

## B2B - Living a Spirit Lived Life

(Psalm 37:4; Matthew 5:6; Galatians 5:13-26)

11-Mar-2018

Just a reminder that there is an outline in the bulletin for you to take down notes if that helps you.

There are Bibles in front of you.

Let me pray for God's help and understanding. Let's pray...

### Recap

[PowerPoint 1-B2B]

This is 7th part of our 9 week B2B series

The whole point of this series is to help us learn the basics of our faith - so that we can share our faith with others - in whatever form that might take

In the last few weeks we've been introduced to the WHEEL

[PowerPoint 2-Wheel]

The idea of the wheel is to show the obedient Christian in Action

[PowerPoint 2a-Hub]

The obedient Christian - needs Christ as the HUB

[PowerPoint 2b-Power and direction]

The Hub transmits *power and direction* from the HUB (Jesus) to the RIM (that's us)

[PowerPoint 3-vertical spokes]

It's the vertical spokes of *God's Word and Prayer* that help us stay connected to Jesus and glorify God

God's Word and Prayer - are our means of getting God's petrol in our tank so we can do God's Work

Once we have God's petrol - we can do work for God

That's where the horizontal spokes come in - of Fellowship and Witnessing

[PowerPoint 4-horizontal spokes]

Fellowshipping with other Christians - which said last week can take many different forms - and then witnessing to non-Christians - by developing a friendship and sharing our faith - which again can take many different forms.

*[And notice we have the hands on the wall over there - the hands of God's Word, Prayer, Fellowship and Witnessing - to remind us what's involved. We'll leave them there for a couple more weeks]*

So let's remind ourselves of 2 memory verses from last week

One to do with Fellowship from Proverbs 27:17

[PowerPoint 5-Heading]

[PowerPoint 5a-Proverbs 27:17]

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

And then a memory verse to do with witnessing from Acts 1:8

[PowerPoint 6-Heading]

[PowerPoint 6a-Acts 1:8]

But you will receive power when the **Holy Spirit** comes on you; and you will be my **witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth

So as we do - fellowship together and witness about Jesus.

Notice from Acts 1:8 - we're not on our own in this

Notice Jesus promises the Holy Spirit

### Who is the Holy Spirit?

[PowerPoint 7-Heading]

But who is the Holy Spirit?

[PowerPoint 7a-God]

The Bible declares that the Holy Spirit is God

[PowerPoint 7b-Creation]

The Holy Spirit was there at the time of creation

Genesis 1:2 says "*and the spirit of God was hovering over the waters*"

[PowerPoint 7b-Ananias]

The fact that the Holy Spirit is God is clearly seen in many Scriptures, including Acts 5:3-4 - where the Apostle Peter confronts Ananias as to why he lied to the Holy Spirit and tells him he had "*not just lied to human beings but to God*"

We can also know that the Holy Spirit is God because the Holy Spirit possesses the characteristics of God. For example the Spirit's **omnipresence** (being everywhere) is seen in Psalm 139:7-8

[PowerPoint 7c-Psalm 139]

<sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

<sup>8</sup> If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

[PowerPoint 7c-1 Cor 2:10]

Also the Spirit knows everything God knows - therefore the Spirit is **omniscient** (all knowing) - In 1 Cor 2:10 - it says **these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things**, even the deep things of God.

**How do we receive the Holy Spirit?**

[PowerPoint 8-Heading]

So if Jesus promises the Holy Spirit - which he did in Acts 1:8 - which we mentioned earlier

How do we receive the Holy Spirit?

