

“Crucified the Flesh. . .”

by Wayne Goff

“And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” — Galatians 5:24.

Who Belongs To Christ?

Paul discussed that subject with the Corinthians who were divided in their allegiances (1 Cor. 1:12). His defense suggested that none should follow any man other than Christ — Who alone was crucified for you, and in Whose Name alone you were baptized (1 Cor. 1:13)! So we may conclude that those who were baptized into Christ belong to Christ. In fact, Paul made the same argument to the Galatian brethren (3:26-27), explaining that if you are Christ’s then you are heirs to the promise. At the second coming of Christ, those who are His will be gloriously resurrected unto eternal life (1 Cor. 15:23).

How Do You Crucify The Flesh?

Now the important point Paul wishes to make is that if you are Christ’s, then you **have crucified the flesh!** The term crucifixion is obviously used figuratively and purposefully in reminding all saints that when we obeyed the Gospel we **died** to sin! That is, we dedicated ourselves to God and our bodies to His service while denying and controlling the desire to fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Paul explained more fully when writing to the Romans: *“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.”* So when Paul tells us in Galatians 5 that we have “crucified the flesh,” we understand that we do not allow the before mentioned sins a place in our lives — adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like — all are absent because we willingly refuse them. If we fail to so restrain ourselves, then we do not truly belong to Christ!

What Are The Passions & Desires Of The Flesh?

“Passions” comes from a Greek word which means “a suffering” or a *passive* emotion. Paul spoke of the *“passions of sins”* (Rom. 7:5) which worked in our members unto spiritual death. So we must conclude that *“passions”* speaks of the desire to unlawfully fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

“Desires” is translated also as *“lusts”* and refers to a “strong desire of any kind.” The *“lusts of the flesh”* are the strong desires to commit base and immoral acts, contrary to the law of God.

Therefore, to understand Paul’s statement here, we know that we must **put to death** every *sinful* action with any and all accompanying *desires* and *emotions*. This will require great discipline on the part of the disciple of Christ, but it is necessary to be pleasing to God!

Only when we crucify the flesh with all of its accompaniments do we then have room in our hearts for the fruit of the Spirit! These two are contrary to one another and cannot abide peacefully in the same heart. Therefore, *“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit”* (Gal. 5:25). Put your **life** where your **boast** is!

This concludes our lengthy series on the **“Fruit of the Spirit.”** I encourage you to go back and study again all of these and to learn them, meditate upon them, and practice them. This is God’s instruction for us!

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