the way he starts this, now, granted, this is well into the letter.

You can read the book of Galatians in about 20 minutes or so. I highly recommend that you do that. But in this particular section, Paul is addressing a battle, a conflict, a fight, that every single one of us, if we're a follower of Jesus, experiences, likely on a daily basis.

[11:58] Look at verse 16. 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 what, faith family? They're opposed to one another. They're opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Now, all of us, if we are followers of Jesus, are in a fight. Amen. Amen. And we've talked about it before. It's not just like we're in a fight, a spiritual war with outside things.

We did a whole series on the armor of God and spiritual warfare. We fight against powers and principalities. But we also have a spiritual war on the inside.

I would say it this way. We may not ultimately wrestle with flesh and blood, but we do wrestle with flesh and blood. Amen. There is this internal fight.

[13:04] And what is this fight? Well, here it is. Notice it on the screen. It's the spiritual fight to do what's right. Do you know this struggle?

Do you know this battle? Do you know this fight to do what's right? Do you, as Paul says, ever find yourself doing the thing you shouldn't do or not doing the thing you know you should do?

Anybody? Okay. Now we're going to have confession. You first. All right. So, we know this. We know this. Come on. Have you ever been in that situation? I don't know.

Maybe it's a friend, a family member. It could be a co-worker. It might even be a stranger. And you're in a conflict. You're in a disagreement. And there's that thing that you really want to say. You know what it is, sinner. Right? Like, there's that thing that you just, you want to say it so bad. And you know that if you say it, you will feel good.

[14:06] You will feel so good. But what you also know is you're totally going to make it worse. And so, but then there's that other thing that, okay, that's what I want to say.

But really what I know I should say is nothing. Or something else that might help the situation more. And what happens sometimes, not all the time, but sometimes you say the thing you shouldn't say. And then five, some of you are looking at me like, did he tell you? Right? Like five seconds later, five minutes later, five days later, you say what?

I can't believe I said that. Why did I say that? Like, like I know better. Like that's, I wish in that moment I would have said something different.

Anybody testify? Can I get a witness right? Here's how Paul describes his struggle with this. This is Romans 7 verse 15. For I do not understand my own actions.

[15:10] For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. How many of you have ever made a decision and after that you felt like this?

Idiot! God! So stupid! So stupid! Anybody? Can I get an amen? Right? Like, what is wrong with me? Like, why do I keep, why do I keep saying that?

Here's what you're experiencing. It's the spiritual fight to do what's right. The spiritual fight to do what's right. And as a follower of Jesus, we want to do the right thing.

And Paul wants to make sure that we have the right motivation for wanting to do the right thing.

Look at verse 18. He says, but if you're led by the Spirit, guess what?

You're not under what? The law. In other words, notice this here. We want to do what's right, not out of obligation to God, but out of affection for God.

[16:13] That was a good place for an amen. Thank you. I heard it over there. Right? It's not law-based. It's not obligation. It's affection. It's not compulsion.

It's wanting to honor Christ. Notice this as well. Obedience, not for the sake of the law, but obedience for worship to our Lord.

And can we all agree tonight that this is not easy? Thank you so much. Right? Don't leave me alone up here. Right? This is not easy.

It's why it's a fight. It's why it's a struggle. It is a battle. The Spirit is often willing, but the flesh is really weak. Now, let me give you a word of encouragement.

And some of you might be like, Pastor, like, I don't feel encouraged in this area at all. But here's the encouragement to you is this.

[17:08] Notice it on the screen. The reason why you struggle is because you have the Spirit. Stop and think about that.

If you, like, the reason why you feel conviction is because the Spirit's convicting. There's encouragement in that. What would be far worse would be no struggle at all.

No fight at all. No awareness at all. And so just the fact that you have this struggle points you to the fact that there's, you have the Spirit with you that's bringing these things to your attention.

The good news of the gospel is not that there is no longer a struggle. The good news of the gospel is that because of the Holy Spirit, we can have victory.

So the sign of struggle is not a sign that you don't have the Spirit. Are you with me? Now, what's the source of this battle? So that's the battle.

