

Winning the War Within

Galatians 5:16-17; 24-25

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

I. Step In the Right Direction

Walk- to conduct one's life, to behave, to live in a certain manner based on a principle or power

"Walk by the Spirit"- To live one's life under the continual influence, direction, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, making Him the governing principle of all behavior, desires, and decisions.

Flesh- human nature that operates independently of God and resists the Spirit's guidance demonstrated through selfish desires, moral weakness, and spiritual opposition to divine will.

1. Our choices should be influenced and empowered by God ^{v.16}

- A. God wants to be considered AND consulted in every decision not just the big ones
- B. God wants your commitment to be habitual, not optional or aspirational (meter)

2. Dependence on God eliminates distractions ^{v.17}

- A. Passions have the power to shape behavior and who you become
 - Desire dictates your direction
- B. Independent desires might appear passive, but they are active
 - Our cravings for independence must be kept in check
 - Growth comes when we give those cravings to God, not when we give in to them
 - The flesh desires," "opposes," and "produces."
 - The obvious: Desires of the flesh that defile us
 - Less obvious: Trying to do God's will, our way
- C. Reliance on God MUST be intentional and exclusive
 - Wage war on immediate gratification
 - Resist the instinct to depend on anything other than God
 - Feelings vs. faith, impulse vs. obedience, comfort vs. calling

²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

II. Righteous Resistance Will Bring Victory

1. Your Life Does Not Belong to You

- A. True belonging produces transformation.
 - Belonging is not earned, it's established by faith
- B. You can't belong to Christ and still be loyal to the flesh.
 - Ownership and allegiance are the foundation for discipline
 - Defines your boundaries
 - Molds your mindset

2. Discipline Prevents Self Destruction

- C. You're not called to manage sin, you're called to mortify it.
 - Crucifixion is a verdict and a vow
 - This is both a decisive act (salvation) and a daily practice (sanctification).