

GALATIANS

Message Eleven

**Walking by the Spirit to Bear the Fruit of the Spirit
and Sowing unto the Spirit to Reap Eternal Life**

Scripture Reading: Gal. 5:16-26; 6:7-10

I. We can either walk by the Spirit to bear the fruit of the Spirit or walk by flesh to manifest the works of the flesh—Gal. 5:16-26; Phil. 3:3:

- A. The flesh is the uttermost expression of the fallen tripartite man, whereas the Spirit is the ultimate realization of the processed Triune God; to walk by the Spirit, therefore, is to walk by the processed Triune God as the all-inclusive Spirit in our spirit—Gen. 6:3; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:16.
- B. When we walk by the Spirit (live, move, and have our entire being by the Spirit), we will bear the fruit of the Spirit—Gal. 5:16, 22-23.
- C. What the flesh does is works without life; what the Spirit brings forth is fruit full of life—vv. 19, 22.
- D. The fallen life of the old Adam is expressed practically in the flesh, and the works of the flesh are different aspects of such a fleshly expression—vv. 19-21:
 1. Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness (which are concerning evil passions), bouts of drunkenness, and carousings (which are concerning dissipation) are related to the lust of the corrupted body.
 2. Enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger (which are concerning evil moods), factions, divisions, sects, and envyings (which are concerning parties) are related to the fallen soul, which is very closely related to the corrupted body.
 3. Idolatry and sorcery (which are concerning demonic worship) are related to the deadened spirit.
 4. Vainglory, provoking, and envying are all of the flesh; these three matters test in a very practical way whether or not we are walking by the Spirit—vv. 25-26.
 5. Paul speaks of those who desire to “make a good show in the flesh” (6:12); to be in the flesh is to be in our natural and external being without the

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inward reality and spiritual value that are in our regenerated spirit (Rom. 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3).

6. If we walk by the Spirit, we shall automatically defeat the flesh and the devil lurking behind the flesh; as we win the war against the flesh in this way, God's purpose to express Christ will be accomplished—Gal. 5:16-17; 6:17; cf. Exo. 17:8-16.
- E. As the flesh is the expression of the old Adam, so the Spirit is the realization of Christ; Christ is actually lived out as the Spirit, and the items of the fruit of the Spirit are the characteristics of Christ—cf. Phil. 1:19-21a:
1. God's intention is that we live by the Spirit to express Christ; what we need in the Lord's recovery today is a walk by the Spirit to express Christ in many different virtues for us to be sons of God in reality.
 2. Our natural attributes do not have anything of the Spirit, whereas the fruit of the Spirit is full of the substance and element of the Spirit.
 3. Nine items of the fruit of the Spirit, as different expressions of the Spirit, are listed in Galatians 5:22-23 as illustrations: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.
 4. The fruit of the Spirit includes additional items, such as lowliness (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:3), compassion (v. 1), godliness (2 Pet. 1:6), righteousness (Rom. 14:17; Eph. 5:9), holiness (1:4; Col. 1:22), and purity (Matt. 5:8).
 5. The fruit of the Spirit is the fruit of the light in Ephesians 5:9; this fruit is in all goodness (Matt. 19:17), righteousness (Rom. 5:17-18, 21), and truth (John 14:17) for the expression of the Triune God (cf. Exo. 25:37).

II. We can either sow unto the Spirit to reap eternal life, or we can sow unto the flesh to reap corruption of the flesh—Gal. 6:7-10:

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- A. According to Paul's view, human life is a process of sowing; all that we say and do involves the sowing of seeds that will grow and eventually be reaped.
- B. To sow unto the Spirit means to sow with a view to accomplishing the purpose of the Spirit; this is to have the Spirit as our goal:
 - 1. Actually, to walk by the Spirit is to sow unto the Spirit—5:16.
 - 2. In our life and living we must aim at the Spirit, taking the Spirit as our goal—6:8b.
 - 3. God's economy is to give us Himself as the Spirit; nothing is more pleasing to God than for us to take the all-inclusive Spirit, the all-inclusive Triune God, as our unique and eternal goal—3:5a, 14; cf. Phil. 2:13.
- C. To sow unto the flesh means to sow with a view to accomplishing the purpose of the flesh; this is to have the flesh as the goal:
 - 1. There is no neutral ground between the flesh and the Spirit; our goal is either one or the other—Rom. 8:6.
 - 2. Everything we do is a sowing either unto our own flesh or unto the Spirit, and all our sowing issues in a reaping either of corruption out of the flesh or of eternal life out of the Spirit—Psa. 126:5; Prov. 22:8a; Hosea 8:7a.
 - 3. If we live unto the flesh, what we do as Christian work will not be effective; what counts is not our working but our sowing—cf. Mark 4:14; Deut. 22:9.
- D. When our goal is the Spirit, we become a supply of life to others and to the churches—Gal. 6:10; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- E. When we sow unto the Spirit, the Spirit makes us a new creation:
 - 1. The new creation is a matter of God's chosen people taking the all-inclusive Spirit as their goal, aiming at Him, being one spirit with Him, and as a result, having the divine element transfused into them to reconstitute them and make them new—Gal. 6:14-15.

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2. The New Jerusalem, the ultimate consummation of eternal life, will be the consummate issue and reaping of our sowing unto the Spirit—v. 8b; John 4:14; Rev. 22:1-2.
3. The Lord is sounding out a call in His recovery to take the Spirit as our goal and to live unto Him in everything that there may be a harvest of life eternal; how wonderful that we may have such a glorious goal in life!