

How To Walk In The Holy Spirit

by Donny Coulter

This sermon delves into the importance of walking in the Spirit as outlined in Galatians chapter 5, verses 16 through 26. It emphasizes the contrast between walking in the Spirit and walking in the flesh, highlighting the need to yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit in order to fulfill the desires of God. The sermon challenges listeners to examine their lives and strive for a moment-by-moment, day-by-day walk in the Spirit, seeking the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit in all aspects of life.

Scripture: Galatians 5:16, Romans 8:14, Ezekiel 36:26, Romans 8:4, Romans 8:5, Romans 8:14, Galatians 5:18, Romans 8:1, Romans 8:3

Topics: "Walking in the Spirit", "Yielding to the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

We're in the middle of a series in Galatians, but a sub-series on walking in the Spirit, or walking by the Spirit, Galatians chapter 5, verses 16 through 26. So I've broken this down in about four sermons in terms of walking in the Spirit. Number one is what we talked about last week, that's a comparison of walking in the Spirit and walking in the flesh.

What's the difference? What's the difference between walking in the Spirit and walking in the flesh? Then the second thing that we're going to be talking about today then is what does walking in the Spirit mean? What does it mean? Next week, we're going to talk about how do I get there? How do I get there? Now, I hope that you are prepared in that as you listen to these sermons, that you are listening with the desire and the need for God to do something in your life. I want you to know this last week, as I have studied and prepared my own heart for this sermon, this particular sermon, and the next one, that I have spent a lot of time walking up and down the aisle or the lobby here, preaching to nobody, which seems kind of normal now, but preaching to nobody and crying a lot. God is placing in my heart a desire to be more like Christ, to be filled with His Spirit, to draw near to God so that He might draw near to me.

I hope that you are desiring the same thing. Next week, we'll talk about how do we get there. Then the next time we are together, we'll talk about what does it look like.

I got a question I want to start with this morning. I have a feeling that I know what your first reaction to the question is going to be, but I want you to think hard and think deep. Here's the question.

What if God were to remove the Holy Spirit from our lives and from our church? Would we know a difference? Would we know it? Would we actually know that God had taken the Holy Spirit right out? Would we know it? Now, again, our immediate reaction is, obviously we would know it, but be careful as you think through that and answer in a completely honest way. Let me make it more practical. If God were to remove His Spirit, would it change the way you approach and read the Scriptures? If God were to remove His Spirit, would it change your prayer life? Would your prayer life be different than it is now? Would your time in the alive words of God, would your time in this book, would it change? If God were to take away the Holy Spirit.

I believe, with all of my heart, I believe that God desires His best for our lives. I'm not talking about mediocre Christianity. I'm not talking about a Christianity that just gets by.

I'm talking about God desires for our walk with Him to be absolutely, completely, and fully satisfying. That every time that we enter into His presence, we experience the fullness of the God that has saved us. I believe that He wants us completely, fully satisfied in Christ and in this life right here.

I believe that God wants us to have His best, not His second best, not His third best. God wants us to have His best. And in having His best, I believe that He wants us to be fulfilled in this life completely.

No matter what your circumstances are around you, you are fulfilled. And here's what I'm not saying to you. I am not saying, I am not preaching a prosperity gospel.

That's what, I'm not preaching that. Here's what I'm saying. I'm saying that God wants His very best for you, even though the world falls on top of you, the houses fall in, your children are taken away, and every possession that you have is removed from you, that God still wants you to be fulfilled.

And the nice thing about this, the great thing about this is that God has provided all that we need in the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Did you know that? Did you know that God has provided all that you need to experience His very best, His fullness in the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit? He's provided that for us, so that we can have His best. No matter what our circumstances are around us, we have the Spirit of God living in us and we are following, walking in His leading.

By that we experience fulfillment and satisfaction. I heard a story this week. Robbie Zacharias writes in his book, *Jesus Among Other Gods*.

Robbie writes about going to the John Bunyan Pilgrim's Progress Museum. He goes in and they're enjoying all of the things that are there. It's the life of John Bunyan and they're touched by this, most of it centers around this book.

This mender of pots and pans, and writes this book that has such an incredible effect around the world. As a matter of fact, I would encourage you, if you haven't already, maybe sit down with your children and look at Revelation Media online. It's called Revelation Media and they have a cartoon version for kids of Pilgrim's Progress.

I've been intending for our family to watch it, I just haven't done that yet for them. We will now that I've said this. If you have a chance, sit down and watch.

