

## ✓ 1. First Summary of the Sermon

This sermon, based on **Galatians 5:13-6:10** with a **focus on Galatians 5:16-18**, calls believers to live free in Christ by relying on the Spirit rather than indulging the desires of the flesh. Paul contrasts the acts of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit, showing that true Christian life cannot be sustained by law-keeping but only by the Spirit's power.

The message unfolds in three movements:

1. **Living by the Spirit**, means being born again into the new life Christ provides;
2. **Walking by the Spirit**, is the daily forward motion of a disciple who deliberately follows God's way;
3. **Being led by the Spirit**, means allowing God to direct every step, shaping our choices, and aligning our desires with His will. (Think: yielding to God, and/or: obeying God)

Pastor Philip explains how desires -- whether physical, emotional, material, or even spiritual -- can either entice us toward sin, **or be transformed by delighting in the Lord.**

**Scripture teaches that God replaces sinful desires with holy ones when we set our hearts on Him.**

**As we submit our minds and desires to God, we are called:**

- to eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit,
- to pursue the fruit of the Spirit, and
- to live in practical, God-glorifying obedience.

**The application is personal: each believer must**

- examine their own desires,
- surrender them to God, and
- ask Him to realign their heart with His.

**This leads to freedom, holiness, and a life worth living.**

This sermon emphasizes that Christian freedom is not for indulging the flesh but for serving one another humbly in love. Paul contrasts the destructive works of the flesh with the life-giving fruit of the Spirit, urging believers to live, walk, and be led by the Spirit.

To **live by the Spirit** means to be born again into the new life only Christ provides. To **walk by the Spirit** is to press forward daily on God's path with reliance on Him in all actions. To **be led by the Spirit** means that God Himself actively guides and directs us, shaping our steps and transforming our desires.

The heart of the message is that human desires can either entice us into sin, or, when surrendered to God, be transformed into holy longings. Delight in the Lord aligns our desires with His heart, making us fruitful and free. Believers are called to eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit, to bear the fruit of the Spirit, and to set their minds on things above. True freedom comes when our desires are aligned with God's will and lived out in practical, Spirit-led obedience.

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## 2. Scripture References

Scripture Reference	Description
<b>Galatians 5:13-6:10</b>	Opening reading of the passage, contrasting flesh and Spirit, law and freedom, culminating in the call to do good to all.
<b>Galatians 5:16-18</b>	Focus verses: walk by the Spirit, not gratifying the desires of the flesh; led by the Spirit, not under the law.
<b>John 14:6</b>	Jesus declares He is the way, the truth, and the life; the only path to the Father.
<b>Deuteronomy 5:32-33</b>	Call to obedience: do not turn right or left, but walk by the Lord's commands for life and blessing.
<b>Ephesians 5:1-2</b>	Walk in the way of love, following Christ's example of sacrificial love.
<b>Isaiah 30:21</b>	Promise of God's voice guiding us in the way: "This is the way; walk in it."
<b>John 5:19</b>	Jesus does only what He sees the Father doing; model of Spirit-led dependence.
<b>Luke 2:49</b>	(Implied at age 12) Jesus tells His parents He must be about His Father's business.
<b>John 12:49-50</b>	Jesus speaks only what the Father commands, knowing His words lead to eternal life.
<b>James 1:13-15</b>	Desire leads to temptation, sin, and death if not submitted to God.
<b>Psalms 37:4</b>	Delight in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.
<b>Psalms 73:25-26</b>	"Whom have I in heaven but You? ... God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."
<b>Psalms 42:1 (alluded)</b>	"As the deer pants for the water" -- desire for God's presence.
<b>Psalms 145:19</b>	God fulfills the desires of those who fear Him. He hears their cry, and saves them.
<b>1 Corinthians 14:1</b>	Follow the way of love and eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy.
<b>Galatians 5:22, 25</b>	Call to bear the fruit of the Spirit and to stay in step with the Spirit.
<b>Colossians 3:1-17</b>	Call to set minds on things above, put off the old self, and live in the new self hidden with Christ.
<b>Colossians 3:2</b>	"Set your mind on things above, not on earthly things."
<b>Romans 8 (general, closing)</b>	Living in the Spirit as children of God, free from condemnation.
<b>Romans 8:14</b>	Blessing: "Led by the Spirit of God, as the children of God."
<b>1 Kings 2:3</b>	Charge to walk in obedience, keep the Lord's decrees, and prosper in all.

