

# Walk by the Spirit

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 04 February 2018

Preacher: Cory Brock

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Here at St. Columbus we believe that the gospel changes all of who you are. That salvation doesn't just end with the forgiveness of sins, but that grace is comprehensive.

It changes everything. It changes all of who we are. And John Calvin talked about this in the 1500s during the time of the Reformation when he described God's grace as the twofold gift of the Spirit. And he said that God's grace, when it comes to you, when you encounter it, when the Spirit comes and falls upon you and you receive the grace given in Jesus, you get a twofold gift of grace.

And the first is that you get forgiveness. You get God's pronouncement that you are forgiven of all your sins. We call that justification. But the second grace that you get is not just the forgiveness of sins, but it's also the grace of change, of sanctification, that the Spirit actually comes and dwells with you and helps you and changes your heart and makes you able to be different.

The latter, sanctification, never comes before the former. But the former, Calvin said, never comes without the latter. So the gospel always changes us.

[ 1 : 1 6 ] The place where we get forgiveness always means change. And we think here at St. Columbus that understanding the gospel, believing the gospel, and coming to know the gospel more and more over and over again in Scripture, changes you all the way down.

Now, that change expresses itself in what we call virtue. It's one way it does, at least, or a character that your character actually changes.

The Bible uses the metaphor of fruit to talk about this. Now, fruit, it grows on trees. It also grows on bushes. And it also grows on vines.

But it doesn't grow unless it's planted, unless it's rooted, unless it's being watered, unless it's sitting beside a river, as we read about in the Old Testament, and in Revelation. And that's why the Bible uses the metaphor of the tree, of the vine, of the bush, and it's fruit all over from Genesis to Revelation.

And in the middle, Psalm 1, you'll remember, the people of God who meditate on the commands of God are like trees who are planted by streams of water which yield fruit in their seasons.

[ 2 : 2 2 ] This is the metaphor all across Scripture for sanctification, for change, for growth, for virtue, for character, for the fruit of the Spirit, which is what we read about in this passage.

And that fruit is the first place that Paul kind of gives a comprehensive list in the Bible of what it is. It's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, goodness, and self-control.

So each week for the next 10 weeks, we're going to look at one of these fruits, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and so on. And we're going to do a whole sermon on each one of them, which means by the time in 10 weeks, if you haven't memorized Galatians 5, 16 through 25, then that's bad news.

Of course, we'll be going to other passages as well to look at love and joy and peace and patience and all that. But tonight we're doing an introduction to the whole concept of the fruits of the Spirit, which comes the introduction, the whole thing is summarized in a command in verse 16, walk by the Spirit.

So that's the initial command, walk by the Spirit so you can put on the fruits of the Spirit so you can change, so you can grow. So the question tonight is, are you a tree planted by rivers of water yielding fruit in season?

[ 3 : 4 6 ] And how do you become one? Well the answer here is that you walk by the Spirit. So what does that mean? Let's take a look at it, let's think about it.

And Paul tells us two things and we'll add a third. He tells us walking by the Spirit means not walking by the flesh. It means not being under the law, he tells us.

And then we'll ask just how do you, some lessons on how do you do it? So those are the three things. So first, walking by the Spirit means not walking by the flesh.

Now there's a struggle here right at the beginning of the passage, but I tell you, Paul says, walk by the Spirit and you won't gratify the desires of the flesh.

There's a struggle. Paul, talking about two opposing powers, two opposing forces that are in you, that are in all of us, two powers that are fighting against each other in your inner life at the very core of who you are.

[ 4 : 47 ] And he says in verse 17, the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh. There's a sharp antithesis, opposing forces and he's doing psychology here.

The Bible does a lot of psychology and he's teaching us what psychologists might tell you that you have desires that are always fighting against each other. And you know this, we all know this, we've all grappled with this all the time in our daily lives, that we have deep desires to do wrong and we have deep desires to do good, to act well.

And we don't always act rationally. And what I mean by that is that sometimes we all know what to do, what is good, what God wants, what God commands in any situation.

We know exactly what it is. We're faced with a choice and a dilemma and we know exactly what the right path is and we still choose to do wrong, actively choosing to do wrong.

And that's what Paul's calling here, the desires of the flesh that sometimes can rise up and dominate the desires of the Spirit.

[ 5 : 54 ] Now I think that probably one of the best illustrations of this in all of literary history is Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo in Africa in the early church age.

His talk about the pear trees in his book *The Confessions*, an old famous book where he prays prayers to God and thinks about his own biography, his own life.