Anyway, Robbie says that he's gone to this museum and they've just been blessed by this. They go up to the front and they're talking to the lady that sells the tickets to everybody. They say, man, what an incredible book and what an incredible place.

Isn't that book just amazing? The woman who sells tickets says, I don't know, I've never read the book. Here's what Robbie wrote. What a remarkable illustration of self-inflicted poverty.

It is possible to hold a treasure in the hand, but be ignorant of it, and go for the wrapping instead. This proximity to truth and distance from its worth is repeated innumerable times in our lives. In Chesterton's words, we hold the dust and we let the gold go free.

So my question, if God were to remove the Holy Spirit from your life and from the life of our church, would we know it? Because we are clinging so much to the wrappings and not to the treasure of the Holy Spirit. So that brings us then to Galatians chapter 5 and verse 16. Turn there with me if you will, Galatians 5, 16.

We're going to read together. Let's begin with verse 16 and then we'll pray. I say then, walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But, if you are led, if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like of which I tell you beforehand just as I have also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace. Joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Let's pray together. Father, I pray right now, may your Holy Spirit penetrate into every room, every home where this is being watched today.

And as He penetrates into that home, I pray, God, may Your Spirit have the freedom then to penetrate deep into every heart that would be listening. I pray that Your Spirit would be the teacher. I pray that He would teach us, teach us, oh God, what it means to walk in the Spirit.

I pray that He would teach us so much that there would rise up within us a longing, a finding that for our very own selves. I pray, oh God, that Your Holy Spirit do His work so much that when He's finished, we would raise our hands and say, I want to walk in the Spirit. Teach us, Spirit of the living God, teach us to follow You.

Teach us to walk in You, by You, in Your power, we pray, in Jesus' holy name, amen. So we want to talk about, then, the flesh. Now we're going to be concentrating on three sections of scripture this week.

And so I want you, as we open up to some of these scriptures, to kind of put your finger there or have a bookmark there, or however you do that electronically, I'd like you to do that. But we're going to be looking at Ezekiel chapter 36, Romans chapter 8, and back and forth in between those to Galatians chapter 5. First of all, we need to review just a little bit about the difference between those who are controlled by the Spirit, are walking in the Spirit, and those who are walking in the flesh. What exactly does it mean to walk in the flesh? What does it look like? Now I've tried again to have some slides available for you.

So the first slide that you're going to see is going to talk about the flesh. Let's talk about the flesh, and while that slide is coming up, let's look at Ezekiel chapter 36. Ezekiel chapter 36, we're going to be looking at verses 26 and 27, Ezekiel 36, 26, and 27.

Here's the promise of God, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone, you catching that? You'll see that on your slide, I will take the heart of stone, I will take it out, and look what he says, and I will give you a heart of flesh. I will give you a heart that is alive, that is pliable, that is living, I will give you that kind of heart, along with this new spirit, I'm going to give you a new heart.

And then verse 27, I will put my spirit within you and cause you, take note of that word, underline that word, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep, underline that portion, and you will keep my judgments, and do them. Now let's talk about this flesh, let's talk about, because if we don't understand the condition of the flesh, then we can never understand the power and the blessing of the spirit. So we want to look at the flesh, and what does it mean? Here's the first thing, we have a heart of stone, think about what that means.

A heart of stone, that is a cold, hard heart. Think about it for a moment, this is your heart, I've been speaking with some folks in my office about relationship difficulties, and one of the problems that we have in relationships that have had so much abuse, is that a heart becomes closed and hard, and it cannot feel anymore. And here you have, the scripture says that we have a heart of stone, this flesh is that old self-ego, it is arrogant, it is prideful, it does not and will not relish or yearn for the things of God.

As a matter of fact, Romans chapter 7 and verse 18 says, that in my flesh, in me, that is in my flesh, dwells nothing good. That's in me, that's in this flesh. Nothing dwells good there.

Take your Bible, if you would, and turn to Romans chapter 7, Romans chapter 7, and we're just going to read through some things that talk about this old self. Romans, I'm sorry, Romans chapter 8, I turned to 8, said 7, turned to 8, Romans chapter 8, look at verse 4, the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Do not walk, we do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Verse 5, for those who live according to the flesh, they set their minds on the flesh. Where's your mind? Where's your thoughts? Not bringing every thought into the captivity of Christ. When we're in the flesh, our mind is on fleshly things, our mind is concerned with all of our circumstances, everything that's going on around us, our mind is concerned with that, our mind is concerned with fulfilling those fleshly desires, those ungodly desires, that's where our mind is.