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### 3. Detailed Important Points

#### A. Freedom and the Call of the Spirit

- Believers are called to freedom, but not to indulge the flesh.
- True freedom in Christ is expressed in serving others humbly in love.
- Living by the Spirit fulfills the law by loving God and loving our neighbor.

#### B. Living by the Spirit

- To live by the Spirit means being born again, receiving the eternal life only Jesus provides.
- God's plan from the beginning was to restore us through Christ, sending the Spirit to indwell us.
- This new birth establishes the very environment of our existence -- we cannot have eternal life outside of it.

#### C. Walking by the Spirit

- Walking implies forward movement in the Christian life, not aimless wandering.
- To walk by the Spirit is to moment-by-moment rely on Him in habits, speech, and actions.
- Our walk gives testimony that we have been born again and are headed toward a God-given destination.
- Scripture affirms this walk: Jesus is the way (John 14:6), we must not turn right or left (Deuteronomy 5:32-33), and we are to walk in love (Ephesians 5:1-2).

#### D. Being Led by the Spirit

- Being led by the Spirit means God Himself actively guides His people in every situation.
- Isaiah 30:21 promises His voice will direct us: "This is the way; walk in it."
- Jesus modeled Spirit-led dependence -- doing only what He saw the Father doing (John 5:19).
- Even with full knowledge of His mission, Jesus declared He spoke only what the Father commanded (John 12:49-50).
- Application: like Jesus, we must slow down, listen, and speak only what God leads us to speak or do.

#### E. The Battle of Desires

- Fleshly desires are powerful motivators that lead to temptation and sin (James 1:13-15).
- Desires may be physical, intellectual, emotional, material, or even spiritual.
- Modern science affirms the Bible's truth: dopamine rushes can come from both the craving, and the fulfillment.
- If not submitted to God, desires entice and mislead; but submitted to God, they can be holy.

#### F. Aligning Desires with God

- Psalm 37:4 shows that delighting in the Lord transforms and aligns our desires.
- Psalm 73:25-26 shifts focus: God Himself becomes our only true desire.
- Psalm 42:1 expresses the longing: "As the deer pants for the water, so my soul pants for you, my God."
- Psalm 145:19 affirms that God fulfills the desires of those who fear Him.

#### G. Eagerly Desiring Spiritual Gifts

- 1 Corinthians 14:1 commands us to follow love and eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit.
- Spiritual gifts are not for boasting, but for humble service to others.
- Fruit and gifts of the Spirit must both be pursued and desired for God's glory.

## H. Setting Our Minds on Things Above

- Colossians 3 calls us to put on the new self, hidden with Christ.
- Verse 2 specifically urges us to set our minds on things above, not earthly things.
- This does not mean ignoring earthly responsibilities, but reordering them under God's rule.
- When we seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, He provides what we need for daily life.

## I. Application and Prayer

- Each believer must personally examine their desires before God.
- Ask: "Dear Lord, which desires in me need to be replaced with Thy holy desires?"
- The transformation of desires comes by delighting in the Lord, and when He renews the mind via the Gift of the Holy Spirit in each one of us, when we put our faith in Christ.
- Living by, walking by, and being led by the Spirit is the pathway to freedom in Christ.
- Closing prayer: that our desires be aligned with God's heart, so our lives glorify Him.

## J. Final Blessing

- Weekly encouragement: we "get to" crucify the sinful nature and live in Christ's new life.
- Blessing from Romans 8:14 and 1 Kings 2:3: may you be led by the Spirit as children of God, walking in obedience and prospering in all you do.

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## 4. Second Summary of the Sermon

### Meeting Overview

- The session focused on Galatians 5:16-18 within the broader reading of Galatians 5:13-6:10, emphasizing living free in Christ through love and mutual service by relying on the Holy Spirit.
- Central thesis: Living by, walking by, and being led by the Spirit is the only way to avoid gratifying the desires of the flesh and to embody Christlike love in community.

### Key Discussion Points

- **Living by the Spirit**
  - Definition: Being born again into new and eternal life through Christ's sacrifice; receiving life from God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) who indwells believers by the Spirit.
  - Scope: New birth (source), ongoing earthly life (daily dependence), eternal destiny (life with God).
  - Precondition: One can live by the Spirit only after receiving life from the Spirit.
- **Walking by the Spirit**
  - Definition: Ongoing, purposeful movement along God's path; moment-by-moment reliance in Spirit-led actions, habits, speech, and reactions.
  - Directionality:
    - Know the Way: Jesus is the Way, Truth, Life (John 14:6).
    - Stay on the Path: Do not turn right or left; obey God's commands for life and flourishing (Deut. 5:32-33).
    - Walk in Love: Imitate God; walk in the way of love as Christ did (Eph. 5:1-2).

