

EXEGETICAL STUDY OF GALATIANS 5:16-26: IT'S IMPLICATIONS FOR THE  
CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN CHURCH

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## ABSTRACT

This work was titled: Exegetical Study of Galatians 5:16-26 and its Implications to the church. This study was carried out in order to help Christians in their understanding of the manifestation of both works of the flesh and fruit of the Spirit in the church. The manifestation of the flesh is in conflict with that of fruit of the Spirit. But both are manifesting in the church which ought not to be. The composition of "an ideal" church is a congregation of believer in Christ Jesus. If this is truth, works of the flesh are not expected to manifest in the Church. The expectation is the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, and not the manifestation of works of the flesh. This research work looked at the manifestation of the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit and their implications for the church.

The research methodology used in this work was historical-critical and exegetical method. While the research instrument used was questionnaire which was administered among churches within Ogbomosho North / West Association of Ogbomosho Baptist Conference in the Nigerian Baptist Convention.

The findings revealed that there was higher manifestation of the work of flesh in the church than manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit. This was as a result of the fact that most of the church members have no personal encounter with the Lord Jesus, and some were not well disciplined. Also some of the preachers are not preaching and teaching about this subject.

The researcher therefore recommended that the spiritual leaders need to live an exemplary life before their members. Also thorough teachings should be conducted from time to time on this issue. Spiritual fruit should be promoted in all church activities. Discipleship program should not be taken with levity but with seriousness. New converts should be encouraged to undergo the discipleship program.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

This is the conclusion; those who are Christian profess to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit. By his influence and agency is our spiritual life. They profess not to be under the dominion of the flesh; not to be controlled by its appetites and desire. Let them then act in this manner, and as if they believe this. Let them yield themselves to his influence and show that they are controlled by the Spirit. It is an earnest exhortation to Christians to yield wholly to the agency of the Holy Spirit on their hearts, and to submit to his guidance.

A mistake made by many Christians is that we try to gain victory over flesh by their own will and efforts. But this is the same as pitting the flesh against the flesh. The flesh and the Spirit are contrary, one to the other. Their aims and purposes are diametrically opposed to each other. Each one says "No" to the other. They checkmate each other. A Christian has a more difficult time than the unsaved person, for the unsaved do not have the presence of the Holy Spirit when the flesh wants to do wrong.

Usually the unbeliever just goes ahead and does as the flesh nature desires; there is nothing to hold him back. But when the Christian wants to do evil, the Holy Spirit is there to check the wrong tendencies and to direct the Christian into the pathway of obedience to the Lord. The presence of the Holy Spirit within the believer produces positive. The Holy Spirit produces His fruit in the life of Christians as that Christian cooperates with the Holy Spirit in the work of sanctification.

The Christian then must be the master of his own desires and impulses; they must not control him. We must recognize that the self-control spoken of here is a fruit of the

Spirit, which does not infer that we ourselves produce this control. One of man's basic failures is his inability to exercise self-control. For the life to be characterized by it, one must walk in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Having taken all these into consideration, the following are the recommendation by the researcher in order for the church to overcome the manifestation and influence of flesh and at the same time establish the fruit of the spirit. The Church needs to work harder so as to reduce the manifestations of these works of flesh and to fully establish the products of fruit of the Spirit. The remedy against the desires of the flesh is to walk in the Spirit: This simply points to our conduct as a result of the Spirit in our live.

The attempt of the Galatians believers to attain spiritual perfection by keeping the law had ended in failure. Their churches were torn apart with conflict, they were devouring each other." Obviously their devotion to the law had not enabled them to be devoted to each other in love. [www.bibleguteway.com](http://www.bibleguteway.com) 03/03/2011. This is also the case in our various churches. But the biblical solution is walking and living in the Spirit.

Let every spiritual head in every church live by example-walking, working and living in the Spirit. Pastors should show love and concern to members when they are passing through one challenge or the other. Deacons should create a peaceful atmosphere for the church and seek the joy of the church. The youths in the church should live a life of tolerance i.e. tolerating one another. One can easily suggest the situation of the church where the fruit of the Spirit is highly manifesting-such as in the first church.

Also, let the churches begin to teach their members about this fruit of the spirit. Open their understanding to see the need and reason for the manifestation of the fruit of the spirit in the church. Expose the members to know the nature and the mission of the church, through teaching of the needs of walking and living by the spirit. Proper discipleship classes are of great importance for the growth of the church. The church will do well if she can let the members be aware of the fact that the discipleship is not just to attend but for a purpose-growth in all ramification. The church should organize spiritual activities that can make the member grow spiritually. Such as retreat, bible study, prayer meetings and organized it in such a way that members will be dedicated to the Lord through these programs.

The way of deliverance, is to walk in the Spirit (v.16). We are to be led by the Spirit (v.18). And we are to live in the Spirit (v.25). If we give the Holy Spirit a free hand, if we let our lives be practical day – by- day expression of His life in us, we will be victors. Christians are involved in the greatest battle on Earth. Satan is the enemy. He wants Christians to practise the works of the flesh while God wants us to eliminate the works of the flesh completely from our heart and mind. The battle between the flesh and the spirit is a difficult one, however, God is able to help us strive to eliminate and discard the works of flesh.

Satan is actively trying to tempt us into his demands He wants us to follow his will and do his bidding. Therefore, the child of God, the soldier will need to exercise some self-control. Self control is needed in every aspect of life. If we want to win the battle between the flesh and the spirit self control is necessary.

[www.thebible.net/15BS/Journal.01/03/2011](http://www.thebible.net/15BS/Journal.01/03/2011).