[18:08] It's the fight to do what's right. What's the source of it? Look at verse 16 again. I say to you, 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. They're opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things that you want to do.

Now, what is this flesh, right? It's more than just skin. Paul has a different idea than just skin.

There is a, I'm going to take just a moment to do this because I think it's important. There's been a popular teaching in a lot of churches for quite some time that what this battle is against, what the source of this struggle is, is the new nature that we have in Jesus, right?

We become new creations, fighting against the old nature that we inherited from Adam because in Adam all have sinned.

[19:15] Is everybody with me so far? So it's the new man versus the old man. There's this old nature from Adam and this new nature from Jesus and they're fighting it out.

And the analogy that I was always given growing up in church was like you have this good dog in you and he's fighting against a bad dog in you. Maybe I shouldn't use that reference when I, Michael Vick, whatever.

So anyways, right? There's dog fighting going on in you, right? So good dog, bad dog. And I just, like, I don't, I don't think that's what Paul's talking about at all.

And again, that's what I was taught. And as I've studied the scripture, I do not believe this is the case. But there's a few reasons why we've been taught it, that we have a sinful nature and that we're fighting the sinful nature.

The first reason why some Christians use that language or talk this way, and I'm going to make the case for why it's important not to, first is bad translations. I'm sorry, those of you that like the NIV.

[20:17] In this particular case, the NIV does something I cannot make any sense out of, and they're one of the only Bible translations that do it. And they take this Greek word, sarks, which always means flesh, and they translate it in English to sinful nature.

And so people will read that and they'll just say, oh, I guess I must have a sinful nature. Secondly, is bad teaching. Bad teaching. What I mean by that is oftentimes we've been taught that salvation is addition rather than transformation.

Are you with me? Like I'm just adding something to my life when I believe in Jesus, rather receiving a new life in Jesus. Salvation is not addition.

Salvation is transformation. Nicodemus, you must be born again. You must be born from above. You must have new life, not add something to your life.

Are you with me? Thirdly, oh, by the way, C.S. Lewis, I think, addresses this in a good way. This is in mere Christianity. God became a man to turn creatures into sons, not simply produce better men of the old kind, but to produce a new kind of man.

[21:34] It is not like teaching a horse to jump better and better, but like turning a horse into a winged creature. Do you see that?

It's becoming a new thing. Thirdly, is just our Christian experience. Like it feels like I'm fighting against me. So when I read bad translations and I get bad teachings and I'm trying to make sense out of what's going on in me in this struggle, I just assume it's the old me fighting against the new me.

What does the Bible actually teach? Here's what the Bible teaches. I think this verse particular is, and I don't have the, I'm not camping out on this all night. But Paul says in Romans 6, 6, we know that what?

Our old self was, now the last time I checked, crucifixion means death, not wounded. Your old man died.

That old self died with Jesus in order that the body, flesh, the body of sin might be brought to nothing.

[22 : 45] So something's going to be brought to nothing, but something else is dead. What's dead? The old you. What's to be brought to nothing? Whatever this body of sin is, which we'll talk about, that we'll no longer be enslaved to sin.

Other verses like Romans 8, 1, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. That is, what condemned you before God is gone.

Praise the Lord. Thirdly, this is Romans 8, 23, not only creation, but we ourselves, we have the first fruits of the Spirit. We groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons.

The redemption, so what's being redeemed? The redemption of our bodies. And lastly, 2 Corinthians 5, 17, if anyone is in Christ, they're a new creation.

The old has passed away, behold, the new has come. And Paul even talks about this in Romans chapter 7. I do the very thing I don't want to do. My delight, he says, is in God.

[23 : 51] Yet, and he talks about this presence, this entity, if you will, that's in his body, in his members. He calls it the presence of sin.

And so this is what I actually think is going on here. And if this isn't clear enough, come talk to me afterwards and I'll explain it more. So here we go. This is it.

The fight, the fight that you experience is not old me against new me. It's the new me against sin that's still in me.

That's really important. And here's why it's important. Therefore, sin is not my identity. This is so important. It's not old me, new me.

It's new me and this presence of sin that still dwells in the flesh, in this body. It's not who I was, but because my body is not fully redeemed, this presence of sin is still there and it's a fight.

