



The Fruit of the Spirit



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HORIZON BAPTIST CHURCH
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Walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16-25

Motivators -> Actions -> Results

1.) The Actions - Walking in the Spirit vs Walking in the Flesh

Galatians 5:16

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

A.) What It Doesn't Mean

i. It's not the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Spirit happens at salvation. The Bible says that every Christian is metaphorically baptized or joined into the body of Christ at salvation (1 Cor. 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.). We know that this is not the walking in the Spirit because we are commanded to walk in the Spirit. You can't be commanded to do something that's already been done to you when you got saved.

ii. It's not the Holy Spirit dwelling inside me. Once again at salvation the Holy Spirit not only places us into the family of God. The Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside of us and guide and direct us in our lives. The Bible says in Romans 8:9 – “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” If you do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you, you are not saved. Why? Because the Holy Spirit indwells believers at the moment they get saved.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit happens to me at salvation. Walking in the Spirit is a command given to me subsequent to salvation now that I have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of me.

iii. It's not a spiritual gift.

1 Corinthians 12 - Spiritual gifts are distributed by the Holy Spirit to believers as the Holy Spirit sees fit. All believers have spiritual gifts, but we don't all have the same ones.

Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to believers as He sees fit. Walking in the Spirit is a command given to all of us.

B.) What It Does Mean

Galatians 5:16

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

- Walk
 - Not run or sprint or jump
 - It's taking one step after another in the sanctification in the Christian life
 - It's daily. It's monotonous. It's one decision after another.
- Present imperative tense -> we are commanded to do it continually
- And ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh
 - When we walk in the Spirit, we do not do what the flesh wants us to do
 - When we walk in the flesh, we do not do what the Spirit wants us to do
 - When we're walking in the Spirit, we're not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.
- Another way to understand that is Ephesians 5:18. In Ephesians 5:18 it says, "Don't be drunk with wine, in which is excess, but be filled with the Holy Spirit." There were pagan religions where drunkenness and orgiastic behavior was essentially the way that pagans thought they were communing with deity. They actually thought that if they were completely inebriated somehow they ascended into transcendent communication with their gods. Paul says, "No, don't be drunk with wine as if that's some access to the supernatural; be filled with the Holy Spirit." The parallel in Colossians 3:16 is to, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." So when you're saturated by the Word and it takes richly over your life, that's the same as walking in the Spirit, because the Spirit's desire is to conform you to the Word, which is to conform you to Christ.
- The power for walking in the Spirit is the Holy Spirit
 - Romans 8:12-13 - 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

- The Spirit empowers us to fight off and kill off our fleshly desires
 - "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh"
 - 2 Corinthians 3:18 -But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.
 - The empowerment behind our sanctification process is the Holy Spirit.
 - Acts 1:8 -but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you
 - Just as He did with the early believers, when the Holy Spirit takes up residence inside of us, He empowers us.
- The pattern for walking in the Spirit is the Word of God
 - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.
 - If everything we need for Christian living is found in the Word of God, then where else is the Spirit going to direct us for daily sanctification other than the Word of God
 - John 14:26 - 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.
 - We see here the pattern of the Holy spirit bringing to remembrance the words of Christ
 - John 16:13-14 - 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of

himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

- The Holy Spirit doesn't point people to himself. He reflects and points people to the Son.
- The Spirit is leading us in one direction by directing our attention to the Word of God. The flesh is leading us in another direction by directing our attention to ourselves. There's a fork in the road, and the question is, "Which way are you going to walk?"

2.) The Motivators - The Spirit vs The Flesh

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

- There is a war within us between our flesh and the Holy Spirit.
 - Illustration - In ancient times, to punish a murderer they would sometimes strap the corpse of the one he killed to his body until its decay eventually ate into the killer and took his life. Paul says we have a body of death attached to us.
- So that you cannot do the things that you would - the Holy Spirit is given to us to restrain our natural fallen desires

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

- Romans 8:14 - 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
- You are free from the bondage of the law. Your sentence has been paid. You are free from the penalty of the law you had broken.

We have our flesh and the Spirit dwelling within us. When we walk in the flesh, we produce the works of the flesh (vs. 19-21). When we walk in the Spirit we produce the fruit of the Spirit (vs. 22-23).

3.) The Results - The Fruit of the Spirit vs The Works of the Flesh

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

- Works is plural. It's ala carte. You can pick and choose what you want.
- Lasciviousness - sensuality

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

- Witchcraft - can be related to drugs as well (pharmakeia is the word)
- Variance - strife
- Emulations - jealousy
- Wrath - outbursts of anger
- Strife - conflict
- Seditions - division
- heresies

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

- Revellings - partying
- They which do such things - the unregenerate man who walks in the flesh and produces the works of the flesh has no place in God's kingdom

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

- Fruit is singular. It's a package deal.

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

- Maybe there's a little sarcasm in that for the legalists. There's no law against such virtue. You that are so worried about law, there's no law against that. Furthermore, the law is not able to produce that kind of virtue.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

- Our flesh has been crucified in Christ. We have the victory already. We don't have to continue to allow it to rule our life. We have the power of the Holy Spirit and the pattern of the Word of God.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

- We live by the Spirit. We are led by the Spirit. Now it's up to us: walk in the Spirit, one step after another.
- God has given us the power to walk in the Spirit. It's time for us to step up to the plate and do so.

Invitation:

Are you walking in the Spirit, or are you walking in the flesh? Are you following the Spirit as He directs you in accordance with the Word of God, or are you following yourself?

The Fruit of Love

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Review

Motivator -> Actions -> Results

Flesh/Spirit -> Walking in the Flesh/Spirit -> Works of the Flesh/Fruit of the Spirit

Sermon

1 Corinthians 13:1-8

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

This chapter is a glorious hymn by Paul in honour of Christian love.

Love is not a feeling. It is a discipline.

This passage on love is sandwiched inbetween two chapters on spiritual gifts. You can't rightly use the gifts of the Spirit without the fruit of the Spirit.

Think application. Think action. How can I be more loving coming out of tonight?

Take notes on where you can grow and 1 thing you can do to make that happen.

1.) THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE

A.) It is More Important than Tongues

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

- Tongues of men - human languages, probably includes the miraculous ability to speak in a foreign language
- Tongues of angels - hyperbolic language

- If I could transcend my limitations, and even get in to angelic conversation, it really wouldn't matter if it wasn't done in love.
- Sounding brass - reverberating gong
- Tinkling cymbal - vibrating cymbal

Without love, my speech becomes nothing more than loud, obnoxious noise.

B.) It is More Important than Prophecy

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy,

1 Corinthians 14:3 - But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.

- It means literally to speak before - prophēmi - to proclaim truth; the power to proclaim the truth of God; its like preaching.

A desire to preach without a heart for people is just a desire to perform.

Illustration - me preaching without love is pointless

Matthew 7:22-23 - 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

C.) It is More Important than Knowledge

and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;

- Mysteries - things unknown to man, hidden until revealed by God
 - Colossians 1:25-26 - 25 Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:
- Knowledge - insight into the deeper meanings of Scripture

Who knows everything? Who has all knowledge? No one. But even if someone did, if they didn't have love, it would be pointless.

People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. It's one thing to know it. It's another to live it.

Illustration - someone who is an expert on health, but doesn't practice it

D.) It is More Important than Faith

and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

This is not in reference to saving faith, but the practice of faith in daily living.

Who has all faith? No one. But even if someone did, and they didn't have love, it would be nothing.

Faith without love is all about getting. You know where you see this? In the prosperity gospel.

Faith without works is dead, but faith without love is empty.

E.) It is More Important than Generosity
3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,

This isn't giving 10%. This isn't giving to missions. This isn't giving to the building fund. This isn't giving to charity work. This isn't giving thousands of dollars to feed the poor. This is giving everything to feed the poor.

Generosity without love is grandstanding.

F.) It is More Important than Martyrdom
and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

This moves beyond giving all of your possessions away and ends up at giving all of yourself away.

Daniel 3:22-23 -

22 Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flames of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

23 And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

It's not the act of dying for one's faith that makes it significant. It's the heart that accompanies that act. You say "that's extreme"! And I agree with you, but that's what it says.

Tongues + Prophecy + Knowledge + Faith + Generosity + Martyrdom - Love = 0

Serving in the Nursery + Cleaning the Church + Tithing + Ushering + Singing in the Choir + Evangelizing + Teaching a Class - Love = 0

Do you serve and give and live out of a heart of love, or are you just a busybody like Martha?

- The problem with Martha wasn't that she was serving. It was that she was missing Mary's heart of love.

2.) THE ATTRIBUTES OF LOVE (SELFLESS)

A.) Love is Patient

4 Charity suffereth long,

Love endures wrongdoing from people. The patience described here is not with circumstances but with people.

Illustration - anger and impatience are weakness. Patience takes real strength.

Think application:

Are you patient with people, or are you weak? Are you patient with people or do people walk around you like they're walking on eggshells?

B.) Love is Kind

and is kind;

- Full of service to others (it does for others)

It's not talking about being kind in attitude, but rather kind in action.

When love is harmed, it does not seek vengeance. It extends kindness.

Illustration - Can you imagine that? Loving someone who hurts you? Who does you wrong? Wait, where have I heard that? That's right. Jesus said that.

Think application:

When is the last time you acted in kindness to someone that hurt you? Love isn't just patient. It extends kindness.

C.) Love is Covering

Skip forward to verse 7.

7 Beareth all things,

- To cover over with a roof
- To protect or keep by covering

Love is reluctant to drag a person into scandal in front of everybody else (Joseph & Mary).

Proverbs 10:12 - Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

1 Peter 4:8 - And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

Think application:

When someone falls, do you kick them while they're down? Are you quick to spread gossip and publicize their failings? Or are you there to help them and to seek restoration for them?

