

Study 14  
Galatians 5:16-21

1. a) What is the issue that Paul is dealing with in this part of the letter as seen in Gal 5:15. Why is this happening in the Galatian church?

b) Reflection Question. Does this happen in your family, your church, or your community?

2. The Greek word for desire here is "*epithumias*" which means over desire. So when Paul warns against gratifying the desires of the flesh what is he warning us against? Why is this important?

3. What are the works of the flesh that Paul warns us against? What is the difference between the desires of the flesh and the works of the flesh?

4. What is the danger of indulging in the works of the flesh? Doesn't this contradict Paul's previous argument that we are saved by faith in Christ and not compliance with The Law?

5. a) What is Paul's solution to the division and dissension amongst the Galatians believers as seen in Gal 5:15?

b) How do we avoid the desires of the flesh after all it is deep-seated in the default stance of all of us. Gal 5:16.

c) How do we practically do this in our lives please share.

## Case Study

Ronald was the boss of a gambling den. Due to the economic downturn, his business ran into trouble and on the invitation of his friends, he came to an Alpha program in a nearby church and came to faith in Jesus. He tried to clean up his life and stop gambling, the use of curse words, and sexual infidelity towards his wife. His progress in his Christian life was slow and intermittent as there was a war of different desires in his life. He felt he needed a breakthrough which his pastor was preaching about. He read about the Spirit-led life in Galatians 5 and asked to be prayed over in church. He received the gift of tongues. He began to use this gift in the church in corporate worship and felt so much more spiritual and began to serve in the church choir singing. He managed to revive his business and expand it to three other towns, becoming more prosperous. He no longer felt conflicted he was happy in church and happy at work.

Another friend in church then made him realize that Gal 5:19-22 that what he was doing in his business is the work of the flesh and he would not be going to heaven if he kept it up. He again felt fearful and began to clean up his act and reduce his branches to just one because he had to maintain the business to provide employment he rationalized.

- a) Discussion Question. In the first part of the case history was Ronald's breakthrough actually inspired by the Holy Spirit described by Paul as walking in the Spirit? Isn't his lack of internal conflict a sign of the Spirit's work? Give your answers based on the passage
- b) If Ronald was not keeping in step with the Spirit. Why was he feeling so much better and unconflicted?
- c) What do you think about Ronald's change when his friend pointed out to him the dangers of his immoral lifestyle, do you think these remedial measures will result in lasting transformation?
- d) Reflection Question. If you were Ronald's friend in church how would you counsel him?

### **Takeaway**

**This study explores the concept of true freedom in Christ, emphasizing that it is achieved by walking in the Spirit, which empowers believers to overcome the desires of the flesh, cultivate godly desires, and reflect Christ's love and righteousness through faith and the transforming power of God's Word.**