



SUNDAY 5TH MAY 2024

Sermon Title: Introduction – Walking in Step With the Spirit

Bible Reading: Galations 5:13-18

Preacher: Ps Sam Toms

Sermon Notes:

- 1) Sheep/ Cats/ Sheep Dogs
- 2) Galations – principles that enable believers to grow into Christian maturity
 - a. Don't Compromise or Polarise
 - b. See Deeper
 - c. Choose Unity over Uniformity
 - d. Choose the Spirit Led Life
- 3) Q. HOW DO WE LIVE IN THE SPIRIT of GOD?
 - a. - Recognise our Flesh RESPONSE.
 - b. recognise there's likely a better way
 - c. Sheep DOGS - learning to listen to the voice of God
- 4) Christian maturity – generates fruit for the family

Small Group Questions/Discussions

The church in many ways should be well versed in managing conflict. We have a collision where God's values, callings, principles and passions often contrast strongly with those of our secular culture. Where thousands of years of tradition often contend with the fresh movement of the Holy Spirit as it works amongst us. We have different cultures, different theologies and not to mention the unique personalities we all bring into a community. We would be naive to suggest we can simply all just get along without any effort or any intentionality. There is a tangible need for God to bring us together, to develop grace and peace and unity amongst us. The fruit of the spirit that the apostle Paul speaks about in Galatians 5:22 are the growth areas that Paul is encouraging the church to develop within the church in Galatia that is in the midst of what we can assume to be a period of significance internal strife. The fruit is something that is a supernatural gift in a period of pain.

Our situations and settings are unique and may well be different from those of the church in Galatia. Whatever our situation though, the Holy Spirit longs to develop within us certain fruit that becomes the hall mark of the believer. We can pin the 9 fruit that Paul mentions on our walls and try really hard to achieve them in our own strength. But I believe the key concept that Paul wants us to take hold of is that the fruit of the spirit isn't something we necessarily need to aim for, because it's something that naturally happens when we are walking in step with the Spirit of God. This is the key, as believers, to learn how to listen, respond and engage with the spirit of God throughout our day. Continually and consistently spiritually aware. This fruit changes the nature of how we do conflict as communities. It gives us grace and patience as we navigate with the one-another's.

Central to all of this is learning to live in-step with the Spirit.

Q. What do you think living 'in the spirit' look like in a perfect world?

Q. In what ways do you struggle to have a spiritual 'awareness' in all that you do?

The book of Galatians gives us some great practical insights in dealing with conflict.

READ Philippians 2:3. The bible doesn't tell us exactly how to respond in every situation, but it does help us understand the attitudes we need to take into every situation.

When we have a real disagreement, the difference between having a good outcome or the disagreement becoming a toxic hot mess, often lies in the assumptions we bring into the conflicts around us. What we focus on is often just the negative aspects of a person or problem and we can miss so much good. It would be wise for us as God's people to learn to do conflict well. Without avoiding or ignoring but loving each other as we disagree.

Q. How good are you at having 'positive' assumptions about people around you?

Q. What conflicts do you have going on in your life, and how can you see the positive or negative assumptions contributing to the way the conflict is persisted?

Conflict is something we need to get really good at as a church. That we can disagree and at times disagree strongly, yet preserve a unity in Christ. (The caveat to this is if someone has a foundational value that differs to the Bible, like the divinity of Christ. We are not called to have unity where significant compromise is needed) Sheep, Cats and Sheep Dogs. – Have a go at explaining this concept to anyone who wasn't at the service on Sunday.

Pray for God's leading, that we can in many ways discover the freedom that engaging well in conflict brings. Pray that we as individuals would learn to walk closer in step with the Holy Spirit in all areas of our lives.