[24 : 59] And it is not my identity. For when I sin, there is no condemnation if you are in Christ Jesus. You see that? So you don't have two natures fighting against yourself.

You are the new creation already that's living in a fallen body that's not yet. And therefore, you cannot escape that battle. Doesn't mean you can't win it.

That's what Paul's addressing here. But you cannot escape it. Because the presence of sin in your flesh is in opposition to the spirit that dwells in you.

Are you with me? Just so you don't think I've gone cuckoo for cocoa puffs, which is possible, but I don't think on this issue. Listen to, for example, what John MacArthur writes.

John MacArthur said, people that have the idea that you have a new nature and an old nature put forth this idea because they want to acknowledge that sin is still in our lives.

[26 : 06] So when I talk about not having an old nature, people go into hysteria saying, oh, MacArthur doesn't believe you have sin in your life. I didn't say that at all.

Just don't call it an old nature. Call it what the Bible calls it, sin that is in me, that is in my flesh.

So as long as I have humanness, I have sin, but I am one new creation in Christ Jesus.

And if you're like, you're just like semantics, no, this is about identity. If you think it's old you, new you, you are never going to understand who you actually are.

But when you understand the new me is fighting still against the sin in me, it's not about my identity. The battle is there, but who I am is secure because of Jesus.

[27 : 10] Preach preacher, right? I'll give you one more. I'll give you one more. A.W. Tozer. A.W. Tozer says, the new life does not have a sinful nature.

The new life has the nature of Christ. Now again, why does this matter? One, it's about our identity in Christ, which is no longer condemned before God.

And secondly, it means that you actually can experience victory. If this is old you, new you, you're never going to win. But if this is new you against this presence of sin, you actually can win because of the power of the Spirit, which is what Paul wants here in Galatians 5.

All right, everybody with me? It wasn't that fun. So maybe not fun is not the right word. But that, so we talked about the fight. What's the source of that? And it's the flesh.

That's what Paul mentions here. And then he goes on to address some specific patterns and passions that live in our flesh or dwell in the flesh. He gives four categories.

[28 : 21] In verse 19, he speaks about impurities. In verse 20, he'll talk about idolatry. And later in verse 20, he'll speak about individuality, things like hatred, discord, jealousy, like selfish desires.

And then fourthly, indulgences like drunkenness, things like that. So the point here is we're in a fight to do what's right. And our flesh has these passions that wage war.

And it's not old me versus new me. It's new me versus the sin in me that generates passions in me. And I can actually have victory.

Did you get all that? That rhymed really well. So anyways, Peter says this. This is 1 Peter 2.11. So here's the question.

How? How? How do we walk in victory? How do we win in the fight to do what's right? I'm glad you asked. Because guess what the answer is?

[29 : 32] The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit. You say, how do I win in the fight to do what's right? And the answer is the Holy Spirit, verse 16. I say, walk by the...

You want to have victory in the fight to do what's right? Walk by the Spirit. Because if you walk by the Spirit, guess what you will not do? 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 that you want to do.

Now skip down to verse 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there's no law.

And those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. So, the point here is this. Paul's making is the only way to win the struggle is walk with the Spirit.

[30 : 36] The only way to win the struggle is to walk with the Spirit. Let's pray and we'll go home. All right. How do I do that?

Are you with me? Are you... Walk with the Spirit? How do you walk with a Spirit?

Do you and the Holy Spirit go on a walk together? Come on, Holy Spirit. Let's just like go to the park and me and you will go on a walk. How do you...

Are you with me? Like how do you walk with a Spirit? Do you realize how strange that sounds? It's really strange. It actually is really strange. And you might say, Pastor, I think it's strange.

I don't know how to walk with a Spirit, but I do know how to walk with a person. Have you ever been on a walk with a person? Yes.

[31 : 37] Just go to the park. Not right now, but later. You'll see people walking with people. You can walk with a person. It's hard to walk with a Spirit. Are you tracking with the tension that I'm trying to create with you?

Because the response I would give, if you said, I can't walk with a Spirit, I can only walk with a person, is you're exactly right. Do you think...

