

Washington church of Christ

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The Washington Messenger

Volume 3 – Number 13

April 13, 2014

Order of Services

Sunday April 13, 2014

Song Leader	Tom Dolan
Prayer	Bob Wydro
Preaching	Dan Wydro
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Bob Celentano
Prayer for the Cup	Brian Jeffries
Prayer for the Collection	Stan Thompson
Assisting at the Table	Glenn Montgomery
Scripture Reading	Bob Celentano Jr.
Morning Closing Prayer	David Osinski
Evening Opening Prayer	Cameron Wydro
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

Walking in the Spirit ...

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. 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. (Galatians 5:16-17 NKJV)

It is easy to forget, when we read passages like this, that Paul was writing to Christians, persons who have received the Spirit of God. Paul is aware of the potential relapse into fleshly existence, the ever-present possibility of falling from grace.

When Paul uses the term "the flesh" it is typically a reference to our whole selves ... not to a part of us that is dirty and objectionable. To live in the flesh is to live as a member of human society in a physical body. Flesh also denotes a domain of power, a sphere of influence in which one lives.

In the act of true conversation through salvation, fleshly persons become Spiritual persons.

Many times in discussing the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives today, a claim that the Holy Spirit is expressly present can lead to controversy. But controversy should not cause us to avoid some of the strongest messages of the Bible. I believe that our text today, Galatians 5:16-26, conveys such a message.

Paul previously stated to the Galatian Saints the fact that when we truly submit ourselves to Christ and His will, He more than influences our lives ... He becomes our lives ...

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20 NKJV)

Paul is urging the Galatians to remember that, as Christians, they have received the Spirit and they are to walk in the Spirit. The Spirit is the supreme energizing and regulative force in their lives. The Spirit brings the Words of Jesus (John 16:13), and if they walk in the Spirit, there is no danger that their Christian liberty will become an opportunity for the flesh.

For Paul, the Spirit is not only the manifestation of a supernatural power and the giver of dramatic gifts (Galatians 3:5) ... rather His influence is the daily sustaining, inspiring, and guiding power of the Christian's life. The Spirit is the sphere of influence which replaces the flesh as the energy force of our lives.

So, the question for us is ... what will we allow to dominate? Flesh or Spirit? As long we are in the flesh there is going to be a conflict between flesh and Spirit, and this is what Paul is dealing with. Remember that our very existence is "flesh" insofar as we give ourselves over to the world of the flesh, serve that world, and allow ourselves to be determined by it.

That means that we can never withdraw from "the flesh" in our earthly lives, but we do not have to forfeit to the flesh. We can fight against its demonic powers ... by walking in, or by, the Spirit.

We should never forget the terrible menace of the flesh. The struggle is not an overnight one. Though we may win the victory in an initial, sincere, and complete commitment of our lives to Christ, the war continues, because we must continue living "in the flesh" and are always exposed to that domain of power. The struggle may be long and at times seem indecisive, and for many the flesh will at times achieve supremacy until they yield to the Spirit's domination.

The writing of James chapter 1 seems to fit our topic today, in that the desire to succumb to the flesh many times is presented through a temptation ...

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. (James 1:12-15 NKJV)

Temptation always begins with us and our tendency to sin. We face constantly the temptation to be drawn away by our own lusts and desires rather than to live and to walk in the Spirit. Indeed, walking in the Spirit with our eyes fixed intently on Jesus is a vital first step in overcoming temptation.

Second, we are enticed by the sin. The word "entice" is *deleázō*, which comes from the base "to entrap." It means to allure or beguile. It is Satan, the ruler of the world, who would tempt us with evil. He is the source of all evil just as God is the source of all good. Satan knows our strengths and our weaknesses. He knows the "bait" which will most readily entice us. He wisely meets us at our tendency to lust or desire and then offers us that bait just as surely as he offered the forbidden fruit to Eve. Submitting to lust always leads to sin. The way of the flesh always results in evil just as certainly as the way of the Spirit always leads to good. Sin never adds quality to our lives. Although there are the momentary pleasures of sin and the lust of the flesh, sin ultimately subtracts from our lives. When we sin, we are always losers and never gainers in relationship to the eternal.

W.E. Vine's Dictionary of New Testament Greek Words says that the word rendered "temptation" in James 1:12 is used in the widest sense, and includes "trials" with a beneficial purpose and effect, "trials" or "temptations," divinely permitted or sent, and "trials" definitely designed to lead to wrong doing.

I would suggest then that the word "temptation" denotes anything that will try or test the reality of our commitment to God ... and it may be applied to afflictions or to direct solicitations to sin ... the latter being the sense in which it is most commonly employed. So, whether by affliction or by direct allurements to do wrong, the question is whether we have the faith to keep us, or whether we will yield to murmuring, to rebellion, and to sin.

I think that both of these exhortations given to us through the influence of the Spirit apply...

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. (Galatians 5:16 NIV)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that

neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39 NIV)

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Abigail Jeffries ... Jordan Thomas ...
Barbara Rhinehart (Bill Duryea's sister) ... Matt Grimaldi ...
Kathleen Wydro's Mom ... Everett Guyton

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Bertie Baxter ... Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation.

The Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support – Jon Focht –
Tim Bunting – Scott Smelser – Dan Wydro

EVENTS AND NOTES

UPCOMING EVENTS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF ARE ...

- ▲ OUR SPRING GOSPEL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR APRIL 18TH – 20TH WITH PHIL ROBERTSON.
- ▲ OUR FALL GOSPEL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 17TH – 19TH WITH JOHN ISAAC EDWARDS.
- ▲ THE NEW BIBLE CLASS TERM STARTS ON SUNDAY, APRIL 20TH. PETE FERENCZE, JAN THOMPSON, AND BOB JAMES WILL BE TEACHING.
- ▲ THE NEXT MEN'S BUSINESS MEETING AND LADIES BIBLE STUDY IS SCHEDULED FOR SUNDAY, MAY 4TH.
- ▲ MONTHLY UPDATES FROM THE EVANGELISTS THAT WE ASSIST ARE POSTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.
- ▲ CHECK OUT SCOTT SMELSER'S WEBSITE "3MINUTEBIBLESTUDY.COM".