***Galatians 5:16-18 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 17For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.***

Our world is a world of flesh. Look at any TV show, listen to any commercial, talk with those who are unsaved, and it is not hard to figure out that our world is a world worshipping flesh. As humans, we are born of the flesh with a sinful nature. Jesus, answers Nicodemus in John 3:5-6, *“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* Jesus makes an incredibly simple statement in verse 6, and yet it carries the most profound Truth the world has ever known. We are born once, and must be born again, receiving the Holy Spirit to enter the Kingdom of God. We cannot walk in the Spirit until we are born of the Spirit. We cannot be born of the Spirit unless we have first believed on Jesus’ name and confessed Him as Lord and Savior. No surrender, no Spirit. It’s not hard to understand… Pride makes it hard to do.

Verse 16 says - *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.* Paul is instructing the Galatians. He is reminding them that receiving the Spirit through Jesus Christ is life altering. He’s saying - Conduct yourselves by rule of the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit directs. In practical life, make the things of the Spirit the norm and not the exception. Flee temptation as Joseph did. Romans 13:14 says - *But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*Make no provision, allow no room for the flesh. Sin doesn’t need a very large opening to ooze in and cause all manner of damage.

Our world makes provision for the flesh. In many cases, the flesh receives an engraved invitation, through what we read, what we watch, what we listen to. None of us need fool ourselves that there is not a war raging between good and evil, flesh and Spirit. As Christians, we have a clear choice. Matthew 7:13 *Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.* Narrow is the gate of the Spirit, few find it. Wide is the gate, broad is the way of the world that leads to destruction, and many go in by it.

Verse 17 *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.* The flesh sets it’s heart against the Spirit. The Spirit rejects the flesh. There is no middle ground. Either the Spirit is in control, or the flesh is in control. The choice is moment by moment. There is no power sharing in the human soul. In Romans 7:14, Paul says, “*For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.* He understands that the flesh will ambush us, waiting until we’re tired, or hungry, or sad. Satan understands this. In Matthew 4, he waits until Jesus is hungry after fasting 40 days and 40 nights. Jesus stands firm using the Word of God to repel the attacker.

We too must expect ambush when we are weak. The Word of God, Communion in Prayer, staying away from places of weakness. Satan prowls around looking for those he might devour. God never once promised to remove us from the fight, remove us from temptation. But we know God is faithful, making a way of escape. The Holy Spirit does not remove us from the fight and the ambush. He instructs us, He arms us, He informs us for the fight and in the ambush.

Verse 18 finishes *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.* The Spirit is greater than the law. In John 16, Jesus promised the Helper, the Holy Spirit sent by God. In verse 13, He says this - *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.* The Truth is that Jesus is the only way to enter the Kingdom of God. The flesh leads us to destruction. The Spirit leads us to eternal life. Jesus didn’t come to abolish the Law. He came to fulfill the law. When we are surrendered to Jesus, we are no longer under the Law, because, in Him, the Law is perfectly fulfilled. In Him, we strive to live from a place of perfect Love, love of God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love of our neighbor as ourself. In Matthew 22:40 Jesus says, *“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”* Unless we receive the Spirit through Jesus, we will by no means enter the Kingdom of God. When we receive the Spirit, our names are written down and our eternal address secure.

This week, let’s notice where our eyes are focused. Are we focused in prayer and the Word, prepared for the ambushes and fights sure to come? Do our words and our actions build up and encourage, providing a light for others to see? Is the Spirit guiding us to all truth and are our desires for the things of the Kingdom? For the next few weeks, we’ll look at specific traits that reveal the state of our Walk. Our conduct always reveals both the direction of our way and the Director of our walk. Let us set our sights to walk in the Spirit and reject the flesh.