

Galatians 5:16-25

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[0 : 0 0] and we start reading in Galatians 5, beginning in verse 16, and going down to the end of the chapter, which gets us to verse 26. Paul writes to the church at Galatia, But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

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. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another. Galatians 5, verses 16 through 26.

[1 : 1 6] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you so much for this day, and God, we rejoice in your word. Lord, we thank you for the opportunity we have to open up your word, and to hear it, and to read it for ourselves.

Lord, we thank you for the privilege that it is. But Lord, I pray that we would move beyond just reading it. Lord, that you would give us an understanding of it. That these truths would come off the pages. Lord, that they would grip our hearts, they would transform our minds.

And Lord, that our lives would be renewed to walk in faithfulness with you as you continue to mold and shape us to become more and more like you each and every day. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. Before I really get into the text this morning, I am reminded, just in my mind, that I have encouraged a number of you to get into a daily Bible reading plan.

And some of you have asked me about having a copy of the one that my wife and I go through, which is Robert Murray McShinn's Bible reading plan, where you read the Bible through in a year.

[2 : 1 2] You read the Old Testament once, and the New Testament and the Book of Psalms twice. You read somewhere around an average of four chapters a day going back and forth. I know this is a side note, but stay with me.

Some have said, well, you'll never really understand the Bible that way, because you'll read in Genesis and Matthew, and then you'll read in the Book of Esther and Acts at the same time. So you'll never understand it bouncing around all throughout the Bible every day like that.

And it is a little bit difficult at first, but I want to go ahead and just testify right here. I've been doing this, I think, for eight years now. I think this is either my seventh or eighth year of going through this plan. And I have never really understood the Bible until I read it that way.

Because what I began to see is when I did not limit myself into reading just one portion of Scripture, making my way through the Old Testament, and then making my way through the New Testament. Friend, listen, if you can start in Genesis and make your way to Revelation, I want to shake your hand and hug your neck and give you Thanksgiving for going through the Book of Numbers.

Okay, that's just me being honest with you. If you can just go through the Book of Numbers every day and just read it, and there are people who do it, and that's great. And I need to have a little bit more clarity in my reading.

[3 : 19] I love that reading plan because it helps me to read in the Book of Zechariah and also the Book of John. I read Zechariah chapter 9 where I see the prophecy of the coming one on the coat, and then I read in the Book of John of the one actually coming in on the coat, and I did it in the same day.

And then I read also the prophecy in the Book of Malachi like I did this morning, and I'm also reading the end of John about the crucifixion. And then I'm also, and by the way, if I was just in John, the crucifixion, I'd be a little depressed because all I read was the crucifixion of Christ in the Book of John.

But I ended my reading in the Book of Revelation where the one who was victorious was reigning. So I'm in this celebratory mood because of the reading plan. I love it.

You might not. But it is a great reading plan. I have unashamedly endorsed it for years. If you want a copy of it, I have some in my office. I'll make more copies. If you do not get it before you leave this morning, I may put it out on the Remind app because I can actually connect PDF files to that.

If you are not signed up for the Remind app yet, you can do that out there in the fellowship hall. There's a sign out there. So I may put it out there as well. That's my unapologetic endorsement of that. You say, who in the world is Robert Murray McShinn?

[4 : 27] Scottish preacher of the 1800s. Those who know church history ought to go, oh, right, Scottish preachers were good back then, who did not live past like 32, 33, in his early 30s.

But he transformed that country in like seven years of ministry. And that's the reading plan he followed. So that's kind of his, and it's lasted throughout all these years of people just following it.

So it's pretty amazing. Anyway, enough of that. Galatians 5, starting in verse 16. Galatians 5, verse 16 through 26. I want you to see this morning, and this is why I encourage you to get in the Word.

If you don't follow that plan, read in another plan, just get in your Bible every day. I want you to see this morning, the believers struggle. The believers struggle.

We would love to convince ourselves that the moment we come to Christ, that we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and we surrender our life. One of my favorite hymns is, I Surrender All, which it's hard to compete with how great is our God, how great thou art.

