



“I shall always be ready to remind you of these things...” 2 Peter 1:21

Pulling the Weeds of the Flesh

By Alex Hale

Imagine that in your backyard is an overgrown garden. You decide to do something with the mess, and so you go to the store and buy some seeds. When you get back home, you plant the seeds. After a few weeks, you see that your plants are growing, but not very quickly, and there is no fruit. You may wonder, “What went wrong? Was there something wrong with the seeds I bought? Have I not been watering the garden enough? Have we not had enough sunshine?” The problem, however, is not the seeds, water, or sun. The issue is that you planted the seeds without first preparing the soil. You planted seeds for plants to grow, but you did not pull the weeds first.

No one likes to pull weeds, but everyone wants to have a beautiful garden. The same holds true spiritually. In Galatians 5, Paul lists the characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit. Everyone wants to be growing in those areas.

However, before he gives that list, he gives another list, the works of the flesh. Paul’s point is that our sinful desire wants what is contrary to the Spirit. You cannot grow the fruit of the Spirit in your life until you pull the weeds of sinful desire.

Within our lives, there is fruit trying to grow, but there are also weeds that will choke out that fruit. In the life of a Christian, there are two forces fighting against each other – the flesh and the Spirit. They want the opposite of one another for our lives. The only way we will grow in the fruit of the Spirit is if we starve and destroy our sinful desires first.

This is why a husband might say he just doesn’t love his

wife anymore. He may even say, “I have prayed for God to bring this love into our relationship. I want it, but it is just not there.” However, when you dig, you will find that this same man who says he wants the fruit of love to grow in his life is living with a heart that is overgrown with the weeds of lust.

This is why a woman might say she is unhappy and wants to be joyful. She has prayed for joy to come into her life. But at the same time, there is a weed of bitterness that she has allowed to grow and overtake her (Hebrews 12:15).

It is the same phenomena that causes a pizza place to go in right next door to a fitness center. For many of us, spiritually speaking, we are running on the treadmill with a big slice of the six-cheese combo, wondering why we are not seeing any results.

We need to ask ourselves, “What are the weeds - the works of the flesh - that are in my life which need to be uprooted?” Is it sexual sin? Is it putting other things above God? Is it ungodly behavior manifested in relationships? The challenge is that what Paul defines in Galatians 5 as deadly weeds, the world often pictures as colorful flowers. Everywhere we look, sin seems to be glorified. However, these things are works of the flesh which will choke out the fruit of the Spirit.

Because of this, we must deal with the works of the flesh, through confession and repentance. As Paul writes, “*And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires*” (Galatians 5:24). If we are not working on this, we should not expect spiritual growth!



CABOT WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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When We Meet

Sunday

Bible Classes – 9:00 am

Worship – 10:00 am, 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes – 7:00 pm

Our Elders

R.D. Hopper

Norman Kemper

Our Preacher

Alex Hale