

**Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!**



I Surrender All

Hymn 408



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Call to Worship

Psalm 43

Psalm 43 Vindicate me, O God, and defend my cause against an ungodly people, from the deceitful and unjust man deliver me! For you are the God in whom I take refuge; why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling! Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

He Touched Me

Hymn 628



Trust and Obey

Hymn 454





Praise and Prayer Request

All Prayer request can be e-mail to:

plbiblechurch@gmail.com

***We would love to pray for God's will to be done
your life and for His Name to be glorified in and
through you, as you seek His Holy Face!***

Receiving of the Offering



**An offering for the Church can be mailed to:
Promise Land Bible Church
PO Box 1437
Mountain Home, AR 72653**

Famous Quote:

“You don’t have to be perfect to share the love of Christ with someone. But you do have to be pursuing a right relationship with God. If you are not, your witnessing will be ineffective.”

SCOTT HINKLE



Today's Message

“What Fruit do we bear?

What Harvest are we to reap?”

Scripture text: Galatians 5:16-6:10

The Spirit Enables Us to Overcome the Flesh (Gal. 5:16–21, 24)

The conflict (vv. 16–17). Just as Isaac and Ishmael were unable to get along, so the Spirit and the flesh (the old nature) are at war with each other. By “the flesh,” of course, Paul does not mean “the body.” The human body is not sinful; it is neutral. **If the Holy Spirit controls the body, then we walk in the Spirit; but if the flesh controls the body, then we walk in the lusts (desires) of the flesh.**

The Spirit and the flesh have different appetites, and this is what creates the conflict.

These opposite appetites are illustrated in the Bible in different ways. For example, **the sheep is a clean animal and avoids garbage, while the pig is an unclean animal and enjoys wallowing in filth** (2 Peter 2:19–22).

After the rain ceased and the ark settled, Noah released a raven which never came back (Gen. 8:6–7). The raven is a carrion-eating bird and found plenty to feed on. But when Noah released the dove (a clean bird), it came back (Gen. 8:8–12). The last time he released the dove and it did not return, **he knew that it had found a clean place to settle down; therefore the waters had receded.**

2 Peter 2:19-22 They promise them freedom, but **they themselves are slaves of corruption.** For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. For if, **after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.** For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: **"The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."**

Genesis 8:6-12 At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made and **sent forth a raven**. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from the earth. Then **he sent forth a dove from him**, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of the ground. But **the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark**, for the waters were still on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. He waited another seven days, and again **he sent forth the dove out of the ark**. And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was **a freshly plucked olive leaf**. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth. Then **he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore**.

Our old nature is like the pig and the raven, always looking for something unclean on which to feed.

Our new nature is like the sheep and the dove, yearning for that which is clean and holy. No wonder a struggle goes on within the life of the believer!

The unsaved man knows nothing of this battle because he does not have the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9). Note that the Christian cannot simply will to overcome the flesh: **“Galatians 5:17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, **for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.**

It is this very problem that Paul discusses in Romans:

Romans 7:15 For I do not understand my own actions. **For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.**

Romans 7:19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

Paul is not denying that there is victory. **He is simply pointing out that we cannot win this victory in our own strength and by our own will.**

The conquest (v. 18).

The solution is not to pit our will against the flesh, but to **surrender our will to the Holy Spirit**. This verse literally means, “**But if you are willingly led by the Spirit, then you are not under the Law.**” The Holy Spirit writes God’s Law on our hearts (Heb. 10:14–17; see 2 Cor. 3) **so that we desire to obey Him in love.**

Psalm 40:8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”

Being “**led of the Spirit**” and “**walking in the Spirit**” **are the opposites** of yielding to the desires of the flesh.

The crucifixion (vv. 19–21, 24).

Paul now lists some of the ugly “**works of the flesh.**” (You will find similar lists in Mark 7:20–23; Rom. 1:29–32; 1 Tim. 1:9–10; 2 Tim. 3:2–5.) **The flesh is able to manufacture sin but it can never produce the righteousness of God.**

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

This list in Galatians can be divided into three major categories:

Mark 7:20-23 And he said, "**What comes out of a person is what defiles him.** For from within, **out of the heart of man**, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. **All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.**"

1 Timothy 1:9-10 understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but **for the lawless and disobedient**, for the **ungodly and sinners**, for the **unholy and profane**, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and **whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine**,

The sensual sins (vv. 19, 21b).

Adultery is illicit sex between married people, while fornication generally refers to the same sin among unmarried people. **Uncleanness means just that: a filthiness of heart and mind that makes the person defiled.** The unclean person sees dirt in everything (see Titus 1:15). Lasciviousness is close to our word debauchery. **It speaks of a wanton appetite that knows no shame.** It goes without saying that all of these sins were rampant in the Roman Empire. Drunkenness and revellings (orgies) need no explanation.