[PowerPoint 8a-Born again]

Well - Jesus had a conversation with a guy called Nicodemus in John 3:5-16 - and said that no-one can be part of God's Kingdom unless they are born again (born from above) - born in the Spirit - by receiving the Spirit of God - when they believe in Jesus

[PowerPoint 8b-No Jesus-no Spirit]

The Apostle Paul makes it clear in Romans 8:9 - that if someone does not have the Spirit - they do not belong to Jesus

[PowerPoint 8c-Sealed by HS]

And in Ephesians 1:13-14 - Paul makes it clear that when we believe in Jesus - we are marked with a seal of the Holy Spirit - it's like we get a label saying "saved by Jesus"

Just before Jesus died - He gave a long talk to His disciples - 3 chapters in John - John chapters 14-16 - and He basically told his mates - He had to die - be crucified on a cross - rise again - and go to be with God the Father in Heaven

But Jesus made a promise - that He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit - as the disciples' helper and comforter and guide. The Holy Spirit is conditional on Jesus going to the Father

[PowerPoint 8d-Conditional on Jesus]

See John 16:7 - one of our memory verses today

<sup>7</sup> But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

The Greek word used for Advocate is *Paraclete* = and it literally means someone standing beside - not in front leading - or checking our tail - but at our side! Someone standing beside us - helping us, assisting us, speaking up for us, pleading our case - comforting us at times and then leading us to a deeper understanding of the truth about Jesus and giving us divine strength to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of God's Kingdom

That's why Jesus is able to say to His disciples it's good He's going away because then each Christian gets this divine help living inside them!

### **Living a Life in the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:13-23)**

So we've found out who the Holy Spirit is

And how we receive the Holy Spirit

But how do we live lives in the Holy Spirit?

That's where our NT passage from Galatians 5:13-25

If you'd like to turn there in your Bibles...

And let's unpack this in a bit of detail

Looking at verses 13 to 15 first

[PowerPoint 9-v13-15-freedom not to indulge flesh]

The Apostle Paul's first point is that

As Christians - Christ has set us free from the punishment of sin

So it's like we have a "get of jail free" card  
 So if a criminal was let out of jail free without serving their sentence  
 They would be foolish to go and break the law again and end up back in jail.

Paul's saying if Jesus has got us out of the "Sin Jail" - it doesn't make sense for us to go on indulging our flesh - in other words - it doesn't make sense to go and do whatever we please without considering what God would want us to do

### [PowerPoint 10-v13-15-love]

We now have the Holy Spirit in us and we should desire to do what the Spirit would want - which is to please God - and the best way to do that - can be summarized in one word - LOVE - love God - love our neighbour as ourselves  
 So as we live our new Christian lives in the Spirit - we need some self-examination  
 Is what I am thinking, or saying or doing - loving or unloving? Is it what I want or what God would want?  
 (pause)

Paul's next point is in verses 16-18

### [PowerPoint 11-v16-18-Conflict]

In these verses Paul describes a conflict  
 Between the desires of our flesh and the Holy Spirit living inside us  
 Paul describes it in his other writings as a conflict between "our old self" and "our new self" (Romans 6:6; Eph 2:15; 4:22-24; Colossians 3:9-11)  
 I'm sure we've all felt this conflict  
 When we do or say something we shouldn't - and we didn't want to - but too late it happened!  
 It's like there's a good dog and a bad dog fighting inside us  
 Our sinful nature verses God's Spirit  
 (pause)

What's the answer to this conflict?

Paul tells us in these same verses

### [PowerPoint 12-v16-18-Walk, led]

He says "walk" by the Spirit - the Greek literally means "live"  
 We need to live a life that we know the Spirit would approve of?

How do we know that?

Back to our vertical spokes - our Petrol - GOD'S WORD and PRAYER

We can only know what God's Spirit wants by listening and praying

Our other NT reading from Matthew 5:6 says

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.**

Here Jesus promises us - if we hunger and thirst to be right with God - if we hunger and thirst to be like Jesus and follow His commandments - then we will be blessed and filled with God's Spirit

So part of living by the Spirit is hungering and thirsting to be like Jesus - and living a life that Jesus would live - then we won't be listening to our sinful nature - but listening to God's Spirit

Then Paul says something a bit strange in v18 - He says - *if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law*

On the first read in might look like - Paul's saying we should ditch God's law

But that's not the case

Let me give you an example that's true for me - maybe for you too

I drive up the freeway most days - and speed limits are always changing because they're constantly doing roadworks

Currently there's a speed sign of 80KM instead of 110KM

And it's a bit annoying because I've been used to doing 110KM

So sometimes a go over 80 - shock horror - I hear you say!