Hang with me. Some of you are like, what are you saying? You're saying I can't walk with a Spirit? You can walk with a Spirit, but what does that mean? Here's the question.

Do you think Paul uses the metaphor of fruit randomly? Do you think Paul's like, I need a really good analogy?

Like the ocean? That's not going to work. Fruit. Yeah, that's a good one. All right. No. He's being very, very intentional. Was the Apostle Paul using temple language last week randomly?

[32 : 42] Not at all. Listen to me. Paul knows his Bible. And he has been consumed in what Jesus taught.

Are you with me? Hang with me. Listen. So Paul is able to say, listen, in John 2, Jesus said he's the temple.

And John even says he was talking about his body. And then Jesus goes on to say, I'm going to create a new kind of dwelling place. Because my body will be crucified and risen.

And then I'm going to ascend. But I'm actually going to return. And my return, at least in this context, is sending you the Spirit. And the Spirit's going to dwell in you.

So wait a minute. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. If Jesus has the Spirit, His personal presence, and He's the temple, what does it mean that His Spirit's going to come dwell in us? It means you're the temple.

[33 : 44] That the temple is no longer a building. The temple is the body of Christ. Do you see that? And Paul knows that's what Jesus taught.

And that's why he uses the metaphor of the temple. Are you with me? Say yes. So why does he use fruit? Why does Paul use the metaphor of fruit? For the same reason that he used the metaphor of temple, understanding how that connected to Jesus, he uses fruit as a metaphor because he knows that not only is Jesus the temple, Jesus is the true vine.

He's the true vine. John 15. I am. Look at this. Read this and tell me that Paul's not ripping this off from Jesus.

Right? Jesus says, I'm the true vine. My Father's the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away.

And every branch that does not bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear more fruit. Abide in me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine.

[34 : 58] Neither can you unless you abide in me. I'm the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, amen, you can do nothing.

You can do nothing. So, now once we understand this, it changes the way we view walking with the Spirit in Galatians 5. Some of you are already going where I'm going.

Do you see where I'm going? This changes what it means to walk with the Spirit, and it's very significant. Notice this on the screen. What it means, first of all, is that the fruit of the Spirit, it's not less than, but it is certainly more than, good works.

How most Christians, and even Bible teachers, approach Galatians 5, and the fruit of the Spirit, is these are the things that you need to do to be a better Christian. I need to be more loving, and I need to be more patient, and I need to be more whatever.

I need more peace. And we just kind of say, okay, I'm going to try to do better in this area, and see if I can, you know, improve in these particular areas.

[36 : 11] The problem is, when you turn the fruit of the Spirit into a list that you do, you've made it law.

And that's the exact opposite of what Paul is doing in the entire book of Galatians. In fact, if anything, he's saying you're set free from the law.

So the fruit of the Spirit is not a list of things that you're supposed to go do and track yourself to see if you're improving in these areas. What's the fruit of the Spirit?

Notice it on the screen. The Spirit is the personal presence of Jesus, and the fruit of the Spirit is the life of Jesus.

Have you ever met anyone more loving than Jesus? The answer is no. Joyful, that is enduring satisfaction, even in suffering.

[37 : 14] Anybody that had more shalom, peace than Jesus? Patience. Has Jesus been patient with you?

Yes, right? Kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Listen, Jesus is the true vine, and those that are connected with him bear the fruit of his life.

And I think this actually makes sense of the metaphor. That is, fruit is the very life of the vine that gets pressed out into the branches.

You know this. When you look at an apple tree and you look at the apples, why are there apples on that branch? Okay? The apples are there because, listen, they're connected to the source of life, the apple tree.

And in fact, pull an apple and see if on its own it can grow. What does it do? This will preach, it'll decay. Right? Because on its own it doesn't have life.

[38 : 32] But when it's connected to the apple tree, life naturally happens because of the tree. That is the fruit. You cannot bear fruit on your own.

You have to be connected to the true vine. And to me, that changes everything in terms of what it means to walk by the Spirit. Notice it on the screen that a Christian is not someone trying to live a better life.

