

Chapter Three: Walk in the Spirit

Throughout the New Testament “flesh” and “spirit” are often used in contrast. When used in such a manner flesh, *sarx* (G: 4561), refers to “the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God” (Thayer 571). It represents the physical as opposed to the spiritual. Spirit, *pneuma* (G:4151), literally means “wind, breath” (Strong 1637). Figuratively, it is “the rational spirit, the power by which a human being feels, thinks, wills, decides; the soul” (Thayer 520). Basically, the flesh is of the world and refers to earthly things while the spirit is of God and refers to spiritual things. Additionally, *pneuma* is used in reference to the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost. Romans 8:1-17 and Galatians 5:16-25 use phrases like “walk in the flesh” and “walk in the Spirit.” Walk, *peripateō* (G: 4043), figuratively means “to live, conduct one’s life” (Strong 1636). Therefore, to walk in the Spirit is to live according to the Spirit. Contrarily, to walk in the flesh is to live according to the to the world and opposed to God. Romans 8:1-17 describes the two opposing lifestyles in which we could walk. Galatians 5:16-25 shows how we can tell which lifestyle we are walking.

Romans 8:1-17 describes the two opposing lifestyles: to walk after the flesh or after the Spirit. To walk after someone or something is to follow that person or thing. Whoever or whatever we walk after becomes the basis of our lives. Whether we realize it or not, all decisions are based on what we walk after. Therefore, it is important to know exactly who or what it is we have chosen to follow and what is expected of us as we follow. This passage contrasts the two lifestyles and allows us to understand what it means to walk after each. Notice the differences between the two:

The Spirit	The Flesh
Difference in Condemnation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “No condemnation” (verse 1) • Free “from the law of sin and death” (verse 2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implies condemnation and subjection to the law of sin and death
Difference in What We Mind	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mind “the things of the Spirit” (verse 5) • “spiritually minded is life and peace” (verse 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mind “the things of the flesh” (verse 5) • “carnally minded is death” (verse 6)
Difference in Our Relationship with God	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Spirit of God dwell in you” (verse 9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “enmity against God” (verse 7) • “cannot please God” (verse 8)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Spirit of adoption” (verse 15) • “sons of God” (verse 14) • “children of God” (verse 16) • “heirs of God” (verse 17) • “joint-heirs with Christ” (verse 17) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “spirit of bondage” (verse 15)
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The first difference is that of condemnation. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:1-2). Condemnation, *katakrima* (G: 2631), “is ‘the sentence pronounced, the condemnation’ with a suggestion of the punishment following” the guilty verdict (Vine 119). Those who walk after the Spirit receive no condemnation because they have been freed from the law of sin and death. Free, *eleutheroō* (G: 1659), means “to set free, liberate” (Strong 1607). The law of sin and death is “the controlling influence of sin, leading to death and condemnation” (Barnes 602). It is only through Christ and his sacrifice we have the opportunity to be liberated from the power of sin, something the Law of Moses could never do. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:3-4). The Law was weak, *astheneō* (G: 770), or “powerless” and “without strength” in regard to the removal of sin. “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:4, 10). The continual animal sacrifices of the Old Law were imperfect as they could not take away sin. They were never designed to do such a thing. Christ, however, can and does take away our sins through the one-time shedding of his blood. Thereby, the Messiah condemned sin in the flesh. Condemned, *katakrinō* (G: 2632), “signifies ‘to give judgment against, pass sentence upon’; hence, ‘to condemn’” (Vine 119). Christ condemns sin “to lose its power” over us (Jamieson 1159). This is done through baptism where we crucify the old man of sin and rise to walk in newness of life, no longer serving sin (Romans 6). Only by walking after the Spirit can we be freed from sin and death, therefore, not subject to condemnation.

The second difference between walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit deals with what we choose to mind. “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit” (Romans 8:5). Mind, *phroneō* (G:5426), means “to direct one’s mind to a thing, to

