



INSIGHT

to biblical TEXTS

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Slide #1

The *Introduction* article for *Critical Concepts in Christian Living* discussed two diametrically opposed viewpoints dealing with the Christian life. It would be helpful to read that introduction article prior to considering any of the four *Critical Concepts*. The article *Critical Concept #2* addresses the content of Galatians 5:16-25, *walking with the Spirit* and *being led by the Spirit*.

Insight to Galatians 5:16-25

Walking with the Spirit Being Led by the Spirit

(CRITICAL CONCEPT #2)

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1

Slides #2

The entire Galatians 5:16-25 text (NASB) is present on slide #2.

WALKING WITH THE SPIRIT Galatians 5:16-25

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,

20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,

21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

NASB

2

Slide #3

The outline of Galatians 5:16-25 is broken down into three segments, as follows:

- Conflicting Options 5:16-18
- Consequences of Conflict 5:19-23
- Logical Result in Practice 5:24-25

OUTLINE
Galatians 5:16-25

Conflicting Options Flesh Spirit	5:16-18
Consequences of Conflict Deeds of the Flesh Fruit of the Spirit	5:19-23
Logical Result in Practice	5:24-25

3

Slide #4

This text parallels Romans 8:1-14, which was addressed in the article *Critical Concept #1*. Notice the issues in each text.

Consequently, how you understand the Christian life from Romans 8 should correlated with your understanding from Galatians 5 and vice versa.

CONTEXT
Romans 8:1-14 and Galatians 5:16-25

ROMANS 8	ISSUE	GALATIANS 5
v 4	Walk by the Spirit	v 16
v 4	Walk by the Flesh*	v 17*
v 13	Live by the Spirit	v 25
v 13	Deeds of the Flesh	v 19
v14	Led by the Spirit	v18

* presumed

4

Slide #5

Prior to this section of Galatians 5 that begins in verse 16, Paul has just addressed Christian freedom. In verses 1-12 as the result of freedom in Christ, believers are told they should not place themselves in subjection to slavery under the Law. In addition, their freedom should not be used as an opportunity for their sinful flesh (propensity to sin, vv 13-15). In light of this freedom, Paul commands Christians to “walk with the Spirit” (v 16). A command refers to a possibility that can be obtained or a condition that can be missed. It can be dismissed and ignored rather than heeded. The Galatians were and we are free to choose to obey or not. But based on what Paul just taught, they should seriously consider it wise to follow Paul’s instruction. The One who graciously delivered us from servitude to the Law and to sin wants to have fellowship with us.

CONFLECTING OPTIONS

Galatians 5:16-18

16	But I say, (you) walk with the Spirit		<i>Command</i>
	and you will not carry out the flesh’s desire .		<i>Promise</i>
17	For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit ,		<i>Conflict</i>
	and the Spirit sets its desire against the flesh ;		
	for those are in opposition to one another, so that		<i>Result</i>
	you may not do the things that you please.		
18	But If you are being led by the Spirit ,		<i>If-Then Statement</i>
	you are not under the Law .		

5

As in Romans 8, translation impacts the meaning of a phrase. The usual understanding of a Christian’s “walk by the Spirit”¹ is that he is living life “by the power of the Spirit,” referring to the Spirit as the antidote for the power of sin. The Spirit is assumed to be the *cause of* or the *means by which* one walks.² An alternative translation, in this case “walk *with* the Spirit,”³ captures the intent of Galatians 5:16 and indicates the manner in which the believer walks with the Spirit or his association with the Spirit. Consequently, a special empowerment of the Spirit for Christian living is *not* the emphasis in Galatians. Not only is the term *power* not used in the how-to-live section of Galatians (4:21–6:18), but also the term is only used once in this entire book, the earliest letter written by Paul. That single use of power in 3:5 concerns the manifestations of the Spirit’s working through gifts for service and ministry, not empowerment for living the Christian life.⁴ In addition, “walking with the Spirit” (5:16) corresponds to “walking in relation to the Spirit” (Rom 8:4). The equivalencies of these two phrases are supported below from Romans 8. Consequently, the idea of power as the cause for walking obediently by the Spirit or disobediently by sin is not found in the context of either Romans 6–8 or Galatians 5.

In both the *Introduction* to LeaderQuest’s series on *Critical Concepts in Christian Living* as well as in *Critical Concept #1* (Rom 8:1-14), we learned “walk *with* the Spirit” (Gal 5:16) is an equivalent expression to “walk *in relation to* the Spirit” (Rom 8:4). *First*, notice Paul interchanged “live *in relation to* the flesh” with “[live] *with* the Spirit” within the very same verse in Romans 8:13, as follows:

Live *in relation to* the flesh (Rom 8:13)
[Live] *with* the Spirit (Rom 8:13)

Be aware the actual words Paul used in the second phrase of Romans 8:13 were “put to death the deeds of the body *with* the Spirit.” Nevertheless, Paul had previously contrasted “walk *in relation to* the flesh” with “walk *in relation to* the Spirit” in verse 4 and “mind set *in relation to* the flesh” with “mind set *in relation to* the Spirit” in verse 5. Paul continues this flesh-Spirit contrast into verse 13 with “living *in relation to* or *with* the Spirit,” being equivalent to “putting to death the deeds of the body *with* the Spirit.” We must conclude Paul used both expressions—*in relation to* and *with*—to convey equivalent ways of walking/living when referring either to the flesh or to the Spirit. They are alternative ways to express an identical idea.

Second, Paul replaced “walk *in relation to* the Spirit” (Rom 8:4) with “walk *with* the Spirit” (Gal 5:16). He also makes the same swap in reference to the “flesh” in both texts (Rom 8:4 and Gal 5:17):

Walk *with respect to* the Spirit (Rom 8:4)
Walk *with* the Spirit (Gal 5:16)

Walk *with respect to* the flesh (Rom 8:4)
Walk *with* the flesh (Gal 5:17, assumed)

