**Live Free – Galatians 5:16-23 / Baby Monster & Spirit Man**

**This letter is about living free! Dropping the chains of religion.**

**The Bridge: Apostle Paul to the Galatians – false teachers had followed Paul there - teaching strict adherence to the Torah. This is a personal, passionate response for the gospel and his authority**

**The Gospel - Jesus lived, was crucified, buried and rose again to rescue from our sin. That alone is the gospel that saves.**

**Jesus + Nothing = Everything / Jesus + Anything = Nothing**

**Last week – Paul spiked the ball on how freedom is expressed by Love**

**Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. (Spiritual freedom) But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.**

**Galatians exposes two things Christians tend to do:**

* **Legalism (The just in case rules)**
* **License (the fear of the legalist: I’ll ask forgiveness later)**

**We can’t tell people they’re free and forgiven they’ll go sin We need rules to keep them holy. Paul says no we don’t.**

**When we truly connect with Jesus our desires go from - What do I need, to What does God need of me? 13 …do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. (Cross kills both License & legalism in order to produce Love. 1 Cor 7-9 = love for others is above our freedom)**

**Paul made the case for grace, now challenges us to walk in it. Today - Possibly the most important message in this series**

**A couple foundational points before we start:**

* **The Father is everywhere / Jesus is on the thrown / and the Spirit is in the child of God (the trinity at work)**
* **You are given the Holy Spirit at salvation. When you are born again the HS moves in. (Ro 8:9 / 1 Cor 12:12,13 / Eph 1:13-14 / John 3:5-16)**
* **The role of the HS is to comfort, empower, and point to Jesus**

**THE WALK**

**(Today, the most popular section – the heart of Paul’s letter. Wrapping up - How to walk grace and freedom out) Galatians 5:16 - So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (flesh = not our body but the part of you that craves sin / habits)**

**I want that. How about you? I’ve been trying to figure that out since I was a teen. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?**

**Def. - To recognize the HS in you and learn to follow and yield to his influence in our life. How can you tell if you do?**

**When we walk in the Spirit - we look like Jesus**

**THE WAR – Paul then describes a battle inside of you**

**Galatians 5:17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.**

* **There is a battle going on inside between our flesh and the Spirit**

**Our selfish desires / things we crave are at war with what the HS desires for us. We are going to dive into this next week.**

**In light of this Paul says walk in the Spirit Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (walking in the HS is not about following rules)**

**God is not against rules and the law**

**They can be healthy expectations to help and protect yourself and others – but they are not the means to Salvation.**

**Paul then reminds them of what walking in the flesh looks like**

**THE FLESH AT WORK: The Fruit of the Flesh - rotten fruit (eaten rotten)**

**We can’t see the “flesh” but we can see what it does to us**

**Paul mentions 4 areas: Sexual life, Spiritual Life, Relational life, Social life**

**Gal 5:19 The acts of the flesh 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. (we are going to unpack those next week)**

**Paul is saying the Holy Spirit will never walk you there**

**The Holy Spirit will never lead you there**

**Many read those and make a list of rules - “the do not’s.”**

**But that is not the point. Paul is simply saying – this is the evidence they are working in you.**

**And honestly, the flesh likes rules because we are great at breaking rules. Drawing a line of rules and walking the line – that is a heart issue. How close can we get and still be good with God. It reveals the flesh monsters’ cravings.**

**You might be thinking - whew - mine was not mentioned – alright! Paul adds –**

**Gal 5:21 …and the like. (to name a few – not an exhaustive list) I warn you, as I did before, (we’ve talked about this) that those who live like this (that is - continually practice – not isolated events but surrenders to – lit. to be busy with – pursues) will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

**Basically - If this is your lifestyle you’re not going to Heaven. This is evidence you have not received Salvation = The HS**

**It’s not that we will never fail – but we do not walk in them. Change follows salvation. But our flesh fights against it.**

**What’s the answer to the flesh? Rules, commitment, work at it? No.**

**16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.**

**When we walk in the Spirit - we follow Jesus and move in a different direction from the line – and the flesh starves.**

**Just as the flesh has its evidence then Paul says so does the Spirit**

**THE SPIRIT AT WORK: The Fruit of the Spirit (evidence** **God is at work)**

**Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit (Fruit, singular - not fruits distributed to us differently – but something for every Christian is to walk in – all of them)**

**(Have orange - peal and eat) Rather than a fruit bowl - it is more like this fruit - looks good / its textures, layers, flavors. Brings nourishment / grows / reproduces itself - has seeds.**

**These are the evidence (fruit) of the Spirit – footprints of a followers**

**Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is (tongues? No) is love… (agape- mindful caring, affection for others - # 1 already said is the main result of our freedom**