seek or strive for...to be of one's party, side with him" (Thayer 658). To mind something is to have an interest in that thing and seek after it. What we mind is what we strive to have or achieve. It does not matter who we pretend to be, for who we really are is always known to God (Psalm 94:11) and will soon be revealed to those around us. "The man is as the mind is. The mind is the forge of thoughts" (Henry *New* 7:260). The thoughts are the basis of our actions. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). We can pretend to be whoever or whatever we want, but our actions will always reveal our true selves and show all who or what we choose to mind. Therefore, we must train ourselves to mind spiritual things and walk after the Spirit. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 6:8). Carnally is translated from the same Greek word as "flesh," *sarx* (G: 4561), thus it, too, represents the worldly things of life. Minded, *phronēma* (G: 5427), "denotes 'what one has in the mind, the thought' (the content of the process expressed in *phroneō* [mind (G: 5426), verse 5]..." (Vine 409). *Phroneō*, then, depicts the act of thinking while *phronēma* represents the actual thought. If our thoughts are worldly, then we, too, are worldly and we walk after the flesh. The end thereof is death, *thanatos* (G: 2288). Literally, death is "the separation of the soul (the spiritual part of man) from the body (the material part)" (Vine 149). Figuratively, death represents "the separation of man from God... 'Death' is the opposite of life; it never denotes non-existence. As spiritual life is 'conscious existence in communion with God'; so spiritual 'death' is 'conscious existence in separation from God'" (Vine 149). If, on the other hand, the object of our thoughts is spiritual and we seek such things, then we walk after the Spirit which is "life and peace" (Romans 6:8). Not only do we enjoy conscious existence in communion with God but also peace, *eirēnē* (G:1515). Peace is "harmony, tranquility" (Strong 1605). "It is the felicity and happiness of the soul" (Henry *New* 7:260). When we truly walk in the Spirit we know we have spiritual life (1 John 5:13) and there is a sense of peace that comes with that knowledge. We do not have to fear or tremble at the thought of the second coming of our Lord but take joy and comfort in it for we know that he will take us home (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The third difference between walking after the flesh and walking after the Spirit deals with our relationship to God. Spiritual life and peace, just as spiritual death, are not just future promises but a present state of existence. Those who walk after the Spirit now are spiritually alive now and have peace now. Likewise, those who walk after the flesh are spiritually dead and separated from God now. They are in such a state because "the carnal mind is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7). Enmity, *echthra* (G: 2189), means "hostility, hatred, antagonism" (Strong 1614). It is "the opposite of *agopē*[G: 26], 'love'" (Vine 201). Enmity against God "means,

that such a regard to the flesh is in fact hostility to God, because it is opposed to his law, and to his plan for purifying the soul...minding the things of the flesh also leads to the hatred of *God himself*, because he is opposed to it” (Barnes 603). Since enmity is the opposite of love, those with a carnal mind can not love God and will not, therefore, obey God. Love and obedience are partners; you can not have one without the other (John 14:15, 21). The carnal mind replaces the love we should have with enmity. “In such a state of mind there neither is nor can be the least subjection to the law of God. Many things may be done which the law requires, but nothing either is or can be done *because* God’s law requires it, or purely to please God” (Jamieson 1160). They can not please God because they have no desire to please God. Rather, their desire lies in their own selfish interests rooted in the flesh. Those who are spiritually minded, however, can and do please God through their love and obedience. We must, therefore, interest ourselves with spiritual things and thereby walk after the Spirit. Only then can we enjoy life and peace in this world and for all of eternity.

The difference in our relationship to God is further seen by contrasting bondage and adoption. “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). Bondage, *douleia* (G: 1397), is “the condition of being a slave” (Vine 73). Fear, *phobos* (G: 5401), means “fear, dread, terror” (Vine 230). “This implies that in their former state, under the law, they were in a state of servitude, and that the tendency of it was merely to produce alarm” (Barnes 605). Now, however, we have received the Spirit of adoption, *huiiothesia* (G: 5206). This “signifies the place and condition of a son given to one to whom it does not naturally belong” (Vine 14). The contrast here is between bondage and adoption. When God brought Israel out of Egypt he declared “I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God” (Exodus 6:7). Time and time again God declares “I am the Lord your God” and promises they will be his people as long as they continue to serve him through obedience. In the New Testament, however, we have a closer relationship with God who is seen more as a father figure. Paul told the Galatians Christ was sent by God to “redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (4:5). When Jesus taught the apostles to pray he even taught them to address God as Father (Matthew 6:9). Through the blood of Christ those who walk in the Spirit have received the Spirit of adoption and are thus placed in God’s family. We enjoy the “feeling of affection, love, and confidence which pertains to children; not the servile, trembling spirit of slaves, but the temper and affectionate regard of sons” (Barnes 605). This adoption makes us not just “children of God” (Romans 8:16) but also “sons of God” (verse 14), thus entitling us to be “heirs of

God, and joint-heirs with Christ” (verse 17). Heirs, *klēronomos* (G: 2818), means “one who receives his allotted possession by right of sonship” (Thayer 349). Joint-heirs, *synklēronomos* (G: 4789), means “inheriting together” (Strong 1644). As joint-heirs with Christ we receive the full birthright rather than a partial birthright often associated with adopted sons. We are full heirs of God and have been promised entrance into his heavenly kingdom as our birthright through adoption. If we want to be a part of God’s family this is the only route. We must walk after the Spirit and become children and heirs of God.