D.) Love is Trusting
believeth all things,

It believes the best in people for as long as it is possible to do so. It looks for the positive. It is the opposite of the mentality of the cynic, the critic, the scorner, and the slanderer.

Illustration - it is the opposite of the news (it looks for the best)

- Some Good News by John Krazyński

Think application:

Are you suspicious or are you trusting? Do you want to believe the best in people or are you just a critic?

E.) Love is Positive
hopeth all things,

- It expects the best

It's optimistic. It's averse to sourness and gloom.

Think application:

Are you a positive person, or are you constantly doom and gloom?

F.) Love is Persevering
endureth all things.

You say, "If I trust people and believe the best and am hopeful, I'm going to get hurt."

- Yes you will, but love endures all things.

You can't kill it. It just doesn't die.

It follows in the footsteps of Jesus.

- It endures wrongdoing
- It endures persecution
- It endures trials
- It endures pain & suffering

Think application:

Does your love for others endure, or does it have its limits? Is it unconditional like Jesus' love, or does it have conditions attached to it?

3.) THE OPPOSITES OF LOVE (SELFISH)

These are false loves that are really expressions of self love. They are works of the flesh.

Let's see what love is not.

A.) Love is not Jealous

Turn back to verse 4.

charity envieth not;

The word for jealousy means to boil over, and it refers to the boiling over of a selfish passion.

Illustration - pride is my tendency to look down on those I perceive beneath me. Jealousy is my attempt to pull down those I perceive above me.

Think application:

Do you compare yourself with people in this room? Do you compare yourself with those at work? Do you get angry at people because of their success? Love is not jealous.

B.) Love is not Boastful
charity vaunteth not itself,

Love doesn't show off. Love doesn't love the platform.

Matthew 6:1 - Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

Illustration - taking selfies with the poor as you give to them

Think application:

Are you only loving when someone is watching? Is your love contingent on an audience?

C.) Love is not Prideful
is not puffed up,

It's not arrogant. It doesn't think too highly of itself. When we think too highly of ourselves, we believe that we deserve love from others. When we think properly of ourselves, we believe that others deserve love from us.

Philippians 2:3-4 -

3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Illustration - William Carey being asked if he was a shoemaker at a party and replying that he was not a shoemaker, but merely a shoe repairer.

Think application:

Are you puffed up? Are you obsessed with self image? Do you think more often of yourself, or do you think more often of others?

D.) Love is not Improper

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly,

1 Peter 3:8 - be courteous

When we act improperly or rudely, its because we want attention. It's self centered. It's the opposite of love.

Illustration - kids acting out because they want attention

Think application:

Do you act out when you're around other people? Are you rude? Are you discourteous? That's born out of a love for attention, not real love.

E.) Love is not Self Centered

seeketh not her own,

Illustration - Dinner Conversation with two Famous Men (one made them feel like he was the most interesting person they ever met; the second made them feel like they were the most interesting people he had ever met)

Self seeking is the root of all evil. It is the defining character trait of the flesh.

"Cure selfishness and you will recreate a garden of Eden."

1 cor. 10:33 -

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Think application:

Do you seek your own profit, or the profit of others?

F.) Love is not Quickly Irritable

is not easily provoked,

It really means a sudden outburst - a sudden outburst, an explosion.

James 1:19-20 - 19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Opposite - slow to hear, quick to speak, quick to wrath

Chrysostom - as a spark which falls into the sea hurts not the sea, but is itself extinguished, so an evil thing befalling a loving soul will be extinguished without disquietude

Think application:

Do you get riled up quickly? Are you prone to outbursts of anger? The discipline of love extinguishes our tendency to outbursts of anger.

G.) Love is not a Score Keeper
thinketh no evil;

Not only does love not blow up at people, it also doesn't hold grudges.

We should be grace givers, not score keepers.

Illustration - forgiving in marriage (men typically forget quickly, sometimes women can hold onto things for longer)

Think application:

Are you a grace giver with people, or are you a score keeper with people?

H.) Love is not Crude

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

Sin's not funny.

How could any Christian ever rejoice in any case over something that offends God?

Get a perspective.

- Dirty jokes aren't funny
- Profanity is not funny
- Homosexuality is not funny
- Racism is not funny

Romans 1:32 - Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

Illustration - immorality: humorous -> acceptable -> appealing -> routine

We don't rejoice in sin. We don't rejoice when someone falls into sin.

It doesn't take pleasure in sin. It takes pleasure in the truth of God's Word.

Why is love so important?

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

- Unlike other aspects of our Christian lives, love endures forever. It goes beyond this life and with us into eternity. We will be loved and love forever and ever amen.

Application

Are you walking in the Spirit? Do you see the fruit of love in your life? How can you grow in love for your spouse this week, for others this week, for people who disagree with you?

The Fruit of Joy

Psalm 100

Review

The Motivators (flesh vs spirit)

The Actions (walking in the flesh vs walking in the spirit)

The Results (works of the flesh vs fruit of the spirit)

The Importance of Love

The Attributes of Love (selfless)

The Opposites of Love (selfish)

Tonight we're going to be talking about the fruit of joy.

Sermon

Psalm 100:1-5

1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

2 Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Joy is not an option. It is a command.

Joy is not a function of circumstance, but of mindset.

Joy is not a feeling. It is a discipline.

Illustration - Governor Newsome order

1.) Be joyful in living

1 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

- Illustration - Pastors saying "it doesn't say make a beautiful noise"
- Hebrew word for make a joyful noise is Roo-ah (occurs 33 times in the OT).
 - It means to shout for alarm or for joy (kinda like amen for the OT)
 - Illustration - shouting before battle, shouting in response to the Lord going before, shouting in victory, glad shout (loyal subjects in the presence of their king)
 - Psalm 95:1-3 - 1 O come, let us **sing** unto the Lord: let us make a **joyful noise** to the rock of our salvation. 2 Let us come before his presence with **thanksgiving**, and make a **joyful noise** unto him

with **psalms**. 3 For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

- It's sometime connected with singing.
- Praise & thanksgiving & singing & shouting are often connected
- All ye lands - all the earth
 - God deserves praise from all the earth (as Creator, as God, as King)
 - This expresses the idea that anyone can and should have a relationship with God
- It does not say to make a joyful noise only in certain circumstances.
 - Be joyful in day to day living
 - Philippians 4:4-7 - 4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. (praise) 5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. (patience) 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (prayer) 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (peace)
 - Praise + patience + prayer = peace

Illustration - joy means that the baseline of happiness for the believer is higher than the happiness level of any unbeliever could ever reach. Our joy in Christ is based on unchanging elements of our identity. Happiness goes up and down based on circumstances. The poorest Christian in the world is better off than Bill Gates.

Joy is the discipline of bringing back into remembrance how blessed we are in Christ. Like love, it's not a feeling.

In Christ, we have won the victory. Are you joyful in that?

Think application:

Are you joyful in living? Are you daily living in remembrance of how blessed you are in Christ? Or do you unintentionally forget sometimes?

2.) Be joyful in serving

2 Serve the Lord with gladness:

- When the focus of the labor is the Lord, it is an act of worship to Him and it's joyful.
- Why do we serve with gladness?
 - Because it's an act of worship
 - 1 Peter 4:10-11 - 10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through

Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

- 1 Corinthians 10:31 - 31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
- Illustration - ladies who come in and clean the church
- Because of who we serve
 - Psalm 8:4 - what is man that thou art mindful of him
 - Illustration - run ins with famous people (seeing Shaq, Marcin Gortat, and Penn & Teller at Universal)
 - When we serve the Lord, we do it for someone far more famous

Think application:

Are you joyful in serving? Do you serve the Lord with gladness?

Reach out to one person in the directory each week.

3.) Be joyful in singing

Come before His presence with singing

- Ephesians 5:19 - Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;
 - That's a command.
 - "I don't like to sing" - well if you're right with the Lord, you will
 - Christian manhood is less about being macho, and it's more about being consistent in faithful disciplines
 - This is why we sing in church
 - Sing from home on the livestream (illustration - I didn't)
- Why do we sing with gladness?
 - Because of who we sing about.
 - 1 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23

Vs. 1 Mizmor le'David, Hashem ro-i lo echsar.
Vs. 2 Binot desheh yarbitzeini, al mei menuchot yenhaleini.
Vs. 3 Nafshi yeshovev yancheini bemagalei tzedek lema'an shemo.
Vs. 4 Gam ki elech be'gei tzalmavet, lo ira ra ki atah imadi, shivtechah u'mishantechah hemah yenchamuni.
Vs. 5 Ta'aroch lefanai shulchan neged tzor'rai dishanta vashemen roshi, kosi rivaya.
Vs. 6 Ach tov va'chesed yirdifuni kol yemei chayai ve'shavti be'veit Hashem l'orech yamim.

- Illustration - hebrew singing of psalm 23 (:20-1:10)
 - [Psalm 23 / "Mizmor LeDavid" / by Gadi Elon / מזמור לדוד](#)
- Because of who we sing to.
 - "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"
 - We sing to an audience of one
 - Illustration - this is one of the legitimate concerns I have with the CCM model (it's a show)
 - It doesn't say singing and making melody in your heart to the congregation

Think application:

Are you joyful in singing? Do you sing? When you watch the livestream from home, do you sing?