BUT - if there's a police traffic car there - I notice it - and keep to the speed limit

So what Paul's saying is the law is like the speed sign telling us the rules - the Holy Spirit is like an internal policeman living inside us. Which one will we listen to? the internal police man - who remember is the Paraclete standing by our side - reminding us - or will we still look at the law which we sometimes ignore - and can't keep without the Spirit's help anyway?

So how could we be led by the Spirit?

A couple of examples from my own experience?

We need to be still and quiet - focusing on God

Then we will feel the Spirit's leading - either an audible voice - or just words coming into our mind -

It happens to me all the time

*Phone so and so?*

*Visit so and so?*

*I wonder how so and so is going? You need to find out!*

The clearest time I heard the Spirit speak to me and lead me - was when my Dad died -

I was here in Australia - he was critically ill in Ireland - and I had to wait until the following day to get a flight

Overnight I felt the Holy Spirit - tell me your Dad's just passed

I'd just become a Christian a few weeks earlier

But I clearly heard the Spirit say: "You've lost your earthly father - but don't worry you have a Heavenly Father, who will never leave you"

As a new Christian, I could have given up on God and been angry with Him for taking my Dad - but I found great comfort from the Spirit's word that I had a Heavenly Father forever

I was then led to phone my Mum - who confirmed what I already knew  
(pause)

Now we won't hear or feel the Spirit if we don't spend time with God

And we're not going to hear or feel anything with a house-full of children or grandchildren either - we need quiet time with God

Paul then describes what our flesh - our sinful nature - is capable of - in this conflict with the Spirit in verses 19-21

**[PowerPoint 13-v19-21-flesh]**

If you look at the list - not all of them are actions - attitudes are just as much over-desires of our flesh

There are three words to do with sexuality - yellow ones:

Sexual immorality - which is sexual intercourse between unmarried people  
 Impurity - which is unnatural sexual practices and relationships  
 And debauchery - which is uncontrolled and excessive sexuality

There are two words to do with the area of religion - blue ones:

Idolatry and witchcraft - idolatry substitutes God for other false gods and witchcraft does magical skills often fostered by idolatry of some sort and fakes the work of the Holy Spirit

Then there are 8 words to do with 8 words to do with relationships - the red ones - and each one will destroy relationships we have

Then finally there are 2 words to do with substance abuse - green ones:

Drunkenness and orgies - the two words are linked - orgies are not sex orgies but drinking orgies - basically an addiction to pleasure creating substances and behaviour - which our society today - tries to down play - by calling them *recreational drugs* - there's nothing recreational about any addiction!

### [PowerPoint 14-Warn]

Paul has a stark warning for those who live like that - he says they will not inherit God's kingdom

Paul is talking about habitual practice here - rather than infrequent and repented-of, lapses. For someone to continually indulge their flesh - sinful nature - is to show that Jesus has not redeemed them and the Spirit has not renewed them. Paul is not trying to undermine our Christian assurance here - but he trying to stop us being complacent

It's also interesting to note that another way to categorize these acts of the flesh is into ones that "religious" people might do such as selfishness, factions and envy - and others that "non-religious" people might do such as sexual immorality and drunkenness. This list goes to show that God doesn't make categories and distinctions like we commonly do, seeing sex and drink as more sinful than selfish ambition and envy. God doesn't grade sin - like we do.

Obviously some sin might have more consequences than others - but sin is sin in God's eyes

So to walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit - is to say no to this list  
And for all of us to be diligent in steering clear of them

So instead Paul gives another list which shows we are walking or living in the Spirit  
From verses 22-23

To be led by the Spirit is to change and be changed - to be people that want to be  
- Christ-like Christians!

