**1. Motivate**

If you could change one personality trait in yourself, what would you change?

* procrastination
* anger
* lack of compassion
* wasting time looking at Facebook, reading murder mysteries, watching TV, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* hard to get up in the morning

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_ksjmn976> . If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/553c6bs9>

* chocolate chip cookies
* laziness
* shyness
* nosey into other people’s business
* always wanting more/better/newer material things – cars, tv’s, clothes, …

**2. Transition**

We often wish we could change some of those traits, but we struggle.

* God can and will change our lives with His power.
* The Holy Spirit leads us to display the fruit of godly character.

**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
* 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 | Witchcraft |
| * 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
 | * Ouija boards
* fascination with horoscopes
* dabbling in palm reading, fortune telling
* entertainment (movies, web sites, computer games) that glorify 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 5:22-25 (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.

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 the benefits of God’s Spirit producing Christlike character one’s life?

* who doesn’t want joy and peace?
* we are a blessing to others around us – showing patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness
* self-control improves the life of anyone

How do you respond to a young person who has just heard a sermon on the Fruit of the Spirit and says, “This week I’ll work on being more loving, next week I’ll try to be more joyful, and after that, each week I’ll work hard of each of the other spiritual fruit.”

* may be a good idea to focus on a specific spiritual fruit
* but … realize it is not the believer who produces that spiritual trait
* it is God who motivates and enables you to display those attitudes and actions

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

Think.

* Every healthy relationship requires time spent together.
* How can you spend more time with the Lord?
* Ask God to reveal ways you can be more in touch with the Spirit.

Decide.

* Pick a fruit of the Spirit for each day of the week and make a conscious effort to think about it throughout each day.
* Ask the Lord to develop this fruit more fully in your life.

Act.

* Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to a mature Christian who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit.
* Set up a time to speak with this person to ask about the most helpful things discovered in his or her life to help you to better walk with the Spirit



Double Puzzle



Aiee Cucaracha ! Those clue words are all messed up. They’re from your Scripture lesson. Read the verses to find words with those letters. Then use the numbers to place the letters in the message from Billy Graham. Inquiring minds want to know what he said. If finding the solution bugs you, go to <https://tinyurl.com/553c6bs9> for help and for other fun Family Activities.