Keep reading. Verse 6, for to be carnally minded is death. There is in this flesh a spirit of death.

There is death, that means no life. We'll find out in a moment if you continue reading that, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Verse 7, because the carnal mind is enmity against God, it is hostile, hostile towards God.

There is a hostility in the flesh, there is a hostility against the God who loves us. How in the world then can we know the things of God when we have this hostile relationship with God? Now look at verse 8, oh I'm sorry, continue to verse 7. The carnal mind is enmity or hostile towards God, you ready? For it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. You see what he's saying? That when we are in the flesh, we will not, we do not submit ourselves to God.

We cannot. As a matter of fact, it's not just a will not. You notice how he ended that.

It is a cannot in the flesh. We cannot submit to God and His laws. See it's a pretty hopeless state.

And then he finishes that off by saying that you cannot, you cannot please God in the flesh. So then, verse 8, so then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Did you know in the flesh you can do good things, but those good things will not and are not pleasing to God because they are done in the flesh.

So, that's our flesh. Now I'm going to introduce to you the second slide. And the second slide, Ben, will show a pretty big difference between the two.

You'll see that our people are now spiritually clean. They are represented as white as snow. And now they have a new heart.

They have a heart inside of them. Let's look back now, back at Ezekiel chapter 36 and verse 26. Let's look at these verses one more time.

I will give you a new heart and I will put in you a new spirit. I will put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh, not the kind of flesh that we just described, but a living heart.

A soft, pliable, living heart. I will give this, I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will keep my judgments. Did you know, here's the beautiful thing about this.

The beautiful thing about this is that God has sent his Holy Spirit to dwell inside of us. Listen, you don't need more of the Holy Spirit. You didn't get a piece of the Holy Spirit when God sent him to dwell inside of you.

You didn't just get a fingertip of the Holy Spirit. You received the Spirit of God. You received the whole same Spirit of God that the apostles received on the day of Pentecost.

Did you know that? That might scare us a little bit if we're not careful, like we talked about last week. But I want you to know that we have received that same Spirit and the same powers. As a matter of fact, if you keep reading in Romans, it says that in dwelling in us is the same Spirit with the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

Living inside of me and you. That should make us think just a little bit. That the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is living inside of us.

Because he lives inside of us, see here's the great promise of the New Testament. God in the Old Testament says, I'll walk with you, I'll walk with you. But in the New Testament he says, I'm going to live in you.

I'm not going to walk with you, I'm going to live in you. I'm going to make you my dwelling place. Not just the place that I hang around, but the place that I live.

That's the promise of the New Testament. And because the Spirit lives in us, we, Romans, let's turn back to Romans now. Romans chapter 8. Because of that Spirit that lives in us, there is, verse 1, there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, the other praise that we presented, but they walk according to the Spirit.

For the law of the Spirit of Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. I'm free from the law of sin and death. Because of the promise of the Spirit coming and dwelling in me, I'm free from the law of sin and death.

I am now, look at verse 5, I'm sorry, verse 3. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did. God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. On the account of sin, He condemns sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us.

That's you. That's me. That the righteous requirement of the law, that thing that we've talked about in Galatians, that put us down and made us feel horrible and separated us from God, that law, He says that when the Holy Spirit comes and lives inside of us, we now can fulfill the righteous requirements of the law because the Spirit lives inside of us.

And because, that's the reason why there's no condemnation. Think about that for a second. That's the reason why there's no condemnation in Christ Jesus, because the Holy Spirit comes and lives inside of me, allows, empowers me and enables me to be able to fulfill the law.

If I'm fulfilling the law, then the law can't condemn me anymore, can it? That's why there's no condemnation. Back in Galatians chapter 5, in verse 18, we read, it says that those who are led by the Spirit, those who are led by the Spirit are not under the law. The reason why we are not under the law is because the Spirit of God has come and enabled us to be able to live the law.

Do you believe the Spirit of God is able to fulfill the law of God? Absolutely. The Spirit of God fulfills the law of God. And we, when we receive, when we are led by the Holy Spirit, we are led to the fulfillment of the law of God.

We're not talking about Ten Commandments. We're not talking about the Torah. We're talking about a heart that's changed.

And the heart that's changed begins to live out the very character of Christ. That's the law. See, when the Spirit comes, we are freed from the law.