[5 : 26] I don't know if many of you read that last stanza when he comes and he calls us home, and if we were reading it, maybe we were reading it habitually instead of reading it worshipfully because we should have been, much like that slide was showing right there, there should have been, the aisles should have been crowded and our hands should have been in the air, and we might could have jumped around a little bit because he's going to call us back, and then we will fall on our knees in his presence, and we will proclaim, my God, how great thou art.

That to me, that's awesome. But anyway, when we come to this point where we surrender our life and we give our life to Christ, we would love to convince ourselves from that moment on, everything is easy.

But the reality is, is that the moment we surrender, things get harder because all of a sudden, something is introduced, not something, someone is introduced into your life that will inevitably cause a struggle and a battlefield in your life, and that someone is the Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells us that the moment we accept him as our Lord and Savior, we are sealed until the day of redemption with the Holy Spirit that he has given to us. And we read in this passage, Paul speaking to the believer here, and he is talking to the believer about the ongoing, continuous struggle they will face.

And friend, it's a struggle that I face, it's a struggle that every believer in Christ faces, and it is one that we very seldom acknowledge, though we should, because Paul acknowledges it not only in the book of Romans, he also acknowledges it twice in the book of Galatians.

[6 : 55] Galatians 2.20, Paul says, I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live. It is no longer I who lives, but Christ Jesus who lives inside of me. So he acknowledges it there, and he acknowledges it here again.

And it is this ongoing struggle that the believer faces that we must know about, and we must be mentally aware of. I would dare say that each and every one of us who have trusted Jesus Christ are aware of it, but we try to act like it does not exist, because we think that if we ignore it, it will go on.

I love the Scripture, and I love Paul writing in the Scripture. He says it in Romans chapter 7, and he says it here in Galatians chapter 5, where he does not ignore it like it doesn't exist, he addresses it head on.

In my house, we call that true talk. If there's a problem, we don't act like there's not a problem, we just state the problem, because I have found I deal better with people who are true talkers, who just tell me the issue at the very beginning instead of not saying the issue.

Don't dance around it and talk about it, and let's just go ahead and say it and put it out there, because the Bible says what? The truth will set you free, right? And we need to understand these things. So Paul is very true in the struggle in his own life, and he's also very true in the struggle of the believer's life.

[8 : 06] And he has talked to them, said you are saved and redeemed through faith in Jesus Christ. Sounds simple, right? And it is simple, because all you have to do is surrender, all you have to do is give up, all you have to do is accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Salvation is that easy. But Paul says, but wait a minute, because it's not going to be easy after that. One thing that I try to do, anytime I'm sharing Christ with someone, either publicly in preaching, or privately as an individual, and I give more attention to it privately as an individual, I'm always very clear in stating that the moment you give your life to Christ, you are going to face a battle.

You are going to face a struggle. Because we need to know these things, and we need to be aware of them. So Paul introduces it to us here. I want you to see, first of all and foremost, the temptation within.

The temptation within the believer. Paul says, But I say, walk by the Spirit, with a capital S, right? Walk by the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

Here, Paul introduces to us both parties involved in the conflict. It is the Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, which is present in the life of the believer. As a matter of fact, I know I keep saying this, that we know this is a believer's issue because the Holy Spirit is not present in the life of an unbeliever.

[9 : 28] If you have not given your life to Christ, and you have not accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then you do not have the presence of the Holy Spirit. That is not anything to put anyone down. That is just a fact.

Paul says that whoever has the Spirit, what? Has Christ. And we understand that the moment we accept Christ, we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. And Paul says that the very presence of the Spirit is that agent which introduces the conflict.

He says, the Spirit will not carry out the desire of the flesh. The believer lives in this constant tension of already has, but not yet.

Of already has been, but is not yet. You say, what do you mean? It means I am redeemed. I am forgiven. I have been born again. I have been washed as white as snow, but I am not yet what I should be.

I am not yet living perfect. I am not yet living. And we see it all throughout Scripture. Paul states it a number of times. Jesus says it a number of times.

[10 : 34] I have been adopted. God has adopted me into the family of God and he's adopted me through the purchased blood of his son. But Paul writes, I am eagerly waiting until the day of adoption.

And my spirit cries out until the day of adoption. He says, I am not yet what I should be, but I press on towards the goal of the upper call. The believer lives in this constant tension of, I am saved.

