

REVIEW:

- We're justified—declared righteous—through Christ Jesus' sacrifice.
- The indwelling Holy Spirit, and the gift of the Holy Spirit: a He, not an it.
- We're sanctified by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God, taught by the people of God, to obey which equals to love.

Matthew 28:18–20 ¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

REMEMBER: SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH—A FAITHFUL FAITH, A REMAINING FAITH.

Colossians 1:22–23 ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—²³if you continue in your faith, [an abiding/remaining faith] established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCESS LOOK LIKE?

Galatians 5:13–25 ¹³You, 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.* ¹⁴For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other. ¹⁶So I say, walk by the Spirit, *and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.* ¹⁷For 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. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and 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. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

1. REAL FAITH PRODUCES A CHANGED LIFE BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- Remember Matthew 22:37–40, a life of obedience that results in love.

Romans 6:1–4 ¹What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

2. THOUGH I HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT INSIDE OF ME, I STILL HAVE MY SINFUL NATURE.

- It's a conflict confirmed in verse 17 (Galatians 5:17 above).

Romans 7:21–25 ²¹So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²²For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

3. THIS IS A CHOICE I HAVE THE POWER—WITH HIS HELP!

- I must choose to work out of me what God has worked into me.
- I don't indulge it nor gratify it, I don't feed it nor give into it.
- I used to have to give into it. It controlled me! Now, I have the Holy Spirit within me.

Philippians 2:12–13 ¹²Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Romans 6:11–14 ¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. ¹³Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. ¹⁴For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

4. THE RESULT IS LOVE; THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE. (See also Romans 1:5)

Galatians 5:5–6 ⁵For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

Matthew 22:37–40 ³⁷Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

1 Corinthians 13:1–4 ¹If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT AND DISCUSS:

Passages to consider: Galatians 5:16-26; 1 Corinthians 13; Matthew 22:36-40; 1 John 2:3-11

Icebreaker: What are family rules or house rules you have for how you function as a household, or how to play a certain game?

1. What was important for you to hear from this week's sermon?
2. Read Galatians 5:16-26 and Matthew 22:36-40. Try re-telling what one passage says to a partner. What do these passages tell you about who God is and His way of life?
3. Who is a model for you in expressing love for God and for others? What have you seen in them?
4. What helps you walk by the Spirit? A) When are you more likely to walk in the old nature/flesh?
5. How would you recognize the fruit of love being formed in your life?
6. What is your response to what God is showing you?

Resources: Consider going through *Experiencing God* this summer!

Passages to prepare for next week, Cultivate! Week 3: Joy

This week, read Galatians 5:16-26; John 16:19-24; Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-5

As you read, ask yourself these questions:

- What is the passage saying about God, mankind, and how the world works?
- What do I learn about myself from this passage?
- What response does this require of me in my thinking, believing, and doing?