Galatians 5:16-25 shows how we can tell which lifestyle we are living: after the flesh or after the Spirit. This passage: 1) Shows the opposition of the flesh and Spirit (verses 16-18); 2) Describes the works of the flesh (verses 19-21); 3) Describes the fruit of the Spirit (verses 22-23); and 4) Exhorts us to walk in the Spirit (verses 25-26).

The passage begins with an exhortation to walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfill the lust of the flesh. Thus, the Spirit and flesh are opposite in nature. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law” (Galatians 5:16-18). Walk, *peripateō* (G: 4043), Spirit *pneuma* (G: 4151), and flesh, *sarx* (G: 4561), are the same words used in Romans 8:1-17 and are used in the same way. Fulfill, *teleō* (G: 5055), “signifies, among its various meanings, ‘to give effect to’” (Vine 258). Lust, *epithymia* (G: 1939), “denotes ‘strong desire’ of any kind” (Vine 384). To fulfil the lust of the flesh, then, is to give effect to or give in to strong worldly desires. It is the same as walking after the flesh (Romans 8:1-17) and, therefore, is the opposite of walking in the Spirit. If we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfil the lust of the flesh because they are “contrary the one to the other” (verse 17). Contrary, *antikeimai* (G: 480), means “to oppose, be adverse to, withstand” (Thayer 50). The Spirit and the flesh “lusteth against” each other (verse 17). Lusteth, *epithymeō* (G: 1937), means “to have desires opposed to” something (Thayer 238). Those who walk in the Spirit have desires that are opposed to the flesh and vice versa. We can not walk in the Spirit and fulfil the lust of the flesh. We may occasionally succumb to temptation, but we who truly walk in the Spirit do not give ourselves over to the lust of the flesh. The idea is that of not living in sin, thereby being dead to sin (Romans 6:6-14). The Spirit and the flesh are mutually exclusive. We are either in the Spirit or in the flesh; we can not walk in both.

Galatians 5:19-21 describes the works of the flesh which are manifest, *phaneros* (G: 5318). This word means “apparent, manifest, evident, known”

(Thayer 648). By their very nature it is clear these actions come not from the Spirit but from the flesh. “[M]ost of them are condemned by the light of nature itself, and all of them [are condemned] by the light of scripture” (Henry *New* 8:280). The many apparent works of the flesh are sins against God, self or others. Adultery, fornication, uncleanness and lasciviousness encompass the sins of sexual immorality. Fornication, *porneia* (G: 4202), means “sexual immorality” and is a “generic term for sexual sin of any kind” (Strong 1638). Adultery, *moicheia* (G: 3430), is sexual immorality when at least one participant is married, thus breaking the bonds of marriage. Uncleanness, *akatharsia* (G: 167), denotes “impurity, a state of moral filthiness, especially in relation to sexual sin” (Strong 1589). Lasciviousness, *aselgeia* (G: 766), indicates “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence” (Thayer 79). “The idea is that of a man who is so far gone in desire that he has ceased to care what people say or think” (Barclay 47). Idolatry and witchcraft are sins against God in that they shift our priorities away from God. Idolatry, *eidōlolatrea* (G: 1495), “is the sin in which material things have taken the place of God” (Barclay 47). It is not limited to idol worship. Anything that comes between man and God can be considered an idol. Witchcraft, *pharmakia* (G: 5331), “primarily signified ‘the use of medicine, drugs, spells’” (Vine 587). It denotes “sorcery, magical arts, [and is] often found in connection with idolatry” (Thayer 649). The remainder of the works of the flesh deal mostly with how we treat our fellow man. Hatred, *echthra* (G: 2189), is the same word translated “enmity” in Romans 8:7. “[T]he idea is that of the man who is characteristically hostile to his fellow men; it is the precise opposite of the Christian virtue of love” (Barclay 47). Variance, *eris* (G: 2054), indicates “strife, quarrel, especially rivalry, contention, wrangling” (Vine 126). Emulations, *zēlos* (G: 2205), is “morally corrupt zealous ill will” (Strong 1614). It indicates “an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy” (Thayer 271). Wrath, *thymos* (G: 2372), is “a state of intense displeasure based in some real or perceived wrong” (Strong 1616). Strife, *eritheia* (G: 2052), “denotes ‘ambition, self-seeking, rivalry,’ self-will being an underlying idea in the word; hence it denotes ‘party-making’... ‘seeking to win followers,’ ‘factions’” (Vine 220). Seditious, *dichostasia* (G: 1370), means “‘a standing apart’... ‘division’” (Vine 556). Heresies, *hairesis* (G: 139), indicates “‘that which is chosen,’ and hence, ‘an opinion,’ especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects” (Vine 303). Envyings, *pythonos* (G: 5355), is the “feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others” (Vine 204). “Basil called it ‘grief at your neighbor’s good fortune’” (Barclay 48). All of these things (hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditious, heresies and envyings) stand in opposition to the love, peace and harmony demanded by God. Reveling, *kōmos*