I am redeemed. I am washed. I am made new. I am forgiven. But I am not yet perfect. And here we have the introduction of that which wages war inside the believer.

It is the spirit and the flesh. It is the spirit that is given to you the moment you accept Christ and the flesh that was given to you from Adam, which is not there until the fullness of Christ.

That is those issues in the book of Revelation, right? The flesh that is constantly present. We would love to know that the flesh is annihilated the moment we accept Jesus Christ. But the reality is, is we are forgiven.

[11 : 41] We are clean. We are perfect. But we are not yet what we are going to be. And so we live in this constant tension. And we live, and I think it is intentional because I've always said that if all salvation was, was about being in heaven, if all salvation was, was about being just forgiven and spending eternity in this glorious paradise, walking on golden streets and living in mansions, then God is very mean by not calling me there the moment I accepted Jesus Christ.

See, it's really about our relationship with Him, and it's about the fact that He redeems us. Heaven is what we get. That is the reward we have. But it is about this relationship that we have with Christ.

It is about this relationship we have of living in a daily battlefield and fighting those battles. And we see here, but I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Those are the two agents of battle within one.

And we see this temptation. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. My friend, I want you to understand something. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then what is naturally in you, that is the flesh, it's not talking about your body, right?

The body is not inherently bad. There is this old world religion called, well, it's a twist of Christianity called Gnosticism, which taught that your body, this flesh that you can touch, was inherently bad, but the Spirit was inherently good.

[13 : 05] So you do whatever you want to with your body. It's bad. It's going to be bad. Let this do whatever you want to because the Spirit inside of you is good. So who cares what you do to your body? That's an excuse to sin. That's what that is.

Okay, that's just an excuse to do whatever you want to do. But what we see here is when Paul is saying the flesh, he's not talking about this that you can see. He's talking about that sin nature that we inherited from our forefather Adam.

That rebellion we have, and Paul very clearly says here that the flesh has this battle going on with the Spirit. It sets its desire against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh.

We call that conviction. Do you understand that there is this temptation inside of you and you are faced with one of two choices and there is not a third option. The Bible is very clear.

You will either do what your flesh wants to do or you will do what the Spirit wants you to do. And they are in direct opposition to one another. Paul paints it very black and white.

[14 : 05] He says the believer lives in this tension because the Spirit wants you to go this way but the flesh wants to go this way and you need to understand that what you naturally want to do and understanding this is key.

I know it seems kind of, you're like, well, this is the last Sunday of the year. We could have had a great going into a New Year message and it could have been all hoopla and the pastor could have shook our hands and we could have went home and hugged his neck and everybody would have been happy but that wouldn't have been me, right?

I know sometimes I preach hard messages but I also want you to enter in not only today but tomorrow but also the next year understanding this, that when you wake up in the morning and you have this battle going on, you have what you naturally want to do and then you have what the Spirit living inside of you wants to do and you have a choice to make.

Because if you do what you feel like doing, most of the time, well, let's just back that up, every time your feelings are going to be wrong. Christianity is not based upon feelings.

It's not based upon goosebumps. It's not based upon these things. It is based upon truth and person, the person of God and the person of the Spirit. You say, how do you know this, pastor? Because he says it's a flesh, it's a desire against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh and look at these, for these are in opposition to one another.

[15 : 17] You say, well, how do I know what the Spirit wants me to do? Read the Word of God. Does that sound simple? Why does that sound simple? Because Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will come to you and he will remind you of all things that I have said.

All the Holy Spirit will ever do is tell you what God has already said. He does not come up with something new. I'm thankful for that, that I don't have to have the Holy Spirit tell me something new to do. It may be new to me, but it's not something new to do.

He's not all of a sudden going to say, you know what, by the Holy Spirit you need to go do this and it'll be some off-the-wall thing. He's going to just keep saying the same thing, so I need to know what it is he's saying, right?

He says that they are in opposition to one another. Look at this, so that you may not do the things that you please. The temptation that the believer faces is either I do that which I please to do or I do that which he wants me to do.