**The flesh is at war with Love**

**Sexual Immortality, impurity, lewdness - counterfeits of love to people**

**Idolatry & witchcraft - counterfeits of love to God**

**Hatred, anger, jealously, envy, divisions, murder – opposites of love**

**Drunkenness, wild parties – attempts to fill the void only love can fill**

**I don’t worship other things (because of a rule) because I love God**

**I don’t cheat on my wife (because of a rule) because I love my wife**

**I don’t lose my temper (because of a rule) because I love my kids**

**I don’t get drunk (because of a rule) because I love you and myself**

**The following evidences describe what love in action looks like:**

**Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, (Delight in God regardless of circumstances) peace, (at rest and safe in the storms of life because God is in control) forbearance, (patience – understanding God is working in you and in others – God has a plan) kindness, (agent of God in action – caring for others) goodness, (moral integrity – you reflect God’s character) faithfulness, (as God is faithful, reliable, loyal, and consistent – so are you) 23 gentleness (a disposition that mirrors how Jesus treated people - humility) and self-control (The flesh is not your master the Holy Spirit is – a surrender to the will of God) Against such things there is no law. (If you walk in the Holy Spirit - you don’t need rules and laws - walking in the Spirit fulfills the purpose for them)**

**Many read those and make a list of rules - “the do’s.” = rules**

**But that is not the point. Paul is simply saying this is the footprints of the Holy Spirit working in you when you follow him this follows.**

**My Bible College Manuel told me what Jesus looks like: Girls- pantyhose, dress, shorts to knee / Guys- hair, clothes / 6” rule, Jesus only likes jazz, Jesus only likes G movies – Satan lives at the theater – could not afford a house. I was an RA – writing up rule breakers. A certain number meant expulsion. It did not stop the rule breakers – they just did under the limit to be removed - That’s how we treat rules. Do not get me wrong it’s important to have expectations**

**We have our own mental manual about what we think people should be**

**BTW Works of the flesh are not just getting drunk – it can also be not getting drunk & boasting because you’re not drinking.**

**How do we go from fruit of the flesh to the fruit of the Spirit?**

**Many try religion, rules, plans, disciplines, commitments, promises, books, manuals, counselors, substitutes – Paul tells us - ownership**

**Gal 5:24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (This does not mean self-torcher)**

**Paul could have used “kill the flesh” but he used “crucify”**

**Nail it to the cross – We are going to dive into this next week.**

**\* Healthy fruit comes from deep roots**

**Realize this - You don’t defeat the flesh by focusing on it – you defeat the flesh by focusing on the Spirit (Jesus)**

**Drawing a line of rules – How close can we get. It reveals what we are pursuing. Do not chase the effects (I’m gonna stop drinking, lying, gossip, etc) Chase Jesus and flesh starves along with its affects.**

**The fruit that falls from the branched who is rooted in Christ.**

**How do you kill the flesh? Belong to Jesus**

**Gal 5:24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh (Love Jesus and be close to Him – and the closer we get to Jesus the further the flesh gets)**

**\* Healthy fruit follows the Spirit of God**

**Notice walking in the HS comes before overcoming the flesh and belonging to Christ before being able to crucify the flesh.**

**Not vice versa – that’s because without the Spirit you can’t.**

**Many see it as - If I avoid these sins, I’ll stay filled with the Spirit. But Paul says walking in the Spirit comes first.**

**Without the Spirit of God we are empty and crave things to fill us. We turn first to the flesh to fill the vacuum. The remedy against the rotten fruit - Jesus.**

**25 Since we live by the Spirit, (we are alive by the Spirit in us – therefore) let us keep (continuously keep) in step with the Spirit. (listen to and follow his lead)**

**Keep in step - like a dance - let the Spirit lead. Walking in the Spirit is not a 1 time, sign a card, walk the isle deal – it’s a “keep in step” daily dance with God. The Spirit has given you life – now respond and follow his direction your life.**

**\*God is not a principle we live by – He is a person we live with**

**Spend time w/ Jesus – and you end up looking like Jesus - When you try looking like Jesus w/out being with him = work of the flesh – fail.**

**Paul concludes this section with - 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. (Don’t look at others and get arrogant and conceited)**

**Why can’t I be like that or why aren’t they like me? Don’t judge your life by looking at their life.**

**Walking in the Spirit is humbly knowing God is still at work in you.**

**Jesus I love you – thank you for working in me. How can I encourage others and love on them – while God is working on them.**

**One of the most important things to know is…**

**\* Remember this is a process – it is not automatic.**

**Fruit often develops slowly - over time (orange- 2-3 yrs from planting) Something’s will take time – for some of you, the monster is pretty big**

**Phil 1:6 …being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.**

**Fruit cannot be achieved by force – it must grow.**

**Daily – monthly – yearly – you look more like Jesus.**

**Go back and think thru the list… what is the HS saying?**

**The million dollar question: SO - How can I stop sinning?**

**You can’t – but Jesus in you can – through His spirit in you**

**There is no 3 step plan or fill in the blanks solution, one size fits all**

**Get with God - remove the clutter – listen to the spirits leading and conviction and walk it out with Jesus… listen and let him lead.**

**Right now more than ever we need to be walk, be lead, and yield to the Spirit. God as we are rooted in you – let the fruit fall from the branched of our life.**

**Prayer – Time for Jesus to take the lead – your flesh is killing you – Jesus is your only hope for freedom.**