



# THE FLESH & THE SPIRIT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GALATIANS 5:16-25

1 **What do you think of the following statements as summaries of how to live the Christian life?** Are they biblical phrases or not? Explain.

 *"Let go and let God!"*

 *"It's all of Him, and none of us."*

 *"Keep seeking more of the Spirit's anointings, new out-pourings."*

 *"It's all about surrendering completely to Jesus."*

 *How would you summarize how to live the Christian life?*<sup>1</sup>

2 **Would you say that you are led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18)?** Why or why not? Do you follow your own course, or do you lean on God to guide you? Can you give an example? How can you become more dependent on the Spirit to direct you?<sup>2</sup>

3 **According to Galatians 5:16-17, what is going on inside every Christian?** What causes the Christian's inner moral conflict?


 *What are some practical results of the conflict?*

 *What is encouraging about this? What is challenging?*

4 **If a young Christian came to you and said, "I don't see much of the fruit of the Spirit in my life," what counsel would you give?**

5 **The word "desires" in Galatians 5:16-17 literally means "over-desires" – when we feel that we must have something.** It is an all-controlling drive or longing for something. It is treating a good thing as though it is a god thing.

 *What does this tell us about how our sinful nature works?*

 *Look at the manifestations of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-20. Pick out two or three and describe below how they are consequences of "over-desire."*

6 **Which of the works of the flesh are most common and most acceptable in our culture?** In contrast to that, which aspects of the fruit of the Spirit are least noticed and celebrated within the church at large?

1. John MacArthur, Galatians; The Wondrous Grace of God (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 99.

2. North Point Ministries, Galatians; The Bible in Community (www.groupcurriculum.org/source 2008), 28.

**7 Think through the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.** According to (v. 18, 22, 25) what is our part in producing these qualities? What is the Spirit's part?

♥ Which of the segments of this fruit do you particularly need to ask God to grow in you through His Spirit?

♥ How will dwelling on the truths of the gospel help produce this fruit in you?

**8 In Paul's warning about works of the flesh, he says in (v. 21) "those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."**

⚙ The Greek verb refers to habitual practice rather than an isolated lapse. Why is the distinction important?

♥ Why is it easy to see the sins of the flesh in others and not within ourselves?

**9 Why is crucifixion an apt description of what must happen to the sinful nature?**<sup>3</sup> How do you practically crucify the flesh? Perhaps give an example of how you are trying to do that in your own life.

⚙ Explain the difference between the active crucifying of your own flesh (Gal. 5:24) and your passive crucifixion with Christ (Gal. 2:20).

🗨 How can personal standards fit into crucifixion without being a form of legalism?

**10 How would you practically describe a believer who is walking in the Spirit?** What are the signs that a believer is out of step with the Spirit?<sup>4</sup>

## GETTING PERSONAL

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Getting Personal - which works of the flesh in Galatians 5:19-21 do you struggle with?**

♥ Don't simply try to change your behavior or your feelings. Ask yourself, "Why am I gratifying my sinful nature this way? How am I looking to get myself security, satisfaction, or significance rather than allowing Jesus to give it to me?"

♥ Remember that through faith you are a child of God (Gal. 3:26). How will that take away your motivation to sin?<sup>5</sup>

**Getting Personal – How can you see the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life?** Do you have natural characteristics which could be confused with the fruit of the Spirit? How can you tell the difference? Which fruit of the Spirit do you chronically lack?

3. John Stott, Galatians; Experiencing the Grace of Christ (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998), 52-53.

4. Steve Pettit, Walking in the Spirit; A Study Through Galatians 5 (Greenville: Journey Forth, 2014), 118.

5. Timothy Keller, Galatians; Gospel Matters (The Good Book Company, 2013), 40-41.