



## MORAIN VALLEY CHURCH

Walking by the Spirit  
Gal 4:21-31 May 7, 2017, MVC

### I. Introduction:

- A. We are doing a series on the Holy Spirit that we are calling Empowered, as we talk about how the Holy Spirit of God empowers us for both life and ministry.
  - 1. Everything that God calls us to do He also equips us to do by means of His Spirit
  - 2. All the way from winning the personal internal war in our soul to carrying out the mission Jesus gave each of us to bring people to Jesus and to become more like Jesus, and everything in between those two!
- B. We learned a few weeks ago that being filled with the Spirit is simply the presence and power of the Holy Spirit so controlling us that we are living under His influence.
- Today my goal is to give us a fuller understanding about ...

### II. Walking by the Spirit

- A. We already saw, in a message about our personal world war, that walking by the Spirit is basically depending upon Spirit rather than ourselves to put out of operation the deeds of the flesh and to fill us with the life of Christ!
- B. Now let's turn to Gal 5 where we see two passages about walking by the Spirit.
  - 1. Read
    - a) v16 – here we see that when we walk by the Spirit we will not carry out the desires of the flesh
    - b) v25 – here he is simply saying, “Since we received our life with God by the Spirit then we should also let the Spirit lead and empower every step of our lives!”

2. These two passages essentially mean that “our walks with Christ, step by step, moment by moment should be by means of the Holy Spirit” Then we will not carry out the desires of the Flesh!
  3. He is saying here walk step by step not leap to leap or jump to jump. This is what I mean by this – Many Christians will trust in the Spirit today for that special opportunity to speak to someone for Christ or do ministry, but then the next time they really trust Him is Tuesday afternoon when they have to deal with that difficult person they will be seeing that requires extra grace, then again on Wednesday night when they lead that Bible Study, and again Friday when they have that important meeting with their boss!
    - a) That is simply that we are depending upon the Spirit for the major events in our life
    - b) Walking by the Spirit means I depend upon Him for every step of my life, every thought, every discussion, every decision, every conversation, every opportunity, every .... Every moment!
    - c) So it is about the presence and power of Christ leading and empowering us every moment of our life for all of life and ministry!
- C. Sometimes to better understand something it helps to see what it is contrasted with.
1. Turn to Gal 3:2-3
    - a) Read
    - b) V2 is saying -You did not receive the Holy Spirit by working to get Him but by faith
    - c) V3 is saying – If your Christian life began by the Spirit are you now trying to grow in Christ by the flesh, by your human efforts, by trying to keep all of God’s laws?
  2. He is contrasting here growing by the flesh - working to keep God’s commands with growing by the ministry of the Holy Spirit – faith in God’s Word!
- Now let’s take a look at a

### III. Biblical Illustration

- A. Let’s look at the story of Abraham and the birth of two of his sons, Ishmael and Isaac, by two different mothers, Hagar and Sarah. Turn to Gen 15

1. At the age of 75 God called Abraham out of Mesopotamia to Canaan. Once he arrived in Canaan God promised him that He would give that land to his descendants.
  2. In Gen 15 God told Abraham that He was going to reward him greatly.  
Listen to Abrahams response
    - a) Read v2-6
    - b) God promised Abraham that he would have an heir that would come from his own body and so many children that he could not count them.
  3. At age of 85 this promised child had not yet been born. Sarah, his wife, came up with a plan that he take Hagar, her own slave, and have a child by her. Abraham listened and he and Hagar had a son named Ishmael when Abraham was 86 years old.
  4. 13 years later when Abraham was 99 years old God appeared to Abraham and told him that Ishmael would not be his heir but rather a son born by his very own wife Sarah. Listen to 17:15-19.
  5. Now you need to remember that both Abraham and Sarah were very old and Sarah was barren all her life and now past the childbearing years. It would take a miracle for a child to be born to them. So, Sarah conceived and bore a son, Isaac, to Abraham when he was 100 years old.
  6. So Abraham had two sons –
    - a) one born by the ordinary human means by which every other child is born
    - b) and one born miraculously as a result of a promise that Abraham believed
- B. Now turn to Gal 4:21-31. We are going to see in this passage Paul taking this story of Abraham, the two mothers and two sons and giving some insight to these events.
1. Read v22-23 Ishmael was born according to the flesh and Isaac born through the promise
  2. Read v29 – again refers to Ishmael as being born according to the flesh and Isaac being born according to the Spirit

#### IV.Application for MVC

- A. Through Ishmael's birth, we get some insight into how we walk according to flesh.

1. Ishmael was born as a result of a plan that Sarah came up with and Abraham and Hagar produced a child in the same way every other human being produces a child – there was nothing supernatural about it. It was ordinary everyday human stuff.
  2. Even though the intentions were good, even though it was towards a Godly end, “helping God out with one of His promises so His plan could be fulfilled”, even though it had God’s plans involved in it – it still mixed in human stuff; it was still fleshly.
  3. Living by the Flesh = living by the ordinary natural means by which every other human lives, trusting in their ‘own’ energy, ‘own’ efforts, ‘own’ education, ‘own’ experiences, ‘own’ plans, ‘own’ resources, ‘own’ ways, or those of another human being
    - a) It is simply walking no different than any other human being who does not know Jesus would walk
    - b) Everything that man can do by himself apart from God.
  4. Here is a question to consider - are you trying to help God out by walking just like any other man who does not know Jesus pulling on every resource you have or others have or even the wisdom of the world to try to do God’s work, fulfill His mission or obey His commands?
- B. Through Isaac’s birth, we get some insight in how we walk according to the Spirit.
1. It was a result of faith in a promise by God.
  2. I believe at the heart of walking by the Spirit is simply walking by faith in both the ‘Word’ of God and the ‘person’ of God to do in and through or for us what the Word promises us.
    - a) One leg – Word
    - b) One leg – Spirit
    - c) Step by step - Word and Spirit
  3. Read Turn to Rom 4:17-22

## V. Communion

- A. The way that Abraham was declared righteous and gave birth to Isaac is the same way we are saved and are supposed to walk.
1. Read v23-25

2. As bread and cup are passed, examine your life to see if you not only have been saved by the Gospel but if you are living your Christian life according to the Gospel!

B. Pass

C. Pray