

Holy Spirit Part 3  
Galatians 4:13-25 (CEB)

What is it to truly be free? Given our American culture, I believe this is a very important question for the church to weigh. It certainly was for the churches in Galatia. Believers set free in Jesus Christ to live a life that glorified him by the presence and power of his Holy Spirit, but who were being led by false teachers to once again enter into a yoke of bondage to the law of Moses via a requirement of circumcision. I call this the theology of 'Jesus, And'. 'And' being whatever man chooses to require in addition to faith in Jesus. Hear me this morning, wherever there is 'Jesus, And' there is no Jesus at all, and where there is no Jesus there is no Holy Spirit. Listen to Paul in **Galatians 3:5**, <sup>5</sup> "I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ." To truly be free is to no longer be under the burden of the Mosaic Law, having been made right with God solely through faith in God's Son, Jesus. Any by faith through indwelling Holy Spirit possessing the power to choose that which glorifies God/Jesus. True freedom, Sisters and Brothers, is choosing to be led by the Holy Spirit rather than one's sinful nature. **Romans 8:3-4** <sup>3</sup> "The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. <sup>4</sup> He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit." **NLT**

So, the question this morning is are we following the Spirit? How do one know if he/she is letting the Holy Spirit guide him/her? Glad you asked.

**We know we are being guided by the Holy Spirit when we are experiencing Jesus' perfect peace. V18** <sup>18</sup> "But if you are being led by the Spirit, you aren't under the Law." Why is this true? Because the Spirit will never lead us into anything that dishonors or displeases God, that dishonors or displeases our Lord Jesus. So, when we are letting the Holy Spirit guide us, we will certainly be honoring God's word, Jesus' gospel. As such, we will find that we are using our freedom to abide in love. And this love is not a can we all get along type of love. This love is grounded in the truth of God and its aim is Jesus, the Son of God. Abiding in the love Christ results in our experiencing the peace of Christ. **Romans 13:10** <sup>10</sup> "Love doesn't do anything wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is what fulfills the Law." (CEB) The flip side of this is when we misuse our freedom (that is, our ability to choose that which honors God/Jesus) We should expect the peace of Christ to reign in their hearts. No, we should expect life be the exact opposite, tumultuous. Sisters and Brothers there is a war being waged on the inside of us. The more faithfully we let the Holy Spirit have its way in us the more victorious over our sin nature we will be, and the more the perfect peace of Christ will reign in our hearts.

**1 Peter 2:11** "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul."

**ESV**

**Romans 8:12-14** <sup>12</sup> "Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. <sup>13</sup> For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit

you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.<sup>14</sup> For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” **NLT**

**Col 3:14-15a** “<sup>14</sup> Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. <sup>15</sup> And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts.” **NLT**

**We know we are letting the Holy Spirit lead us when we see, progressively, a pattern of Christlike fruit in our lives. V22** “<sup>22</sup> But the

Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,<sup>23</sup> gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!” The looming question here is are we growing in Christ likeness? Are we looking more and more like Jesus.

Therefor, the desire to do that which glorifies God is intensifying in us or does the pull of the sin nature remain stronger—sexual immorality, moral corruption, doing whatever feels good, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, drug use and casting spells, hate, fighting, obsession, losing your temper, competitive opposition, conflict, selfishness, group rivalry, <sup>21</sup> jealousy, drunkenness, partying, and other things like that?

Church, are we seeing more of the fruit of the Spirit at work in our lives and less of our sin nature? When we look back over our journey do we see a progression towards holiness or more holiness, sanctity, piety, godliness, Christ likeness? If not, could it be we have not crucified the self with its passions and its desires? And if we have not done so, can we say with confidence that we belong to Jesus? **V24** “<sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the self with its passions and its desires.”

**John 15:1-8** ““I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. <sup>3</sup> You have already been pruned and purified by

the message I have given you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. <sup>5</sup> “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned. <sup>7</sup> But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! <sup>8</sup> When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.”

### **NLT**

Let me close with a real-life example that I believe will make clear what Paul is attempting to get in our hearts by his words in **V25**, “If we live by the Spirit, let’s follow the Spirit.” Some time ago....