And that is a constant temptation. You say, well, I'm happy to do what God wants me to do. I want to do what God wants me to do. It's so fun doing the things that God wants me to do. Wait a minute until we get to the end of the message, okay?

[16 : 25] You say, I love doing what God wants me to do. Yes, you do through the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit, but in your flesh you do not. Because just as our brother shared, in the flesh, in that moment when someone cuts you off, or in that moment when someone makes you mad, or in that moment when they do something worse than that, you are faced with an option.

Do what I please. And let's just be honest, sometimes what I would please to do would be to get in my big truck, which is already nasty and dirty and muddy and scratched up, and running into that pretty car. Somebody said, the pastor just said that.

Yes, I did. Because in the flesh, that's what I would please to do. Especially when you're driving a school bus and you're bigger than anybody on the road. It'd be so much easier just to push them out of the way. But in the Spirit, that's not what we do.

Right? You say, I can't believe you think like that. I mean, now all of a sudden you're casting judgment towards me. No, you're not. I'm more just being honest and saying that in the flesh, there is this nature to get tense and to get upset and to get mad and just to be real about it and say, I have now a choice before me.

Do I do what I please or do I do what he wants? Here is the temptation that is found in every believer. Number two, not only is there the temptation within, there is the testimonial display.

[17 : 44] Because the choice I make will be testified about. And that doesn't mean I have to say it. The choice I make when I wake up in the morning is will I be dictated today by the flesh and do what I please or will my life be dictated by the Spirit and I walk by the Spirit?

It will be known because there is this testimonial display that all of the world will see. And Paul gives us a listing here of a testimonial display.

He says, but if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. That's a great thing because the law does nothing but condemn and the Spirit sets you free. So he says, if you're being led by the Spirit, you're not under the law.

Now look at this, verse 19. Now the deeds of the flesh are evident. I want you to see, first of all, there's this contrast between the two testifying things. There are deeds of the flesh, which means these are the things the flesh works out.

Deeds are something you do. It could also be called a work. It is something that by your own effort or by your own strength, you can produce these things. So if you want to know what your flesh can do or a kind of a listing of some of the types of things your flesh can do, read this list with me if you will.

[18 : 54] Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these.

Paul says, if you wake up in the morning and you face the choice of which one I'm going to do, and you say, well, today I'm going to walk by the flesh. Today I'm going to do what makes me happy, and I'm going to do what I feel like doing.

Friend, listen, the only thing the flesh will ever put forth are things like these. You say, well, I'm reading this list, and I'm not doing any of these things.

I'm not doing this. I can try my best to stay away from all these. Paul's not saying this is a complete list. He says these are things like these. Some translations here have it witchcraft.

Some have it. There is the deeds that are done by the flesh and immorality, those which are sexual in nature. There are the deeds which are idolatrous in nature, which dictates our worship.

[20 : 03] And then there are deeds which are wicked in nature, which is the witchcraft and the sorceries. And it's that word we get, pharmaceuticals. And I know I kind of make people upset on that, but it really has to do with drugs and how the people would use drugs to make them have visions at that time.

And friend, listen, I've walked around people like that. I've been in those situations, and I know there's some danger there. And it's all these things, this wickedness, so much of what we count as just being, and I'm not belittling it at all, a problem really is a spiritual issue.

It really is. And the problem is within every one of us. It is the flesh. This is what we get. This is the only thing the flesh can produce.

Because none are righteous. No, not one. Every heart is desperately wicked. Every one. And you say, well, this seems kind of down and out. And it is. It's the truth of the matter.

None of us are righteous. Not one. In our own flesh, none of us are pleasing. And the only thing we can work out are things like these. And by the way, these things are evidence to everyone watching.

[21 : 17] We don't have to tell people I'm living by the flesh. If you see me, and I'm out in public, and I have an outburst of anger, I don't have to look at you and go, you know what? Today I chose to live by the flesh.

Because all of a sudden, you know at that outburst of anger, I am operating by the flesh and not by the spirit. It testifies. Jesus says you will know them by their fruit, right?

You will know them by what it is they do. And we see here this testimony. But Paul doesn't stop with just the deeds or the working of the flesh. But he goes in verse 22. He contrasts it here with the testimony of the spirit.