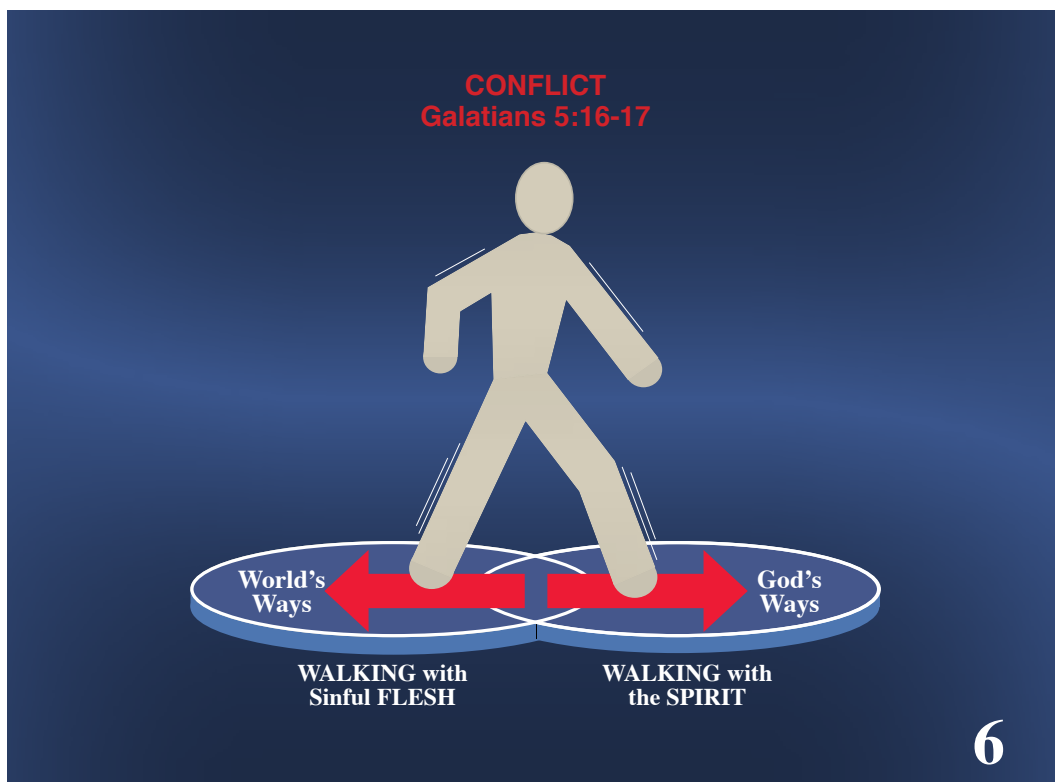
Again the corresponding usage of *in relation to* or *with* indicates their equivalency and thus synonymous expressions in intent and meaning. To “walk/live *in relation to* the Spirit/flesh” is to “walk/live *with* the Spirit/flesh.” In every instance the emphasis is the *manner* in which Christians walk/live.

Now notice in verse 16 that the command *walk with the Spirit* comes with a *promise*—*you will not “carry out”⁵ the flesh’s desire*. If a Christian’s conduct aligns with the Word provided through the Spirit, he will not be carried away by the world’s enticements through his inclination to sin. This is in fact what Paul taught in Romans 8:13: “If [walking] with the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body.” The reason being that “walking with the Spirit” and “walking with sinful flesh” is mutually exclusive; they cannot occur simultaneously. Notice also that the “deeds of the body” in Roman 8, which we will encounter in Galatians 5:19-21, are the “deeds of the flesh.” These are the deeds resulting from the Christian choosing to allow his sinful flesh to influence his behavior.

Continuing into verse 17, Paul begins with the conjunction “for”⁶ to clarify the reason for his previous instruction. The desire of the flesh is diametrically opposed to that of the Spirit and vice versa. They are in continual conflict with one another and believers can follow after the “desires of the flesh” or the “desires of the Spirit.” As a result, the Christian experiences this conflict in his own life through the choices he makes, reflecting the focus of his attention—the ways-of-the-world or the ways-of-God. Paul addressed this conflict that occurred during his own early Christian life in Romans 7:15-24 (see chapter 12 of *Escape*, 192-94).

Slide #6

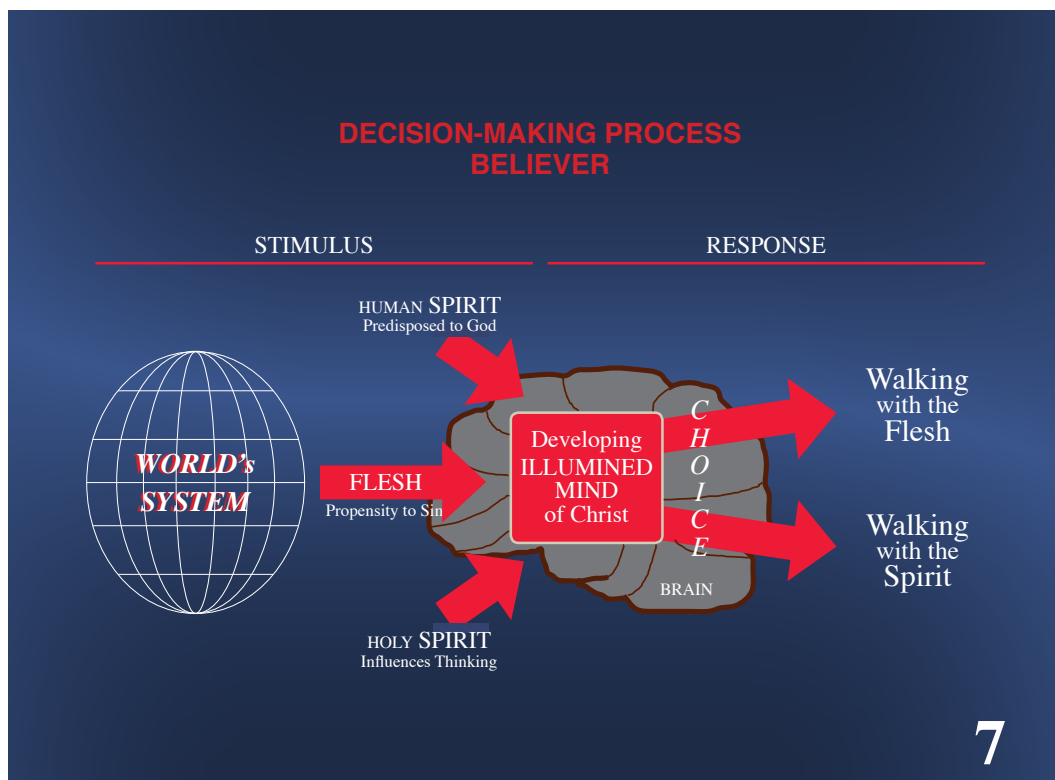
The choices are to live influenced either by the ways-of-God or by the ways-of-the-world. If we choose the former (aligning our desires with God’s), we will experience freedom from the latter (siding with the world’s system). If we choose the latter, we walk in servitude to sin.



Continue to Next Page

Slide #7

A Christian’s behavior—whether walking with the flesh or the Spirit—is the result of the decisions made in the mind. From the tripartite (body, mind, and spirit) perspective on this slide, moving from stimulus to response, show how the decision-making process leads to conduct [see article *Outward Man & Inner Man Distinctions*, 3-5]. The flesh (physical body, outer man) is the seat of a person’s propensity to sin, being receptive to the world’s stimuli whether good or bad. At conversion the believer possesses an illumined mind (1 Cor 2:15-16) and a godly human spirit (1 John 3:9; Col 3:10). Together they constitute the inner man. While the believer’s spirit is predisposed to godliness, the illumined mind, which is spiritually discerning, can and should experience renewal and growth in appraising spiritual truth through the Word (see Rom 12:2). The mind processes every input from the body’s senses and makes decisions in collaboration with his human spirit.