4.) Be joyful in knowing

3 Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

- Know three things
 - Know ye that the Lord he is God - recognize the fact as a certainty
 - Jehovah is God.
 - It's not Buddha, Mohammed, Joseph Smith, etc.
 - It's not my sports hobby, my 401k, etc.
 - Know that He has made us
 - Psalm 19:1-3 - 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.
 - Know that we are his people & the sheep of his pasture

- Embracing a real relationship with God is the foundation upon which joy is built in all areas of our lives.
 - Psalm 95:6-7a - 6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. 7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.
 - The shepherd cares for the sheep
 - The shepherd feeds the sheep
 - The shepherd leads the sheep
 - David was a shepherd, and he liked using the imagery of God as a shepherd and us as his sheep (Psalm 74:1; Psalm 79:13; Psalm 95:7.)
- Sometimes we forget about what we have in Christ. We live beneath the baseline, but we don't have to. Joy is the discipline of bringing back into remembrance how blessed I am in Christ.

Think application:

Are you joyful in knowing that the Lord is God and that He is your shepherd? Have you forgotten how privileged you are in Christ?

5.) Be joyful in thanksgiving

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

- Gates - the gates which lead to his temple or to the public place of worship

Colossians 3:15-17 - 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Psalm 103:1-5 - 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Illustration - count your blessings, name them one by one

Illustration - write down 3 things that God has done for you that you are thankful for

- I'm thankful that God saved me
- I'm thankful that God brought me to my wife
- I'm thankful that God brought me to Camarillo

He has been good to me. He has been merciful to me. He has been true with me.

Think application:

When is the last time you took time in prayer to thank God? When is the last time you counted your blessings?

6.) Be joyful in praising

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

- Courts - The "courts" were literally the open spaces which surrounded the tabernacle or temple. It was in these that worship was celebrated.

Luke 19:37-40 - 37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. 39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. 40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

Illustration - write down 3 aspects of God's nature to praise Him for

- He is good. He is merciful. He is true.

Think application:

When is the last time you took time in prayer to praise God? When is the last time you remembered how great your God is?

Joy is the discipline of bringing into remembrance how blessed we are in Christ. How do you do that?

- Take time to praise Him every day for who He is
- Take time to thank Him every day for what He's done
- Take time to sing to Him in worship
- Take time to serve Him in worship

Are you living with joy or are you all over the place? If you're not living joyfully, are you praising Him? Are you thanking Him? Are you singing to Him? Are you serving Him?

The Fruit of Peace

Philippians 4:4-7

Review

Walking in the Spirit (following the Holy Spirit) -> Fruit of the Spirit

Love - selfless action

Joy - remembering how blessed we are in Christ

Peace - surrendering my worries to God & living graciously

Sermon

Philippians 4:4-7

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1.) The Prerequisites of Peace

A.) Joy

4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

- Rejoice in the Lord (what?)
 - Not my circumstances
 - Not this world
 - Not in people
 - Not my spiritual accomplishments
 - Joy finds its foundation in the Lord
- Always (when?)
 - Because God is stable, my rejoicing in Him can be continual
 - Illustration - even when my team loses (Jaguars losing to the Patriots in 2017)
 - Rejoice in the Lord always, and when you've done it that much, go ahead and do it again.

Rejoice because (none of these things change)

- God is in control
- God knows me and loves me
- God saved me and one day I will be with Him forever
- God has promised to supply my needs
- God has a plan for my life
- Death unites me with im

Rejoicing reminds us that our God is big and our problems are small. That brings peace.

Peace does not come from a drug, from a seminar, or from a psychiatrist. It comes from being fixated on the goodness and nature of God always.

B.) Graciousness

5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

It is a kind of patience which is able to submit to injustice, disgrace, mistreatment without hatred, without malice, without retaliation, without bitterness, without vengeance.

Moderation - humble graciousness

- This is the opposite of self love. (Christian self help)
 - Whatever feels good to me, whatever satisfies me, whatever builds me up, whatever gets me over my inferiority complex, whatever gives me a better self-image, whatever gives me better self-esteem, that's what I do. On the other hand, what Paul says is be humble, gracious, don't demand anything, give charity to those who are committing crimes against you, give mercy toward the failures of others.
 - Illustration - I look for this in leaders.
 - This type of graciousness takes immense strength. It's easy to blow up. It takes a lot to respond to adversity with humility and graciousness.
- The Lord is at hand - near in time or place
 - Could be in reference to His coming (James 5:8 - Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.)
 - Could be in reference to His presence (Psalm 119:151a - Thou art near, O Lord...)
 - Connected to the moderation of verse 5
 - Be patiently gracious with people. The Lord is returning soon.

When we are humbly gracious with people, do you know what that brings? It brings peace with man. When we are at peace with man, there is an inner peace that resides in our hearts.

External peace -> inner peace

We're going to come back to that peace with man at the end of our study here tonight.

C.) Prayer

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

- Be careful for nothing - If God is real, what is there to worry about?
 - Matthew 6:25-26 - **25** Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?
- 26** Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?
 - When is the last time you worried about food? When is the last time you worried about not having clothes?
 - Illustration - the only worries I have about food are trying to figure out what restaurant to go to or worrying that I ate too much.
 - Sometimes I worry that I have too many clothes.
 - If God can and does provide for those who don't know where their next meal is coming from, don't you think He can take care of you?
 - Verse 33 - but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.
- But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God
 - The antidote to worry is prayer
 - In everything - means that this should be our response no matter how large the problem is
 - When you face a difficulty or trial, don't worry about it. Pray to God about it, but do so with a spirit of thanksgiving.

Illustration - the sin battle of my life is worry (balling at a chess tournament as a kid)

When we take our worries and replace them with prayer, do you know what it brings? Peace.

2.) The Types of Peace

Galatians 5 says that peace is a fruit of the Spirit. Well, which peace is it? There's three types.

A.) The Peace of God (internal peace)

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

- It passes all understanding
 - It's supernatural. No psychiatrist or drug can give it to you.
- It keeps our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus
 - Keep - guard
 - The peace of God guards our heart from anxiety.
- The peace of God is not contingent on God answering the request.
 - It says whatever the answer may be and whenever the answer may come, God will give you what? Peace.
- Peace - surrendering my worries to God

Illustration - Peter taking his eyes off of Jesus and sinking

Isaiah 26:3 - Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

John 14:26-27 - 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The peace of God comes when we

- Rejoice - remember how big our God is
- Practice Graciousness - being at peace with man helps cultivate an inner peace
- Pray - replace our worries with prayer

Is the fruit of peace referring to the peace of God? Yes.

B.) The Peace with God

Romans 5:1-2 - 1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:12-14

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Is the fruit of peace of referring to peace with God? No. Because we already receive this permanently at salvation.

C.) The Peace with Man (external peace)

Is the fruit of peace referring to peace with man? I believe yes. I believe the fruit of peace refers to both the peace of God and peace with man.

I think they're connected.

Romans 12:18 - 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

How can we have peace with others when dealing with divisive issues?

- Meats offered to idols
- Alcohol
- Tattoos
- Entertainment
- Coronavirus

6 Questions to Ask

Does the Bible allow it?

NO → Don't do it!

YES

Does my conscience allow it?

NO → Don't do it!

YES

Area of freedom

Three further questions:

1. What is the effect on other Christians?
(Love is more important than knowledge.)
2. What is the effect on non-Christians?
(The gospel is more important than rights.)
3. What is the effect on my spiritual life?
(Spiritual health is more important than freedom.)

Romans 14-15

- 1.) Don't cause your brother to stumble
- 2.) Don't grieve your brother
- 3.) Don't destroy your brother
- 4.) Don't hurt your witness
- 5.) Don't deface the work of God
- 6.) Don't flaunt your liberty

Romans 14:13-23 -

1.) Will this cause my brother to stumble?

13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

- One day the Lord will judge us all. For the time being why don't you judge yourself and make sure you're not causing your brother to stumble.
- It's not, "Do I have the right to do this? Or Is this a sin?" It's "Could me doing this cause my brother to stumble"?
- Example - newer in the faith seeing someone older in the faith eat meats offered to idols and thinking "wow, that's what Christianity is all about"

2.) Will this grieve my brother?

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

- There is nothing unclean of itself - he's talking about non moral things & he's admitting that the strong are correct
- But to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean - when someone violates their conscience, they suffer the consequence of a guilty conscience
- Illustration - violating my conscience working out in high school to certain music
- When a stronger brother comes along and somehow tempts by his liberty a weaker brother to violate his conscience, when that weaker brother violates that conscience, that weaker brother will have a painful, bitter sorrow in his own heart. He'll feel guilty and instead of helping him grow in his spiritual life, it will push him back

3.) Will this destroy my brother?

15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

- Destroying your brother is talking about some kind of sever spiritual disaster in their life
- The implication here is if Christ loved that person enough to die for them, you ought to love them enough to be cautious about how you exercise your liberty in front of them.

4.) Will this hurt my witness with others?

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

- It is possible to so abuse our liberty that our good is evil spoken of in the world around us, that instead of men looking at us and thinking that we're approved or admirable, that they might look at us and disapprove.
- 1 Peter 2:15 - For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:
- We don't need to show the world how free we are. We need to show the world how loving we are.

5.) Will this deface my brother?

20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

- Food is symbolic of any discretionary thing that you might have a right to do
- Ephesians 2:10 - we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus
- God is at work in every Christian. Don't pull down what God's building up.
- Illustration - I mean, to put it about as crassly as you could, would you take a black marker pencil and go into the local museum and find the masterpieces of art and scribble on them? Would you take a knife and cut through a Rembrandt? Would you take a Stradivarius and crush it over your knee? Then why would you tear down what is the work of the ultimate master of all?
- Yes, all things are pure, but they become evil if you do them and cause somebody else to what? To stumble or be offended or grieved or devastated.

6.) Am I flaunting my liberty?

22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

- See, just enjoy it between you and the Lord. And you can enjoy it to the full and not have to cause someone to stumble and create a guilty conscience and a devastated believer or one led into sin.

