freedom

MIND THE GAP

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 8

This weekend, we examined the gap we often experience between the works of the flesh and our desire to bear the fruit of the Spirit. We learned how we can better partner with the Spirit to experience greater freedom and close that gap in our lives.

Reminder: The Life Groups ministry would love your feedback! You should have received an email with a link to the Life Group evaluation. Please take a few minutes to complete it. We value your feedback, and it helps us grow as a ministry. Thank you!

PAUSE

As you begin this study, take a moment to pause. Set any concerns or distractions aside while you spend time in God's presence. Say a simple prayer, asking the Lord to help you stay focused on Him, His Word, the Spirit, and what He wants you to learn today from this study.

Then, spend a couple of minutes reading these verses a few times and circle or underline any words or phrases that seem to stand out to you.

> *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 5:16-18**

STUDY

1. What was one point or idea the Holy Spirit highlighted for you in the weekend message, and why?

2. Have there been times in your life when you felt tension between the person you were and the person the Lord was calling you to be? What were those tensions, and how did they affect your relationships with others?

a. How might you have experienced resolution or growth?

3. Read **Galatians 5:22-23** and write down the fruit of the Spirit.

   a. As Joel shared, when it comes to the fruit of the Spirit, it is the Holy Spirit's role in our lives to highlight the areas where we need to grow, and He convicts our hearts to desire change. Pray over the list you wrote down and circle any that you sense the Spirit would like you to grow in.

   b. How would you describe the gap between where you are now in that area (or those areas) and where you know you're called by God to be?

   c. How have you previously tried to overcome that gap outside of the help of the Holy Spirit and instead used the ways Joel described—*trying harder, being more educated*, and/or just *following your heart*?

   d. If you were to grow in that area, what relationships in your life do you think would be positively affected, and how?

4. In the message, we learned that we have a role to play in "getting the fruit" of the Spirit. When the Spirit brings conviction about where we need to grow, it's simply an invitation to partner with the Spirit for that growth. As Joel shared, one part of our responsibility is to "Ask!" **Read Luke 11:9-13**, and as you do, write down any words or phrases that seem highlighted to you.

   a. Do you trust the Father to answer your prayer for change? Why or why not?

   b. Take some unhurried time now to pray to the Father, asking for help. Review the list of the fruit of the Spirit you wrote down and ask Him to grow you in the area(s) you circled. Write down anything He shares with you about that.

5. Through the Galatians series, we've been learning that we need to rely on the Spirit's **power** to grow and be transformed. As Joel explained, we also need to *Fight In Light Of The Son*. **Read John 15:1-8, and 15:16**.

   a. In this passage, Jesus urges His disciples to *remain in Him*. What do you think He means by that?

b. **Reread verse 5**. How have you experienced fruit in your life as you've stayed close to Jesus and relied on Him for growth and change?

6. It's also on us to *Fight In The Power Of The Spirit*. **Reread Galatians 5:16-18** at the top of this study. We are called to *walk in the Spirit* and to be *led by the Spirit*. How can we do that practically every day?

   a. **Read Galatians 5:25**. As you reflect on this verse and the previous verses from John 15, what might you *already* be doing day to day that helps you to *remain in Jesus* and *keep in step with the Spirit*?

   b. Do you sense God calling you to do something more or different to keep up the good "*fight*"? (E.g., spending quality time with Jesus daily, pausing throughout the day to pray and ask God for help, choosing obedience when tempted, inviting the Holy Spirit to lead your decisions, taking your thoughts captive and instead thanking God for His provision in your life).

RESPOND

Through this series on Galatians, we've been learning that, as Christ-followers, we've been set free from both the **penalty** and the **power** of sin. Galatians 5:1 says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." To truly walk in that freedom, we must rely on the Spirit's **power** to bring transformation and wholeness to our lives.

As you finish this time with the Lord, use the verses below as a prayer over yourself. Invite God to do a deeper work in your heart as you surrender fully to Him.

> *We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*
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> **Colossians 1:9-14**