And he writes a story in book two of *The Confessions* about these pear trees. And just listen to what he said. Now this is in pretty old English but that makes it even more fun but you have to work harder so listen up.

A pear tree there was near our vineyard, laden with fruit, tempting neither for color or for taste. In other words, the pear trees weren't particularly good pears, didn't produce particularly good pears. But some of us, lewd young fellows, went late one night, which was our pestilent custom prolonging our sports in the street till late into the night, to shake down and rob these trees.

[ 7 : 02 ] And we took huge loads of pears, not for our eating but to fling them to the very hogs once we had obtained them. We did nothing but taste them and only a few.

And this was to do what we liked only because it was disliked. And then he prays, Behold my heart, O God, behold my heart, which thou hast pity upon in the bottom of the bottomless pit.

Now behold, let my heart tell you what it found there, that I am gratuitously evil, having no desires to do wrong, except the simple thrill of doing wrong for itself.

It was foul, he says, and I loved it. I love to perish, I love my own faults. And then he goes on to say, I didn't do it because of the desire for hunger.

It wasn't to feed my family. There was nothing noble in that act of theft. It wasn't a situation for us more modern thinkers like Aladdin and Abu.

[ 8 : 11 ] They weren't trying to get something just to eat because they were starving. He wasn't doing it for that. He says, no, and it scared me when I realized the truth. He says this, it was as if I was controlled by my sinful desires.

Now we all know that. We all know that's like sometimes. Whether you're a Christian or not, deep down even for non-Christians, Paul says enrolls to that the spirit actually testifies to every person's heart and gives them a conscience, that they know the difference in right and wrong to at least a general extent.

We know what it's like to be controlled by deep desires, sinful desires, desires of the flesh. Paul calls them right here. And we even know when it's, we know what's right and we still choose to do otherwise.

And that's what he's talking about in these two opposing forces. The desires of the spirit, the desires of the flesh that are deep down within us. Now let's just think for a second about these two different desires just for a moment.

The desires of the flesh, the flesh, the desires of the flesh, the flesh is not something that has to do with your body.

[ 9 : 22 ] He's not referring here to the soul versus the body. So the flesh here is not just some mere physicality, some material, some spiritual against physical type of a notion.

And how do we know that? Well, just look down at the list of sins that he gives. Now some of them undoubtedly have to do with the body, right? Sexual immorality, first one, definitely a bodily issue. But it goes on. What else does he say? Idolatry, sorcery. Sorcery. He's not physical at all. It's completely spiritual.

It's a complete problem of the spirit, of its witchcraft is the other word for it. Or enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger. These are spiritual states. These are states within your heart.

They're not physical. And so he's not, when he says the order of the flesh, the sinful desires of the flesh, he's not talking about your body. He's not merely talking about your physicality, but he's talking about all of who you are.

[ 10 : 22 ] Full mind, body, intellect, emotion, will, your whole flesh is being given over to the order of sin, to the curse, to rebellion against God.

It's not being against spirituality. It's the whole of it. And then the desires of the spirit. Now this is what Calvin was talking about in his twofold grace.

For a Christian, when the spirit of Christ comes, an encounter knocks you back, knocks you on the ground, convicts you of sin, changes you. When you wake up from the dead, when you're forgiven your sins, that's justification.

But Paul says the spirit of Christ then testifies with our spirits, one that we're children of God, that we're justified, that we've been forgiven. But also he testifies with us and teaches us what is truly good.

In other words, for the first time, for the first time when the spirit comes and encounters you, the spirit gives you the grace to do what is righteous, to walk down the path of righteousness, as Psalm 1 talks about.

[ 11 : 29 ] That's what happens when the spirit comes and testifies to your consciousness, testifies to your inner heart, makes you alive. Paul says it like this in Ephesians, awake, rise from the dead, oh sleeper.

And then he goes on to say, walk in the works of the spirit. Wake up, wake up to the good, wake up to change, wake up to walking the path that you've been called to walk. That's what he's talking about.

And it only comes when the spirit of God, a spirit of Christ comes and changes you, forgives you and changes your heart. Now this is assuming, Paul is assuming here, that the good, that some objective way of living life, a good way that it's real, that it's outside of you, that it's not just something that you make up, that it's not just about your feelings, but that there truly is a good that exists external to you and that you can choose whether or not to walk in it.

That you have a choice, that you're active. The Christian is active. He has a choice whether to walk down the path of righteousness or to be overwhelmed by sinful desires and the spirit awakens us to that, makes us alive to that.

