

TITLE: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE “SPIRIT-FILLED”

TEXT: GALATIANS 5:13-26

INTRO: In his early years, a child is completely under the rule of his parents. But eventually, he starts to grow up and his parents give him a little freedom (responsibility). This freedom is **never** intended to be license to do whatever he wants. His parents hope to see him make mature decisions based on what they’ve taught him. *The idea is the same with the old law. They were to learn from its commandments. And so are we! This is the topic of ch. 5:13f.

I. LOVE MOTIVATION (v. 13-15):

- A. (v. 13-14) Just because they’re not under the bondage of the law anymore, doesn’t mean they don’t have responsibilities. *Don’t use your freedom for an occasion to the flesh* (it’s not a license to do whatever you want). *Rather, by love serve one another.*
1. Love for God & others was the central theme of the old law (greatest commands – **Mt 22:37-40**). On these hung *all* the law.
 2. So it is in the new law. Love causes us to obey God and serve one another. This is faith working (v. 6)!
- B. (v. 15) *But if ye bite and devour....* Apparently they had a lack of love (maybe as a result of the Jew/Gentile issue). Whatever the context, we know this will always apply to the church. Nothing will get done without an attitude of love, care, & respect.

II. BEING SPIRIT-FILLED (v. 16-26):

Different ideas exist regarding how the Spirit indwells the Christian today. But what does it really mean to be Spirit-filled?

A. The Choice (v. 19-26)

1. Works of the flesh (v. 19-21)
 - a. (v. 19) Sins of sensuality
 - Adultery – a sexual relationship between a married person and someone other than the spouse.
 - Fornication – an illicit sexual relationship (“porneia”). This is an all-inclusive word.
 - Uncleaness – a spiritual uncleaness, impurity (another general, inclusive word)
 - Lasciviousness – lack of restraint, usually in a sexual context; wantonness, much dancing falls into this category
 - b. (v. 20a) Sins of false religion
 - Idolatry – image worship (worship of anything other than God)
 - Witchcraft (“pharmakeia”) – includes the inordinate use of drugs as part of religious idol worship
 - c. (v. 20b-21a) Sins against fellow man: Hatred (hostility), variance (strife, quarrels), emulation (jealousy), wrath, **strife** (a desire to put one’s self forward-Thayer), sedition & heresies (divisions-**Titus 3:10**), envy (ill will), murder.
 - d. (v. 21b) Sins against self: Drunkenness, reveling (rioting, partying)
 - e. (v. 21c) And such like (this is not an all-inclusive list). So don’t look for a loophole! You will *not* inherit the kingdom!
2. Fruits of the Spirit (v. 22-23): Fruit is what grows from the plant; the characteristics that exude from a Spirit-filled person!
 - a. Love (agape) – seeking the best interest **of others**, not yourself! *“By love serving one another”* (v. 13).
 - b. Joy – spiritual happiness, gladness
 - c. Peace (rest, quietness, good relations with all) – True peace comes only as a result of God’s grace & mercy (“grace, mercy, & peace” – always in this order).
 - d. Longsuffering – patience; putting up with one another
 - e. Gentleness, goodness (synonyms) – moral excellence, virtuous, kindness
 - f. Faith – probably more specific meaning than faith in Christ. Fidelity, dependability, faithful in all things.
 - g. Meekness – strength under control, gentle, patient.
 - h. Temperance (self-control) – mastering your passions – you now seek *others’ interests!* (Prov 25:28; 16:32)
 - i. Notice some things missing from this list: tongue-speaking, healing, prophecy, etc.! These were temporary!
3. Results of these fruits (v. 24-26)

(v. 24) If you are Christ’s, you have **crucified** the flesh with its lusts (**2:20** – died w/Christ, in order to live w/him).

(v. 25) If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk... (march in rank as a soldier; conform). Christians should be well-behaved, well-ordered, and obedient to Christ as our leader (willingly removing those fleshly lusts and putting on those fruits).

(v. 26) A last word about relationship to one another – don’t put yourself first (**Heb 10:24** – *provoke one another to love...*)

B. The Commandment (v. 16-18)

(v. 16) *“Walk (live; v.25; imperative) in the Spirit...”* - immediately we see a contrast of lifestyles. One is godly; the other is not. It’s no surprise that this would be a **command**, especially considering the importance he’s about to place on it.

(v. 17) Why? Flesh vs. Spirit! Because of the contrary/opposing nature of the two – they *“lust* (set the heart on, desire) *against”* each other (they oppose one another; they have opposite desires and directions). This doesn’t mean that either can’t be ignored. We can (and must) choose which one to follow. This is why he says to live in the Spirit – because it opposes the direction of the flesh, *“so that ye cannot* (might not) *do the things you want.”* “Cannot” is not in the Greek; it’s “might not.” Paul is *not* saying that you can’t do what you want! He’s saying that *if* you follow one, you won’t follow the other, due to their conflicting natures.

(v. 18) *If you are led by the Spirit, you aren’t under the law.* Why “law?” Wasn’t he contrasting “Spirit” & “flesh?” The focus of the law was fleshly ordinances. It’s purpose was to bring us to Christ (**3:24-25**), so we could live by the Spirit.

CONCLUSION: The lust of the flesh is fulfilling the fleshly desires. It seeks only to fulfill what **I** want. And what I want many times will be opposed to what *you* want, since we may want the same things. This is a good definition of the Greek word translated “strife” (v. 20). Even if there is no direct conflict of interest, any time I spend helping you is time I can’t use to help me! **God has called us out of a world that is filled with this attitude (to different degrees). God says to “love me and love one another” (**Mt 22:37f**). True agape love is putting others ahead of yourself, trusting in God and having faith that **HE** will be the one to look out for you. This truly takes faith. Do you have this faith?