

Our Vision: A people of Grace, peace and love

- Read with me our mission and vision statements
- **OUR MISSION: Share the Living God through worship, witness, service and discipleship in order to bring abundant life to all.**
- **OUR VISION: Empowered by the Spirit we will become:**
 - - A people of grace, peace and love
 - - A people who live out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)
 - - A people who are growing in faith, and furthering God's kingdom
- Last week we saw what it was to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- This week we are going to look at what it means to be a people of grace, peace and love.
- When the Spirit of God becomes part of us and we submit our lives to Him, he guides us.
- Paul writing to the Galatian church telling them of the freedom they have in Jesus.
- In verse 13- 15 Paul writes **13 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. 14 For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.**
- We have been called to live in freedom but we are not to use our freedom to follow our sinful desires.
- **Galatians 5:16–18 (NLT)**
- **16 So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. 17 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. 18 But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses.**
- The Message Version **My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit.**
- We are to be guided by the Spirit, following the Spirit, Motivated by the Spirit.
- Did you ever play follow the leader? You know the game where you had go and do whatever the leader did.
- Can you imagine playing that game and doing the opposite of what the leader did?
- The flesh or our sinful nature and the Spirit are always at war with each other.

- Paul lists the things that we will see in our lives when we follow our sinful nature and what our life looks like when we live by the Spirit.
- **Galatians 5:19–21 (NLT)**
- **19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 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.**
- You know when you are sick you go to the doctor and the doctor asks you what are your symptoms.
- When we follow our sinful desires there are certain things in our lives show up and they are the symptoms of our sinful nature.
- This list is a list of a person following their sinful nature. Notice if we look at our vision statement we don't any of these listed there.
- We are to become a people of grace, peace and love.
- When we look at our lives and see hostility, quarreling, outbursts of anger, dissension, division and any of the other symptoms we are not being led by the spirit.
- When these things rule our lives we are allowing our sinful nature to rule our lives and if we do that we can never be a people of grace, peace and love.
- This struggle of a sinful live and a righteous life is not new.
- In Romans Paul talks about this struggle.
- **Romans 7:15–20 (NLT)**
- **15 I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. 16 But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. 17 So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. 18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. 19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. 20 But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it.**
- Does this struggle sound familiar? Has any of us gone through or are going through this same struggle?
- Why did I eat that extra food? Why did I get so angry? Why did I pick up that cigarette?
- The list goes on and on doesn't it?
- Remember last week? The first line in our vision statement?

- Empowered by the Holy Spirit we become...
- We know that the Spirit and our sinful nature is always at battle with each other.
- How do we do what we know the Spirit wants us to do?
- Can we think about it in terms of food?
- When our daughter Katelyn was younger and we would try to get her to eat more of her dinner she would say she was full. Then we would coax her with dessert and she would say yes to dessert. We would tell her she was full. Her reply would be her dinner side was full but her dessert side was empty.
- If we feed our Spiritual side with the things of God our Spirit will become more like God.
- If we feed our sinful nature, then our sinful nature we grow and those things on the list will show up in our life.
- This is like a computer what goes in comes out.
- What we put into our selves will come out.
- When we live by the Spirit's power of the Holy Spirit there will be evidence of that Spirit in our lives.
- **Galatians 5:22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!**
- When we see these things in our lives we know that we are becoming more like Jesus and it's because we are allowing the Holy Spirit to rule in our hearts.
- Which side are we feeding?
- Are we following the Spirit?
- Are we in praying? Are we thinking on things that are good?
- I want to encourage you to do what Paul told the Philippians.
- **Philippians 4:8 (NLT)**
- **8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.**
- At all times and everywhere we go we need to do this!
- **Galatians 5: 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. 25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. 26 Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.**
- Let's nail the passions and desires of our sinful nature to the cross and leave them there!