23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

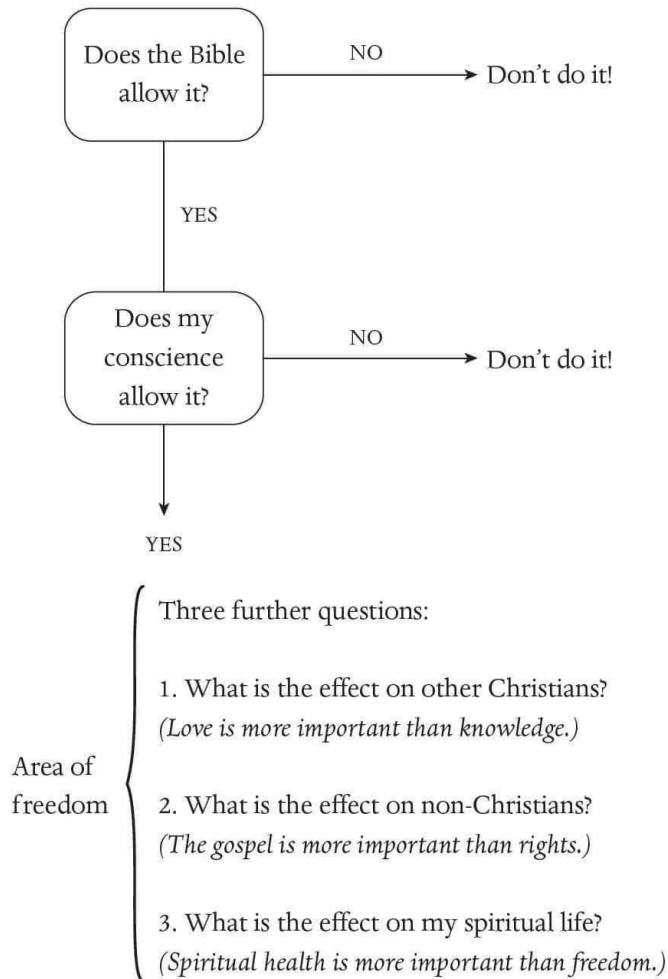
- So, weak Christians, don't try to emulate the strong until you really believe it's right or you'll be condemned by your own conscience.

Do you know what the mark of a strong believer is? Humility. They're more concerned with others than with themselves.

Romans 15:1-3 - 1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

Cross Reference - 1 Corinthians 8-10

Christian decision-making
(1 Corinthians 8 – 10)



'DO IT ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD' (10:31)

Application

Apply these questions to an area of divisiveness in your life?

Bonus - read 1 Corinthians 8-10

God has called us to peace. It's a fruit of the Spirit. If you are walking in the Spirit, you will have the inner peace of God, and you will have the external peace with man.

The Fruit of Longsuffering

James 1:2-4 & 5:1-11

Review

Love suffers long
Joy helps us suffer long
Longsuffering brings peace

Sermon

There are really two types of longsuffering/patience in the Bible.

- Patience through trials
 - In the midst of trials, patience is the endurance we exhibit when we believe that our reward and inheritance is in the world to come. Patience through trials is allowing God to work all things together for good.
- Patience with people
 - In the midst of injustice (when someone has wronged me), patience is the endurance we exhibit when we believe that their reward and punishment is in the world to come. Patience with people is allowing God to judge.

The patience of Galatians 5 is talking about patience with people.

1.) Longsuffering with Trials

Illustration - Longsuffering at Disney (there is no fast pass; there are no shortcuts from trials)

God's grace does not promise to take us out of trials, but it does promise to power us through them.

James 1:2-4

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

How do we have patience through trials?

A.) Have the right attitude

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;"

Brethren - believers

Count - consider

When - not if

Fall - stumble (they sneak up on you)

- Illustration: difference between earthquakes and hurricanes

Divers - varied, multi colored, coming in all shapes and sizes

Temptations - trials, troubles

Our values determine our evaluations. If we value comfort more than character, then trials will upset us. If we value the material and physical more than the spiritual, we will not be able to count it all joy. If we live only for the present, and forget the future, then trials will make us bitter, not better. - Warren Wiersbe

We can have joy because we see beyond the sorrow to the end.

How do you have the right attitude?

B.) Have the right mindset

"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience"

Patience - endurance, longsuffering

We need to know what trials are and what they do.

Trials destroy false believers. Trials deepen genuine believers.

The more difficult the trial, the sweeter it is when you come out of it.

Illustration - endurance running requires pushing the limits. The further you push yourself, the more endurance you build up.

Just as training builds up physical endurance. Trials build up spiritual endurance.

No pain, no gain.

What's the right mindset? This trial is making me stronger. It's building up my endurance.

How do you have the right mindset?

C.) Have the right approach

There's a difference between knowing that God is working through a trial and submitting to it with my heart.

Here James calls us to be submissive.

"But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Let - allow, let endurance do what God wants it to do

Job 13:15 - though he slay me, yet will I trust in him

Genesis 50:20 - ...ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good

2 Cor. 12:10 - ...gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me

That ye may be perfect and entire - spiritually mature

1 Peter 5:10 - 10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

2.) Longsuffering with People

Longsuffering with trials is trusting that God will work all things together for good.
Longsuffering with people is trusting that God will right all wrongs.

James 5:1-11

A.) The Judgment of the Unjust

1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

(1) They hoarded money

1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

- Luke 16 says you can't serve God & money. These are lovers of money.

- 1 Timothy 6:10 - 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
- This denunciation is directed at the rich fakers in the church who want to name the name of Jesus but whose real God is money.
- Doom is on the horizon.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

- Stockpiled wealth in numerous ways
 - Riches corrupted - food that had been stored and rotted (people put their wealth in stockpiling grain)
 - Garments motheaten - garments that had been stored and motheaten

3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

- Stockpiled wealth in numerous ways
 - Gold and silver is cankered - coins in those days were not pure silver or pure gold, but mixed with an alloy tended, given the right circumstances, to rust
- They had abused and misused their wealth. They had hoarded it and failed as stewards of the resources that God had given them. Stewardship is the concept that God has given us resources to use for his glory.
 - Our time
 - Our abilities
 - Our money
 - When money is a resource that I use for God's glory, I use it.
 - When money is a god that I worship, I stockpile it.
 - Matthew 6:19-21 - 19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
- The rust will be a witness against you when you face God.
- The rust will be the cause of the consumption of your flesh in the fires of condemnation.
- Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days - You hoarded your wealth in the last days with no regard for God's clock

(2) They ripped people off

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

- Behold the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields - hire refers to their wages or pay

- Which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth - You cheated your day laborers by withholding their wages, and now those wages cry out against you
- The cries of them which have reaped - you ripped off these poor people and God heard their cries

(3) They lived indulgently

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

- Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton - you have lived luxuriously
 - You have robbed from the poor to live in luxury
 - Illustration - the opposite of Robin Hood
- Ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter- you've fattened your heart up with pleasure like a calf that gets fattened for the slaughter

(4) They murdered

6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

- You have sentenced people, and effectively, you've murdered them, judicial murder. You literally have used the courts to murder people.
- They did whatever it took to sustain their lifestyle

B.) The Call to Longsuffering

In verses 1-6 James condemns the persecuting wicked wealthy and in verses 7-11 he talks to those being persecuted about how to respond.

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

- Be patient - this is talking about patience with people and is linked to the oppression of the wicked wealthy (be long tempered instead of short tempered)
 - Illustration - long fuse, not a short one
 - Proverbs 16:32 - He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.
- Unto the coming of the Lord - this is in reference to His second coming
 - Following the tribulation period
 - Battle of Armageddon (judgment)
 - Millennial Kingdom set up on Earth
- Behold the husbandman waiteth - this is an illustration
 - Just as the farmer plants and waits in anticipation of the coming of the fruit, we too are called to patiently endure with people in anticipation of the coming of the Lord
 - Early rain (when you plant in October) to the latter rain (when you harvest in April)

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

- The coming of the Lord draweth nigh - he could come any moment & that's been the case since this book was written 2000 years ago
- Illustration - a day with the Lord is a thousand years (it's been two days)
- Think negative - the Lord is coming and they'll be judged

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

- Be patient because you don't want to allow this persecution to lead you to sin. If you do, you may forfeit your reward when the judgment comes.
- The Lord is coming. Don't mess up in the mean time.

Illustration - Count of Monte Cristo by Alexander Dumas

C.) The Examples of Longsuffering

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

- They've suffered evil, evil treatment, and they did it with patience – makrothumia again. They were long-tempered; they were patient with people. They faced great difficulty; they faced great hostility; they faced tremendous rejection.
- The prophets were patient with people.

11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

- Job was patient with trials.
- Job went through terrible things on earth, but how did his story end?
- So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. He had fourteen-thousand sheep, six-thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, a thousand she asses. He also had seven sons and three daughters.

Patience in trials is allowing God to work all things together for good.

Patience with people is allowing God to judge.

Application

Are you going through a trial? Do you need to give it to the Lord and believe that He will work all things together for good?

Who do you need to let go of bitterness against? Who do you need to give to the Lord and say, "Lord, I'm going to let you take care of this"?

The Fruit of Gentleness

Ephesians 4:25-32

Sermon

Gentleness

- Greek word Chrestotes
- Translated Gentleness, Goodness, and Kindness in the KJV
- Moral goodness expressed in compassion (gentleness) and action

Love is kind.

Gentleness leads to longsuffering.

Gentleness leads to peace with man.

This passage of Scripture is very direct and very plain regarding sanctification (holy living).

How we live flows out of who we are.

Religion - Sanctification precedes salvation. Salvation flows out of sanctification.

Gospel - Salvation precedes sanctification. Sanctification flows out of salvation.

