

Open Sails

“The Fruit of the Spirit”

Galatians 5:16-25 – part two

Introduction

- Now all of us even if we pretend not to have heard a rendition of Jeff Foxworthy’s “you might be a red neck if”
 - And whether you think they are funny or not, when I lived in Texas for 8 years – I found them very helpful – because some people just don’t know that they are
 - You share with them a line or two and their world opens up

So I was thinking about that and then wondered – how do we know we are really Christians, and I came up with these top 10 – you might be a Christian if..

Top 10 – You Might Be a Christian if....

#10 – If You have ever referred to hanging out as “fellowship”....

#9 – If Psalty the singing songbook was your first American Idol...

(if you knew Psalty was spelled with a “P” you are really a Christian

#8 – If you have ever been called, “Brother or Sister” by someone who does not know your name...

#7 – If you think DC talk invented Rap music...

#6 – If you watched “The office” but were selective on who you told that too at church....

#5 – If you have ever posted a Bible verse on Facebook just to prove you had done your devotions that day...

#4 – If you have broken up with someone and used the line, “right now I’m just dating Jesus”...

#3 – If you have every prayed for someone to have “traveling mercies”....

#2 – If you know what Kirk Cameron has been doing since Growing pains....

#1 – If you know the question, “How is your heart?” is not a medical question....

I wasted so much time putting that list together – but it was so much fun

- But listen – how do we know we are a Christian?
 - How do we know we are really walking in the Spirit???
- Apart from a dumb list that really has no bearing on the subject– Paul has a list here in the verses we just read by which actually really do help us answer the question

And we answer that today as we continue doing a series called “Open Sails” – the picture is opening up your heart and your life to everything that God has for you through His Spirit

- We have seen the theology – that the Holy Spirit is not an “it” or a force
 - But God, the third part of the trinity
- That part of God whose first ministry is to come along side you, and convict you of your sin as we saw last week from John 16:8-9
 - Then when you respond to that conviction, John 14:17 says He goes from being alongside you to within you
- And God’s Holy Spirit from the moment of conversion is there to stay - So why do we need to pray to be filled with the Spirit?
 - Because according to Acts 1:8, and Ephesians 5:18 – the Lord has a third relationship with His Spirit He wants for us – to be controlled, lead and directed by His Spirit

Paul calls it here in Galatians 5, walking in the Spirit

- and we saw last week that although we tend to mystify the idea a little bit – walking in the spirit is not weird, your eyes need not to roll back into your head
 - walking in the Spirit is very practical, but very few really do it

It’s staying in constant communion with Him – so as you go throughout your day

- you are asking Him – Lord how do I handle this client, how do I deal with this boss – how do you want me to speak to my wife, or my husband, how do you want me to deal with my kids, or with this temptation I am faced with
 - Walking in the Spirit is very practical – it is the opposite of walking in the flesh – of simply following the dictates of my sinful heart, the experience of my years of life – so I just throw it in neutral and flow down stream
- And when I get into that habit, and I do – spiritual disaster is usually the result

Walking in the Spirit is very practical and it is very spiritual

- because God is wanting to make me into a new man and maybe for you a new women
 - again not led by my sinful heart but by His Spirit
- Like He transformed Peter from the coward who could not bring himself to stand up for Jesus in front a little girl, to the preacher of Pentecost – “Jesus who you crucified has become both Lord and Christ”
- Like He transformed John from a hothead who wanted to set the Samaritans on fire for not believing in Jesus in Luke chapter 9 into the apostle of Love

So Jesus wants to transform you from someone who is bitter, from someone who is undisciplined, from someone who is addicted

- To someone who is filled with joy, self-controlled and free in the truest sense of the word

But we need to start with an honest look – how do we know that we are walking in the Spirit?

- well Paul gives us a list of what walking in the flesh looks like practically in our lives and what walking in the spirit will look like practically
 - and this is great – we don’t have to guess
 - we just need to have an honest evaluation of our lives

The first thing Paul does is lists the effects of living after the flesh, the NKJV calls it the “works of the flesh” other translations call it the “results”, the “deeds” or the “acts” of the flesh

- but they all mean the same thing – if you are walking in the flesh, these things will mark your life
 - what things
 - Paul mentions 17 things – we will not go into much detail this morning, maybe someday when we study Galatians in depth, but he lists

The Works of the flesh

Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lewdness

- and all of these first four deal with different types of sexual sin
 - Adultery – kind of a catch all word, we think of a married man or woman having sex outside of that marriage bound and that is definitely adultery, but the word literally means unlawful sex not in the way it’s intended to be
- That is why when you are told that whatever type of sexual sin someone is defending is not mentioned in the 10 commandments because it only mentions adultery, that is a misunderstanding of God’s heart

God forbids sex outside of His design

- God invented sex – it is not dirty in any way, but it needs to be in the confines of where God created it to be – between a husband and his wife in the context of marriage

Fire in its place – campfire, fireplace is amazing – but outside of those confines, fire can be dangerous and destructive