(G: 2970), indicates “‘a revel, carousal,’ the concomitant and consequence of drunkenness” (Vine 532). It represents “enjoyment that has degenerated into licence” (Barclay 49). It goes hand in hand with drunkenness, *methē* (G: 3178), which simply means “intoxication” (Thayer 395). At the end of Paul’s list of the works of the flesh he adds “and the such like” (verse 21). This phrase stands as an all inclusive et cetera. The works of the flesh are not just these seventeen things enumerated by Paul. The works of the flesh include anything and everything else that resembles these sins or is proven to be contrary to the Spirit. Paul warns us, “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (verse 21). Inherit, *klēronomeō* (G: 2816), means to “receive an allotted portion... become partaker of, to obtain” (Thayer 348). It is a reference to being “heirs of God” through the “Spirit of adoption” (Romans 8:15-17). Those who practice the works of the flesh are not the sons of God and will not receive the Father’s inheritance. The works of the flesh are sins and they, like all sin, “will undoubtedly shut men out of heaven” (Henry *New* 8:280).

The fruit of the Spirit is listed in Galatians 5:22-25. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (verses 22-23). The word “but” shows a clear contrast between what precedes, the work of the flesh, and what follows, the fruit of the Spirit. Fruit, *karpos* (G: 2590), is used metaphorically “of works or deeds” (Vine 256). Many of the virtues cited are direct opposites of the works of the flesh. Love and joy relate to how we as Christians perceive our lives and circumstances. Love, *agape* (G: 26), is “the characteristic word of Christianity... ‘Love can be known only from the actions it prompts’” (Vine 381). Love represents “unconquerable benevolence. It means that no matter what a man may do to us by way of insulting or injury or humiliation we will never seek anything else but his highest good... never to seek anything but the best even for those who seek the worst for us” (Barclay 50). Joy, *chara* (G: 5479), “most often describes that joy which has a basis in religion... It is a joy whose foundation is God” (Barclay 50). It stems from the knowledge we have of the spiritual blessings we enjoy through Christ, both now and in eternity. The remainder of the fruit of the Spirit deals with how we relate to and treat others. Peace, *eirēnē* (G: 1515), represents “peace between individuals, i.e. harmony, concord” (Thayer 182). Longsuffering *makrothymia* (G: 3115), is “patience, forbearance, internal and external control in a difficult circumstance” (Strong 1625). Gentleness, “*chrēstotōs* (G: 5544), is “kindness” (Vine 343) or “a sweetness of temper” (Henry *New* 8:280). Goodness, *agathōsynē* (G: 19), means “uprightness of heart and life... kindness, beneficence” (Thayer 3). Gentleness and goodness are “closely connected words:” the former is “goodness which is kind” while the latter “is the

widest word for goodness” and is defined as “virtue equipped at every point” (Barclay 51). Faith, *pistis* (G: 4102), means “fidelity, faithfulness, i.e. the character of one who can be relied on” (Thayer 514). Meekness, *praotēs* (G: 4236), is not weakness, but is often described and strength under control. It is “gentleness, mildness” (Thayer 535) and denotes “the quality of the man who is always angry at the right time and never at the wrong time” (Barclay 52). Temperance, *enkrateia* (G: 1466), is “self-control” (Strong 1604), denoting “the virtue of one who has mastered his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites” (Thayer 167). If we compare the types of sins represented by the works of the flesh to the types of virtue characteristic of the fruit of the Spirit, we see they relate to one another in their nature but at opposite extremes. Instead of strife and contention, the Spirit produces peace and gentleness. Instead of revelings, we have temperance. Once again, this shows the extreme differing character between the flesh and the Spirit. They are so different Paul declares “against such there is no law” (verse 23) in reference to the fruit of the Spirit. The works of the flesh are mostly contrary to nature itself and completely contrary to the law of God, thus barring entrance to heaven. The fruit of the Spirit, however, is in accordance with God’s law and is even a part of it. There is nothing to condemn these virtues or punish those who perform them.