When the illumined mind harmonizes with the godly desires of the human spirit, the Christian does not sin and cannot sin (1 John 3:9). Notice too the believer’s decision-making process is assisted by the indwelling Spirit’s influence through the Word. When the illumined mind ignores the godly desires of his human spirit and dismisses the Spirit’s ministry, the Christian sins. The outcome of the process is a twofold product of choices.

Slide #8

Returning to verse 18, we are confronted with an “if-then” statement.⁷ The statement assumes both the condition described and the resulting consequence to be true. *If* believers are being led by the Spirit, *then* they are certainly not under the Law. We will address the “then” consequence section on slide #14. First we will consider the initial portion of the verse, the “if” section that states the condition (on slides #9-#13).

When we come to verse 18, we must answer the obvious question “What does it mean to *be led by the Spirit*?” The statement that believers “are being led by the Spirit” only occurs twice in the New Testament—in Romans 8:14 and Galatians 5:18. As we have already seen from slide #4, the context of Romans 8 and Galatians 5 are identical. With that in mind a wise author gives a needed perspective on “being led by the Spirit”. He writes:

CONFLICTING OPTIONS
Galatians 5:16-18

16	But I say, (you) walk with the Spirit and you will not carry out the flesh’s desire .	<i>Command</i> <i>Promise</i>
17	For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit , and the Spirit sets its desire against the flesh ; for those are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.	<i>Conflict</i> <i>Result</i>
18	But If you are being led by the Spirit , you are not under the Law .	<i>If-Then Statement</i>

This has nothing to do with what is often described as “the leading of the Lord.” That concept is essentially an appeal to some “inner direction” that is more mystical than Biblical.⁸

Unfortunately the normal automatic default kicks in and it is assumed that the “power of the Spirit” comes into play. Consequently, in both Romans 8:14 and Galatians 5:18 it is usually understood that the Spirit leads or guides the believer *by means* of His power⁹—the “inner-direction” view. I submit there is a better way to understand this verse.

Slide #9

The grammatical construction of verse 18 assists in gaining insight to the proper understanding of this verse in the context of Galatians 5. The construction of “being led by the Spirit” is made up of a present-passive-indicative verb (*are being led*) and a noun (*Spirit*) in the dative case. The verb *to lead* means “to lead...morally or spiritually, *lead, encourage (in the direction of).*”¹⁰ While the present, indicative verb form inform us the “leading” takes place, the passive voice indicates the subject (an assumed “you” or “believer”) receives the action performed rather than executing the action.¹¹ Consequently, the verb form describes “being led” as a “willingness to *allow oneself to be led.*”¹² The noun *Spirit* is translated as a prepositional phrase *by the Spirit*, being understood as the dative of agency—“the word in the dative denotes the agent by whom something is done.”¹³ Consequently Paul teaches, “You [believers] are being led by the Spirit [agent of leading].”

GRAMMATICAL CONSTRUCTION
Galatians 5:18

(BELIEVERS) BEING LED BY THE SPIRIT

Subject	Verb	Agent
(2nd pers, pl)	(pres, pass, indic)	(dative)

9

Slide #10

Having identified the agent of leading,¹⁴ it should be understood that “agency” does *not clarify the manner* in which leading occurs. The key to understanding the *manner in which leading is actually experienced* is found in the context of the passage under consideration or from parallel texts. As previously noted in the parallel text of Romans 8 (see *Critical Concept #1*), we discovered the Spirit works in believers, influencing them to respond to God’s will found in God’s Word (2 Tim 3:16-17) provided by the Spirit Himself (2 Pet 1:21). As in the parallel text of Romans 8, the *manner* in which the Spirit leads a believer is “with the Word of God.”

Notice Romans 8:14 and Galatians 5:18 do *not* teach the Spirit is the *means* by which something is *produced*, with believers allowing the Spirit (the means) to mystically zap them. Rather, these texts teach the Word of God is the *manner* in which something is *obtained*, with believers allowing the Word (the manner) from the Spirit (the agent) to lead them.

MISSING ITEM IN THE TEXT
Galatians 5:18

RESULT	MANNER	AGENT
Led	[]	Spirit

10

Slide #11

Being Led is the process of choosing to be increasingly *receptive* to the Word of God through the Spirit; it is a *willingness to allow* “God’s Word” provided by the Spirit to influence one’s thinking and behavior. The preferred translation of Galatians 5:18 takes into account the *manner* of “being led,” which is *with the Word of God*. Consequently, the verse could be translated:

(Believers) being led [with Word]
(Subject) (Manner)
by the Spirit.
(Agent)

An illustration will give some clarity to the concept of “agency.” In high school, I had a basketball coach who was demanding, always expecting our best effort, but always fair. The coach provided us with a sophisticated playbook that diagrammed each and every play. As practice started, we wouldn’t begin at full speed. Rather we would walk through certain plays. It was basketball in slow motion, but it allowed every player to fully understand his responsibility so that each player and the team would be successful. Then after repeating the same plays relentlessly over and over at full-speed, the timing and execution increasingly became second nature. We became a successful basketball team because we put the playbook into practice just as the coach designed it.

If agency refers to “the person by whom something is accomplished,” then certainly a basketball coach is an *agent*. Now notice the *manner* that brought about the desired outcome. With the use of the playbook and repetitive practice, the coach instilled the game tactics in his players. Consequently, the individual players became proficient and the team successful. This precisely parallels the ministry of the Spirit who has provided believers with a playbook, the Word of God, so that through application in life experiences they become increasingly obedient to Christ.

“Being led” in basketball is allowing oneself to be influenced with the playbook provided by the coach. Notice, it’s the individual players, not the agent, who do the playing. Likewise, “being led” in the Christian life is allowing oneself to be influenced with the Word of God provided by the Spirit. Again, it’s believers, not the Spirit, who do the walking.

MANNER ASSUMED FROM THE TEXT
Galatians 5:18

RESULT	MANNER	AGENT
Led	[with the Word]	Spirit

PREFERRED INCLUSIVE TRANSLATION
Galatians 5:18

Believers being led [with the Word] by the Spirit

11

Continue to Next Page

Slide #12

When seen from the proper perspective, one would conclude from Galatians 5:18 the following *biblical principle*:

Believers are being led
[as they walk with God's Word]
by the Spirit.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE
Galatians 5:18

Believers are being led [as they walk
with the Word of God] by the Spirit.