We are not under the law. We are not under the condemnation of the law. The law says, you can't do it, you can't do it, you can't do it.

And if I'm in the Spirit fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law, then I am out from under the condemnation of the law. Then secondly, I am no longer under the law because I am not under its burden.

Listen, the law comes in and says, you have to do this, you have to do that, you have to do that.

And when I'm in the flesh, I don't want to do that. But because now I have the Spirit of God living inside of me and He's leading me, I have a want to do. And the law doesn't have to tell me to do it.

The Spirit of God leads me to do it. So, we can live, Romans 8, verse 5, we can live according to the Spirit. We can fulfill the desires of God.

When we are in the Spirit, we have life and peace. Flesh is death, the Spirit is life and peace. You do not forget this because it's going to be so important if we do not grasp a hold of this concept, we will never be able to walk in the Spirit.

You are the dwelling place of the Spirit of God Almighty. Now, we have this command to deal with, walk by the Spirit. So our thing today is, what does it mean to walk by the Spirit? Now that I know that I have the Spirit of God and the changes that He's brought along with His presence, I need to be walking in the Spirit.

Let's look at Galatians, now I'll turn back to Galatians, chapter 5, and look with me then, we'll start with verse 16, I say then, walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh, for the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and these are contrary to one to the other so that you do not do the things that you wish, but if you are led by the Spirit, you are no longer under the law, led by the Spirit. What does it mean, led by the Spirit? If the above is true, if what we just talked about is true, if all of those things that you saw on that slide are true about us and about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, then we have to believe that living inside of us is the Spirit of God that will only speak of Christ. Did you know, do you remember, that's what Jesus taught, that I'm going to go and send the Comforter and when the Comforter comes, He will only speak of me.

He knows, we talked about these last week, He knows the deep things of God. He will only do the things that are pleasing to the Father. He is a part of the Godhead.

He is God the Spirit. He will only do the things that are pleasing to the Father. Back in Ezekiel chapter 36 and verse 27 it says that I will put My Spirit, a new Spirit in you and I will cause you, remember I told you to underline that word, I will cause you to walk in My ways.

Here's what I believe that means. I believe that means that He will lead us, He will lead us, cause to lead you to walk in My paths, He said. So the Spirit of God comes to lead us.

Dana stole my thunder when she talked about the calf. The other night we had a calf that was not sucking and he had gone for about a little over a day and a half without sucking and I think he came out a little dumb and those that have calves know what I mean. He was big and I think he spent a little too long in the canal so he came out a little bit dumb and so he just wasn't getting the idea of sucking.

So I had to bring Mom in and put her in the pen and watch for a little while thinking maybe that would help and he's out there and he's just skinny, just tiny but he's huge body but his belly was so small. And so we put him in there and he screamed and he screamed and he screamed and so finally that evening I come back and I realize I've got to do something, he's not catching on. And I've never done this before so I didn't know what to do so I called a couple people but I had a thought in my mind, I'm going to get a bottle and I'm going to feed him with a bottle and then lead him to Mom and have him sitting right there beside.

Now I've got to tell you I am not the Holy Spirit and so the first time I tried to get this calf to latch on I was not walking in the Spirit. The feelings that I experienced were not those of walking in the Spirit but the second time when we came back, when I came back with a pretty good plan, I had the milk ready and we brought this cow into the chute and we pulled the palpation cages up, the bottom of the chutes up and we had access to Mom and I brought the calf over and I gave him that milk and he finally started sucking on the bottle, he got it, he understood and he started to receive that nourishment and it was good for him and all of a sudden his little tail started to do this and he's really getting in and he's taking in this bottle as hard as he can and I took the bottle away and then I led him to his Mama and we took the teats and we put it towards him and helped him and he didn't catch on, he wasn't quite catching on still so we put the bottle back in and then we put him back over on Mom and pretty soon he was catching on, leading him to the spot. The Holy Spirit is exactly like that in our lives, He leads us, He does everything that the Father wants and so we are able then to fulfill, He's able to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law because He's the Spirit of God and He leads us in that.

The Spirit of God leads you and I just like we led that little calf to the place of nourishment from his mother. The Holy Spirit leads that way, that's His job, that's what He does. Romans chapter 8 and verse 14, for those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God, are the sons of God.