The power for holy living is the Holy Spirit (it's not my abilities). The motivator for holy living is the gospel (it's not acceptance). The roadmap for holy living is the word of God (it's not my feelings).

The gospel is simple, but significant.

Chapters 1-3 - who you are in Christ (this is who a Christian is)

Chapters 4-6 - how you live in Christ (this is how a Christian lives)

Verses 17-24 - talks in general terms about how a Christian should be different than the lost

Verses 25-32 - talks in specific terms about how a Christian should be different than the lost

Ephesians 4:25-32 -

1.) Don't Lie - Tell the Truth

25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

- Wherefore - since it is generally true that the old is gone and the new is come
- Putting away lying - Lost people lie
 - Lying is so easy to do.

- Did you take the trash out honey? Uh yeah (fully intending to just take it out first thing in the morning)
- Are you doing ok sweetie? Oh I'm fine (that's a lie)
- "I'm on my way"
- "Did you get my vm/text"
 - Oh I must've missed that. I'm sorry.
- "I forgot to do that"
 - You intentionally forgot
- "I didn't hear you"
 - Yes you did
- Calling out sick when you're not sick
- Revelation 21:8 - But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.
 - Liars go to hell
- John 8:44 - Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.
 - Satan is the father of lies
 - He is a master of subtle lies, counterfeits

Are you a liar? How often do you lie? Make an effort this week to catch yourself and be determined to tell the truth even when it's not convenient.

- Speak ever man truth with his neighbor - Christians tell the truth
 - Quotation of Zechariah 8:16 - These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:
 - John 14:6 - I am the way, the truth, and the life
 - Jesus is the truth
 - John 17:17 - Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth
 - God's word is truth
- For we are members one of another - this is talking about the unity in the church
 - If we don't tell the truth with one another , it's going to destroy the unity in the body of Christ
 - Illustration - imagine if the different parts of your body didn't communicate with one another

Don't lie. Tell the truth.

2.) Don't Hold onto Anger - Resolve it

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

- It is possible to be angry and sin. It is possible to be angry and not sin. The vast majority of references to anger in the Scripture portray it in a negative light.
 - Psalms 37:8 - cease from anger and forsake wrath
 - Proverbs 19:11 - the discretion of a man deferreth his anger...
 - Ecclesiastes 7:9 - be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools
 - Ephesians 4:31 - Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:
- Be ye angry and sin not
 - Sinful anger is selfish, uncontrolled, vengeful, hateful. It's often directed towards others. It's me oriented.
 - Selfish
 - Philippians 2:3 - Let nothing be done through strife (selfish interest) or vainglory...
 - Uncontrolled
 - James 1:19-20, 26 - Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man (concerned with man, not God) worketh not the righteousness of God. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion [is] vain.
 - Vengeful
 - Romans 12:17 - recompense to no man evil for evil
 - Hateful
 - Matthew 5 - anger in our hearts towards a brother is murder
 - Towards Others
 - Proverbs 10:12 - hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins
 - Sinful anger is self focused. It's the natural response of our flesh to someone offending us.
 - Righteous anger is directed towards sin. It's spiritual. It's God oriented.
 - Psalm 97:10 - ye that love the Lord, hate evil
 - Psalms 7:11 - God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day
 - Nehemiah 5 - Nehemiah is angry with the wicked
 - 1 Kings 11:9-10 - God is angry with Solomon because of his turning away from him
 - Illustration - Jesus' anger in the temple

- Sin ought to frustrate us.
- Matthew 7:5 - Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.
 - If you're only ever angry at other people's sin, you need to check yourself.

Are you prone to anger? The vast majority of the time our anger is sinful or leads to sinfulness.

Sinful anger comes naturally. Righteous anger takes work.

Practical

- Grow up and be an adult (it's easy to be angry)
- Take deep breaths and walk away
- Close your mouth
- Let not the sun go down upon your wrath
 - One way to control anger is given by Paul here in his second command. Don't let anger sit unresolved.

27 Neither give place to the devil.

- Satan is looking for opportunities to trip you up and get you off track.
- 1 Peter 5:8 - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Are you an angry person? It's a trick question. Because you shouldn't be, but you also should be.

- Are you prone to selfish anger?
- Are you prone to anger against sin? You should be, and it starts in your own heart.

3.) Don't Steal - Earn & Be Generous

28 Let him that stole steal no more:

- Not paying debt (Psalm 37:21)
- Cheating on taxes (render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's)
- Fraud
- Ripping people off
- Stealing vacation days/sick days
- Stealing from God
- Literally stealing
- Illustration - we see this attitude in our country (it is my right for you to take care of me); saw this attitude in the bus ministry

but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

- We don't take. We work.
- Be like Robin Hood without the stealing part
- Labour, working with his hand - Work hard
 - Christians should be known for their work ethic. Your work ethic should point people to Jesus. You should be an asset, not a liability.
 - 1 Cor. 10:31 - we work for the glory of God
- That he may have to give to him that needeth
 - As Christians, we do not take from others. We work hard to earn what we need and so that we can be generous with the less fortunate.
 - We work hard not so that we can hoard, but so that we can provide for ourselves and give to others.
 - We don't work to get. We work to give.

Are you known as a liability? Are you known as a taker? Or are you a worker? Are you an asset? Are you a giver?

We work to give. We don't slack to take.

4.) Don't Tear Down - Build Up

29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

- Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth
 - Corrupt - rotten, useless, depraved
 - Col. 3:8 - ...put off...filthy communication out of your mouth
 - There's a lot of rotten words used in our culture's vernacular that not Christian ought to use (4 letter words)
 - Illustration - playing sports with guys that just cursed up a storm; some of them were Christians; hearing the same from Pastors
 - Curse words, dirty jokes, racist jokes
 - It's not funny. Sin's not funny.
 - Psalm 19:14 - let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer
 - Illustration - would you say that if the Lord were standing next to you? If not, you probably ought not to say it at all.
 - That's part of the old nature.

- Mathew 12:34 - ...for out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.
 - Proverbs 4:23 - keep (guard) thy heart with all diligence for out if it are the issues of life
 - How do things get into your heart?
 - Your eyes
 - Your ears
 - Don't let your tv influence your kids more than the Word.
 - This goes beyond vile words to degrading words, words that tear others down. This would include gossip and backbiting.
- But that which is good to the use of edifying
 - Illustration - if you don't have something nice to say, then don't say it at all
 - Our speech ought to build others up
 - Positive
 - Spiritual
 - Encouraging
 - Loving
 - Gracious
 - That it may minister grace unto the hearers

5.) Don't Grieve the Spirit - Obey Him

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

- And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God - we grieve the Holy Spirit when we disobey. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we do not put off the old for the new. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we don't follow the Scripture's road map for Christian living.
- Whereby ye are sealed unto the day of Redemption
 - When you were saved the Spirit of God put a stamp on you that said, "This is God's, this is genuine, this is authentic, and this is forever."
 - Why would you grieve the Spirit that has been so good and gracious to you? Why would you bite the hand that feeds you?

6.) Don't Be Hostile - Be Gentle

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

- Bitterness - smoldering resentment
- Wrath - outbursts of anger
- Anger - selfish anger (as opposed to righteous anger)
- Clamor - commotion making (public yelling)
- Evil speaking - Slander (can be public or private; can be loud or quiet)
- With all malice - with all evil
 - Put away all of these things in addition to all other forms of evil
- These things should not characterize the way that we interact with one another.

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

- Gentleness - moral goodness that's expressed in compassion and action
- Expressed in compassion
 - Tenderhearted - (having a good heart) compassionate, gentle, not harsh
 - Illustration - we tend to excuse or own shortcomings and assume the worst with the shortcoming of others (e.g. coming in late to work)
 - Expressed in compassion
 - As Christ was tenderhearted with you, be tenderhearted with others
 - 1 Peter 3:8 - Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:
 - It's not bitter, wrathful, angry, clamorous, or slandering
 - Illustration - Extreme Makeover Home Edition recipients being compassionate to others
 - Compassion is feeling for another person. Compassion is expressed when we
 - Care more about being interested and not interesting
 - Put ourselves in other people's shoes
 - Make people feel felt
 - I bet that makes you feel "..."
 - Tell me more
- Expressed in action
 - One to another...Forgiving one another
 - Expressed in action (not a feeling or disposition)
 - Compassion is feeling for someone. Kindness is doing something about it.
 - Gentleness feels and acts. (Just as Jesus felt compassion on and us acted on it)

- Illustration - Hearing about someone's need and saying, "I'll pray for you."
- Kindness is both doing for others as well as forgiving others (as Christ has done both for us)

Gentleness - moral goodness expressed in compassion & action

Application

Are you living like the old nature or living like the new?

Are you lying?

Are you angry?

Are you stealing?

Are you cursing?

Are you grieving the Spirit?

Are you gentle with others, or are you hostile to others?

Are you compassionate or are you angry?

Are you helpful or are you hurtful?

Are you living like your old nature, or are you living like the new?

The Fruit of Goodness

Ephesians 5:1-10

Review

Love - selfless actions

Joy - the discipline of bringing back into remembrance how blessed we are in Christ

Peace - surrendering my worries to God (peace of God) & living graciously (peace with man)

Patience - allowing God to judge

Gentleness - goodness expressed in compassion and action

Goodness - moral excellence; acting as God would

Sermon

Ephesians 5:1-10

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

1.) The Command to Be Good (The What)

If goodness is moral excellence, then by definition to be good is to be like God. Why? Because God is the standard for moral excellence. Morality flows out of His nature as God.