Just think about 1 Corinthians chapter 6. Paul is talking to a bunch of messy Christians in Corinth who have done a lot of things since he left there that were deeply sinful.

[ 12 : 56 ] And he gives another long list there of active patterns of sins, very similar to the list we have here in our passage. But then he says, but such were some of you, but you aren't anymore.

You have now been sanctified by the spirit of Christ, he writes. In other words, Corinthians, he's talking about what you've become in Christ by the spirit.

You've been changed. You're no longer a slave to these patterns of sins. You've been changed from the inside out. And now what he's telling them is you have to become who you are.

You have to become who you already are. You've already become a child of grace. You've already become a holy one, as Derek talked to us about this morning, a saint. But now you have to walk in it.

And so what he's saying is there's an active and there's a passive and there's an active aspect to good works, to walking in the fruits of the spirit. And that's that the spirit comes and changes you and gives you the grace to do good works.

[14:02] You'd never do it apart from him, works that truly please God. But when he has and because he has, he's saying you now have to become that. You have to walk down that path. You have to make a choice.

You have to be active. It's real and ethics really matters for the Christian life. That's what he's saying. So the point is this, the Christian life, it's a fight.

It's a fight. It's presenting us between two opposing desires, the desire of sinful flesh that still lives within you as a Christian and the desires that the spirit has given you.

And it's a fight. J.C. Ryle in his great book, *Holiness*, a book that is really great to pick up on thinking about things like this.

He has a whole chapter in it that he just titles the fight. And we've printed a quote actually from it in the bulletin, which I meant to bring up here and read, but I don't have one, about the fight.

[15:06] That the Christian life is a fight in 1 Timothy 6.12. This is where Ryle gets that idea. Paul says this, fight the good fight of faith.

And what kind of fight is it? It's a good fight. You used to fight a bad fight before you were a Christian if you're a Christian tonight. And that was the fight against God, against your nature.

And now, by the grace of the spirit, you've been able to fight the good fight, which is the fight against your sinful desires, against the flesh, against those tendencies to walk down the path of righteousness for the first time, being awakened to the good, to the good life, to the wise life.

And that's what he's calling us to here. Now, the application for point one, have you started the fight? If you're a Christian tonight, if you're a believer in Christ, are you fighting?

Are you active in the fight? Are you pushing back and trying to overwhelm the sinful desires of your flesh, which keep coming up the indwelling sin, as it used to be called in the older days of the Puritans?

[16:10] Are you fighting? And have you come to a place in your life where you've given up the fight? We all find ourselves there at some point because we look at these lists, and undoubtedly we can find ourselves somewhere in both of these lists.

If we really come to grips with who we are, and we can do that as Christians, we can come to grips with what we still struggle with, but as we read this list, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, rivalry, dissension, lust, we can come to these lists and say there are places where we struggle here, and then come to love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and realize there are things here that, fruits that I'm not developed in.

I know for me it's patience. I'm not patient. I'm not patient at home with my kids and my wife. We all can find ourselves here, and there's a tendency to stop fighting because it feels like we'll never overcome, we'll never get there, we'll never become people who are truly loving and joyous and peaceful and patient and kind.

But what Paul is saying is yes you will, yes you can, you have to fight. You have to be a Psalm one tree, planted by streams of water as a Christian. Now, well I'll wait for that.

I wanted to say something, but I'm going to leave it for the second point. When are we going to bear fruit? That's the question Paul's asking us here. And when are we going to fight to change by the help and grace of the Holy Spirit?

[17:37] Okay, so that's the first thing. Walking by the Spirit means not being walking in the flesh, fighting the sins of the flesh, the sinful desires.

Secondly, walking by the Spirit also means not being under the law. So he says that you'll see in verse 18, but if you were led by the Spirit you were not under the law.

So being walking in the Spirit means fighting against the sins of the flesh, the fleshly desires and it also means not being under the law.

Now what does that mean? This phrase is tricky.

This phrase is tricky. What does it mean to not be under the law? What it doesn't mean is this. It doesn't mean being outside of God's divine commands, like the Ten Commandments.

[18:38] That's not what he's talking about here. If you walk by the Spirit you don't have to pay attention anymore to God's divine commands, the Ten Commandments are something like that.

That's not what he means here by law at all.

It's something much more specific than that here in the book of Galatians. This is what he means. Being under the law means thinking that your performance is the ground of your acceptance before God.