For the fruit of the spirit. Now let's just stop right there. The flesh produces deeds, which means when the flesh works, these things come out. The spirit gives fruit, which means there's nothing you can do to produce it.

You can't produce this list. You just can't. You can't make up your mind and say, I'm not going to do those things, but I'm going to do these things. Because the first list is a list of deeds.

[22 : 14] It is a list of works. It is a list of when I put my mind to it, this is what's going to come out. The second list is a list of fruits. You don't put your mind to it and put forth an apple.

It is something that just naturally blossoms from a fruit tree, right? And so we see when the spirit is inside of us, it is this natural blossoming of these things. Something else that is unique about this list, before I get into it, the first list lists a number of items.

It gives a number of deeds and a number of works that are individually. If any of those are individually there, we begin to see at that moment I am living by the flesh. Now, I've got to back up and say here, because when we read that list, every one of us have found ourselves guilty in that list.

Outburst of anger, guilty, right? All those things. I'm guilty of a lot of those things in that list. Now, what does Paul say? We need to clarify before we move on to the fruit of the spirit. He says, Of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, the Bible is not saying that if you trip and fall and do these things, you're lost. He's writing to believers, right? That's not what he's saying. He's not saying that, Oh, man, I did this.

[23 : 25] Strife and jealousy and outbursts of anger, disputes. Man, I had an argument with somebody. That means I don't have the kingdom of God. Or I got upset and I lost my cool. That means I'm not an inheritance of the kingdom of God. That's not what Paul is saying.

He says, Those who practice these, that is those who live a habitual lifestyle of things like these, cannot have the presence of the Holy Spirit in their life. And if the Holy Spirit is not there, then they are not a believer.

Understand that. He says, Those who practice, who live habitually, now this is the Word of God saying it, who make these type of things their habitual practice. The Holy Spirit cannot live in that environment because the Holy Spirit will produce fruit.

God is fruitful in every believer's life. Will produce. Jesus said in John 16, John 15, that he will produce fruit. I am the vine and you are the branches.

He who abides in me will bear fruit. Doesn't say you might bear fruit. Doesn't say you could bear fruit. Says you will bear fruit. He says you will. It's going to happen. And if you are not bearing any fruit, it is not because you need to try harder.

[24 : 34] It's because the fruit tree hasn't been planted in your life, which is the Holy Spirit. And if the Holy Spirit isn't there, then he who has the Spirit has Christ. Whoever does not have the Spirit, what?

Does not have Christ. Paul says that one's not inherited in the kingdom of God because he's not born again yet. He has not put his faith in Jesus Christ. And now all of a sudden we shift. Now we go to the second testimony.

But the fruit of the Spirit is, and I love this, that Paul says fruit singular, right? It doesn't mean that some of these things will be involved in your life or are explicit in your life.

The wording here is that all of this list will be in your life. When the Holy Spirit is living inside of your life, producing fruits, and you have given your life to Christ, and you have the presence of the Spirit in your life, this is what will come forth.

Not some of these, all of these, because they all build. You love. So the fruit of the Spirit is love. You say, well, I love people. Right. But this word love here is agape love. And that is, God so loved the world, he agaped.

[25 : 37] Some of you have went through pre-marriage counseling. Some of you are getting ready to go through pre-marriage counseling with me. And we always go through the five different types of love that are found in the Greek language. The one type of love that is never written in Scripture that was found in the Greek language is eros.

We get our word erotica from it. Now, that means a sensual feeling type of love. Like, I feel like loving someone. I have eros for them. That's nowhere in Scripture, by the way. It's not recorded. It's in the Greek language.

But God doesn't care how, if you feel like loving someone. Agape love means, I love you enough to do something for you, even if you don't love me back. God so loved the world when the world was lost and dying and going to hell in a handbasket.

The easiest way to say it. The world was denying him and rejecting him when he came to his own and his own received him not. When the world could do nothing for him, God loved them enough to send his son to die for them. Agape, love, is the love that says, I'm going to love you even when you're unlovable.

And I'm going to love you enough not just to have good feelings about you, but I'm going to love you enough to do something for you. And that something I'm going to do for you is going to cost me something. It's going to be self-sacrificing.

