

“Walk in the Spirit”

Mark 16:15-20 / Galatians 5:16-25

Introduction

- We are doing a study in the final week of Jesus’ life, the greatest seven day period in human history
 - Where man was redeemed, where our sin was paid for, and where Jesus had victory over death
 - The greatest week ever!
- It started with Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling prophecies from Daniel 9 and Zechariah 9
 - The next day after Jesus prayed it in and thought it thru was the cleansing of the temple
- Then later that day He is examined by the Sanhedrin and the Herodians, the Pharisees and the Sadducees
 - Because as the Passover lamb, he was going to be examined just like the actual Passover lambs were between the 10th and the 14th of Nisan

Then on the 14th – Jesus was crucified on the Feast of Passover, fulfilling so many prophetic pictures, but beyond pictures, Jesus paid for our sins

- on the cross He was made sin for you and me, He was treated as if He lived my life, so I could be treated as if I had lived His
 - Jesus died on the cross, but praise God the story didn’t end there
- As Pastor Rob taught us last week – Jesus then rose from the dead, backing up everything He had ever said and setting Himself apart from every religious leader there has ever been
 - For Buddha is Dead, Mohammad is dead – but Jesus is alive!

And for the disciples of Jesus, the story of His work in their lives and through their lives continues here in chapter 16 and then in the record we have in the book of Acts

- and Pastor Rob wants to finish these last few verses with you next week
 - and He asked me, if for my week, we would focus on the power that inspired and enable these disciples to change the world
 - the power of the Holy Spirit

For that we need to leave the gospel of Mark and turn with me if you would to Galatians chapter 5, Paul writes starting in verse 16-25...

- many Bible scholars believe that Galatians was the first book of the Bible that Paul the Apostle wrote
 - it was written not to one particular church, like the book of Ephesians or Philippians which were written to the church in Ephesus, the church in Philippi
 - but the book of Galatians was written to a group of churches for a region
- Galatia is not a city, but a region made up of the cities of Iconium, and Lystra and Derbe

This region of what is today Turkey was one of the first places Paul and Barnabas ever went to preach the gospel after being sent out from the church in Antioch

- it was in the region of Galatia that some of the first gentile churches were planted
 - it was in the region of Galatia that Paul met a young man by the name of Timothy who would later be huge in the ministry of the early church

And it was in this area of Galatia that a problem began to brew

- The problem was a group known as the Judaizers who were teaching the new converts, “Faith in Jesus is good, but if you really want to go deep in your walk, you need Judaism”
 - Jesus was a Jew
 - Paul was a Jew

- And if you want to become all God wants you to be, you too, need to adopt the law of Moses, to be under it, to let it shape you
- And because of these Judaizers, these false teachers, many in this region of churches were being ripped off and tripped up in their simple faith in Jesus

So along comes Paul, who led many in those churches of Galatia to Christ, Paul who was at one time as stepped in Judaism as you could be

- He knew the law was not the answer
 - He knew trying to perfect your life by being under the law was frustrating and futile
 - And so Paul writes this book, writes a letter to the churches of Galatia to help them understand
- No – the answer to sanctification, going deeper in your walk with God, the answer is not in Judaism
 - And if you have studied this book you know the arguments that Paul goes through

There is only one gospel – the good news of Jesus Christ, that He, not you has set you free from your sins - righteousness does not come by the law – O foolish Galatians who has bewitched you, are you so foolish to think that what began in the Spirit, your walk with God began in the Spirit, you think you are going to perfect yourself now in the flesh? – Crazy

- But Paul being the masterful teacher that he was, anticipates a question – well then how do I walk pure

The Judaizers were saying, you know you need to walk in purity, you know you are not right, so you need the law to help you walk in purity

- that is why we need the rules Paul, how do you think we are going to be perfected?
 - And Paul answers that question in verse 16

“Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” – Galatians 5:16

Now that sounds like a promise to me, doesn't it to you?

- it sounds like God through the Apostle Paul is promising you and me – I know you struggle with the flesh, I know you need to grow in sanctification, so here is how you do that
 - Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh
- That sounds like a promise, but how does walking in the Spirit happen practically in my life?

Well something I think we must understand is walking in the Spirit is not something metaphysical or new agey

- this is a mistake I used to make all the time
 - I would think, I need to be filled with the Spirit, and I'm a quart low God help me out
 - I would equate being filled with being stuffed
- You know kind of like the holiday next week – I have to admit Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday of the year
 - You would think it should be Easter or Christmas, and I love those days to – but I work Easter, we work hard around here
 - We work Christmas Eve
- But oh Thanksgiving – a time of football, family and food – I don't know if it gets any better
 - Football, family and you get to stuff yourself

I will never forget my first Thanksgiving as a married man

- we all lived in North County San Diego, but now my wife's parents are missionaries in Tel Aviv Israel, my Mom followed Christy and I out to Texas, but stayed there because my sister is still out there

- so we are all alone for much of the year now
- but back then we all lived 10 minutes from each other

