

Galatians

TO THE
CHURCHES
IN GALATIA

WORKS OF THE FLESH VS. FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. GALATIANS 5:16-25

Galatians 5:16-25 is one of the most well-known passages in Galatians as it talks about “the fruit of the Spirit.” Tim Keller wrote that he doesn’t think there is any better passage in all the Scriptures than Galatians 5 in showing us what spiritual life results in.

Read Galatians 5:16-25.

- **What do you think Paul is doing with these two lists?**

The “works of the flesh” are really **signs of spiritual deadness**. As we live in them, we grow more calloused toward God, we become more dead (if that is possible) inside. There are 15 words for works of the flesh. Many moral Christians look at the “works of the flesh” and think it’s the “bad people” who do them, not realizing that they can (and usually do) fall into the same trap: selfish ambition, envy, jealousy, hatred, discord, fits of rage, and dissensions.

- **In what ways have you lived out these works of the flesh?**
- **Examine your life and assess if you are ruled more by your flesh or by the Spirit?**
- **What indicators do you see that lead to one or the other?**

Paul gives four categories of how the “flesh” is born out:

1. Sexually
 2. False Spirituality
 3. Socially
 4. Addictions
- **How does an understanding of how these works of the flesh help us to better understand/see what is happening in culture around us?**
 - **How do these things master us, enslave us, and destroy all freedom?**
 - **How can we communicate that enslavement to a skeptical world in which we live?**

WEEK TWENTY-TWO

Paul then says, “What you want in your life is not dead works, but fruit that is birthed through the Spirit of God.” This fruit is the opposite of the works of the flesh and are **signs of spiritual life**. Paul will start with **LOVE!** Love is opening yourself and serving somebody else for the intrinsic value of who they are. Paul then moves to **JOY**, because joy is delight in God for the intrinsic value of who He is.

- **Why does Paul start with love?**
- **Do you try to love others (open and vulnerably) or protect yourself?**

Paul moves on to peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Paul calls these the fruit of the Spirit. He doesn’t call them the “fruits”; he says “fruit” (singular)! In describing the fruit of the Spirit, he gives us 9 things—each leads into and works with the others.

- **In what ways have you seen these birthed in your life?**
- **What signs of spiritual life do you see in yourself, or if you are in a group, in your group as a whole?**
- **How do these different expressions of the fruit of the Spirit work together?**

How do we walk in the fruit of the Spirit? *Gal 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. . . . 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.* God’s Spirit knows how to lead us, guide us, and propel us towards Jesus; it is an ongoing life process.

- **Whose righteousness do you rely on?**
- **What do you need to crucify in your life? What does that mean/look like?**
- **How can we rely more on the Holy Spirit to bring about His change?**
- **How can we celebrate, mark, remind, encourage, check-in, etc. each other about walking in the Spirit?**