1 John 1:5 - God is light and in him is no darkness...

1 John 3 - You can't be a child of God and constantly sinning. Why? Because there is no sin in God.

Matthew 5:48 - be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect

A.) Act Like God Does

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Follower - imitator or mimic; reproduce in yourself everything that is true of God

Matthew 5:48 - Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

When you know you are to be like God, and you know you can't be like God, then you know there's got to be some other power to make that possible.

Ephesians 3:16 - That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Goodness is living with the mindset of WWJD.

Illustration - kids follow their parents (video of dad and baby having a conversation)

[Baby Has A Full Conversation With His Daddy](#)



B.) Love Like God Does

2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Walk in love - live your daily lives in love; the secret to preaching and teaching is to keep telling you the same stuff you heard before, but you forgot, in terms of your behavior.

As Christ hath loved us

John 13:34 - A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

What is Christ's love like?

- Unconditional
 - Romans 5:8 - But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- Forgiving
 - Eph. 4:32 - and be ye kind one to another, forgiving one another as God for Christ sake hath forgiven you
 - How can you and I refuse to forgive someone of a sin that Christ died to forgive them of?
 - 1 Peter 4:8b - love shall cover the multitude of sins
- Self Sacrificing
 - And hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God - Jesus is both the offeror and the offering.
 - Gal. 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

A greater understanding of God's love for me leads to a greater love within me for others. A greater appreciation of God's forgiveness towards me leads to a greater outpouring of forgiveness from me towards others.

This is the kind of love that Christian marriages are designed to be built on.

- The two become one (Gen. 2)
- What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. (Matt. 19)
- The marriage covenant is literally entering into a binding covenant with another person before God to love them how?
 - Unconditionally
 - In Forgiveness
 - Self Sacrificially
 - The problem in many marriages and relationships is that we don't buy into the Scriptures definition of love. We buy into the worlds.

Here we see the Scripture contrast God's love with the world's love.

3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Fornication - sexual sin (the phony counterfeit that the world offers to true love) (the world's love is cheap and easy, God's love is priceless but hard) (mentioned 35 times in the NT)

- Physical Intimacy before Marriage
- Physical Intimacy outside of Marriage
- Homosexuality
- Bestiality
- Pedophilia
- Pornography
- Prostituton

When you buy into the world's definition of love, you fall into these types of sin.

The world's love is self seeking (what makes me feel the best).

The world's love chases a feeling that doesn't last instead up pulling their sleeves to build a relationship that does last.

Great marriages are not found. They're built.

Illustration - the lie of the world and Hollywood is that if you look hard enough you'll find the perfect person that completes you and that you'll never have conflict. It's a lie. It's a lie. It's a lie, and it's a lie that leads to the sin of the world's love.

The world's love is conditional.

The world's love is unforgiving.

The world's love is self centered.

The world's love is a cheap counterfeit for God's design for marriage.

Illustration - Every parent of a teenager in the room ought to have their kids read Tim Keller's book *The Meaning of Marriage*. When you follow God's design for marriage the statistics show that those relationships flourish and they're happier in the long run.

Apart from money, the world craves and idolizes love.

Uncleanness - it's used 11 times. The first time it was used by Jesus to speak of the rottenness, of the filth and decay, of a body in a tomb. The next 10 times it's used, it is connected with sexual evil. It means the vile, rotten, stench that goes with sexual sin.

Covetousness - greediness

Exodus 20:17 - Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

People in our society covet other people's wives. They covet other women. They covet women they see on TV, or the movies, or ads, or magazines, or books, or whatever.

Let it not once be named among you - not one time

As becometh saints - "holy ones"; How could holy ones be characterized by unholy love, unholy lust, selfish, conditional and unforgiving.

C.) Talk Like God Does

4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Not only are you not to do it. You're not even to talk about it.

Filthiness - general obscenity

When you open your mouth, they ought to be the words that come from the mind of God, the heart of God, the lips of Jesus.

Foolish talking - "moros" stupid talk; Just filthy gutter talk, senseless, profitless words with a filthy connotation

Jesting - high obscenity

On the one hand, you've got the moronic stupidity of the drunken or the fool, who just talks filthy gutter talk; on the other hand, you've got the sophistication of the clever man, who's not stupid but who has a clever dirty wit, who can easily turn anything to have an innuendo.

Who would be a good example of that? Take your pick of any late night talk show host.

Giving thanks - thanks is the most unselfish thing you do. Instead of seeking selfish things - sexual fulfillment, uncleanness, coveting - instead of indulging in all these self-fulfilling things, stop, say thanks.

Eph. 4:29 - Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

We ought not to be dirty talkers. We ought to be thankful talkers.

What does it mean to be good? To be morally excellent?
Just live and love and talk like God does.

2.) The Reasons to Be Good (The Why)

A.) Consequences

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

If you live like that, you're not saved.

Oh, maybe there'll be a time when a believer falls into the sin of fornication (1 John 1:9), but that is not going to be the continuing characteristic of his life, without a break.

1 Cor. 6:9 - Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

Galatians 5:19-21 - 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

For because of these things - these are the very things for which God condemns people to hell. These are the characteristics of the children of disobedience.

Romans 1:18 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Partaker - partner

Don't join the world in evil.

B.) Identity

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Light is a symbol in the Bible used in two ways.

- Intellectually it is used to refer to truth.

- Psalm 119:105 - thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path
- 2 Cor 4:3-4 - 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
- Morally it is used to refer to righteousness.
 - 1 John 1:5-7 - 5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
 - Matthew 5:14-16 - 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
 - You are a light. So shine!

We need to live in accordance with our identity.

We have been made righteous, so live righteous.

We have been made holy, so live holy

We have been made a child of God, so live like a child of God

We have been made light, so live in the light

We need to live in accordance with our identity. That's not who we are any more!

Illustration - act your age! (Adult that acts like a kid; or a teen acting like a baby)

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

The children of light are made manifest by the fruit of light. There needs to be some fruit.

- The fruit of the Spirit is an evidence of a genuine believer.
 - Goodness - inherent goodness; moral excellence; virtue; this is the same word used in Galatians 5:22
 - If we are living in accordance with our identity (as we should be), we will see this
 - Righteousness - can refer to the state of being approved by God (salvation); can also refer to integrity, purity of life,

uprightness; points a little more towards our relationship with God

- Truth - honesty, genuineness, reliability as opposed to falsehood and hypocrisy

C.) The Father

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Proving - verifying

Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We ought to be a living verification of what is acceptable to the Lord. We ought to want to please our Father.

Illustration - kids that just want to please dad; watching a show where the sin did all kinds of heinous things trying to please his father.

We have a good Father, and we verify what is well pleasing to Him when we live good lives.

Application

Are you living a good life? God has commanded us to be good, to act like Him, to love like Him, to talk like Him.

Are you living the good life for the right reasons? Because our actions have consequences. Because of our identity as children of the light. Because we want to please our Father.

The Fruit of Faith

Hebrews 11:1-6

Sermon

Faith & Faithfulness are the same word in the Greek: "pistis".

There are 21 other usages of the word pistis in Galatians, and in every other instance, the word is translated faith (not faithfulness).

There are 243 usages of the word pistis in the New Testament. Of those 243, there are 3 instances in which most modern translations go with "faithful" instead of "faith".

- Matthew 23:23, Romans 3:3, and Galatians 5:22

So this evening we're going to be talking about the fruit of faith.

The faith that saved us should be lived out in the other areas of our lives.

Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ for my eternity. The fruit of faith is trusting in Christ for my day to day living.

As we study faith tonight, we're going to take a look at one of the greatest passages in the New Testament on the subject of faith: Hebrews 11.

Hebrews 11:1-6

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

1.) The Definition of Faith

1a Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,

A.) Faith is making a present substance out of a future reality

- The substance of things hoped for - Faith is making a present substance out of a future reality. The things we believe in or hope for don't have any present substance. They don't exist in any way, and yet faith gives them a present substance.
 - The past is forever gone. The future is not yet. All that is the present. And yet faith takes the future and makes it present and real.
 - Substance - the very essence
 - Just as Jesus is the very essence of the Father, so faith in the present is the very essence of the future things we hope for.
 - Have you experienced something before it actually happened?
 - Illustration - enjoying a vacation before you actually go on it (Disney World)
 - As Hebrews 11 shows, in Old Testament times there were many men and women who had nothing but the promises of God to rest on. God said there's coming a Messiah. There's coming One who will finally take away sin. God said there's coming a day when Israel shall have its own kingdom, when Messiah shall reign, and when the land shall be restored to Israel. Those things were all future, and yet their faith made a present reality out of them.
 - Illustration - you can taste the burger in a really good fast food commercial
 - Application
 - In salvation - hoping in Gods promise of eternal life
 - None of us have ever been to heaven, and faith allows us to live in light of it.
 - In daily living - hoping in Gods promises for daily living
 - Philippians 4:19
 - Proverbs 3:5-6
 - Matthew 6:32
 - Romans 8:28
 - Faith in daily living is trusting in God to keep his promises to us.
 - Illustration - every month we have bills to pay that we don't worry about. Why? Because our company has promised us that on the first month we will receive a check with our wages. Faith in Gods promises simply means trusting in God to write the check. It's making a present substance out of a future reality.

1b...the evidence of things not seen.

B.) Faith is living by conviction in the unseen

- The evidence of things not seen - Faith is the conviction that the unseen exists
 - Evidence - elegechos -> conviction
 - If I have the conviction that the unseen exists, I will act on that conviction. This implies action. Faith is living on the basis of things not seen.
 - Faith isn't just believing it. It's banking your life on it.
 - Illustration - having a surefire bet that you could make money on. What would you do? Imagine if you had one you could make every day. We have that in the Scriptures. Every day, there are things that you can do based on the Scriptures that will lead to eternal rewards. Do you believe that? Are you living like that?

