

“A Spirit-Led  
Life”

galatians

5:22-23

bearin

fruit



**Navigators  
Discipleship  
Tool**

**5x5x5**

# **New Testament Bible Reading Plan**

*Read through the New Testament in ⑤ days a week, ⑤ minutes a day.*

# Galatians

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

# Galatians

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

# Galatians

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

# Galatians

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.



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The process of growth and change **requires battle** between two natures that are at war within our hearts.

# Galatians

## 5:16-17

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# Galatians

## 5:19-21

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# Galatians

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Jesus doesn't encounter Matthew and John—or you and me— and ask, “What do you know?” He doesn't even ask, “What do you believe?” He asks, “What do you want?” This is the most incisive, piercing question Jesus can ask of us precisely because we *are* what we want. Our wants and longings and desires are at the core of our identity, the wellspring from which our actions and behavior flow. Our wants reverberate from our heart, the epicenter of the human person. Thus Scripture counsels, “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it” (Prov. 4:23).



Discipleship, we might say, is a way to curate your heart, to be attentive to and intentional about what you love.

So discipleship is more a matter of hungering and thirsting than of knowing and believing. Jesus's command to follow him is a command to align our loves and longings with his—to want what God wants, to desire what God desires, to hunger and thirst after God and crave a world where he is all in all—a vision encapsulated by the shorthand “the kingdom of God.”

*James K.A. Smith, You Are What You Love*

We are *desiring* beings,  
driven and defined by  
our *loves*.

# Galatians

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to **indulge** the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

# Romans 7:4-6

So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

# 2 Corinthians 3:6

He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.



My question was something like this, "Professor Bruce, do you think women should be ordained?" His response I shall remember forever. He said, "I don't care much for ordination. But what I can say with regard to the exercise of women's ministries in the church, is this: I am for whatever brings freedom in the church. *I am for whatever brings the freedom of the Spirit in the church of God.*" His answer seemed so nebulous, so full of holes, so full of problems, and so full of unanswered questions.



... Are we perhaps as guilty of “legalism” as they were? Do we perhaps also want legal guidelines and Mosaic law? These questions are worth pondering.

We must first convince ourselves that God’s Spirit is a sufficient guide for moral life before God. We must thoroughly grasp God’s goodness in his granting to us the Holy Spirit as the sure guide to holiness and love. To do this we need to read Galatians once again with an open mind, and then proceed to Paul’s other letters (this makes really good sense if Galatians is



the first of Paul's letters), to see what Paul has in mind there when he speaks of "life in the free Spirit."

Furthermore, it is not that Paul did not have available rules and regulations to appeal to: he could have gone to Moses for some moral guidelines or even to Jesus. He could have appealed to such texts as the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7) or to specific texts in the Old Testament (e.g., Lev. 11:44-45: "Be holy, because I am holy"). He did not, however, and he



knew that in not doing so he was leaving these as options. He did not see the teachings of Jesus as new laws, nor would he appeal to the law of Moses as binding on the Christian. Instead, Paul described the essence of Christian living as “freedom in the Spirit.”

# Galatians

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.



*"Heavenly Father, I pray that this day I may live in your presence and please you more and more.*

*Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you.*

*Holy Spirit, I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."*



That was the prayer that John Stott prayed every day when he first woke up in the morning. It hardly seems surprising, then, that many people who knew John Stott personally said that he was the most Christlike person they ever met. For God answered his daily prayer by making the fruit of the Spirit ripen in his life. And what the Spirit of God does, above all, is to make those who put their faith in Jesus to become more and more like the Jesus they love, trust, and follow.

Christopher Wright, *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit: Growing in Christlikeness*



My dear children,  
for whom I am  
again in the pains  
of childbirth until  
**Christ is formed  
in you**

Galatians 5:19

