

A Guided Circle of 4 Study – Galatians 5:16-25

As you begin, take a few moments to **quiet your mind** and **let your body relax** so that you **feel no stress or muscle tension**; find an **easy rhythm** of **slower, deeper breathing**, and the **awareness** that your **thoughts and emotions** are moving toward a **focus on one thing** - your **Circle of 4**.

Do your best to **visualize** in **whatever way is suitable** to you, the heavenly **Father, Jesus** the Son, and the **Holy Spirit** with you in a **quiet, comfortable space**. Begin the conversation by **acknowledging the presence** of each and **thanking them** for being with you in this special way. **Pause and listen** for anything they might **say back to you in your thoughts**. Then ask for **help** with **hearing** from them **anything** they want you to **receive** from this experience.

When you are ready, turn to the scripture passage and **begin working your way through the questions**. For each question **first ask your Circle of 4** what *they want you to know about the question*, **listen** to what they are saying **in your spirit** through the **still, small voice**, and then **write down your thoughts**.

Galatians 5:16-25

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.

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.

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. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Believers live with a **constant internal battle** between **the sinful nature** we **inherited** from being human, and **the Spirit of God** who **indwells** at our invitation. By **grace** through **faith**, we **follow Jesus** and **wake up in His Kingdom** every day, and because of this **reality** our **inner person** (heart) is a **war zone**. The sinful nature is **inherently selfish**, and the Spirit asks us to live our lives **the Kingdom way**, God's way.

This study explores **what is at stake** in this **battle**. **Ask the following questions** to your Circle of 4, **listen for a response**, and **write your thoughts**:

What do you want me to know about this passage and my thoughts?

What do you want me to know about this passage and my emotions?

What do you want me to know about how this passage relates to my body?

What do you want me to know about how this passage relates to my relationships?

What do you want me to know about how this passage relates to my actions and my character, both selfish and Christlike?

What do you want me to know about how this passage relates to my identity?

What do you want me to know about how this passage relates to my will? In what ways is my will already set in a particular direction?