The superstitious sins (v. 20a).

Idolatry, like the sins named above, is with us today.

Idolatry is simply putting things ahead of God and people. We are to worship God, love people, and use things, but too often we use people, love self, and worship things, leaving God out of the picture completely.

Jesus tells us **that whatever we worship, we serve** (Matt. 4:10). The Christian who devotes more of himself to his car, house, or boat than he does to serving Christ **may be in danger of idolatry** (Col. 3:5).

Colossians 3:1-6 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. **Set your minds on things that are above**, not on things that are on earth. **For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. **Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:** sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and **covetousness, which is idolatry.** **On account of these the wrath of God is coming.**

The word witchcraft is from the Greek word pharmakeia, which means “**the use of drugs.**” Our English word pharmacy is derived from this word. Magicians in Paul’s day often used drugs to bring about their evil effects. **Of course, sorcery is forbidden in the Bible as are all activities of the occult** (Deut. 18:9–22).

The social sins (vv. 20b–21a). Hatred means “enmity,” the attitude of mind that defies and challenges others. This attitude leads to variance, which is strife, the outworking of enmity. Emulations means jealousies or rivalries.

Deuteronomy 18:9-13 "When you come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you, **you shall not learn to follow the abominable practices of those nations.** There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a **sorcerer** or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead, **for whoever does these things is an abomination to the LORD.** And because of these abominations the LORD your God is driving them out before you. **You shall be blameless before the LORD your God,**

How tragic when Christians compete with one another and try to make one another look bad in the eyes of others. Wrath means outbursts of anger, and strife carries with it the idea of “**self-seeking, selfish ambition,**” that creates divisions in the church.

Seditions and heresies are kindred terms. The first suggests division, and the second **cliques caused by a party spirit.** Divisions and factions would be a fair translation.

These are the result of church leaders promoting themselves and insisting that the people follow them, not the Lord. (The word heresy in the Greek means “**to make a choice.**”)

Envyings suggests **the carrying of grudges, the deep desire for what another has** (*Prov. 14:30 A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.*).

Murders and drunkenness need no clarification.

The person who practices these sins shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul is not talking about an act of sin, but a **habit of sin**. There is a false assurance of salvation **that is not based on the Word of God.**

The fact that the believer is not under Law, but under grace, **is no excuse for sin** (Rom. 6:15).

If anything, it is an encouragement to live in obedience to the Lord.

But how does the believer handle the old nature when it is capable of producing such horrible sins?

The Law cannot change or control the old nature.

The old nature must be crucified (v. 24). Paul explains that the **believer is identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection** (Rom. 6). Christ not only died for me, **but I died with Christ**. Christ died for me to remove the penalty of my sin, but I died with Christ **to break sin's power**.

Paul has mentioned this already in Galatians (see 2:19–20), and he will mention it again (6:14).

Galatians 2:19-21 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. **I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.** And the life I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for **if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.**

Galatians 6:14 But far be it from me **to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.**

He does not tell us to crucify ourselves, because this is impossible. (Crucifixion is one death a man cannot inflict on himself.) **He tells us that the flesh has already been crucified.** It is our responsibility to **believe this and act on it.**

You and I are not debtors to the flesh, but to the Spirit (Rom. 8:12–14). We must accept what God says about the old nature and not try to make it something that it is not. We must not make “provision for the flesh” (Rom. 13:14) **by feeding it the things that it enjoys.** **In the flesh dwells no good thing** (Rom. 7:18), so **we should put no confidence in the flesh** (Phil. 3:3).

The flesh is not subject to God's Law (Rom. 8:7) and it cannot please God (Rom. 8:8). **Only through the Holy Spirit can we "put to death" the deeds that the flesh would do through our body (Rom. 8:13).**

The Holy Spirit is not only the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 5:25), but He is also the Spirit of death: He helps us to reckon ourselves dead to sin.

We have seen two ministries of the Spirit of God: He enables us to fulfill the Law, and He enables us to overcome the flesh. He has a third ministry as well.

The Spirit Enables Us to Produce Fruit (Gal. 5:22–23, 25–26)

It is one thing to overcome the flesh and not do evil things, but quite something else to do good things.

The legalist might be able to boast that he is not guilty of adultery or murder (but see Matt. 5:21–32), but **can anyone see the beautiful graces of the Spirit in his life?** Negative goodness is not enough in a life; **there must be positive qualities as well.**

The contrast between works and fruit is important. A machine in a factory works, and turns out a product, but **it could never manufacture fruit.**

Fruit must grow out of life, and, in the case of the believer, it is the life of the Spirit (Gal. 5:25). When you think of “works” you think of effort, labor, strain, and toil; when you think of “fruit” you think of beauty, quietness, the unfolding of life. The flesh produces “dead works” (Heb. 9:14), but **the Spirit produces living fruit.** And this fruit has in it the seed for still more fruit (Gen. 1:11). **Love begets more love! Joy helps to produce more joy! Jesus is concerned that we produce “fruit ... more fruit ... much fruit” (John 15:2, 5),** because this is the way we glorify Him. The old nature cannot produce fruit; **only the new nature can do that.**

The New Testament speaks of **several different kinds of “fruit”**: **people won to Christ** (Rom. 1:13), **holy living** (Rom. 6:22), **gifts brought to God** (Rom. 15:26–28), **good works** (Col. 1:10), and **praise** (Heb. 13:15). The **“fruit of the Spirit”** listed in our passage **has to do with character** (Gal. 5:22–23). It is important that we distinguish the gift of the Spirit, which is salvation (Acts 2:38; 11:17), and the gifts of the Spirit, which have to do with service (1 Cor. 12), **from the graces of the Spirit, which relate to Christian character**. It is unfortunate that an overemphasis on gifts has led some Christians **to neglect the graces of the Spirit**. **Building Christian character must take precedence over displaying special abilities.**

The characteristics that God wants in our lives are seen **in the ninefold fruit of the Spirit**. Paul **begins with love because all of the other fruit is really an outgrowth of love**. Compare these eight qualities with the characteristics of love given to the Corinthians (see 1 Cor. 13:4–8).

This word for love is **agape, which means divine love**. (The Greek word eros, meaning “sensual love,” is never used in the New Testament.) This divine love is God’s gift to us (Rom. 5:5), and **we must cultivate it and pray that it will increase** (Phil. 1:9).

When a person lives in the sphere of love, then he experiences joy—that inward peace and sufficiency that is not affected by outward circumstances. (A case in point is Paul’s experience recorded in Phil. 4:10–20.) This **“holy optimism” keeps him going in spite of difficulties**. Love and joy together produce peace, “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7). These **first three qualities express the Godward aspect of the Christian life**.

The next three express the manward aspect of the Christian life: long-suffering (courageous endurance without quitting), gentleness (kindness), and goodness (love in action).

The Christian who is long-suffering will not avenge himself **or wish difficulties on those who oppose him**. He will be kind and gentle, **even with the most offensive**, and will sow goodness where others sow evil. **Human nature can never do this on its own; only the Holy Spirit can.**

The **final three qualities are selfward**: faith (faithfulness, dependability); meekness (the right use of power and authority, power under control); and temperance (self-control). Meekness is not weakness. Jesus said, “I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29), and Moses was “very meek” (Num. 12:3); yet no one could accuse either of them of being weak.

The meek Christian does not throw his weight around or assert himself. Just as wisdom is the right use of knowledge, so meekness **is the right use of authority and power.**

It is possible for the old nature **to counterfeit some of the fruit of the Spirit, but the flesh can never produce the fruit of the Spirit.** One difference is this: when the Spirit produces fruit, **God gets the glory and the Christian is not conscious of his spirituality;** but when the flesh is at work, the person is inwardly proud of himself and is pleased when others compliment him.

The work of the Spirit is to make us more like Christ for His glory, not for the praise of men.

The cultivation of the fruit is important. Paul warns that there must be a right atmosphere before the fruit will grow (Gal. 5:25–26). Just as fruit cannot grow in every climate, so the fruit of the Spirit cannot grow in every individual's life or in every church.

Fruit grows in a climate blessed with an abundance of the Spirit and the Word. “Walk in the Spirit” (Gal. 5:25) means “keep in step with the Spirit”—not to run ahead and not to lag behind. This involves the Word, prayer, worship, praise, and fellowship with God's people.

It also means **“pulling out the weeds”** so that the seed of the **Word** can take root and bear fruit. The **Judaizers were anxious for praise and “vainglory,”** and this led to competition and division. Fruit can never grow in that kind of an atmosphere.

We must remember **that this fruit is produced to be eaten, not to be admired and put on display.** People around us are **starving for love, joy, peace, and all the other graces of the Spirit.** When they find them in our lives, they know that we have something they lack. **We do not bear fruit for our own consumption; we bear fruit that others might be fed and helped, and that Christ might be glorified.**

The flesh may manufacture “results” that bring praise to us, but **the flesh cannot bear fruit that brings glory to God**. It takes patience, an atmosphere of the Spirit, **walking in the light, the seed of the Word of God, and a sincere desire to honor Christ**.

In short, **the secret is the Holy Spirit**. He alone can give us freedom from sin and self. He enables us to fulfill the law of love, to overcome the flesh, and to bear fruit.

Will you yield to Him and let Him work?

Getting Used to the Family of God

Hymn 548

