

## Study Guide for the Central Church of Christ

June 30, 2019

To Adult Teachers: June 30, we will study Galatians 5:13-26. Discussion questions are:

### Warm-Up/Icebreaker

What is your favorite fruit? How is the process of growing a fruit different from manufacturing a product? What would your favorite fruit look and taste like if someone (even a very smart someone) attempted to manufacture one rather than growing it?

### Scripture Reflection

Read Galatians 5:13-26

1. In verses 13-15, what particular way of using one's freedom to indulge the flesh (sinful nature) does Paul have in mind?
2. In verses 16-18, Paul speaks of a basic conflict in the Christian's life. What forces are involved in this conflict? How is this conflict a source of frustration for us?
3. Look at the acts of the flesh listed in verses 19-21. Which of these traits do you have the hardest time understanding? Which of these have you personally seen damage or destroy a loving relationship?
4. Look at the fruit of the Spirit in verses 22-23. Which of these are a struggle for you? In which of these do you believe you have grown the most over the past year? Why does Paul say that there is no law against these things?
5. What kinds of things could a person do to better "stay in step with the Spirit" (verse 25)?

### Sermon: *Led By the Holy Spirit*

Memory verse: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."  
2 Timothy 1:7

How many of you have a GPS in your car? What a great invention! Turn-by-turn directions. Start out on a long, cross-country trip without a map or a clear idea what route you will be taking. Trust that the box on the dash will let you know just when and where to turn, at just the right time.

Listening to a comedian who said he was in love with his GPS. Sweet, female voice. "Turn left, now." And if he misses a turn, *she* apologizes: "I'm sorry, missed turn. Recalculating route." Better than the female voice he normally listens to: "Where are you going? That was your turn back there! This isn't the way. Now you've done it. We'll never get there! We are lost! L-O-S-T, lost! You always do this!"

If you understand what a GPS does, you have a general idea of what the Holy Spirit does in the life of the believer. God gave us the HS as the voice that provides turn-by-turn directions through life. Who let us know when we've missed a turn, not with harsh condemnation, but with a matter-of-fact announcement that the route is being recalculated.

Read Galatians 5:16-25.

1. If you are led by the Spirit, it will be obvious. If you are not led by the Spirit, that will be obvious too. How can you tell if someone has the Holy Spirit?
  - a. Not
    - (1) speaking in tongues, or any other gift.
    - (2) Not the way a person talks—always talking about Jesus and throwing in a hallelujah periodically, or talking in spiritually superior terms, how you have the Spirit and others don't.

- (3) Not freedom from difficulty.
- b. Only one reliable indicator, but as Paul says, it's obvious: what characterizes a person's life as a whole. Works of the flesh vs. fruit of the Spirit.
  - (1) I've known people who have claimed to have Spirit, quick to point out that others are of the flesh, but lives characterized by hatred, rage, discord.
  - (2) I've known people who are fairly quiet. When they do speak, conversation is not peppered with holy language. But their lives characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
  - (3) What about you? Do you have the Spirit are you led by Him? Doug W.: "I don't know," but to those around him, it's obvious.
- 2. The Spirit will lead us! But first, a question: do you want to be led by the Spirit? Why wouldn't you?
  - a. Don't like asking for directions. Turn in your manhood. Pride. I can figure this out on my own. I don't need help. No GPS in familiar territory, but rely on it in big, unfamiliar cities. Same w/HS. But unless you are willing to listen to him all the time...
  - b. May not want to go where he leads. Matthew 4:1. "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." Whoa! We don't like the idea that HS could lead us into something that's hard, uncomfortable, or even painful. (People who don't pray for patience.)
  - c. The truth is, the HS will lead us to the cross...repeatedly. Galatians 5:24, "those who belong to Christ have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." Selfishness, dishonesty, fear, pride, inconsiderate attitudes. One of the roles of the Spirit is conviction and he will convict you of things that need to be taken to the cross.
- 3. So how do you let the Spirit lead you? It's a matter of responding to the right set of desires.
  - a. God made us with wants, desires, drives, hungers. Every single one of them is designed to bring us into intimacy with God. At every turn, listen to your God-given desires and drives and you'll automatically turn toward God.
  - b. Problem: another force has taken over our desires and turned them away from God. But the original longings, desires, hungers are still there. We don't listen to them, may have even lost the ability to listen to them. Example: physical hunger replaced by food as a source of comfort, escape from pain. Learn to listen to hunger again and eat *only* in response to it.
  - c. Sexual urges: calling to intimacy. Not calling to the strip clubs and into the arms of anonymous lovers. Men, calling you to be nice to the girl. Calling you to know and be known at the deepest level. What if that's not working for you? Ultimately, calling you to intimate relationship with God himself.
  - d. Cultivate hearing the voice of the Spirit through your desires. This is not easy. Galatians 5:17 – two sets of desires in conflict with each other. Life-long process. In any given situation, recognize the loud voices of the desires of the sinful nature and listen for the other voice.
    - (1) Ignore the selfish voice that says, "get what you want," listen for the voice that urges you to serve others.
    - (2) Stand firm against the voice of fear; listen for the voice that reassures you that you can do all things through Christ.
    - (3) Turn away from the voice that tells you that you need to shade the truth, listen to the voice that tells you to simply speak the truth.
    - (4) Turn down the volume on the channel that replays your hurts, resentments, disappointments, failures. Turn up the volume on the channel that speaks of the concerns of others.

Again, a life-long process, but not a reason not to engage. How do you know you're led by the Spirit? Next month, six months from now, look back at today and say, "I'm less ruled by my anger, my lust, my resentments, my jealousy and hurt feelings. I am more loving, more patient, kinder, more self-controlled." I am being led by the Holy Spirit! And so, the encouragement we receive from Scripture is to keep in step with the Spirit! (Galatians 5:25)