- Application
 - What does it mean to live by conviction in the unseen?
 - In salvation - committing in faith to Christ
 - In daily living
 - Turning down a promotion because it'll take you out of church too much and you won't have much time with your family
 - Giving when you don't understand how it's all going to work out
 - Storing up treasures in heaven when you can't see them (as opposed to your IRA)
 - Loving or respecting your spouse as the Scripture commands even when you don't think it will do any good
 - Forgiving someone that's hurt you so bad
 - Staying faithful in Bible reading, prayer, church attendance when your world is falling apart
 - Obeying the Scripture when there is no reason to do so other than the promises of God
- Are you living by faith in the unseen?

And so we see the definition of faith. It is making a present substance out of a future reality, and it is living by conviction in the unseen.

2.) The Examples of Faith

A.) The Elders

2 For by it the elders obtained a good report.

- Elders - the Old Testament saints, the fathers of Israel, the greats that he names in this particular chapter
- Obtained a good report - God approved of them
 - They trusted in what they could not see. They banked their lives on it, and God approved.

B.) The Readers

3 Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

- Through faith we understand - In fact, all of us Jews already have faith. How so? In that we believe that God created the universe.
 - It's a matter of faith not sight. No one was there. No one saw.
 - In the beginning God created vs in the beginning nothing popped into existence uncaused
 - Illustration
 - Well who created God?
 - First off, the universe is different than God because the universe came into existence. Even the Big Bang admits that. It had a

beginning. We say that the universe needs a cause because it began to exist. God does not because He did not begin to exist.

- Second, this question is circular reasoning.
 - Anyone who's reasonable understand that there had to be a first domino. There had to be something that just existed...that was uncaused.
 - The question is not was there something that came first? Obviously there was. The question is what was that thing that came first? If someone asks me who created God, I respond with two questions. (1) Do you believe in a first domino? (2) If you do, and it's not the universe, then what would that first domino have to be like?
 - It would've had to of been uncaused otherwise it wouldn't be the first thing (by the way that rules out the universe since it began to exist).
 - It would have to be eternal
 - If it exists outside of the universe, it would have to be immaterial, timeless, spaceless.
 - It caused the universe, it would have to be incredibly powerful.
 - So the first domino would have to be uncaused, eternal, immaterial, timeless, spaceless, and incredibly powerful. And you've basically just described God.
 - It makes no sense to ask the question who created God. That's like asking what domino came before the first domino.
- Things which are seen were not made of things which do appear - creation ex nihilo "out of nothing"; God spoke and the universe came into existence
 - Faith means that we believe something without seeing it, but it doesn't mean that we believe something without evidence.
 - In fact I believe there is very strong evidence for creation and very strong evidence for the truth of Christianity.

C.) Abel

4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

- The whole point of the chapter is to let the Jewish people know that salvation by faith is not something new. It is something very old. In fact, it goes all the way back to Abel.
- He offered a better sacrifice
 - According to Genesis 4, there was a place to worship. There was a time to worship. And apparently there was a way to worship.
 - How do you know there was a way to worship?

- Abel knew the right sacrifice to bring. How could He have known if God hadn't told him?
- Cain knew the right sacrifice to bring. Why would God have rejected his sacrifice unless it was brought as an act of self will and defiance.
- By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain - Faith in what? Faith in the revelation of God . He acted in obedience by faith to the revealed Word of God about how to worship.
 - The sacrifice was better because it was what God said to do.
 - The sacrifice was better because it was a blood sacrifice.
 - Cain didn't recognize the need for atonement. He's the originator of false religion. Abel accepted God's prescribed pathway to Himself. Cain tried make up his own way to God.
 - Illustration - God throwing someone a lifesaver and someone saying no thank you. How about you come over here in a row boat instead.
 - Application - you can't pick and choose what you believe and where you're going to follow Jesus. That's false religion. Faith says whatever God's word says, that's what I'm going to do.
- He was declared righteous by God
 - by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts
 - When we understand our own sinfulness and accept in faith the provision for sin made by God, our sins are forgiven, and God declares us righteous.
- He became a model of faith
 - And by it he being dead yet speaketh
 - Through faith, though he's dead, he still speaks. In what sense does he speak? He speaks to us about the necessity of faith, believing God.

D.) Enoch

5 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Abel illustrates worship by faith. Enoch illustrates walking by faith.

All we see in the Genesis account of Enoch is his works, his walking with God. But what the author of Hebrews is going to show us that his works were preceded by faith.

- By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death and was not found, because God had translated him - He didn't die. He was just gone to be with the Lord. Why did God take him to heaven?
- For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God - he was translated because he pleased God. How did he please God?

Genesis 5:21-24 - And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

- How did he please God? There's only one thing Genesis 5 tells us about Enoch. He walked with God. He pleased God by walking with Him. He had a real daily relationship with God. He lived a righteous life.
- How do you know that his walk pleased God? Because God took him. He went straight to be with the Lord. He never died. He's a wonderful example of living righteously and having a day by day relationship with God. And yet look at verse 6 of Hebrews 11.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

- But without faith it is impossible to please him - You can not walk with God and have a relationship with God and live righteously without what? Faith. How do you know that?
- For he that cometh to God must believe that He is - You can't walk with God if you don't believe in Him! You must believe that He is. That God, the God who claims to be God, is God. But you must not only believe that...
- And that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him - You cant walk with God if you don't believe that it's possible to have a personal relationship with Him...or that God rewards those who seek a personal relationship with Him.
 - Deism vs Theism
 - Even in the life of Enoch who is a wonderful example of walking with God, we see that faith came first. Faith was the foundation.

Application

We see the definition of faith and we see the examples of faith. Are you living by faith?

Are you living like heaven is real and the Word of God is true?

Are you following only the parts of the Word of God that make sense to you? Or are you living in obedience by faith to the whole counsel of the Word of God?

The Fruit of Meekness

Galatians 6:1-6

Review

When we are following the Holy Spirit as He directs us in accordance with the Word of God, we will see the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Love - selfless action

Joy - bringing back into remembrance how blessed I am in Christ

Peace - surrendering my worries to God

Longsuffering - allowing God to judge

Gentleness - goodness expressed in action & compassion

Goodness - acting like God would

Faith - making a present substance out of a future reality; expressed in living by conviction in the unseen

Sermon

1.) The Command to Restore

Galatians 6:1-6 - 1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. 2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. 3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. 4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

Illustration - ECO Challenge team where the one person got heatstroke; no man left behind

A.) Who restores?

1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one

Brethren - he's talking to believer

Overtaken - surprised (like in a trap) - have you ever had that happen to you? Where you just fell into sin?

Fault - sin

Those who need to be restored are believers that fall into sin. Who does the restoration?

Ye which are spiritual - who are the spiritual? Look at the context.

Galatians 5:16-17, 22-24 - 16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would...22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. 24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

The spiritual are those who walk in the Spirit. They obey the Word of God as the Spirit directs them to it. They exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. These are the ones to be involved in the restoration process. Here's why? Fleshly have no business being involved. They blow up the restoration process. Before you go confront a believer that's fallen into sin (for the purpose of restoration), you need to check your own eye for the sin in your life.

- You need love for others not self concern
- You need to be a peacemaker not a problem causer
- You need to be longsuffering not short tempered
- You need to offer compassion not criticism
- You need to have faith in God's ability to restore your brother, not cynicism

Romans 15:1 - We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

- We have older believers in our church and newer believers in our church, and the two are meant to compliment one another.

B.) How do we restore?

restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Restore - mends something that is broken

When things are broken, we don't throw them away. We fix them.

Illustration - married couple that stayed together for 60+ years

We need that mentality with our fellow believers.

When people are broken, we don't throw them aside. We help mend them. How do we do that?

We help people see their sin and call them to repent and confess that sin before the Lord.

1.) In meekness

In the spirit of meekness

Galatians 5:22-23 - 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Meekness - Gentle strength; power with reserve; demonstrating power without undue harshness; connected with humility

Illustration - your brother has a fly on his head. In your right hand, you have a hammer. In your left hand, you have a fly swatter. Meekness is using the fly swatter even though you have the hammer.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 - 24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Trapped people need help not hammers. They need gentleness, not grandstanding. They need meekness, not meanness.

2.) In humility

Considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.

- Consider how you would want to be treated if you were in his shoes.
- Be careful not to fall into the same sin that you are restoring your brother from.

1 Cor 10:12 - Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall

C.) Why do we restore?

1.) We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourself

2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Burdens - heavy loads

The law of Christ - love your neighbor as yourself

Galatians 5:13-14 - 13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Illustration - group of people coming together to lift a car off of a trapped person; the church is meant to help rescue trapped people not gossip about them

Restoration & gossip are the opposite of one another.

- Restoration talks to the trapped person; gossip talks about the trapped person
- Restoration is all about them; gossip is all about me
- Restoration restores fallen brothers; gossip sends them out the back door
- Restoration forgives and rejoices; gossip brands and remembers

If you love your neighbor as yourself, you will seek to restore them. You will not gossip about them.

Church discipline is a restoration process.

- One goes
- One + witnesses go
- The church goes
- The fallen brother is sent out and treated as an unbeliever

2.) We are no better than those who fall

3 For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

Illustration - watching Wipeout and laughing at the people who fall. How do you think you would do?

One of the chief reasons we don't stop to pick up somebody else is that we feel better than they are.

When you think you're something when you're nothing, you deceive yourself because, you may be more sophisticated and more polished but you're no better than any other sinner before God, apart from the blood of Christ.

2 Cor. 3:5 - Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

2.) The Command to Examine

A.) Who examines?

4 But let every man prove his own work,

Prove - examine

It's your responsibility to examine your own life, to be sure your attitudes are right before you try to help bear someone else's burden.