A Christian is someone who's growing in Christ's life. Because if we're connected or abiding with Jesus, then we're conforming to Jesus.

And how do I know for sure that Paul is connecting Jesus as the true vine and the fruit of the Spirit together? Well, what comes right before John chapter 15?

I'll give you one guess. John chapter 14. You're brilliant. You're brilliant. And where did we start this series off with?

[39 : 36] John 14. So John 15 is where Jesus says, I'm the true vine. And right before that, and it's one long discourse, right before that, he says this.

This is John 14, 17. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him or knows him, you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

In other words, the context of John 15, I'm the true vine, comes right after the Spirit. Jesus saying that the Spirit will come and be with us and in us.

So, you ready? I'm landing the plane. Here we go. You with me? What is walking by the Spirit?

Answer, abiding in Jesus.

Walking with the Spirit is the same thing as abiding in Christ. You don't produce fruit by focusing on fruit.

[40 : 39] You produce fruit by abiding in Jesus. He produces fruit as you abide in Him. Therefore, the preoccupation of our spiritual life is not to bear fruit, but to pursue Jesus.

as you, so this is why I'm saying it, how do I walk with a Spirit? I can't walk with a Spirit. You're right, but you can Jesus.

Right? As you worship Jesus, pursue Jesus, seek Jesus, what are you doing? You're walking with His personal presence.

As you, as you love Him you're walking with His Spirit. And what did we say at the very beginning? Come on, here it is. I hope this is like light bulb. Our behavior is influenced by the presence we keep.

[41 : 40] The more I abide in Jesus, walk in His personal presence, the more I bear His life. and what is, what was the very, come on, somebody say preach, preacher.

What did the life of Jesus ultimately accomplish? Answer, victory over sin. Victory over sin.

Do you see how all that comes together? How do I win in the battle to, the fight to do what's right? Walk with the Spirit. What does that mean?

It means abide in Jesus. because the more that you are seeking His presence, the more you're walking with Him, learning about Him, worshiping Him, thinking about Him, praying to Him, what does the influence of His presence with you do?

Changes your behavior. And what ends up happening is you don't walk according to the flesh, you walk according to His very life.

[42 : 44] faith. And that's Galatians 5. Faith family, every single one of us is just like Michael Vick.

We may not be participating in dog fighting, but we are most certainly in a fight. We are influenced by things around us and influenced by things in us.

As Paul says in Ephesians 2, you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that's now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the flesh and the mind, and we were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

That is who we were. That is like Michael Vick, we were all in a prison. A prison to the passions of the flesh.

But in prison, come on now, this is the gospel, in our prison, someone entered in. And he is far greater, no disrespect, Tony Dungy, but he is far greater than Tony Dungy.

[44 : 05] Someone's presence entered in. Paul continues in Ephesians 2, but God. Being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, he made us alive together with Christ.

By grace, you have been saved. God, amen, amen. God in the person of Jesus Christ entered into our prison.

He came into our life, and he set us on a whole new path. Jesus literally saved our life. And as we now abide in him, we will become more and more influenced by his personal presence, the Holy Spirit.

And in doing so, we will experience the victory in the fight to do what's right. and all God's people said, amen.

Let's pray together. Father, thank you for your word to us tonight. I hope this is a tremendous encouragement to us. Not only in understanding more of the Holy Spirit, what it means to walk with the Spirit, and how that is literally happening as we abide in Jesus and pursue Jesus and love Jesus and worship Jesus.

[45 : 32] Not focusing on fruit, not trying to be better Christians, but preoccupied with Jesus. And so tonight I pray that this is an encouragement. I know there's people here that probably feel like they're losing in their fight or battle or struggle and we rest in the fact that there is no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus.

We are in a battle, we are in a fight, but it is not who I was versus who I am. It's who I am. And this power of sin that still exists in the flesh and in this world.

But Lord, thank you that you have given us your Spirit, that we can walk with you and experience victory in Jesus. And tonight we're going to celebrate the very thing that reminds us of the victory that we have in Christ.

As Christ took on our sin upon the cross and he won the victory through the empty tomb. And so we remember and we celebrate tonight in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you.