Galatians 5 and verse 18, but if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law, the Spirit's job, what He does is He leads, He says come on, come on Donny, come on, He's leading us into the things of God. Now, our then, our part of this is just learning to walk and follow the Spirit, walk by in the Spirit of God as He leads, He's leading us, He has, we talked about last week, He has no vices, He has all the patience in the world that He needs, He's not addicted to pornography, He's not addicted to adultery, He's not addicted to stealing, He's not addicted to anything, He's addicted to the righteousness of God, and so we are, He's leading us in that way and our part of this is learning to walk in that obedience. Now, we're going to introduce now the third slide that shows you, like, much like last week, there is a flash point between the two.

You have the heart of stone and you have the new heart and those two are contrary one to the other. Are you ready? Now listen, the Spirit desires, it has a whole set of different desires, contrary desires, different desires that are not pleasing to God, okay? So you've got the flesh that has its desires and you have the Spirit that has His desires. And walking in the Spirit comes down to this, His desires ruling in my life.

When I begin to come to this place in my life where His desires are ruling in my life, not its desires ruling in my life, but His desires ruling in my life, is exactly what it means to walk in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit means that I have come to the place where the desires of the Spirit are more than the desires of the flesh. Now this only happens, it can only happen in my life and in your life if we are willing to yield to His rule.

If we are willing to yield to His leading. Listen, when it says, walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, when it says walk in the Spirit, it is a present tense command, walk in the Spirit. You know what that means? That means moment by moment, day by day, every second.

Now you remember when I said about God pulling out the Holy Spirit, we know there is a difference. Every moment, there should not be a second in the life of the Christian that is not Spirit led, in which we are not walking in the Spirit. There should not be a second.

That is what it means to walk in the Spirit. You talk about revival, I believe that is what revival is. When we find a place where we move all of that stuff out of the way, when we move everything that has hindered us

up to this point, we move it all out of the way and we begin to follow the Spirit moment by moment, day by day, every day, following the Spirit of God.

It is a day to day, moment by moment, recognition of the presence and the power of the Spirit of God inside of us. That is what we need. We are in desperate need of people that will do that very thing.

I know it is pie in the sky. I know it is asking a lot, but God has called us to a higher plane. We will talk a little more about that next week.

God has called us to a higher plane. He has called us to a higher place. If He has called us to a higher place, don't you think He wants the best for us? If He wants the best for us, then why in the world would we not pursue that moment by moment, day by day? Guess what? You are going to mess up on that.

I promise you, you are going to mess up on that. I mess up on it so much. I remember this week going out and hanging out with those cows and something not working right.

The fences were down and a cow got out. I got so frustrated trying to fix a fence. There was this feeling of frustration and anger welling up inside of me.

But there was also the presence of the Holy Spirit that instantly pricked my heart. When He did, I said, Spirit of the Living God, lead me. I want you to know it works.

I want you to know it works. He works. When you ask, He works.

But we have got to be willing to step away from our own flesh, self-ego, pride, unwillingness to submit and submit to Him, yield to Him. Now next week I want to talk to you about how in the world can we do that? How in the world can we do it? Here is my challenge to you today. Will you like me take a close examination of your own life? Look deep inside.

Look at your practical Christian living. Look at how you read God's Word. Look at how you read God's Word.

Look at how you sing worship songs. Look at how you give. Look at how you love your wife or your husband.

Look at how you parent your children. How much of that do you do in the ability of the flesh? And how much of it do you do by walking in the Spirit? Take a close look. I believe if you are like me, you won't like the answer very much.

I am praying that our God will revive us and give us a sense of need of this that will drive us to follow Him in everything we do. Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your Word this morning.

I pray that as it goes out, may it do its work. I pray that You take feeble words from feeble human lips. May You empower them by Your Holy Spirit and may You use them to glorify Yourself in the life of Your believers, of Your children.

Lord, I pray for that one this morning that has never made a decision, has never reached out in faith. I pray, O God, may You touch their lives and their hearts. May You convict them of sin.

May You help them see and understand their need of Christ and save them. Create in them, O God, a heart of faith so that they can reach out to You. Father, for us, I pray that we would be attentive, that You would develop within us a desire for You, a desire for the presence and the power of Your Holy Spirit, an experience of the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives on a daily basis.

Lord, for this work, we trust You because, God, it is Your work and Your work alone. It is not ours. God, may You do it now, I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Thank you. God bless you, and I hope that you have a wonderful week.

Come back next week ready to find out how in the world do we do this? How do we get to a place where we can walk in the Spirit? God bless you.

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