

Lesson 9 - Galatians 5:16-26**Main Idea**

Now that we have been set free from the condemnation of sin and our consciences free from the guilt of sin, we as believers can conquer the desires of the flesh that constantly threaten us through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Study Questions

1. Describe the conflict believers have with the flesh.
2. Compare and contrast this passage with what Paul says in Romans 7:13-25.
3. What does it mean to daily “crucify the flesh” (vs24) and how do we do it?
4. What means or method does this passage teach for becoming like Christ? In what aspects do we not become like Christ?
5. How does this passage relate to the sections before and after it (5:13-16 and 6:1-10)?
6. From your own experience, describe what it means to live by the desires of the sinful nature.
7. By contrast, explain what you think it means to live by the Spirit. (See also Romans 8:5-14).
8. What does the metaphor of “fruit” (5:22) in contrast to “acts” (5:19) tell about the way these good traits become a part of your life? (see also John 15:1-8)

9. Paul brings up the concept of “law” again in 5:23. What is his point to the legalistic Galatians?
10. What is the solution to the conflict between the sinful nature and the Spirit (see 5:24-25)?
11. What is the connection between our walk with the Spirit and our walk with one another (see 5:25-26)?

Theological Soundings¹

The Freedom of the Spirit. These verses provide a concrete picture of what the Spirit-led freedom of divine sonship looks like, and it is significantly different from the modern-day freedom of autonomy. “I get to do whatever I want” is not freedom, but slavery. Submitting to our selfish desires brings us to loneliness, shame, and despair. True freedom involves the choice to forgo what one naturally desires and to joyfully serve others out of love. Nowhere is this freedom seen more clearly than in the person of Christ, “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant” (Phil. 2:6-7). We live free as Christ is formed in us.

Personal Reflection

- What stood out to you most in this study? Why?
- In what ways are you tempted to disobey verse 26? Stop and pray for the Spirit’s work in you to avoid this sin. List ways you might instead love and serve others.

¹ Zeigler pg. 73