12

Slide #13

Galatians 5:16-18 explains that living is a product of the choices we make each day. If we choose to *walk with the Spirit* in conformity to the Word of God, we will experience *leading by the Spirit*. Our *lifestyle* will give evidence that we are indeed "being led by the Spirit."

CONSEQUENCE OF WALKING WITH SPIRIT
Galatians 5:18

PRODUCT OF CHOICES



13

Slide #14

Now, notice the “if-then” statement presented in Galatians 5:18. Paul first addressed the *condition* in the “if” clause: *if you are being led by the Spirit*.¹⁵ If that is the case, which Paul assumes to be true, the “then” clause provides the *consequence* — *you are not under the Law*. The context for his reference to the Law, as we previously mentioned, relates to verses 1-12. As the result of the believer’s freedom in Christ, he/she should not place himself/herself in subjection to slavery under the Law.

Keeping the Law was a major issue in the book of Galatians (see chapter 12 of *Escape*, 187-92). When Judaizers (zealous Jewish Christians) came from Jerusalem (Gal 2:11-14), they were insistent that Gentile Christians should embrace the Law in order to fully experience the Christian life.¹⁶ Even Peter was caught up in the melee and separated himself from the Gentile Christians,

fearing what the Judaizers would think if he continued to fellowship with them. That is when Paul confronted Peter regarding his inconsistency in “the truth of the gospel” (v 5).

In Acts 15, the Council at Jerusalem also centered their discussion on this subject. A second topic was raised by “some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed” (v 5). These were Jewish Christians whose concern for Gentile believers was not salvation. Rather they said, “It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses” (v 5). They accepted the Gentiles in Galatia to be saved. Like the believing Pharisees in Jerusalem, the Judaizers or Jewish Christians who had created the confusion in Galatia expected all believers, both Jews and Gentiles, to embrace the Mosaic Law for Christian living.

Acts 15 brings to light misunderstandings in the early church. We need to appreciate the transitional circumstances of the first-century church. Remember the early church was primarily made up of Jewish Christians who had been keepers of the Law and, at least some of them, continued to live by the Mosaic Law. In that case, these Jewish Christians observed the Law in “expressing their Christian convictions in their lifestyle in ways compatible with Jewish tradition.”¹⁷ This is consistent with the discussions and conclusion of the Jerusalem Council (see Acts 15). Note, however, that their lifestyle should not necessarily be considered legalistic (see chapter 14 of *Escape*).

Paul’s problem with the Judaizers in Galatia and the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem was that Gentile Christians were being taught that they must obey the Mosaic Law. The Council at Jerusalem upheld Paul’s teaching that no Christian was required to obey the Mosaic Law, most certainly Gentile Christians. In deed, they were positionally free from the Mosaic Law.

Now return to the “if-then” statement in Galatians 5:18 found in the how-to-live section (4:21–6:18) of Galatians. Here Paul’s concern was not their positional freedom from the Law, which was covered earlier in the letter. Rather having just taught that Christians should not place themselves in subjection to slavery under the Law (5:1-12), he taught if you are being led by the Spirit, then you are walking in relation to the Word from the Spirit (5:16; Rom 8:4). That being the case, they and we are not living in subjection to the Law. You are experiencing freedom from the Law.

**CONSEQUENCE OF WALKING WITH SPIRIT
NOT UNDER LAW
Galatians 5:18**

"If" — CONDITION

If you are **being led** by the Spirit,

"Then" — CONSEQUENCE

you are **not under the Law**.

14

Continue to Next Page

Slide #15

Galatians 5:19-23 shows two contrasting lists resulting from the two contradictory ways of walking. The consequences of “walking with the flesh” is the “deeds of the flesh,” which include immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, and carousing (vv 19-21a). On the other hand, the outcome of “walking with the Spirit” is the “fruit of the Spirit,” being manifested by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (vv 22-23a). While each list is extensive, the items are representative and not an exhaustive listing of the “dos” and “don’ts” in the life of the believer.

Deeds and Fruit Issues

Three issues provide clarity for these representative lists:

First, some have made much of the comparison between “deeds” (v 19) in the plural form, while “fruit” (v 22) is singular. In the singular, fruit supposedly indicates that the believer will manifest all the character traits of the Spirit simultaneously, at least to some extent. However, more likely this is the use of a collective noun in a singular form to indicate a group or unit. Therefore a distinction based on the singular-versus-plural form is questionable.

Second, some say the different words used (“deeds” and “fruit”) spotlight the means by which both are evidenced. Character traits produced by the Spirit are compared to the deeds produced by one’s own sinful flesh. Fruit (*karpos*) is assumed a product of the Spirit’s power “through” the believer, while deeds (*ergon*) are the behavior resulting from one’s own ability apart from God. The distinction is between deeds or works that men do and fruit that God produces. However, “fruit” and “deed” can be used interchangeably. When addressing repentance, Luke used these same two words—“bear *fruits* (*karpos*) in keeping with repentance” (Luke 3:8) compared to “performing *deeds* (*ergon*) appropriate to repentance” (Acts 26:20). A distinction based merely on the use of “deeds” and “fruit” lacks support.

Third, the context of Galatians 5:16-25 concerns two influences, which are in competition for the believer, that ultimately affect one’s behavior. To *walk with the flesh* involves the believer’s decision to allow his propensity to sin to influence his behavior with the world’s enticements, not a supposed power of sin to produce sinful conduct. On the other hand, to *walk with the Spirit* refers to the believer allowing the Spirit to influence his behavior with the Word of God, not an alleged power of the Spirit that causes obedience. Freedom from sin came with a cost on Christ’s part: once free we can choose to be influenced either by the flesh or by the Spirit. This then is the conflict each believer faces—the Choice!

CONSEQUENCES OF CONFLICT

Galatians 5:19-23

19	Now the flesh’s deeds are evident, which are: immorality impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these,	22	But	the Spirit’s fruit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.	<i>Practice</i> Flesh’s Deeds (vv 19-21) Spirit’s Fruit (vv 22-23) <i>No Law</i>
20		23			<i>Not Inherit</i>
21					<i>15</i>

of which I forewarn you
that those shall **not inherit God’s kingdom**
who **practice such things.**

Continue to Next Page

Slide #16

Paul taught that Christians could manifest the *deeds of the flesh*, represented in the fifteen items in verses 19-21a. Notice that this list is not all-inclusive since Paul adds the phrase *and things like these* (v 21a). He then informs believers, who evidence these and other such traits, which are displeasing to God, that they *shall not inherit God's kingdom* (v 21b). In the following slides, we will *first* (on slide #17) consider these “deeds of the flesh” in light of that which the believers are commanded to “put off” in Colossians 3:8-9. *Second*, we will then explain Paul’s warning of losing one’s inheritance (on slides #18 and #19).