Paul chooses his imagery carefully - he uses "acts" (plural) of the flesh - but here he uses the singular "fruit" of the Spirit

[PowerPoint 15-Fruit]

The word "fruit" should take us to the world of agriculture - and tells us **four** things about how the Spirit works in us:

[PowerPoint 15a-gradual]

1. Spiritual fruit is **gradual** - our spiritual growth is gradual - we might not realize how we have grown - until trouble shows up - and we handle it - and say to ourselves - *a couple of years ago I never would have been so patient or self-controlled*

[PowerPoint 15b-inevetible]

2. Spiritual fruit is **inevitable** - if you've noticed the tree outside church that we had chopped down recently - now has new shoots bursting through - In the same way spiritual fruit will come in our lives - it is inevitable - because we have the Spirit living inside us

[PowerPoint 15c-internal roots]

3. Spiritual fruit has **internal roots** - being a Christian is about being changed by the Spirit - and that change goes deep. Think about an apple tree. Do the apples (fruit) make it alive? No! If you tied apples to a dead tree it wouldn't make the tree alive. Apples don't give life they are a sign that the tree is alive. The life produces the fruit - not the other way around

The test that we have the Spirit living inside us - is growth of the fruit of the Spirit - from those deep internal roots - And notice the first on the list is love - as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 - **if I do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.**

Love will bring about the rest of the fruit... which is the next point

### [PowerPoint 15d-Symmetrical]

4. Spiritual fruit is **symmetrical** - Paul deliberately uses the singular word "fruit" - to describe a whole list of things that grow in a spirit-filled person. Paul is making an important point spiritual fruit grows up together When we look at the list we might notice that we are naturally stronger in some than others. But these might be our strengths, apart from the Holy Spirit, and due to our natural temperament (through brain chemistry and/or early training) When we look closely at the fruit of the Spirit and see that one aspect of it cannot be seen in isolation from any other. We might see then that we are far more in need of growth of the Spirit than we think When we stop looking at our natural strengths as a sign we are Christ-like But challenge ourselves to look at the nature and **unity** of the Spirit, we will have a much deeper sense of how we lack the fruit

### Response (Galatians 5:24-45)

So our response to live a spirit-filled life is from Galatians 5 verses 24 and 25

### [PowerPoint 16-v24-25]

1. We need to remember we **belong to Jesus**. All that is His, is ours. Our approval from the Father, is not based on our own character or actions but on Jesus. And if we belong to Jesus - we must remember it - and honour Him with our bodies (Romans 12)
2. We need to crucify the flesh - crucify our sinful nature and all its desires and passions. By that Paul means strangling sin at the motivational level not the behaviour level. So we need to ask ourselves "not just what we do wrong, but why we do wrong?" When we disobey God in order to get something we

feel we must have. That's an over-desire! Why must we have it? It's something we have come to believe validates us. But our real value and validation is in the truth that Jesus loves us, died for us - and has given us His Spirit.

3. We need to **keep in step with the Spirit** - so when we find the particular false belief that causes our sinful nature (flesh) to over-desire and lead to sin - we replace that false belief with the belief that Jesus is all we need

### Application

[PowerPoint 17-Heading]

A couple of applications to finish off with then

[PowerPoint 17a-filled]

- Pray that we would hunger and thirst for God's righteousness (Matthew 5:6) and be filled by the Spirit and go on being filled (Ephesians 5:18)

[PowerPoint 17b-Desire]

- As our Psalm reading said to day in Psalm 37:4 - take delight in the Lord and He will give us the desires of our heart - [Example of me going into ministry]

[PowerPoint 17c-survey]

- Finally as we spiritually grow and produce the fruit of the Spirit - be praying how God might use us for His Kingdom work - sit with a friend and ask what our gifts and skills are - fill in a survey form if that helps us identify where the Lord's leading us - I have some here

Let's pray