



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Philippians, Colossians, Philemon Sermon Series
Supports Session 11: The Gospel Lived
Sermon Title: Walking Daily in the Spirit
Passage: Galatians 5:16-26

Connection to Colossians 3:1-17

Believers in both Galatia and Colossae were taught to shun their old inclinations and learn to walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit indwelling them.

Introduction/Opening

Robert Louis Stevenson penned *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In the story, a London lawyer investigates the interaction between the kind, generous Dr. Henry Jekyll and the evil, cruel Mr. Edward Hyde. The story develops as Dr. Jekyll voluntarily takes a potion that changes him into Mr. Hyde. In the story, Dr. Jekyll eventually loses control to his dark side and only the evil Mr. Hyde remains.

Paul warned that a war raged within the heart of every believer. The opposing sides were fleshly desires and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. While the flesh threatened deprivations, the Spirit promised joy and peace. The choice of the believer is simple: Say no to the flesh, yielding to the Holy Spirit instead.

Outline

1. Our split dispositions
 - a. Paul warned believers that they possess a “flesh” or old fallen nature that continues after their salvation experience. The Holy Spirit comes to live within every believer as a gift of our salvation (Acts 2:38-39). The flesh desires what is contrary to the Holy Spirit within us, and vice-versa. Thus, in every believer there is an ongoing war of desires.
 - b. A sad truth of the Christian experience is that many are unaware of this contest within. Some believe once a person is saved the disciple naturally grows into a mature believer as evidenced by abundant good fruit. Sadly, we see the truth of stunted Christian growth and how some believers are reclaimed by the world.
 - c. Thankfully we have God’s promise that our old fleshly identities have been crucified with Jesus (Gal. 2:20; 5:24), and the power of the cross for us renders our old selves powerless as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit living within us.

2. Our split decisions
 - a. For the Holy Spirit living in us to prevail, we must cooperate with Jesus and make daily split decisions saying, “No” to our flesh and “Yes the Holy Spirit living in us and prompting us.
 - b. The split decision we face is between the distorted desires of the flesh (Greek: *epithumian sarkos*) and the Spirit (Greek: *pneumatos*). Literally the flesh lusts against the Spirit. This is the lust of our old fallen nature. The contest is between what we “will” or “want” (Greek: *thelete*) and the Spirit’s “leading.” Jesus charged His followers to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Him (Matt. 16:24-25).
 - c. We have the assurance that because of the cross our old nature is disabled and the Spirit is empowered by the promised presence of our Good Shepherd.
3. Our split destinies
 - a. Paul warned that those who practiced the works of the flesh would not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - b. We reap the “works” of the flesh by following our old natures such as immorality, envy, jealousy, and similar miseries. These works destroy relationships and quench happiness and joy.
 - c. The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, and self-control. These relationship-nurturing qualities prompt happy homes and joyful lives.
 - d. The choice is clear but not automatic. Choices are made daily as we “walk” in the Spirit. These are manageable steps we make each day as we live in the strength of the Lord with the declining presence of our fallen natures.

Conclusion

Paul challenged the Philippians, declaring: “Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things” (Phil. 4:8) We would be wise to follow Paul’s directive.

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