DEEDS OF THE FLESH
Galatians 5:19-21

19	Now the flesh's deeds are evident, which are:	<i>Practice</i>
20	immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,	
21	envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you that those shall not inherit God's kingdom who practice such things.	<i>Not Inherit Kingdom</i>

16

Slide #17

In Colossians 3:8-9, believers are commanded to “put off” a way of living *in relation to* or *with* the flesh (v 8). Paul lists six illustrative actions and attitudes: anger, wrath, malice, slander, abusive speech, and lying (vv 8-9a). It is interesting when you direct your attention again to a comparison between the list in Colossians 3 and the list in Galatians 5. While Colossians 3:8-9 concerned “don’ts” for which the Christian is responsible to avoid, Galatians 5:19-21 referred to the “deeds of the flesh” which can be manifested in the believer’s walk. Notice that “anger” in red should not characterize the Christian’s life (Gal 5) and is, in fact, conduct that the Christian is commanded to “put off” (Col 3). Even though only one description of improper behavior is found on both of these lists, Romans 13:12-14 addresses the same “put-on/put-off” theme and provides insight. There Paul taught

PUTTING OFF DEEDS OF THE FLESH
Galatians 5:19-21

CONDUCT PRODUCES CHARACTER

<p>COLOSSIANS 3:8-9</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Anger Wrath Malice Slander Abusive Speech Lying</p> </div> <p>CONDUCT</p>		<p>GALATIANS 5:19-21</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> <p>Immorality Impurity Sensuality Idolatry Sorcery Enmities Strife Jealousy Anger Disputes Dissensions Factions Envy Drunkenness Carousing</p> </div> <p>CHARACTER</p>
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17

that believers should “put off the deeds of darkness” (v 12). Any behavior by the believer that does not align with God’s Word is to be “put off” since it is an evidence of the “deeds of the flesh” or ungodly character. The “victorious” Christian life is not guaranteed or spontaneously produced by the Spirit, rather it is intentionally and purposefully lived by choices that are pleasing or displeasing to God. Your decisions lead to conduct that forms your character evidenced by your lifestyle.

Slide #18

If Christians do not “put off” the “deeds of the flesh,” it evidently results in a loss of inheritance. So let's begin to understand this implication with the question—*To what does inheritance refer?*

An inheritance is a bequeathed or endowed “possession.”¹⁸ In this context that possession concerns the believer’s inheritance in the future, earthly kingdom of God that is inaugurated at Christ’s return. To help our understanding, a clear distinction must be made between entering the kingdom of God and inheriting the kingdom. In John 3:5 we clearly see that “entering the kingdom” is synonymous with “entering eternal life,” both being the result of faith in Christ (see chapter 4 of *Choose to Live*). Jesus told Nicodemus that unless he was born a second time by the Spirit (v 8) he could not enter the kingdom of God (v 5). All are spiritually dead in their sins (Eph 2:3) and desperately

need life, spiritual life. Without the work of God providing the life-gift (v 5) through our faith in Christ (v 8), we would never enter into life. Since each believer possesses eternal life, he or she will enter into the future kingdom of God. We have *come into* the experience of spiritual life and in the future we will *come into* His very presence.¹⁹

If “entering” is defined as *coming into something*,²⁰ “inheriting” differs since it refers to *acquiring, obtaining, coming into possession of something*.²¹ While entering the kingdom concerns receiving salvation as a gift, inheriting the kingdom has to do with rewards for obedient service.

Slide #19

A study of the word *inherit* shows that the word is used either as a reward for meritorious behavior (e.g., Matt 25:34) or, conversely forfeiting a reward for non-meritorious conduct (e.g., Gal 5:21). The underlined words on the slide #19 indicate what is inherited. The majority of the times it refers to “the kingdom” (5 times) and “eternal life” (four times). In the remaining usages, inherit involves “promises” and “blessings.” As discussed from the previous slide #18, inheriting the kingdom was a reward earned through obedience, concurring with this slide (slide #19). However, in the previous discussion entering the kingdom and entering into eternal life were interchangeable ideas. Yet, here we show inheriting the kingdom (Matt 25:34; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Gal 5:21) is synonymous with inheriting eternal life (Matt 19:29; Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25, 18:18), earning eternal life by works. This presents a problem!

ENTER & INHERIT the KINGDOM New Testament

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

BOOK	CH	VS	TEXT	GIFT	REWARD
MATT	5	20	ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	X ¹	
	7	21	ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	X ¹	
	18	3	ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	X	
MARK	9	47	ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD	X	
	10	15	ENTER IT (KINGDOM OF GOD)	X	
LUKE	23-24		ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	XX	
	18	17	ENTER IT (KINGDOM OF GOD)	X	
JOHN	23-25		ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD	XXX	
	24-25		ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD	XX	
ACTS	3	5	ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD	X	
	14	22	ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD	X	

INHERITING THE KINGDOM

BOOK	CH	VS	TEXT	GIFT	REWARD
MATT	25	34	INHERIT THE KINGDOM		X
1 COR	6	9-10	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		XX
	15	50	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		X
GAL	5	21	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		X
EPH	5	5	INHERITANCE (N) IN THE KINGDOM		X

1 ¹⁸ texts concern “positional” righteousness through faith in Christ rather than “practical” righteousness as illustrated by Abraham in James 2:21-24 in reference to Genesis 15:6.

18

To INHERIT New Testament

BOOK	CH	VS	TEXT	GIFT	EARNED
MATT	5	5	INHERIT THE EARTH		X
	19	29	INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE ¹		X
	25	34	INHERIT THE KINGDOM		X
MARK	10	17	DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE ¹		X
LUKE	10	25	DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE ¹		X
	18	18	DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE ¹		X
1 COR	6	9-10	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		XX
	15	50	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		X
GAL	5	21	INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD		X
HEB	1	4	INHERITED A MORE EXCELLENT NAME		X
		14	WHO WILL INHERIT DELIVERANCE		X
	6	12	INHERIT THE PROMISES		X
	12	17	INHERIT THE BLESSING		X
1 PET	3	9	INHERIT A BLESSING		X
REV	21	7	WHO OVERCOMES SHALL INHERIT		X

1 Questions both by the Rich Young Ruler (Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18) and the Lawyer (Luke 10:25) were erroneous, being based on the rabbinical understanding that eternal life (positional righteousness) was obtain by works and therefore earned. Responding to Peter’s question concerning what was the benefit for following Christ (Matt 19:27), Jesus said, “[you] shall inherit eternal life” (v 29), assuring Peter that obedience (practical righteousness) of the already saved, as compared to the RYR, leads to rewards.

19

The solution to this perceived contradiction is resolved when we address the particular question asked Jesus: “What shall I do to inherit eternal life” (Mark 10:17; Luke 10:25, 18:18). The question was posed by the Rich Young Ruler, seemingly with a genuine motive (Mark 10 and Luke 18) and by a lawyer of the Law in order to test Jesus (Luke 10). In both instances their questions were based upon the erroneous, rabbinical understanding that eternal life was obtained by works and therefore earned. Consequently, they had confused inheriting eternal life with obtaining eternal life by faith in Christ alone.

