



"Keeping In Step With The Spirit" (Galatians 5:7-26)

Danny Hodges – NT3442

I. THE TEXT

v.9 This is a spiritual principle that covers a lot of issues, but the issue here is that of legalism...If not turned around, the whole church will become legalistic, and that is not a pretty sight!

v.12 Do you think Paul takes this issue seriously?

- * Emasculate: To castrate
- * Castrate: To remove the testicles
- * Paul is saying he wishes these false teachers no longer had the capacity of reproduction.

v.13a Just a quick reminder of what freedom he is referring to: Free from the demands of the law, religious ritual & tradition (that makes me think I'm a better person because of these activities, condemnation, striving for righteousness (I'm already righteous by faith)...

v.13b Some people wrongly conclude that Christian freedom is an excuse to sin...See Romans 6:1-4, 15-18, 20-23.

v.15 This is what legalism will produce in a church! Rather than curbing the appetites of the flesh, legalism arouses them.

* Romans 7: 8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.

* "Many a man has, in good faith, set himself to conquer his own evil lusts and has found that the net result of his struggles has been to make the lusts more conspicuous and correspondingly more powerful." (Maclaren, p.157)

* See Col.2:20-23

v.16 Also translated "walk" in the Spirit

* 4043. peripateo, per-ee-pat-eh'-o; from G4012 and G3961; to tread all around, i.e. walk at large (espec. as proof of ability); fig. to live, deport oneself, follow (as a companion or votary):--go, be occupied with, walk (about).

v.18 Rom.8: 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

vv.19-21a Point out that drunkenness is not a disease, but an act of the flesh...

v.21b Those whose lifestyles reflect these kinds of things do not have the Spirit of God...

vv.22-23 Can you imagine being arrested for loving someone , being full of joy, being patient, etc.?

v.25 Very interesting. We can live by the Spirit (truly born again) yet not be "in step with the Spirit."

* Eph.2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins...4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,

5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...

v.26 Spiritual pride is part of legalism...

* Read Soul Care, p.14

II. LESSONS

A. Law/Legalism Will Never Produce The Spiritual Life God Intends

* Law keeps me focused on things I want to attain, but do not have the capacity.

* Legalism keeps me focused on externals, while the Spirit's focus is internal.

B. Walking In The Spirit Is The Path To Biblical Spirituality

* Walking in the Spirit = walking in truth

* II John 4; II John 3-4; John 16:13a; 17:17

C. Essential Elements Of Walking In The Spirit

1. Setting my mind of things above

* Romans 8:5-6; Col.3:1-4; Romans 12:2

* My devotions for today: Prayer, Ps.141:1-5a

* Prayer, Bible reading & meditation, worship, fellowship...

- "...the amount of Scripture read is not the issue. The point is how much of its truth is written in your heart..."

* Testimony: Jairus

2. Pride replaced with humility

* The Pharisees were religiously proud, and that's exactly what Saul of Tarsus was like before he met Jesus Christ personally...

* James 3:13-4:1; Phil.2:3-8; Gal.5:20; Luke 18:11, 13

* Pride resists the Spirit, while humility submits to the Spirit (See II Kings 5:1-14).

* When I humble myself, I open the door for God to do what I cannot do.

3. Sinful nature crucified

a. Characteristics of the sinful nature

(1. Thinks wrongly

- Matthew 16: 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." (context is the cross)...vv.24-25.

(2. Resists the will of God (Rom.8:7-8)

b. Keys to crucifying the sinful nature

1. Denying myself (Gal.5:17b)

2. Denying myself daily

- Peter Lord calls it "living in the will"

- God has given us all the capacity to choose (The Garden of Eden, tree of the knowledge of good & evil)...I must choose daily to deny myself...

- Whosoever will, let him come...I choose God's way, rather than relying on what I think or want. Sermons, desires, and understanding of God's truth does not change me. It is my choice to act on those truths that makes the difference. God asks us to submit our will to his will. Then He is released to do what I cannot do in my own strength.

4. Walk with the Spirit by faith, even when I don't feel like it, do not agree, or do not understand.

* God leading Peter out of a legalistic mindset and into an expanded ministry (see Acts 10:9-20).

* Direction in life & ministry

- see Luke 5:3-8

- Acts 8: 29 The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

- Acts 16: 7 When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.

- Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

- John 3: 8 The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

- I Cor.2: 14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.
15 The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

5. Serve others instead of serving myself

- "If you choose to do what you ought to do, you will not have time to do what you should not do. The best way to keep from evil is to do good." (Soul Care, p.140).

III. CONCLUSION

* Two overall directions that get me out of step with the Spirit

1. I do something that I shouldn't

- Eph.4: 30 And do not **grieve** the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

2. I don't do something that I should

- I Thess.5: 19 Quench not the Spirit. (NIV = ..."put out the Spirit's fire").