After Paul lists the fruit of the Spirit he reminds us that those who are Christ’s, or those who are after the Spirit, “have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Galatians 5:24). Crucified, *stauroō* (G: 4717), means, metaphorically, “putting off” (Vine 138). Affections, *pathēma* (G: 3804), is “an evil emotion, passion...the uncontrolled nature of evil desires” (Vine 17). Flesh and lusts are the same words used earlier in this passage as well as in Romans 8:1-17. To crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts is to put off the flesh as we put on Christ. “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Romans 13:14). Initially, we put on Christ in baptism as we crucify the old man of sin (Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:27). That, however, is not the end of it. It is our constant care and concern to crucify the flesh and “destroy its power utterly” (Thayer 586). We are constantly faced with temptation. Therefore, we must constantly overcome sin in order to live in the Spirit.

The best antidote against the poison of sin is to walk in the Spirit, to be much in conversing with spiritual things, to mind the things of the soul, which is the spiritual part of man, more than those of the body, which is the carnal part, to commit ourselves to the guidance of the word, wherein the Holy Spirit makes known the will of God concerning us. (Henry New 8:279)

We overcome temptation by putting spiritual things first in our lives and focusing on them (Matthew 6:33). If our minds are filled with spiritual things there is no

place for the things of the flesh and there is less opportunity for temptation's ugly head to take hold of us.

Paul concludes his thoughts with an exhortation to live and walk in the Spirit. "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). Live, *zaō* (G: 2198), means "to live a life" (Strong 1614). Walk, *stoicheō* (G: 4748), means "to follow, walk in, adhere to" (Strong 1644). If we profess to be Christians, then we should behave like Christians. This is "an exhortation to keep step with one another in submission of heart to the Holy Spirit, and therefore of keeping step with Christ, the great means of unity and harmony in a church" (Vine 664). If we so walk and keep in step we will not be "desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (verse 26). Let us not only profess to have the Spirit, but also "let us evidence our good principles by good practices" (Henry *New* 8:281).

Paul addresses both the positive and the negative. He describes the flesh and the Spirit. He warns against the flesh and exhorts us to follow the Spirit. To truly live and walk in the Spirit we must put off the flesh **and** embrace the Spirit. "It is not enough that we cease to do evil, but we must learn to do well. Our Christianity obliges us not only to die unto sin, but to live unto righteousness; not only to oppose the works of the flesh, but to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit too" (Henry *New* 8:281). To walk in the Spirit and to walk in the flesh are contrary lifestyles, one of which we have all chosen to live. They are different by their actions and character, by their relationship to God and by their end. Those who walk in the Spirit have no condemnation because they mind spiritual things, are children and heirs of God through adoption and enjoy life and peace both now and for all of eternity. Those who walk in the flesh are condemned because they mind worldly things, have enmity with God and suffer spiritual death both now and for all of eternity. Our character and actions show us which life we have chosen. If we practice the works of the flesh, then we walk after the flesh and are opposed to God. If we practice the fruit of the Spirit, then we walk in the Spirit and are the children of God. By comparing our lives to the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit the evidence becomes quite clear. Thereby we know whether or not we have eternal life.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:25).

Questions:

1. What passage describes the difference between walking after the Spirit and walking after the flesh?

a. What is the first difference?

b. What is the second difference? _____

c. What is the third difference? _____

2. How can we tell if we are of the Spirit or of the flesh?

a. How are the works of the flesh manifested?

b. In your own words, describe the various works of the flesh.

c. In your own words, describe each fruit of the Spirit.

3. Compare the works of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit.

a. How are they similar? _____

b. How are they different?

4. What happens when we compare the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit to our lives?

a. What does it mean if the works of the flesh are active in our lives?

b. What does it mean if the fruit of the Spirit is active in our lives?

5. In your own words, describe what it means to walk in the Spirit.