And it worked out great for Thanksgiving because my family would always eat early, 2pm

- so we went to my parents Thanksgiving first – and I had a great plan to take it easy, to eat conservatively, but when I smelled that Turkey, it's momma's cooking and you can't disappoint momma – so I ate and ate and ate
 - at 5pm my wife's parents had their Thanksgiving, so we headed to their house and the plan, don't eat much
 - but this was Mom-in-law's house and you can't disappoint mom-in-law on your Thanksgiving together, so I ate and I ate and I ate

Well my wife had said to me a week before Thanksgiving, I know we are going to your parents and my parents house for thanksgiving, but I want us to have our own thanksgiving, I want to make you a Turkey

- and I said to her – Woman do all that is in your heart
 - and so after eating and eating at my parent's house and then her parent's house – at about 7:30 that night we headed to our apartment and I had my 3rd Thanksgiving meal in about 6 hours and can't disappoint your new bride – so I ate and ate and ate
- And when it was over I knew why gluttony is a sin

It hurt so bad, I was stuffed, I was filled

- and I think we make the mistake of thinking that is what I need to do with the Holy Spirit
 - I need more Lord, more Lord, more Lord
 - Pop – okay now I have enough of the Spirit

But biblically that is not really what it means at all

- in Luke chapter 4 Jesus is telling the Pharisees that He is the Messiah and they are not really listening as normal
 - but then Jesus says, He is not just the Messiah for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles
- and Luke 4 says that the Pharisees loose their mind, well actually it says, they were “filled with wrath” – same word as being “filled” with the Holy Spirit
 - but what Luke tells us is, the effect of being filled with Wrath, is they started from that day forward to plot the death of Jesus
 - now think that through for a moment

The Pharisees were suppose to be the religious leaders in Israel, and religious leaders are not suppose to kill people

- you know we read our bibles with our latte and our Danish in our hands and we think – oh they were filled with wrath and they wanted to kill people – oh that is nice – sip, sip
 - that is not nice

I'm mean – Rob and Denise were away this week, it was his birthday, he is writing a book – but what if I told you what really happened, is they were plotting how to kill me – hopefully, come on church, hopefully your response to that would not be, oh that's nice, I see why they would want Jason dead, any way we can help – no – you would say that is not okay because spiritual leaders aren't supposed to kill people

I mean I heard that Andy Dean took the interns on a retreat this week, to bless them, to pour into them, but what if I told you that in reality, they were plotting to kill some of you at the banquet on Sunday night – watch your back Jack – how many of you would say, oh that's nice – some Bible College students planning to kill – no you wouldn't - because spiritual leaders are not suppose to be planning on killing people

So what I want you to see is that being ‘filled wrath’ turned these religious leaders into different men

- because to be “filled’ with something biblically does not mean quantitative
 - it means when that thing begins to change who I am
 - God changed Peter, from a coward to preacher
 - God changed John, from a hater to the apostle of love – so the Spirit of God can change you into a different man or a different woman
- We can live pure and powerfully effective lives for the Kingdom of God – not by going back into Judaism, but by walking in the power of the Holy Spirit
 - So how do we do it – 3 C’s this morning

#1 – Cry out – Luke 11:9-13

“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” – Luke 11:9-13

- Now you will hear on some Christian TV programs that this verse is about money – “seek and you shall find” – I don’t know why you need that voice to be a prosperity gospel preacher, but you do

But that is not what Jesus is talking about

- He is talking about the Spirit
 - I need to be transformed, I need Him to work
 - We need to cry out

The way I see it, there is so much power available to you and me from the throne of God, but insist on trusting in ourselves

- We live in a culture that Paul the apostle couldn’t even have dreamed of, with jet travel and the internet, and blogs, and podcasts and so many ways for us to impact our culture
 - And yet we pale in comparison to what the early church accomplished
 - Could it be because we don’t cry out – God send your Spirit

You look through the scriptures and you see God has a tool available for us

- in II Kings 19, the city of Jerusalem is surrounded by the Assyrian army, and Isaiah and Hezekiah get on their face and cry out
 - And God sends military angels, that is the only way I can describe, we think of angels as a chubby baby on a cloud playing a harp?
 - Well this angel shows up and kills 185,000 Assyrian warriors in one night – that is some chubby baby
 - We see military angels

We see Messenger Angels

- Daniel chapter 9, Daniel is seeking the Lord, what are you doing with us God here in Babylon, how long will we be here, what do you want us to do while we are here
 - As Daniel is crying out – God sends a messenger angel – with the most amazing prophecy in the word of God – wisdom and comfort
 - We see messenger angels

We see ministering angels – Matthew chapter 4

- Jesus after fasting for 40 days, the Bible says He was hungry, I love those “no duh” statements in the scripture – Jael took a tent peg and thrust it through Sisera’s head and then he died – (really is that what happened to him?)
 - Jesus was hungry after 40 days of not eating, He was just being tormented by the devil, and God sent a ministering angel to comfort Him and lift Him up