Being under the law means thinking that your performances, your good works are the ground of your acceptance before God. It means that thinking that your work and your achievements are what make you actually worth something and valuable.

That's what it means to be under the domain of the law here. It's acting as if something is greater to you than God's grace. In other places in the Bible the simple word for it is idolatry.

Being under the law is idolatry. You'll remember one of the great illustrations of this is in the Old Testament we looked at this last semester when Elijah was on the mountain with the prophets of Baal and they were trying to get their gods, their idols, to come down to them and hear them and accept them and say that they're worth it.

[ 19 : 54 ] They cried out in prayer, you'll remember first, but the text says, but there was no sound. When their gods didn't come after they performed for them they started doing a dance.

There was no voice, the text says. When that performance and that performance kept failing them, when their gods, their idols never came to them, when they were trying to be accepted by their performances and it wasn't working, it says that they started beating their chests.

When that didn't work it says that they cut themselves and spilled their own blood all over the altar. They started cutting themselves. They cried out, they danced, they beat their chests, they cut themselves, they performed and their gods never came.

Their idols never worked for them. Their idols left them miserable, totally crushed because they had put their whole weight, their whole worth, their whole value, the ground of their acceptance merely in the performance before some idol.

In other words, they had decided that they were going to go under the domain of law. That's what Paul's talking about here in Galatians. In the immediate context, you'll remember if you've read this book, that coming under the domain of law was people telling Christians in Galatia that if they truly wanted to be accepted by God, they not only needed to believe in Jesus, they needed to take on the Jewish cultural customs of that time.

[ 21 : 12 ] They needed to act like Jews even if they were Gentiles. You can come under the domain of law at any point in history, at any point in life. It's different for them than it was for us.

It's coming under the yoke of loving something more than God and it caused you to perform, it caused you to work so that you might be acceptable and worthy.

For some of us, we're unable to walk by the Spirit. Our flesh is fighting against us from walking by the Spirit because we are so overwhelmed with achievement for some other idol, for some other God in our lives, even as Christians.

This happens to Christians all the time. For some of us, it could be getting married. For some of us, it could be workplace achievement. It could be our reputation in general.

It could be our standing in the local church. It can be some guy or some girl or some grade, anything. It's taking any of these things that are naturally goods in and of themselves and making them into gods and trying to do a dance and perform for them.

[ 22 : 14 ] It's unconscious, unconscious most of it. The issue here, the difference in that and walking by the Spirit is all about motivation.

What is it that motivates you to do good works, to love, to have joy, to be patient, to treat people well, to fight against sin? What is it that motivates you?

This is cloudy. Let me give you an illustration from my own life. I'm not speaking for anyone else, but I do think this is probably true of all preachers.

This is an illustration from the preacher's life that there's a difference in walking by the Spirit in any walk of life, any occupation, any profession, and walking under the law or according to the flesh.

Now, here it is. I want to preach a good sermon, not a bad one. And fair enough, right? Who wouldn't?

[ 23 : 16 ] And you want to hear a good sermon. Every time you walk into a church or wherever, you want to hear a good sermon. You don't want to hear a bad one, right? And that's fair enough. That's obvious. It's universal.

Of course, that's the way it is. But preachers sometimes are tempted to think too much about the fact that people want to hear a good sermon.

And when they prepare, they work hard and they drum up good illustrations and they spend extra time trying to make it clear and precise and easy to listen to and helpful and moving.

And you're tempted to be motivated precisely because nothing else that the people want to hear a good sermon. And when the people hear a good sermon, they accept you and they think you're worth it.

And they like you and they tell you these things, right? And that happens for any preacher, I think. I can only speak for myself. It's a real temptation. I'm happy to be honest.

[ 24 : 10 ] But I think others might say the same thing. It's real. It's there. Now, most of it's unconscious. It's under the surface. It's a deep desire of the flesh that it's coming under a law that you're not really worth something.

That preaching becomes about law, not grace, about being accepted, about being made worth it, right? That's the order of the law. That's the domain of the law.

But the domain of the spirit, it's different, right? I mean, what is it when it comes to preaching? It's knowing that preaching is the proclamation of the Word of God that God has specially given specific officers in his church the task of.

It's weighty. It's huge. It's got gravitas. It's so important. It's the way he progresses the word throughout the world, or one of the main ways, at least. And it's big. It's huge. And instead, when you have the motivation that because you've been changed by grace and you walk by the spirit in your preaching preparation, then you pray over it and you're humbled and you do it because you want God to work through it and the spirit to be active.