[26 : 40] When it says, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church, it says, Husbands, agape your wives as Christ loved the church, which means, husband, it needs to cost you something to love your wife. It doesn't cost you walking in and giving her a kiss on the cheek, right?

And then I'm preaching to myself a little bit. It means you have to give of yourself to love your wife. That's what that means. And then we have no problem with the rest of that verse. And wives be subject to your own husbands. We don't have any problem with that.

But what we see here is the fruit of the Spirit, the very first thing the Spirit produces in the believer is a love that says, I agape people. You know what I'm saying?

I'm going to love them when they're lovable. I'm going to love them when they do something for me. I'm going to love them when they hate me. I'm going to love them when they despise me. I'm going to love them when they can't do anything for me in return. I'm going to love them intentionally and do something about it.

If the church stands up and says, well, so we love the world or we love our community, my question is always going to be, how do we know that? Not because we say it. It's because we can point and show things. And we can right now.

[27 : 38] We can show things where we say, we love war traces. The church loves the community it's put in. We need to be able to point to things and say, we did this, we did this, we did this, we did this. If we love the nation, we need to be able to point to things and say, we did this, we did this.

If we love the lost around the world, we need to be able to point and say, this is what we did because we love because love always implies an action of doing something. And so, when the spirit produces love, it builds on these next things.

Love, joy. When you can love people even when they don't love you, all of a sudden you have something no one else has and that's joy. If my love for you is not dictated by your response to me, I have a joy. Even when you don't like me and you hate me and you don't want and all you want to do is talk about me, but the spirit has produced inside of me a love for you which you cannot overcome with your hatred.

I'm not saying, I'm not pointing to any of you specifically, okay? I'm just saying generally, if you really to the deep of your core want to hate me, but the spirit has produced inside of me a love for you in spite of your hatred for me, I cannot help but have joy.

I'm not happy, but I have joy, which means I rejoice. So love produces joy, peace. And when I have joy, guess what else I have? Peace. Peace. Because your discord does not affect my joy, therefore it cannot affect my peace.

[28 : 49] And the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace. When I have peace, all of a sudden I have patience. When I'm not living on edge, when I'm not kind of in a hurry, all of a sudden I have patience.

You want to know the place where I have the least amount of patience? I mean, just me testifying is when I'm driving a bus and I'm watching a kid walk down the sidewalk or walk down his driveway at the slow walk that I'm too cool to walk fast walk and I'm sitting here going, I'm fixing to be late to school if you don't get on this bus.

I don't have joy and I don't have patience at that time and I really don't have love. That's just me being honest with you. But love, joy, peace, and patience all flow together. So we see here we have patience and when I'm patient, all of a sudden I'm kind.

Kind. And when I'm kind, I have goodness flowing from me. When goodness is coming from me, I have faithfulness and gentleness and self-control. I love this. Braden and I, we pray these things a lot of times at night and he's always asking me, Dad, what is self-control?

So I try to explain it to him as a five-year-old and I can understand the other day he came up to me and he had done something to his brother and he was in my lap and he was just sitting there and he goes, Daddy, I forgot to exercise self-control.

[29 : 52] I was like, yeah, you did, buddy. You forgot to exercise. I don't know what that is but I didn't do it because I didn't do self-control. Now I'm in trouble. So we see that when I am gentle, I am self-control and to get such, there is no law.

Friend, listen to me. This is the fruit of the Spirit and guess what? People know when you have love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, gentleness, kindness and self-control. It testifies. And we see the testimonial deeds and the testimonial work and the testimonial display of the believer's life.

If I wake up today and I decide to live according to the flesh, you're going to know it. If I wake up today and I decide to walk according to the Spirit, you will know it. It is evident. Now third and finally, and I'll make my way quickly through this third and final one because it is really just to wrap up the truth to believe.

You say, well, how can I do this? How can I do this? Because it seems impossible. Pastor, there's this war going on inside of me. There are things I want to do I do not do. There are things I do not want to do. Those are the very things I find myself doing.

What Paul said in Romans chapter 7, right? Pastor, I wake up every morning and I want to live according to the Spirit, but that flesh just keeps getting in the way. And what I don't want to do, that's what I find myself doing.