All this power available

- we see our culture falling around us, we see our own hearts hard toward the Lord
 - and I see heaven waiting to work

Friend power is available from on high

- generations of kids are going to hell
 - marriages are falling apart
 - your own heart is in bondage to sin
 - what do we do
- you cry out – Lord I need your Spirit, I want to be filled and changed by your Spirit, I want to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh
 - I want to be ready for all you have for me
 - Cry out – He has what we need, He has power available

#1 – Cry out – Luke 11:9-13

#2 – Cultivate – I Thessalonians 5:19

“Do not quench the Spirit”

- we are to call out to the Lord, but the Word of God also makes it clear there are some things we can do to hinder the Spirit of God in our lives

Acts 7 – we can resist the Spirit

Ephesians 4 – we can grieve the Spirit

I Thessalonians 5 – we can quench the Spirit

How can we do that? – Well often the Spirit is compared with a fire.

John the Baptist said, “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” – Matthew 3:11

- the Spirit is compared with a fire, and I find that helpful, because we understand how we can quench a fire

A Fire can be quenched in two ways

#1 – Introducing an outside agent, not part of the fire process. i.e. dirt, water

Or in the case of my sons third birthday, we had candles on his cake, blows out the candles make a wish, and we were all videotaping, and watching

- and he tried and tried and couldn't until he dug deep in his lungs and proceeded to spittttt all over the candles
 - I instantly lost my desire for cake
 - But the candles went out
- Because when you intro into the fire process, something that doesn't belong, like dirt, water, a fire extinguisher or spit – the fire is quenched

And so too, when I introduce in my heart, something that is foreign to walking in the Spirit, the Spirit can be quenched

- now this is not works theology, we are not saved by walking right, God doesn't love you more
 - but it is wisdom to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:9 says, “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.”

- well there you go, I am in the Spirit, because the Spirit is in me
 - that is not what it says, it says, you will walk in the Spirit when the Spirit of God dwells in you
 - the word “dwell” there is interesting

“Dwell” – means to be at home with

- we all know what is like to be somewhere that just doesn't feel like home, out camping, at the families for Thanksgiving, Bible College

- I remember my Mom's friend growing up had a boy that was couple years older than me and he had the coolest room, all the star wars toys – and I loved going over, but then he would say, you want to spend the night?

- Now he had this bed with a bar, and dog – horrible

So he would run to my mom, can Jason spend the night, “no” – why

- I like the guy, I really did, but I was not comfortable in his room

And I feel like the Lord would say to some of us

- I love you, I love you so much it hurts
 - But this thing you are allowing, and making excuses for in your life – I'm not comfortable with that

You see I want to walk in the Spirit, I want to be a different man, and change my world

- so I need to cry out, and I need to cultivate a life were the Spirit isn't uncomfortable with me, but where the Spirit is at home

#1 – Cry Out – Luke 11:9-13

#2 – Cultivate – I Thessalonians 5:19

#3 – Commune – 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

- in Galatians 5:16 we are told that if we walk in the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh
 - well right next to Galatians 5:16 is written Romans 8:5 because it tells me how to walk in the Spirit
 - those who walk in the Spirit – set their minds on the things of the Spirit
- remember the illustration with comparing the Holy Spirit to a fire

A Fire can be quenched in two ways

#1 – Introducing an outside agent, not part of the fire process. i.e. dirt, water

#2 – Lack of fuel

- fire needs something to burn, it needs fuel

And the fuel of our Christianity is to commune with Him

- not with an agenda, not dictating to Him what needs to happen in my life
 - but just to be with Him, to talk with Him
 - and as we do – He will change us by His Spirit from the inside out
- As we behold Him, as we commune with Him, we will be transformed

“But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.” – II Corinthians 3:18

- You become like those you are around
 - My mom when I was younger, had this annoying habit of mouthing my words back to me when I would tell her a story
 - And I would say why are you doing that – so embarrassing – dumb son – be careful
- Because again, I was married for about a week and my wife was talking to me about something she was interested in and then she said, “What are doing with your mouth?” – I needed no explanation
 - I had become my Mom

You become like those you are around

- that may be a good thing or not a good thing when it comes to your parents
 - But when it comes to being like God
 - There is no one like our Jesus
- And I want to be like Him

- But I struggle with flesh and sin
 - And I realize – there is much to be done
 - But I need to grow

So, we can go back to Judaism, back under the law, which Paul says is foolish, or we can turn our eyes upon Jesus, we can look full into His wonderful face and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace

- Cry out to Jesus
- Cultivate your relationship with Jesus
- Commune with Jesus and in the power of His Holy Spirit

You are my kid's pastors – you are who my son will look up to as revolutionary and I'm concerned about what you teach him

- we live in a time where ministries and church planting is exploding
 - and I think we can learn from those men that are doing it well, who understand how to reach our culture
 - methods change – but the message never does
- if you will be effective, not just for a year or two, but if you are to change lives for eternity, then it must, it must, it must be done
 - **“not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit says the Lord.” – Zechariah 4:6**