And those are two completely different motivations for preaching good sermons. Now in either one, you might preach a good sermon, but there's two different reasons for why you did it. And that's the difference in walking by the spirit and walking under the law, doing good things to be accepted.

[ 25 : 33 ] You see the difference? Two very different motivations. That's why just to close out this point, I think Paul in this passage uses a very specific word for desire here.

He doesn't use the normal term in Greek for desire. There are many terms in Greek for desire, but there's one very normal one, and he chooses not to use it. All the times he uses the word desire, he uses the word *epithymia*.

So *thymia* just means desire, but you can hear a little prefix at the beginning of that word *epi*, right? And *epi*-center or something like that. It's big, it's expansive, it's grounding, it's undergirding.

And what he means here is that he's not talking about normal desires. When he talks about desires of the spirit, desires of the flesh, desires to come under the domain of law to be worth something. He's talking about *epi*-desires. Normal desires are you want to eat cake when you're on a diet, right?

[ 26 : 38 ] You want to go home right now because you're hungry. These are normal desires, but *epi*-desires are much deeper than that. They're the desires that actually drive all your other desires.

They're the desires like, I seek a spouse because I want to be loved. I want to be valued. Where I've come and knelt before the cross because I want to find joy and I haven't found it anywhere else. You see love and joy, those are *epi*-desires, those are deep down desires. Blaise Pascal, the great French mathematician and philosopher, he talked about it this way with reference, even this is a famous quote, so you've probably heard it, but with reference to suicide and it's *epi*-desire.

He says this, all human beings are seeking deep happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this sin.

Happiness is the motive of every action of every human, even of those who hang themselves, he wrote in the 18th century. Sin, Paul is saying here, begins with your *epi*-desires, your ultimate desires, the desires beneath all of other desires and then it controls those daily desires that keep reoccurring in your life.

[ 27 : 50 ] That means because sin is rooted in *epi*-desire, that sin is not just wanting bad things, but it's wanting things, good things in this world, badly in a way that's deeply sinful, that comes from a place of *epi*-desire, of bent deep down desires.

Paul says here, Christian, verse 13 just before this, you are free. You are free from that law.

You are free from the domain of the law. You do not have to do good works in order to perform, in order to be accepted. You're free from that.

And so now you are free to walk by the Spirit out of the love that's first been given you in Christ.

In other words, walking by the Spirit is being motivated by the love. You have received in Christ Jesus, not by achievements, not by your worth, not by trying to be worthy with some idol, with some things standing out in front of you.

[ 29 : 01 ] All right, so thirdly and finally and briefly, this has been a normal link sermon, not a short sermon actually, I'm realizing, but we'll be done very shortly. Point three, let me just say four brief things, some lessons here now.

Paul tells us walking by the Spirit means fighting against the sinful desires of the flesh. Walking by the Spirit means not walking, not being under the domain of the law, or in other words, prone and chasing after idols.

So there are four lessons I think here in the text very briefly on how to think about this a little bit and do this as we approach the whole series. And here they are first.

He says at the end of the passage, verse 24, in the Spirit you have crucified your sinful desires.

Now I said earlier, all of us can go on these lists and identify areas where we are weak, especially in the fruits of the Spirit. And that's part of what we're collectively calling each other to do in this series, is to think about the fruits of the Spirit and realize weaknesses and vices and where we're not there.

[ 30 : 18 ] But this verse, if you have the Spirit of Christ, you have crucified the sinful desires of the flesh. In other words, it's past tense.

Did you notice it's past tense? You have already crucified the sinful desires of the flesh, meaning this, that as you walk down this path of life as a Christian, every time you lose that battle to whatever it is on these lists that you struggle with, every time you lose, Paul is telling you that that sin has already been crucified on the cross.

It's already been killed. It died in the death of Christ, and that God has forgotten it, and that He's forgiven you for it, and that you're justified, meaning that when this happens, if you are fighting and you lose and you will, you have to know that that sin has already been crucified in Christ, that you are already justified and forgiven before God, and that means you can get up and you can march on and you can crucify your shame with it.

You don't have to hold on to your shame. You can forgive yourself because God has forgiven you, and we can't set a higher standard of forgiveness than the standard that God himself set in Jesus Christ on the cross, and holding on to shame and holding on to guilt and not being willing to forgive yourself for something, and move on and grow is like setting up a higher standard than the death of the Son of God for your own forgiveness.

So He's telling you here, rejoice, be glad, get up. You've already, your sin has already been crucified. That's past sin, present sin, and future sin.

