

The Fight (aka Spoiled Fruit)

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Gal 5:16-26

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Synopsis:

Once we say yes to Jesus Christ, the Spirit of Jesus enters our life. But our old life will not give up easily. A fight ensues between the Spirit of Jesus and what the Bible calls “the flesh.” The Spirit of Jesus has won and will win, but not without our cooperation. When we engage our flesh, we reap the spoiled fruit of destructive relationships. When we engage the Spirit of Jesus, we reap the fruits of right relationships.

I.

The Big Fight

Gal 5:17 “What the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit”

Classic showdowns: This week NCAA basketball

Rocky Balboa versus Apollo Creed

Ali versus Frazier (The Thrilla in Manila)

The Spirit versus the Flesh

Spirit and Flesh redux:

Spirit = presence of the absent Jesus

Flesh = not our bodies, but bodily life opposed to Spirit/Jesus

*When we trust in Jesus as our savior, we invite a fight. Expect it. This is the essence of the Spiritual life—a struggle.

II.

Letting the Flesh Win

Gal 5:19 “Now the works of the flesh are . . .”

Works of the Flesh: Notice not *fruit* but *works* (inorganic) 5:19

Fornication = adultery, sex outside marriage, homo acts

Impurity = sexual license

Licentiousness

Idolatry = putting something in God’s place

Sorcery = drug induced experiences

Enmities

Strife
Jealousy
Anger
Quarrels
Dissensions
Factions
Envy
Drunkenness
Carousing

Paul and his lists: Sin lists are representative

Romans 1:26-29
Ephesians 5:3-5
Colossians 3:5
All over Corinthians

Paul and Galatia: Northern Asia

- Gospel of freedom in Jesus Christ
- Left, Judaizers came in
- Flesh = bodily life opposed to Spirit (Jewish variety vs Gentile variety = see Romans 1 and 2)

*How do you get these things in your life?

- They are a byproduct of your attention/worship
- What do you pay attention to?
- This determines your lifestyle

*We can allow the flesh to win (see Rom 7:14-25)

III.

Letting the Spirit Win

Gal 5:22 “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is . . .”

READ 5:22-26

Name the fruit: 5:22

Love
Joy
Peace
Patience

Kindness
Generosity
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self Control

*How do we get these things into our life?
-A byproduct (organic) of your attention/worship

Fruit: Metaphor implies attached to vine
-Vine =famous metaphor from Bible (OT/NT)
-Growing fruit attaches to vine and branches
-John 15 “I am the vine, you are the branches”

*As we pay attention to the vine, we produce fruit
How do we pay attention to Spirit of Jesus?

Means of Grace: Attending to Jesus

Daily Quiet Times
Small group study
Worship
Sabbath
Stewardship
Mission

IV.

Who Wins the Fight?

Gal 5:24 “Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh”

Two rounds in this fight: See 5:24

1. Crucifixion of Jesus = fight has already been won at Calvary

Jesus *on the cross* has won the victory over sin and death

2. Crucify the flesh = fight needs to be won *in us*

Spirit of Jesus needs to win in our lives the same victory

E.g. Our church: A fight right now

Flesh = Old Christendom
Wait for people to show up
Concern about our needs, service times

Spirit = Where Jesus is
Go where people are
Follow Jesus into the world

Here's the battle:

What is Spirit of Jesus doing in the world?
What does our church need to be in order to align itself with the Spirit
of Jesus?

Martin Luther: *A Mighty Fortress*
Did we in our own strength confide
Our striving would be losing
Were not the right man on our side
The man of God's own choosing
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus it is he
Lord Sabaoth his name
From age to age the same
And he must win the battle