Illustration - on an airplane secure your own mask before assisting someone else with theirs; take the thing out of your eye before helping someone else with what's in there's

Who examines? Every man needs to examine his own life.

B.) Why examine?

and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. 5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

1.) You can rejoice in God's work in you

and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

You're not rejoicing in your own greatness.

You're not rejoicing in your own abilities.

Rather, you're rejoicing in God's working through you.

In me dwells no good thing. It's the Spirit of God dwelling in me.

Luke 18:11 - The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

2.) You are first responsible for yourself

5 For every man shall bear his own burden.

You are responsible for resisting temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

You are responsible for walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25)

You will stand before God one day alone (2 Cor. 5:10)

2 Cor. 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Application

You need to examine yourself. How's your life? How's your sin? Are you able to rejoice in how God is working in you?

You need to be a restorer, not a gossiper.

When you restore, it needs to be done in meekness (strength without harshness)
(confrontation in love)

The Fruit of Self Control

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Sermon

In the first 14 verses of this chapter, Paul gives 6 reasons why he had the right to be supported by the churches to whom he ministered.

1. He was an apostle (vs. 1-6)
2. It is customary to pay workers (vs. 7)
3. It is according to God's law (vs. 8-11)
4. Other leaders exercise the right (vs. 12)
5. It is the universal pattern (vs. 13)
6. Jesus ordained it (vs. 14)

He starts off the chapter talking about his rights. I have this right to be financially supported, and here are six reasons why.

In verses 15-27, Paul goes on to show how our love for others can sometimes limit our Christian liberty (rights). He talks about how even though he had the right (liberty) to be supported financially by the churches he ministered to, he had decided to not take support.

He personally gives two reasons why he had chosen to limit his liberty in this regard.

1. He wanted to be able to just preach the gospel freely to people (vs. 16-18)
2. He wanted nothing to hinder his reaching the lost with that gospel (vs. 19-27)
 - a. Paul reached the lost through self denial (vs. 19-23)
 - b. Paul reached the lost through self control (vs. 24-27)

1.) Paul reached the lost through self denial

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

- For though I be free from all men - as far as his rights and liberty were concerned, he was free from all men. He didn't have to change the way he acted around them.
- Yet have I made myself servant unto all - even though he was free from all men, he had figuratively become like a slave to all in restricting his rights and liberty.
 - He would change his habits, his preferences, his entire lifestyle if any of those things causes someone to stumble, to be offended, or to be hindered from faith in the Lord. Why?

- That I might gain the more - he just wanted to see people saved. He practiced self denial in restricting his rights and liberties because he just wanted to see people saved.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

- Unto the Jews I became as a Jew..to them that are under the law as under the law - within Scriptural limits he would be as Jewish as necessary when working with Jews. Why?
- That I might gain the Jews...that I might gain them that are under the law - Whether it was abiding by ceremonial regulations, observing a special day, or refraining from eating certain foods, Paul was willing to do those things if it would help win those who are under the Law. It was a way of opening doors to spread the gospel among the Jews.
- Illustration - trying to reach a Muslim friend and not ordering a pulled pork sandwich

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

- To them that are without the law, as without law - Paul was willing to live like a Gentile when he worked among Gentiles.
- Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ - To keep from being misunderstood, he makes it clear that he is not talking about ignoring or violating God's moral law. The ten commandments and all of God's other moral laws have, if anything, been strengthened under the New Covenant.
 - Every believer is under obligation to Jesus Christ.
 - But in other matters that didn't violate Scripture, Paul identified as closely as possible with Gentile customs so as to win the Gentiles to Christ. No doubt, he went where they went, ate what they ate, dressed as they dressed for the purpose of opening doors to spread the gospel among them.
- Illustration - in our context those without the law might be those who are unbelievers.
 - Look for opportunities to connect with people where they're at. What are they interested in? Sports, Quilting, Arts, etc.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

- Weak - literally means strengthless; can refer to physical weakness, spiritual weakness, mental weakness, and I think that's what it's talking about here. For those who had trouble understanding the gospel, Paul was willing to get down on their level and no doubt go over it again and again and again.
- I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some - Paul would never change the message of the gospel, but he was willing to change how he lived and delivered it if it would bring some to Christ.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

- And this I do for the gospel's sake - he practiced self denial for the sake of reaching people with the gospel.

- That I might be partaker thereof with you - those who were saved were made partakers of the blessings of salvation, and that would be a matter of joy that he would share with the believers in Corinth.

2.) Paul reached the lost through self control

Self denial requires self control.

Temperance - self control; dominion within; self mastery; the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions

1.) The Race We Run (life)

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

Illustration - The Isthmian games which were held at Corinth

- One of two great Greek athletic festivals (also Olympics)
- Contestants had to prove rigorous training for 10 months
- The last month was spent at Corinth with supervised daily workouts in the gym and athletic fields
- Paul uses the games to illustrate the faithful Christian life (it's an illustration)

Galatians 5:7 - Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

Philippians 2:16 - Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Hebrews 12:1 - Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Our life is like a race that we must run, and it's not a sprint.

- It's a marathon.
- It's not easy sometimes.
- It involves self denial
- It's a battle at times

2.) The Reason We Run (to win)

24 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

We run to win!

- They which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize - No one would train so hard for so long without intending to win. Yet out of the large number of runners, only one wins.
 - Illustration - Usain Bolt in the 100 meter dash
- So run, that ye may obtain - Run to win!
 - Does that mean that only one of us wins? No.
 - A big difference between the Isthmian games and the Christian life is that we're not competing against one another.
 - We're competing against obstacles, distractions, trials, tribulations, ourselves.
 - Anyone who pays the price of training and runs their race can win their race.
- Temperate in all things - If the Isthmian athletes exercised such great discipline and self control in their lives, why can't we do that?
- Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown - In the Isthmian games, the prize was a pine wreath.
 - The wreath represented fame, acclaim, and the life of a hero. But that fame and acclaim was just as temporary and mortal as the wreath they put on their heads.
- But we an incorruptible - we don't run our race for something as temporary and meaningless as a crown or fame.
 - We run to receive an incorruptible crown.
 - 2 Timothy 4:7-8 - I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
 - 1 Peter 1:4 - To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,
 - 1 Peter 5:4 - And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
 - Our reward is valuable and unperishable (everlasting), and yet our heavenly reward requires self control (temperance) just as the corruptible crown does.
 - The immediate context here is in reference to soulwinning, and yet Paul is using the race as a broader illustration of the Christian life.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

- Uncertainly - without aim
 - Paul had a reason for running. He ran to win. He ran to reach the lost.

- Not as one that beateth the air - he wasn't just throwing punches for no reason. He had a purpose. There was a fight he was trying to win, a race he wanted to run.

Philippians 3:14 - I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

James 1:12 - Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Revelation 2;10 - Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Revelation 3:11 - Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Application - some of us men really need to have this winning mentality (I don't like to lose! We need to have that mentality with our faith)

- I am not going to let my marriage fall apart
- I am not going to fall into this sin
- I am not going to be a harsh parent to my kids
- I am going to spend time in the Word of God and prayer
- I will run my race

How do you win the race?

3.) The Requirement to Run (self control)

25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

Temperate in all things - Every good thing we accomplish—whether in learning, business, artistic skill, marriage, spiritual living, witnessing, or whatever—is accomplished through discipline and self-control.

- Want to be great at work, what do you do? Discipline yourself.
 - Get up early.
 - Get there on time.
 - Work hard.
 - Develop yourself.
 - Get training.
 - Build relationships.
 - Climb the ladder.
- Want to be great in education, what do you do? Discipline yourself.

- Want to be a great athlete, what do you do? Discipline yourself.
 - Restrict sleep with early mornings.
 - Workouts.
 - Diets.
 - Running.
 - No pain, no gain.
- If every other area of our lives take discipline and self control to grow in, then why would our spiritual growth be any different?
 - Too many Christians are willing to have a plan and discipline themselves for sports, work, hobbies, but they won't do it for their walk with God.
 - That's a shame.
 - We need to have a mentality of discipline and a plan of action.

26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:
 27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

- But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection - Paul says, "Hey I'm not fighting the air. I'm not fighting nothing. I've got an enemy that I'm exchanging blows with. You know who it is? Myself."
 - I fight my body.
 - I make it my slave. My body is not the master or me. I am the master of my body.
 - When it comes to spiritual things, are you the master of your body? Or is your body the master of you?
 - Reading your Bible (I don't like reading)
 - Prayer (I'm too tired)
 - Sharing the gospel (I'm not a people person)
 - Loving your spouse (It's not easy)
 - Parenting your children (I don't know what I'm doing)
 - Living righteously; living out the fruits of the Spirit
 - We have to do it in his strength.
 - Have a mentality of discipline.
 - Have a plan of action.
 - Ask God every day for help.
 - Illustration - tapping into the power of the engine to make the car go
 - Those who cannot control themselves are weak!
 - Doesn't matter how much you lift, how much money you have, how successful you are, how many degrees you have.

Why is it so important to be disciplined and have self control?

- Lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway -
 - Castaway - disqualified; failing the test; worthless
 - This is another illustration from the Isthmian games.

- A contestant who failed to meet the training requirements was disqualified. He could not even run, much less win.
 - Paul did not want to spend his life preaching the requirements to other and then be disqualified for not meeting the requirements himself.
 - You can't win the race and the spiritual rewards that accompany it, if you don't have self control.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 - I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Application

Are you running to win the spiritual race that is before you? What's your mentality like?

We are disciplined in so many different areas of our lives.

Are you disciplined in your spiritual race?

- Do you have a plan of action?
- Are you relying on God's power?
- Are you disciplining yourself daily in spiritual habits?