[ 32 : 12 ] It's already dead. All right, so secondly, and the first two are the kind of explanation ones, and the last two will be just a couple sentences. First 25, secondly, it's not just, yes, if we live by the Spirit, let us also keep and step with the Spirit.

Now, He's just said, if you belong to Jesus, the sinful desires have already been crucified. You've already been forgiven for them, everything you will do, and now He's saying the following idea, sanctification, if you live by the Spirit, let us also keep and step with the Spirit.

So the last one was completely passive. Jesus did that work for you, and that's why you can walk the walk of faith. But now, if you do belong to Jesus, and if you are alive in the Spirit, you do need to walk step in step with the Spirit.

You have to be active. You have to make choices. You have to fight. That's what He's talking about here. Now, when I was, very quickly, when I was a little kid, I grew up in a family that hunts, that goes hunting a lot.

I know that some people might have an aversion to that immediately, but it's just the kind of place I grew up in. Everybody did it. Everybody hunts. We go out and we harvest our own food, and we put it in the freezer, and we eat on it all year long, usually at least the meat.

[ 33 : 36 ] And when I was young, I'll never forget. I mean, this was constant. Every week we go hunting, and when we get out in the woods, my dad would always turn around with me in his like 5 a.m., freezing cold, dark outside with just a headlamp face, which you're never happy at 5 a.m. when it's freezing cold outside in the woods.

And he would say, now you walk everywhere that I walk and nowhere else. And he said, every step I take, you make sure you put your feet in exactly the holes that I've made with my feet.

Now, why did he tell me that? Well, if you've ever been hunting, you probably know, and that's because when you're hunting, especially deer or turkey or something, you don't want to break any sticks or pine cones or crunch any leaves if it's the autumn, because you scare the animals away.

Now, when you're a little kid, that is impossible. You just can't do it. You break sticks constantly. And that's why every dad tells their son or daughter, you take every step I take. And of course, your legs are too short to do that, so you actually have to jump step to step to take the steps he took to avoid the sticks.

And it never works, right? But that's the same idea here. You've been justified. And now you actually need to jump step and step with the spirit and follow the lead of the spirit in your heart to walk the path of righteousness.

[ 35 : 02 ] That's what he's saying, a fight, the good fight of not letting the sinful desires overwhelm you, but overwhelming them. All right. I'll move on to the third and fourth very quick.

Why are the fruits of the spirit, the fruits of the spirit are products, right, of walking step and step with the Holy Spirit? Why?

Well, just quickly, I just want to say, because the fruits of the spirit theologians will tell us are the communicable attributes of God.

In other words, God has, we often say, communicable attributes and incommunicable attributes. And the incommunicable ones are the ones that he can't share with you.

They're exclusive to God. You can't catch them. You can't be like him in that way. Of course, he is everywhere at all times. He's omnipresent.

[ 35 : 55 ] And you're not going to get there. Sorry. It's just not going to happen. And he's also omniscient. He's everything past future and present all at once. And we talk about God, we talk about him being eternally present at all times.

Everything is present to him. And that's just not going to be in the cards for us ever. But there are things about God that we can catch that are communicable. And they're right here. They're the fruits of the spirit.

And that means when you grow up and love joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control, never, never are you more like God. That's what it looks like to be like God.

It's what it looks like to be the image of God that he called us to be in Genesis 1, that we lose in sin. To be the image of God is putting on the fruits of the spirit. It's being like God.

All right. Lastly, I just want to say, join us here in this series as the guys who preach, we've talked about this and we've said, in this series, we want to identify our weaknesses in this list.

[ 36 : 58 ] Ours, we want to deeply commit to pray about them. We want to focus on them. We want to mark them when we fail. We want to notice how we fail.

We want to be awake like Paul calls us to be. To what's going on in our hearts, day in and day out, and strive to change. And each week we're going to be asking, what is this fruit in a roundabout way?

What is its opposite? What is its counterfeit? What looks like love but really isn't? And how do you get it? And that's what we're going to be doing.

So pray about this. Examine yourself. Look for your own opposites and counterfeits. What are your tendencies?

And fight for fruit and change. And you can do it on the grace given to you by the Holy Spirit. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the truths here.

[ 37 : 59 ] Change is so, Lord, we ask in this time, this semester as we pray and think and explore our own hearts and want to grow to be like you, O God.

And we can't do it without the spirit of Christ. So come, spirit of Christ, and help us. In Jesus' name, amen.