Nevertheless, even more problematic following Matthew’s account of Jesus’ interaction with the Rich Young Ruler (Matt 19:16-30) was His response to Peter’s follow-up question [see *Choose to Live*, 52-55, 87-90, 115-17, 126-128]. First, in Matthew the RYR initially asked, “What good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?” (v 16). Same question except Matthew used the word *obtain* (*echo*), which is a different word from *inherit* (*kleronomeo*) used by Mark and Luke. During their interaction, Jesus tells the RYR to “go and sell your possessions and give” them away (a salvation issue—trusting in Christ, not wealth) and “come and follow Me” (a discipleship issue—growing fellowship with Christ). As the RYR left dejected, “Jesus said to His disciples, ‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God’” (vv 23-24, italics added). Obviously, the RYR went away continuing to place his trust in his worldly goods rather than in Christ for eternal life. Then speaking for the disciples as the ruler departs, Peter asks, “We have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?” (v 27). Remember Jesus had brought up the idea of “following Him” (discipleship) subsequent to “trusting Him” (salvation). Now Peter wanted to be encouraged since the disciples had left everything to follow Jesus. Jesus tells them they “will receive many times as much and will inherit eternal life” (v 29). In so doing, He assures Peter that obedience by those who are saved leads to rewards. Here Jesus teaches that to *inherit the kingdom* is equivalent to *inheriting eternal life*, elevating *inheriting eternal life* (v 29) in this Matthew text to being rewarded in the kingdom and contrasting it from *obtaining eternal life* (v 16), which has to do with salvation.

If possessing an inheritance in the kingdom refers to rewarded obedience by those who are saved and thus those who will likewise enter the kingdom, the non-believer is not in view in Galatians 5:21a. Rather believers are warned—“Those who practice such things shall not inherit God’s kingdom”—that disobedience nullifies rewards in the kingdom but not entrance into the kingdom. If they “practice such things,” they miss out on what could be their experience while being in the kingdom. This exact context is also addressed in Ephesians 5:5 in *Critical Concept #3*.

Slide #20

Paul taught that Christians should manifest the *fruit of the Spirit*, represented in the nine items in verses 22-23a. Again we must assume this list is not exhaustive. On the following slide (slide #21), we will consider the “fruit of the Spirit” in light of that which believers are commanded to “put on” in Colossians 3:12-14. Before we proceed, notice that Paul informs believers, who evidence these and other such traits that are pleasing to God, that *against such things there is no law* (v 23b). “There is no law whatsoever against such behavior.”²² In fact, “the works of the flesh *know* no law, but the fruit of the Spirit *need* no law.”²³

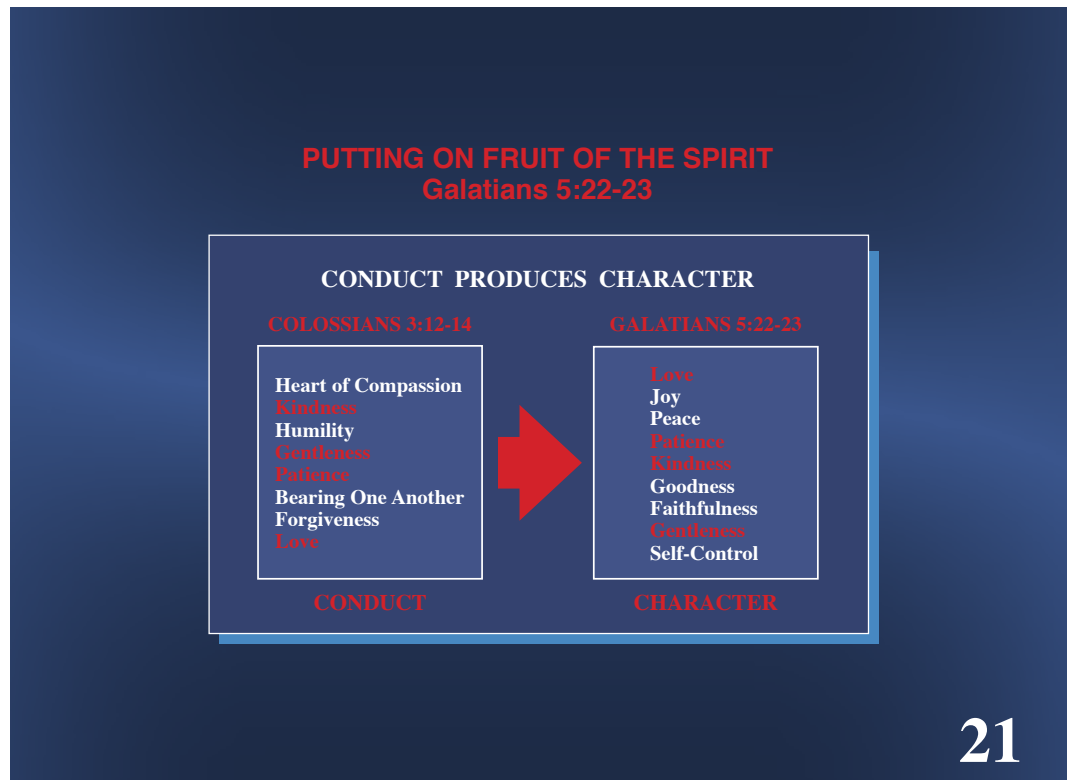
FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
Galatians 5:22-23

22	But the Spirit's fruit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;	<i>Practice</i>
23	against such things there is no law.	<i>No Law</i>

20

Slide #21

Returning to Colossians 3:12-14, believers are commanded to “put on” a way of life, a lifestyle *in relation to* or *with* the Spirit (v 10). Paul lists eight illustrative actions and attitudes: heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, forgiving each other, and love (vv 12b-14a). It is again interesting when you direct your attention to a comparison between the list in Colossians 3 and the list in Galatians 5. While Colossians 3:12-14 concerned “dos” for which the Christian is responsible, Galatians 5:22-23 referred to the “fruit of the Spirit” which are evident by the believer’s walk with the Spirit. Notice the four items in red (love, patience, kindness, and gentleness) that should be a visual evidence of Christian character (Gal 5) are, in fact, conduct that the Christian is commanded to “put on” (Col 3). These two