- And I know that is the exact opposite message the world gives you today
 - Everything is fine as long as none get hurt – no precious ones that is not true
 - Your Father in heaven who designed you knows that is not true, no matter what the world says

- And if you will listen to old pastor Jason – I have been in fulltime ministry since I was 20, that was 16 years ago – and if I had a dollar for every person I have had to counsel whose life was ripped apart by adultery, fornication (Greek word porneia, by the way), uncleanness, (just letting things that unclean into your heart) and lewdness (heart that longs for those things) – if I had a dollar for every person whose life was broken I would be rich man, but that thought does not bless me for I have seen its pain
 - God who loves you says – let’s be honest – do you see those things marking your life – you are not walking the Spirit, but in the flesh
 - God goes on in His list

The Works of the flesh

Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lewdness

Idolatry, Sorcery, Hatred, Contentions, Jealousies

- Idolatry is having anything that I worship in place of God – my things can be an idol, my hobbies, my sin, and even good things, like my kids, my wife

The Greek word for sorcery is pharmakia – and definitely refers to the occult of fortune teller and dark magic, but it’s where we get our English word Pharmacy – it refers to drugs that were used to alter the mind and open you up to the spirit world

- Hatred, being contentious, jealous, we know what that means and we see it in our heart too frequently
- and all of these first four deal with different types of sexual sin

The Works of the flesh

Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lewdness

Idolatry, Sorcery, Hatred, Contentions, Jealousies

Outbursts of Wrath, Selfish Ambitions, Dissensions

- “Outbursts of Wrath” – flying off the handle – but I’m Irish that is how we communicate – no, you are a Christian, and that is not how Jesus communicates
- Selfish ambitions – where I care more about pleasing myself and getting ahead than I do about others
- Dissensions – dividing people, churches – guard against it, it’s ugly

The Works of the flesh

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Outbursts of Wrath, Selfish Ambitions, Dissensions

Heresies, Envy, Murder, Drunkenness, Revelries

- Heresies – going outside the truth of God’s word
- Envy, Murder we all know what those words mean
- Drunkenness – it is not a sin to drink, but it always a sin to get drunk – why, because of the result
- Revelries – just living in a way without control, normally brought on my alcohol – I’m so tempted but I won’t pontificate on this

Paul lists these things that are sin, please see that church – sometimes the church gets pigeonholed that only one thing is a sin, that is not true, Unlawful sex is not more of a sin than selfish ambition, it might have great consequences to you and me, but these are all sins

- to be repented off and not to be tolerated in our own hearts
 - and Paul is saying – you see these things, don’t kid yourself, you are not walking in the Spirit and some life adjustments need to be made
 - in fact Paul gets even more serious than that

Paul goes on to say in verse 21 that those who practice those things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God

- What did you say Pastor? – I didn’t say it, the Bible said it

- but please understand what the word “practice” means
- it doesn't mean that you have fallen in one of these 17 areas
- If fact I would venture to guess that everyone of us have had times in our lives where the Holy Spirit says, don't think on that, don't look at that, don't treat that person that way, don't be so into you and we say – Holy Spirit – hang on a few minutes, stay right here and I will be back in a while
 - And we sin – we fall – so that means I don't get to go to heaven?
 - No – that means for that moment, don't kid yourself you were walking the flesh, not the Spirit
 - The Spirit does not lead you to lust, jealousy, envy, drunkenness – don't kid yourself – that was the flesh, and it was sin

But there is something different from falling, feeling bad, repenting and wanting to be right, then practicing, and living in an unrepentant state of any of these things

If you are living in sin, you are sleeping around with your boyfriend, girlfriend – you are continually bitter, envious, you continually fly off the handle, you are continually drunk and listen to me

- it's not just a matter of time continuance, because I know people who have been in bondage for a long time, but their soul hates it and they want to change, that is different
 - but if there is no desire to repent
 - not only are you not walking in the Spirit, I don't believe you are even walking with God – the Bible seems to indicate you don't have a real relationship with Him yet
- you may have religion, but you don't have a relationship with Jesus
 - and you need to repent today, and pray, God I want to be right with you

We need to be honest with ourselves

- the fruits of walking in the flesh are when these 17 things and Paul adds “and the like” things that are like them, are pouring forth from your life
 - I don't care what position you have in the church
 - I don't care who your daddy was or is
 - I don't care how long you have been sitting in that seat
 - You are not walking in the Spirit and the Father who loves you is calling you to wake up and repent

Now the opposite: What will it look like when I am walking in the Spirit – verse 22-23

- In contrast to the fruits of the flesh, there is only one fruit of the Spirit – and that is love
 - How do I know I am walking in the Spirit – love begins to flow out of my life

As Rob mentioned a couple of weeks ago, and I would totally agree when I first was baptized in the Spirit, the first thing I noticed, is I had a love for God's Word, I wanted to be in it and learn about Him

- when I go to youth retreats and we take time to wait upon the Lord, one of the things I notice, is not so much prophecy and speaking in tongues as love begins to fill the room
 - relationship are restored, people who are hard core, start to soften up
 - the fruit of the Spirit is love
- Now Paul gives us 9 manifestations of love there in verse 22 and 23

The Fruit of the Spirit – Love - 9 Manifestations of Love...

Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control

- joy and peace, even when trials are caving things in, there is just a peace that passes understanding, a joy not from this world or life that comes from walking in the Spirit
 - Longsuffering – I am patient with my wife, kids, maybe for you husband (I need to grow) – we all do – we all need less of us and more of Him, more of His Spirit
- Kindness, Goodness – a deliberate preference of what is right over what is wrong

- Faithfulness – just doing what God has called you to do
 - What do we want to hear when we see Jesus face to face – Well done my good and faithful servant

God considers Goodness – a deliberate preference of what is right over what is wrong and faithfulness as a successful life – man pray that one in for a few minutes

- gentleness, and here is one we all need, self-control
 - don't choose to be bitter and dwell on those feelings – have self-control
 - don't log onto that sight or search that on Google, have self-control
 - don't tell that lie – have self-control

I don't know about you, but I look at this list and I think, Lord I need to walk in this

- I don't always, but I know this is the direction I want to head it
 - So as we draw to close again – how do we walk in the Spirit
- We talked about this last week

How do we walk in the Spirit?

#1 – Cry out

#2 – Cultivate

#3 – Commune

- and since we are dealing with fruit, that which is produced from our lives, I just want to camp out again on that last one
 - I want to walk in the Spirit – I want love, joy, peace, goodness, faithfulness, self-control to dominate my life instead of the flesh and the works of the flesh
 - But how – You have made me a promise in verse 16, but how???
- I hope you know it isn't going to happen magically, as I sit back and let go and let God
 - I need to fight, I need to make some decisions in my life, I have to make some choices to walk in the Spirit

In my Bible next to Galatians 5:16 is written a reference, Romans 8:5

“For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*” – Romans 8:5

- you see what I set my mind on, what I cling to, what I commune with, will affect what I walk in
 - If I am setting my mind on the flesh, if I am clinging to my so called liberties in the flesh, if I communing with sin
 - Then make no mistake about it – you will walk in the flesh and that whole list will start to come pouring out of your heart

But if you make a decision to seriously head in a different direction

- to set your mind on the things of the Spirit – Lord I want to know you in the pages of this book – I want to know how You worked in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Joseph
 - I want to know what made You and Moses tick in Exodus – Deuteronomy
 - I want to know the lives of Joshua and Gideon
- I want to learn from David and Solomon, from Hezekiah, Josiah, and hear the heart of the prophets Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Daniel, Joel, Malachi
 - And want to see You Jesus in the gospels
 - I want to see Your Spirit work in the book of Acts
 - I want to learn the heart of those who walked with You and talked with You in the epistles
 - And I want to think on the fact You are coming again in the book of Revelation
 - I want to know Your story – I want to know Your book

It might be my flesh – But I love it when people tell me they have read my book

- I think it is hilarious when they thank me for making it so simple when I was trying as hard as I can to sound smart and that is all I got

- But I love it when people get something out of the Fundamentals of Walking with God

I can't wait to look in His eyes and be able to say with absolute honesty – I read Your book, over and over again and every time I learned something new about You and me

- I want to set my mind on the things of the Spirit

I want to cling to Him in worship and prayer

- every chance I have to grab ahold of His garment I want to do so and not let go
 - knowing that as I am with Him, as we talked about last week, I will become like Him
 - Jesus said to His disciples in John 15

“Abide in Me, and I in you. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing....If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.” – John 15:4-11

- I need to abide in Him if anything of value is going to come from my life, from my marriage, in my kids, in my church

And I abide in Him by being in His Word, by clinging to His love, but keeping His commandments (we don't talk much about that in the church today)

- and He does it so our joy will remain full
 - that most blessed life is a life that abides in His Word, in His love and in His law, His commandments, doing what He says to do

And as I abide in Him – you will bear fruit, you will bear the fruit of the Spirit

- you see sometimes we try to figure out how we are going to produce Godly character in our lives, we strive and make promises to God
 - where the real secret is to keep abiding – not in the world, but with Him

Psalm 1 – Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor does he stand in the path of sinners or sit in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord and in it, does he meditate day and night

- He will be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bring forth what – fruit, in its season, in the right time God has determined – as I simply choose not to abide in the world, but in Him, in His love, in His Word, in His commandments

We make it so difficult but I have a few fruit trees in my backyard that produce wonderful oranges and other citrus, but I have never heard them straining, groaning, striving

- they just stay planted in the good soil, receive sunlight from the Lord and water from Christy – and as they do that – the fruit producing system that God put within them just works
 - so you and me – abide in the good soil His Word, hang out in the sunlight of His presence in worship and prayer, be refreshed by the Water of His Spirit – you will produce fruit

You will change, your marriage will change, and your world will change

- Not by the power of the flesh
 - Not by walking and abiding in the things of the flesh, that will produce death
 - But by Walking in His Spirit