

THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD DIVINE STRENGTH & MORAL GUIDE

Day by day—even against the pressure of the flesh—you trust in the faithful love of the Son of God. The flesh trusts only itself. It leaves you to carry the load and finish the work. But the Spirit declares all things done and enables you to roll all your cares over onto Christ, who cares for you. [Bush, D., & Due, N. (2015). *Live in Liberty: The Spiritual Message of Galatians* (pp. 195–196). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.]

Believers are not called upon to summon up the strength within them, for their new way of life is supernatural, stemming from the powerful work of the Holy Spirit. [Schreiner, T. R. (2010). *Galatians* (pp. 348–349). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.]

The Judaizers, we suspect, claimed that the Galatian converts needed to adopt the whole law to be accepted by God because in so doing, they would express their trust in the entirety of God's revelation and provide themselves with an adequate moral guide (the law). I suspect this latter point was appealing to the Galatian converts. H. D. Betz puts it well: "In the absence of a code of law, how should one deal with transgression?" And J. M. G. Barclay adds: "With no law to distinguish right from wrong, and no rituals to deal with transgressions and provide assurance, their security and self-confidence were somewhat shaky."⁴ The Judaizers had a ready answer: assume the yoke of the law. [McKnight, S. (1995). *Galatians* (pp. 263–264). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan

Publishing House.]

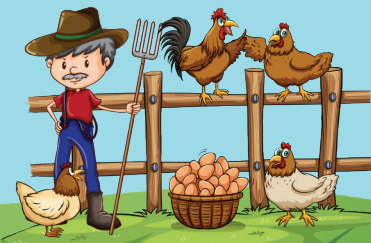
In general we see something fundamentally important here as to how Paul depicts the Christian life. It is life in the Spirit, the life of a person who is surrendered to letting the Spirit have complete control. But we see here also that one does not gain this life by discipline or by mustering up the energy. One does not huddle with oneself in the morning, gather together his or her forces, and charge onto the field of life full of self-determined direction. Rather, the Christian life is a life of consistent surrender to the Spirit. [Ibid. (p. 269).]

Several things come together here and, in my view, provide a more accurate picture of the social and religious context out of which Paul was speaking. The Galatian converts were insecure about their moral guidance and in particular about how to fight off the flesh. The Judaizers, having been taught that the law of Moses is God's moral guide, contended that it would enable the Galatian converts to fight off the flesh. Paul contends that the flesh has actually been put to death already and that the means of moral guidance has already been given: God's Spirit. For Paul, just as Jesus was the fulfillment of the law, so the Spirit is the replacement (and fulfillment) of the law as God's instrument for moral guidance. In other words, the Spirit takes the place of the law for the Christian. This is the historical context of Paul's application of the idea of freedom to the battle with the flesh. [Ibid. (p. 265).]



WALK BY THE SPIRIT LIVE BY THE SPIRIT LED BY THE SPIRIT

We Live "Different"
Down Here!



GOD'S FRUITFUL FIELD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS