

Week 20: "Living by the Spirit"

Memory Verse

"Looking at his disciples, he said:

'Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man.

"Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their fathers treated the prophets" Luke 6: 20-23

Day One

Sunday, March 2, 2003

"Living by the Spirit"

Read: Galatians 5 (p. 1350) and Commentary (p. 1351)

Reflect: Which fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) is most evident in your life?

Dig: What is the "yeast" that Paul is talking about in verse 9? (see Matthew 16:6, 11-12, p. 1099) Can you think of any present day examples of "yeast"?

What is the difference between legalism and license to sin? What do they have in common? (see commentary)

What is the evidence that this church in Galatia was not living according to the Spirit? (see verses 15, 19-21 and 25)

Apply: Choose one or two "acts of the sinful nature" which are evident in your life (see verse 19-21) Confess them. Then ask God to give you fruit of the Spirit to take their place.

Day Two
Monday, March 3, 2003
"Overcoming Legalism"

Read: 2 Corinthians 3:5-18 (p. 1331) and Commentary (p. 1331)

Reflect: What have you (either as a child or adult) been told not to do which only increased your curiosity to do it?

Dig: See verse 14: Why are people's minds dull to the things of God without the help of the Spirit? (see 1 Cor. 2:10-16 p. 1306 for the Bible's answer to this question)

List the three reasons the commentary gives that are the problems with legalism.

According to verse 18, how are we transformed?

Apply: Spend some time in adoration (songs, prayers of deep love) seeking transformation and real heart change through adoration.

Day Three
Tuesday, March 4, 2003
"Overcoming Licentiousness"

Read: 1 Corinthians 8 (p. 1314) and Commentary (p. 1314)

Reflect: What activity in your life may be permissible but it is not beneficial to your life in Christ?

Dig: What more do you learn about the temptation to use your new freedom in the wrong way in Romans 5:20-6:4 (p. 1284)?

What does 1 Cor. 8:1-3 have in common with 1 Cor. 13:1-3 (p. 1320)?

Apply: What adjustments should you graciously make in your behavior to prevent injury to someone's faith?

Day Four
Wednesday, March 5, 2003
"Filled with the Spirit"

Read: Acts 4:31 (p. 1239) and Commentary (p. 1240)

Reflect: What are the comparisons and contrasts between being filled with the Spirit and being filled with "spirits" (alcohol)?

Dig: Notice that in two places being filled with the Spirit brings to mind being drunk (Acts 2:13-15 p. 1235 and Ephesians 5:18 p. 1361).

What was the effect of being filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts 4:31? See also Acts 5:40-42 p. 1243.

Check out Ephesians 5:18-21. What are the four (or five) consequences or fruit of being filled with the Spirit?

How does that contrast with what we often are told by some Bible teachers about what it means to be filled with the Spirit?

Apply: I suggest that you close your time today by speaking out loud the prayer at the close of the Commentary on p. 1240.

Day Five
Thursday, March 6, 2003
"Releasing the Holy Spirit"

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-22 (p. 1387) and Commentary (p. 1387)

Reflect: What throws a "wet blanket" on your spiritual life? On the other hand, what lights your fire?

Dig: List the commands given in verses 16-22. What do all of them have to do with the central command to "not put out the Spirit's fire"? How might verse 23-24 of this chapter help you understand how to fulfill those commands? How does this passage compare with the passage in Ephesians 5:18-21?

Apply: The commentary reads "Though it seems paradoxical, letting God reign in our lives is the only way we can have self-control, which is a fruit of the Spirit."

Pray a prayer which is in essence, "let go and let God" and make it specific to your needs and concerns today. Then, ask God to release his Spirit's power in your life.