

# Beyond Sunday

For groups, friends, families, couples, or individuals to reflect on the message you heard this Sunday.

REFLECT on the message heard Sunday, 3/26.

1. Read Galatians 5:16-26. How is being changed by God's Spirit within you different than just trying to follow a bunch of religious rules? What "aha's" occur to you about this? What confuses you?
2. There are two very different lists in our passage: "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit." Is there significance to the fact that one list is called "works" and the other is called "fruit"? How is the "fruit of the Spirit" different than a "to do list" we try to achieve in our own strength?
3. Compare Galatians 5:22-23 to John 15:5-8. What does John 15:5-8 add to your understanding of how we live into Galatians 5:22-23?
4. Gary often says, "God wants something for us, not something from us." Think of what it would be like to live into the opposite of the fruit of the spirit: instead of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control, a person would be hateful, miserable, agitated, impatient, cruel, evil, unfaithful, brutal, and out of control. How much fun would it be to live that way? How much fun would it be to hang out with someone like that? Thank God for the love He has for you to save you from that type of existence!
5. Gary said an interesting thing in his message: "Gardeners don't actually make seeds grow; they just create the conditions under which growth tends to happen." How can you create the conditions under which the seed of God's Spirit and influence tends to grow in your life?

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## True & Lasting Change

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. Galatians 5:16-17

### Review: Galatians 5:1

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

GRACE > rules

**BIG IDEA: Growth in Christ is less about following rules and more about falling in love.**

"If idolatry is the characteristic and summary Old Testament word for our drift from God, then 'desires' (epithuma) is the characteristic and summary New Testament word for that same drift. The New Testament merges the concept of idolatry and the concept of inordinate, life-ruling desires...for lust, craving, yearning and greedy demand. —David Powlison, *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*

## If I'm going to change, I need to understand:

### 1. The organic nature\* of Christian change:

But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.  
Galatians 5:22-23

- **Gradual**
- **Inevitable**
- **Internal**
- **Symmetrical**

“The church becomes irrelevant when it becomes purely a human creation. We are not all we were made to be when everything in our lives and churches can be explained apart from the work and presence of the Spirit of God.”  
—Francis Chan

### 2. The organic process of Christian change:

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.  
Galatians 5:24-25

- **Starve the flesh**

Those who belong to Christ Jesus **have crucified** the flesh with its passions and desires.  
Galatians 5:24

- **Follow the Spirit**

Since we live by the Spirit, let us **keep in step** with the Spirit.  
Galatians 5:25

“Trying to do the Lord’s work in your own strength is the most confusing, exhausting, and tedious of all work. But when you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the ministry of Jesus just flows out of you.”  
—Corrie ten Boom