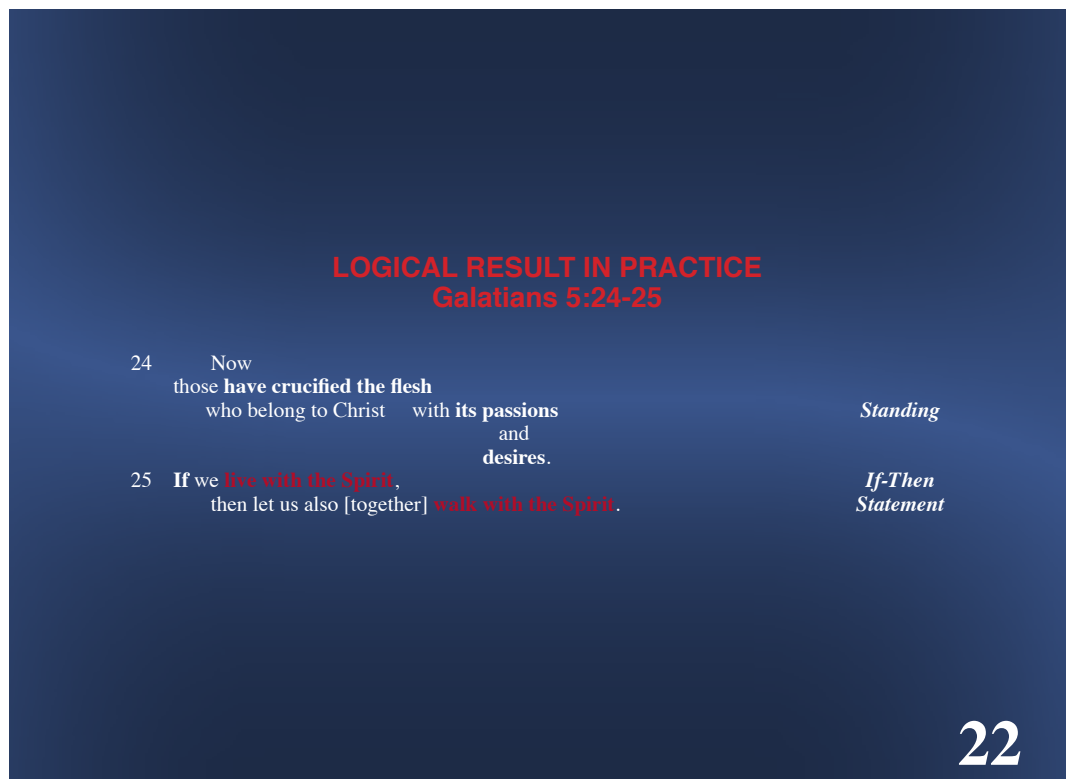
representative lists with synonymous terminology indicate that it is the “fruit of choices” or conduct that leads to manifesting the “fruit of the Spirit” or Christian character. Remember, the “victorious” Christian life is not guaranteed or spontaneously produced by the Spirit, rather it is intentionally and purposefully lived by choices that are pleasing to God. Your decisions lead to conduct that becomes your character manifested through your lifestyle.

Slide #22

Paul addressed the two conflicting and contradictory ways of walking (5:16-18) and then the consequences of each: the deeds of the flesh or the fruit of the Spirit (5:19-23). Now he sets forth the logical result that should occur within the community of believers (5:24-25). In verse 24, Paul reminds Christians of their positional standing in Christ. He addressed this in Romans 6:6-7:

6 Knowing this, *that* our old man was crucified with Him, *in order that* our body of sin might be done away with [rendered inoperative], *so that* we would not longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin (italics added).

At salvation, the unsaved, natural man (1 Cor 2:14) died with Christ. Sharing in the benefits of Christ’s work, believers are new creations at regeneration (2 Cor 5:17). Previously spiritually dead,



they are now spiritually alive. Their sin capacity, “the body of sin,” is rendered inoperative in order that they should no longer be in servitude to sin. While being positionally dead to sin, each believer nevertheless has a choice, to again serve sin or to serve God (Rom 6:16-19).

In light of their positional standing, Paul uses an “if-then” statement to reinforce the obligation of believers.²⁴ Assuming Christians are living with the Spirit, indicating one’s association with or manner in which one walks (*peripateo*, 5:16) or lives (*zao*, 5:25) with the Spirit,²⁵ he rightly assumes they are walking together (*stoicheo*, 5:25) in fellowship and harmony with one another.²⁶

Now you have to make a decision. Do the two clauses in verse 25 refer to the same thing? Since “to live with the Spirit” and “to walk with the Spirit” are equivalent expressions in Romans 8 (see “to walk” in v 4 and “to live” in v 13), then one would naturally conclude from Galatians 5:25 the same idea. Believers are responsible both “to live with the Spirit” and also “to walk with the Spirit,” meaning that believers and the Spirit live/walk in harmony together with one another. However, the repetition of the very same idea in the very same verse seems awkward. I submit there is a different way to understand this verse. Paul’s command to “walk with the Spirit” (v 16) is certainly synonymous with “live with the Spirit” in verse 25. Notice, however, the word usually used for “walk” (*peripateo*, Rom 8:4 and Gal 5:16) is different from the word used for “walk” (*stoicheo*) in verse 25. In fact, it is used only four times in the entire New Testament. Paul’s particular selection of a different word for “walk” in verse 25 seems to make a distinction in those doing the walking. In order to bring a sense of understanding to the verse, I am suggesting Paul first refers to individual believers who are living/walking with the Spirit in the “if” clause. In the following “then” clause, the corporate body of believers as a unit is encouraged by Paul to “keep in step with”²⁷ the Spirit. This suggestion is supported from verse 15, the preceding verse to our section under study (vv 16-25), and verse 26, the immediately following verse. In both verses, Paul addressed the one-to-another ministry of believers within the body. The use of a different word for “walk” in verse 25 and the context in light of verses 15 and 26 lend credence to the idea that Paul envisions the members of the corporate body together walking in harmony with the Spirit.

Throughout Ephesians 5:16-24, Paul encouraged each believer to align his/her walk with the Word of God provided by the Spirit so that the “fruit of the Spirit” would be manifested in their lives. In so doing is to demonstrate a lifestyle of being led by the Spirit. In verse 25, Paul seemingly concludes by urging the community of believers to corporately experience the same—together keeping in step with the Spirit in order to be led as a body by the Spirit.