- **Being Led by the Spirit**
  - Definition: Continuous guidance from the Holy Spirit -- transforming the mind and directing decisions in every context (family, work, driving, volunteering, church, secular, etc.).
  - God's Comprehensive Provision:
  - Guidance assurance: Hearing the Spirit say to you: "This is the way; walk in it" even when tempted to veer (Isa. 30:21).
  - Jesus' model: Acts and words aligned with the Father's will (John 5:19; 12:49-50).
- **Flesh vs. Spirit: Desire and Conflict**
  - Conflict: Flesh and Spirit are contrary to one another; being Spirit-led frees from law-driven attempts to earn or maintain salvation.
  - Works of the flesh, vs. fruit of the Spirit: Warning against fleshly acts; aspiration to bear spiritual fruit (love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control).
- **Nature and Dynamics of Desire**
  - Definition: Strong longings that capture attention and direct action; can be physical, emotional, intellectual, material, or spiritual.
  - Neuroscience insight:
  - The dopamine effect: Anticipation itself can be rewarding; fulfillment often disappoints, fueling continual craving if desires aren't surrendered to God.
  - Implication: Unsubmitted desires entice and lead to sin (James 1:13-15).
- **Aligning Desires with God**
  - Delight and alignment:
  - **Delight in the Lord;** He shapes and grants desires aligned with His will and the path He sets: (Psa 37:4 Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.)
  - **Desire God above all:** "Earth has nothing I desire besides you" (Ps. 73:25-26).
  - God fulfills the desires of those who fear Him; He hears and saves (Ps. 145:19).
  - Spiritual aspirations:
  - **Follow the way of love;** eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially prophecy, for serving others humbly (1 Cor. 14:1).
  - Anticipation of deeper exploration of the fruit of the Spirit in future weeks (Gal. 5:22-25).
- **Practical Application**
  - **Personalization:** Application varies by individual; different people face different desire-related temptations.
  - **Mindset shift:** Set your mind on things above (Col. 3:1-17; v.2) while responsibly handling earthly duties; seek first God's kingdom and righteousness.
  - **Freedom focus:** Living free means crucifying sinful passions and being wholly devoted to God, with transformed desires in step with His will.

## Decisions and Conclusions

- **Reaffirmed reliance on the Holy Spirit** as the sole means to live free, love others humbly, and resist fleshly desires.
- **Commitment to pursue alignment of personal desires with God's desires** through delight in the Lord, fear of the Lord, and eagerness for spiritual gifts used in service.

- Intention to continue the series into the fruit of the Spirit and keeping in step with the Spirit.

## Risks and Blockers

- Unsubmitted desires can escalate into persistent temptation and sin due to anticipation-driven reward cycles.
- Drifting “to the right or left” from obedience undermines progress on the spiritual path.
- Speaking and acting without seeking the Spirit’s guidance leads to misalignment with God’s will.

## Next Steps

- **Pray** and examine personal desires before God; submit, and replace misaligned desires, with Spirit-shaped desires.
- **Practice daily reliance:** ask for the Spirit’s guidance in all contexts and pause to listen before speaking or acting.
- **Cultivate delight in the Lord** through prayer, Scripture, fellowship, testimony, and quick obedience.
- **Eagerly desire and exercise spiritual gifts for the edification of others**, grounded in love.
- **Prepare for upcoming teaching** on the fruit of the Spirit and staying in step with the Spirit.

## Action Items

- Conduct a personal inventory of desires; identify areas needing alignment with God and **bring them to prayer this week.**
  - Establish a daily practice to **pause and seek the Spirit’s guidance** before key decisions and conversations.
  - Increase engagement in spiritual disciplines (Scripture, prayer, fellowship) to **cultivate delight in the Lord.**
  - **Ask the Lord to help you discern and pursue spiritual gifts for serving others humbly in love,** prioritizing community edification.
  - **Review and meditate on the cited passages** (Galatians 5-6, Colossians 3, Psalms 37/73/145, 1 Cor. 14:1) to reinforce application. (For a more complete list, see the List of Scripture References on page 2 above, in the First Summary.)
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