

Fruit of our Choices

Self vs Spirit

Free Will

- The incredible blessing of being able to choose
- The incredible burden of being able to reject

Oh, the choices we make...

- When we know what God wants from us and we rebel, we distance ourselves from Him
- When we know what God wants from us and we wait to obey, our stubbornness is costly
- The antidote to this rebellion and stubbornness is to repent and allow God to have His way with us

Galatians 5: 13-15

"For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another."

Consequences of choices

- Impact not only us, but those around us
- Impact can last for generations
- "Beware of destroying one another..."

Galatians 5: 16-18

"So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses."

Our freedom can lead us into bondage...

- We have free will to choose God's desires for us or to reject them and follow our own desires
 - How's that working for you?
 - How often does your own desire lead you into what is best for you?
- Instead, our own desires frequently lead us to consequences in our lives we never saw coming

Galatians 5: 19-21

"When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God."

Free to choose results

- Choosing to do it your way leads to this:
 - Satisfying self at cost to others
 - Sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures
 - Worshipping something other than God
 - Idolatry, sorcery
 - Corrosion of heart and relationships
 - Hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy
 - Need to anesthetize your emotions/pain
 - Drunkenness, wild parties

Final result of this choice

- Choosing self over God in the end results in a final granting of choice
 - Life eternal spent outside the presence of God
- Paul is writing to those who believed in Jesus, but then choose to go back to what they knew before they knew Him
- Free Will's incredible burden

There is another way...

"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!"

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to His cross and crucified them there."

So, we choose these?

- This is a statement, not a prophecy
- The Presence of the Holy Spirit results in the presence of these traits in us
 - A change in our hearts
 - Love, Joy, Peace
 - A change in our actions
 - Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control
- There is no law against them - nothing to rebel against once we choose God

So, if these things are lacking, what's the deal?

"Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to His cross and crucified them there."

I have no...

- Love, joy, peace when I satisfy myself at the cost of others
- Patience, kindness, goodness when I worship something other than God
- Faithfulness, gentleness, self-control when I let my heart get corroded and I begin to anesthetize myself

Old saying...

"No peace, no Jesus.
Know peace, know Jesus..."

No peace, choose self.
Know peace, choose Jesus.

"God take this from me..."

- Choose to give it up
- Choose to nail it to the Cross of Christ
- Choose to leave it there
- Start approaching spiritual disciplines the way that Scripture says to do it

Make a choice

- Jesus actively chose to die for us
- We actively choose to let our sinful nature/desires die
- If we don't actively choose it, our sinful nature will rebel and want it our way

Galatians 5: 22-23

"Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another."

If I choose to follow Jesus

- I will appreciate who I am
- I will appreciate the needs of others
- I will appreciate the gifts of others
- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control

One final point... Galatians 5:26

“Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.”

Literally, “let’s not go there”

- The Fruit of the Spirit focuses on what truly matters
- The Fruit of the Spirit prevents us from being self-centered and proud
- The Fruit of the Spirit leads to gratitude for who we are and what we have
- The Fruit of the Spirit leads to peaceful resolution of conflict with those who also live by the Fruit of the Spirit

Fruit produces fruit

- Apple trees won’t grow from acorns
- The Spirit in you will testify to you of the presence of “fruit” in the lives of others
 - Spiritual discernment not visible with human eye
- The evidence of the “fruit” in you will also testify to the world of the Spirit’s role in your life.