[30 : 59] So pastor, how can I do it? You believe the truth of Scripture. There is a truth to be believed. Look at what the Word of God says. Now, those who belong to Christ Jesus, that is, those who are saved, those who are redeemed, those who belong to Christ Jesus, the question is here, do you belong to Christ Jesus?

Yes, I put my faith in Christ. I trust in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. He is mine. It has been said, do you know that you know that you know that you know you are redeemed, that you're saved? If you can absolutely say, yes, I know that, then listen, friend, believe this truth.

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Someone once wrote, crucifixion is the only death, is one of the only deaths that you cannot afflict upon yourself.

You cannot crucify yourself. Someone has to do it for you, right? Paul says, I have been crucified with Christ. It is a past tense. Here's the truth to believe. The moment you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, the flesh has been crucified because you are united in the likeness of his death so that you can be raised to walk in the newness of his life.

And that's the truth. That thing which you're battling against, that thing which is waging war inside of you, it is something that has already been killed and the only way it still has breath is we resurrect it every day when we get up.

[32 : 20] We breathe new life into it, which means we put things in our life that fan its flames. We put ourselves in front of things which caused the wind to blow up on it. We put things in front of our face or in front of our eyes or in front of our lives and we give ourselves into situations that are trying to raise up that dead thing.

The flesh has been crucified. And that is a truth to be believed for those who know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior because we see that its passions and its desires, they are no longer the dictators and controllers of your life.

They don't have to be. There is a time in your life before you knew Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior that you could not help but do the things your flesh wanted to do because the flesh was the power of your life that dictated every choice you made.

You could not help it. You could not fight against it because that's naturally who you are. But in Christ, that has been taken away from the flesh. The flesh no longer has the power to dictate what you do.

You say, but I feel like doing it. Praise be to God. Your relationship with Christ is not based upon feelings and you do not have to live according to feelings anymore. You need to live according to truth and the truth is he has crucified the flesh.

[33 : 28] Its passions and its desires, they're still there but they're not the dictators of how you live your life. You don't have to get up in the morning and you don't have to do the rest of the day doing the things you want to do the things you feel like doing.

Now in Christ, you have the power to do the things he's called you to do. In Christ, you now have the power and the authority to tell the flesh to leave you alone. In Christ, you have the authority and even the opportunity to be pleasing in his sight.

It is a battlefield and you need to know the truth and the truth is that you are still being tempted within. You are still fighting this battle within. You still have desires and all those things within but those things are dead in Christ and in Christ, you now have the ability, look at this, if we live by the Spirit, I have been crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live.

It is no longer I who lives but Christ who lives inside of me. Paul says, I'm a dead man but I'm alive. I'm a dead man walking and that's good news because I'm living by the Spirit and if my life is found in the Spirit, guess what? I have a choice to make.

Let us therefore walk in the Spirit. If he is the only reason I'm alive in Christ, then I need to walk. Now to walk there means I take every step based on what the Spirit wants me to do.

[34 : 37] Will I fail? Will I mess up? Yes. But the good news is is that all I have done is raise up a dead man and I can just put him back aside again.

I say, you know what? That's been crucified. I need to hold on to this truth. Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another. Paul says, I have the power in Christ to make a choice.

I will either live according to the flesh or I'll walk according to the Spirit. Praise be to God in Christ that authority has been given to me because when I trusted him, my flesh, its passions, its desires, it was crucified.

It's still there. It still raises its ugly head every now and then. But I don't have to listen to it. I don't have to. There are opportunities when I will and there are opportunities when you will, but you don't have to.

If you do not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you cannot help but do the things that your flesh desires to do. If you do know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, you now have a choice to deny the flesh and to live according to the Spirit for His glory.

[35 : 41] Let's pray. Lord, we thank You so much for this day. Lord, we rejoice in the truth of the Scripture. We thank You for all that it contains. We thank You for the truth that we find in it.

Lord, I pray that our lives will be dictated by that truth. That we would not do those things which we please, but Lord, we would do those things which You please to do inside of us for Your glory. Lord, may our lives be open to Your inspection.

And may we say, here we are, oh Lord, do what You want to do with each and every one of us. And we ask it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[38 : 47] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.