**1. Motivate**

What is something that people in your hometown love to brag about?

* the HS football team
* the band

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://tinyurl.com/ykf8c9w7> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/5n8w4tzy>

* pretty parks
* good shopping
* friendly neighbors
* community spirit
* recreation options
* transportation options – airport, close to Interstate, local bus service
* easy to get around town
* nice churches
* plenty of different kinds of jobs available

**2. Transition**

The purpose of having a community is to provide an infrastructure that benefits everyone.

* One’s purpose as an individual is improved (or hindered) by the community
* One’s spiritual purpose is fulfilled as we surrender to and are led by God’s Holy Spirit.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 End Following Sinful Desires

Listen for a conflict.

Galatians 5:16-18 (NIV) So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

What two admonitions does Paul give the Galatian readers?

* live by the Spirit
* do not gratify the desires of the sinful nature

What is the conflict he speaks of and what is the result?

* our sinful natures desire what is contrary to the Spirit
* the Holy Spirit desire what is contrary to the sinful nature
* you can end up not doing what you want

Some translations use the word “flesh”. What does that word refer to?

* the sinful nature
* not the physical body
* although our physical bodies do have some tendencies that are sinful in nature
* they are better understood as sinful character traits

Consider how our flesh, our sinful nature enjoys indulging itself in sin.

* It pleases our flesh to vent off steam by complaining.
* It pleases our sinful nature to get revenge by shouting at someone we are angry with
* Sexual sins are pleasurable during the moment.
* Lazily sleeping late instead of working is very enjoyable

⇨ These things give a temporary fun factor

* Later they bring guilt
* They produce bad consequences.
* They show a distant or broken relationship with God

Paul talks about “the law”. What were some of the laws the Jews lived by?

* different kinds of sacrifices, rituals
* circumcision
* Sabbath laws
* The Ten Commandments

What do you think Paul means (or does not mean) about not being under the law?

* does *not* mean we can freely flaunt the law of the land
* does *not* mean we follow a list of rules (like The Ten Commandments) to *earn* our salvation
* when we are in submission to and lead by God’s Holy Spirit within our lives, we will be enabled to live in such a way as to fully satisfy and glorify God
* we are enabled to live lives that satisfy the commandments
* because of Jesus’ sacrificial death for us, we no longer need to go through the different sacrificial rites of Jewish law
* He was the sacrifice, once and for all

What are some of the obstacles to our living “by the Spirit”?

* we still live in a fallen world
* there are temptations all around us
* we still live in mortal bodies
* the desires of the sinful nature are still there



But … when God’s Spirit is ruling within our lives, we are set free from the power of sin over us

3.2 Do Not Walk in the Flesh

Listen for the results of walking in the flesh.

Galatians 5:19-21 (NIV) The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

How can a person be identified as living in the flesh?

* the sinful nature is predominant
* sinful actions are the result

Note the actions, attitudes, and behaviors Paul identified as works of the flesh.

* sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy ….

How do we know Paul’s list not exhaustive?

* there are plenty of other evidences or examples of sinful living
* we know other personal temptations that are not on this list
* our modern life has created many more ways to offend God and harm one another
* Paul includes the phrase “and the like”

Note the two sins that have to do with the spiritual realm – idolatry and witchcraft. Most of us don’t burn incense to wooden carvings or ceramic images. So, how might even a Christian family get caught up in idols or witchcraft?

Idols

* anything more important to you than God
* material goods
* substance abuse (from hard drugs to chocolate chip cookies)
* abortion is sacrificing children to the deity of convenience

Witchcraft

* Ouija boards
* fascination with horoscopes
* dabbling in palm reading, fortune telling
* entertainment (movies, web sites, computer games) that glorify spiritual evil

Why or how do acts of the sinful nature tend to entangle us?

* some of these things may start out minor
* when sin gets a hook in one’s life it can be difficult to get away from it
* we often speak of the “slippery slope” of sinful actions
* once you get past a certain point on that slippery slope, it can be nearly impossible to recover

3.3 Walking by the Spirit

Listen for Christlike attributes.

Galatians 5:22-26 (NIV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

How does the concept of the *fruit* of the Spirit differ from the concept of the “works” of the flesh?

* fruit is the *result* of the type of tree it comes from
* apart from Christ, we will demonstrate works of the flesh
* the Fruit of the Spirit is the qualities produced by the Holy Spirit
* we don’t produce those traits, God does

If we have life in the Spirit, then what difference should that make in the way we live?

* Self submits to Christ
* The Spirit produces the Fruit spoken of in our scripture passage
* When the Holy Spirit controls the various areas of our lives, they are in harmony with God’s purposes

Paul says the sinful nature with its affections and lusts of the flesh has been crucified.

*Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.*

* Our sinful nature died on the cross with Jesus.
* We must appropriate that reality, that Truth as an act of faith.
* We need not yield or pay attention to that old nature which is *dead*.
* Instead, we have a new nature that God seeks to control, He wants to sit on the “throne” of your life

What are some practical ways believers can keep in step with the Spirit?

* same as how we avoid giving in to the works of the sinful nature
* daily communication with God – scripture reading/meditation and prayer
* choosing to obey and live according to God’s Truth
* involvement in spiritual ministries within the church, the body of believers
* exercising your spiritual gifts

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Assess your walk.

* Examine your life for areas where you follow the flesh.
* Confess those sins, turn from them, and ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.
* Commit to following Christ and letting His Spirit work His godly character in you.

Invest time.

* Walking by the Spirit requires setting aside time for Him.
* Determine when and where you can meet God each day.
* Make it an unwavering habit to spend time with God every day.

Redirect your thoughts.

* Begin the habit of relying on the Spirit, so that your thoughts are honoring to Christ.
* Toward this end, memorize Philippians 4:8: “Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.”

Fallen Phrases Puzzle



We have letters down. The irascible “Billboard Bandit” has pried off many of the letters of this landmark sign. Luckily, they fell straight down, but they are out of order vertically. We need your help. The easy fixes are the columns where only one letter is missing. Then work on the two and three letter words. Put the letters in place that make reasonable words. When you repair the damage, send your city council representative the solution. Help and more fun activities are found at <https://tinyurl.com/5n8w4tzy>