Endnotes

1. In this verse the noun *Spirit* (*pneuma*) is in the dative case and is translated as the phrase *by or with the Spirit*. In Romans 8:4, the prepositional phrase is translated *in relation to the Spirit*. The preferred translation *in relation to* [preposition *kata* + accusative noun (object of preposition) construction] is based on BDAG definition 6. Walter Bauer, the author of this leading Greek resource, indicates that *kata* used with an accusative noun can be translated “with respect to” or “in relation to” when “denoting a relationship to something.” [BDAG–Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich] Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 513.]
2. Philip R. Williams, *Grammar Notes* (Tacoma, WA: Northwest Baptist Seminary Greek class notes, 1988), 15-16. A noun in the dative form, denoting the “cause by which” something is accomplished, is a *dative of cause* and typically indicated with “by” or “because of.” Similarly, a *dative of means* denotes the “means by which” something is accomplished indicated with “by means of.”
3. *Ibid.*, 13, 15.
In Galatians 5:16, “walk *with* the Spirit” is a contextually available translation. A noun in the dative form, designating the person or thing with which one associates, is a *dative of association* and a *dative of manner* denotes the manner in which something is accomplished. In each case, they are typically indicated by a “with” phrase. Both the dative of association and manner properly conveys the context of Galatians 5. A special empowerment of the Spirit for Christian living is *not* the emphasis and cannot be biblically supported.
4. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), 105.
Regarding “works miracles among you” (Gal 3:5), Longenecker wrote, “δυνάμεις (‘miracles’) refers to outward manifestations of the Spirit’s presence such as enumerated in 1 Cor 12:7-11 (note the use of ενεργηματα δυνάμεω [‘working of miracles’] in v 10) and 2 Cor 12:12 (where σημειοις [‘signs’], τερασια [‘wonders’] and δυναμεισιν [‘miracles’] appear as synonyms). The expression εν υμιν [among you], as contrasted with the simple dative υμιν of the preceding phrase, undoubtedly means ‘among you’...and so identifies the Galatians themselves as the recipients of the Spirit’s charismatic activities. It is true, of course, that 2 Cor 12:12 speaks of miracles as one of the signs of an apostle, and it might be argued from that that Paul has in mind here the miracles he performed as an apostle while evangelizing Galatia.”
5. BDAG, 997-98.
See definition 2, which means “to carry out an obligation or demand.”
6. *Ibid.*, 189.
For introducing conjunction see marker 2, which is a “marker of clarification, *for, you see.*”
7. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 663.
“In the *first class condition* the speaker assumes that the condition stated in the protasis (the “if” clause) is true for the sake of argument, and thus the content of the apodosis (the “then” clause) follows, naturally and logically.”
8. Zane C. Hodges, *Romans* (Corinth, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2013), 220.
Other authors concur. In his comments on Romans 8:14, Moo wrote, “to be ‘led by the Spirit’ probably means not to be *guided* by the Holy Spirit but, as in Gal. 5:18, to have the direction of one’s life as a whole determined by the Spirit” [Douglas J. Moo, *Romans* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 498]. In regard to Galatians 5:18, Wilkin wrote, “The context here has nothing to do with personal guidance” [Robert N. Wilkin, “Galatians,” *The Grace New Testament Commentary*, ed. Robert N. Wilkin (Denton, TX: Grace Evangelical Society, 2010), 849].
9. Williams, *Grammar Notes*, 15-16.
A noun in the dative form, denoting the “means by which” something is accomplished is translated in English with a “by means of” phrase.
10. BDAG, 16.
See definition 3.
11. H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Toronto, Ontario, Canada: The Macmillan Company, 1957), 161.
“The passive voice is that use of the verb which denotes the subject as *receiving the action*” (italics theirs).
12. Rene A. Lopez, *Romans Unlocked* (Springfield, MO: 21st Century Press, 2005), 171.
Lopez cites BDAG for *allow oneself to be led* (BDAG, 16, definition 3).
13. Williams, *Grammar Notes*, 16.
A noun in the dative form, denoting the agency (personal) by which something is done, is a *dative of agency* and typically indicated with “by.”
14. In this presentation, we pointed out that the “Spirit” in Galatians 5:18 (“Believers be led by the Spirit”) should be understood as a *dative of agency*. Others, however, disagree and indicate that the “Spirit” is a *dative of means*. That distinction is critical since the verb *be led* is in the passive voice, indicating that believers cannot lead themselves. So, it is very important to understand biblically in what way believers are to be led. In this presentation, we indicated that the acquisition of biblical truth through the Word by the Spirit leads to “the leading” (the Agency Approach). On the other hand, others believe the power of the Spirit produces “the leading” (the Means Approach). The former is the *manner* in which something is *obtained*, with believers allowing the Word from the Spirit (agent) to inform and influence them. On the other hand, the latter is the *means* by which something is *produced*, with believers allowing the Spirit to energize them.

Coming essentially to the same conclusion as Wallace, Hoehner’s translation of Ephesians 5:18 is “the Holy Spirit is the means by which believers are filled with Christ and his will” (704). Consequently, the verse rendered by the *Means Approach* follows:

Believers be filled [with Christ and his will]	by	<i>means of</i>	the Spirit
(Subject)			(Means)
	(Content)		

Notice:

First, when again compared to the agency approach, the “content” in the “means approach” and the “manner” in the “agency approach” refer to a similar concept.

Second, while also not addressing the means of filling is by the “power of the Spirit,” that is in fact his position: “The will of the Lord...is carried out by the *power of God’s Spirit*” (699, italics added).

15. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 663.
The first class conditional clause: “In the *first class condition* the speaker assumes that the condition stated in the protasis (the ‘if’ clause) is true for the sake of argument, and thus the content of the apodosis (the ‘then’ clause) follows, naturally and logically (e.g., εἰ + *indicative* in Gal 5:18, 25, Luke 4:3).”
16. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990), xcv.
After an extend investigation to identify Paul’s opponents in Galatia, Longenecker wrote, “We conclude, therefore, that Paul’s opponents were Jewish Christians...who came from the Jerusalem church to Paul’s churches in Galatia with a message stressing the need for Gentiles to be circumcised and to keep the rudiments of the cultic calendar, both for full acceptance by God and as a proper Christian lifestyle.”
17. *Ibid.*, 86.
18. BDAG, 548.
See definition 2.
19. Both Matthew 5:20 and 7:21 concern “positional” righteousness (salvation) through faith in Christ rather than “practical” righteousness (obedience) as illustrated by Abraham in James 2:21-24 and as addressed in Genesis 15:6 [see chapter 4 of *Choose to Live*, 64-65].
20. BDAG, 294.
See definition 2. To enter means “to come into something.”
21. *Ibid.*, 547.
See definition 2. To inherit means to “acquire, obtain, come into possession of something.”
22. Wilkin, “Galatians,” 851.
23. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Galatians* (SonicLight, www.planobiblechapel.org, 2020), 117.
25. See Endnote #15.
25. BDAG, 425, 803.
To live (5:25) and to walk (5:16) are equivalent expressions. To live (*zao*) means “to live in a transcendent sense, *live...in the world*” (see definition 2, α, 425). To walk (*peripateo*) means “to conduct one’s life, *comport oneself, behave, live as habit of conduct*” (see definition 2, β, 803).
26. BDAG, 946.
In a figurative sense, the word (*stoicheo*) means “to be in line with a person or thing considered as standard for one’s conduct, *hold to, agree with, follow, conform.*”
27. Longenecker, 265.