

## Radically Christian Bible Study Podcast

Title: What Does It Mean To Be Led By The Spirit?

Guest: Chase Turner

**WES:** Welcome to the Radically Christian Bible Study Podcast. I'm your host, Wes McAdams. Here, we have one goal: Learn to love like Jesus.

We are starting a new series of discussions. I intended for this to be sort of a large-group discussion on different Biblical topics with some preacher friends, evangelist friends of mine, people that I highly respect. Today, we actually have a special treat because all but one of our guests couldn't make it, but the guest that is joining us is Chase Turner, who is someone that -- this is the first time I've spoken to him, even though we're still virtual, but it's as close to a real-life meeting as we've had. But Chase is somebody that I have thought the world of for quite some time, and I'm very excited to introduce Chase to our listening audience.

So Chase, thanks so much for being with us, Brother.

**CHASE:** Hey, thanks for the invitation. I'm a fan of the podcast, a fan of yours. I love the lessons I get to hear on social media, just from sermons and things you preach, and so very good to meet you, even if just virtually for now.

**WES:** One of these days we'll get to meet in person, I'm sure. But, I mean, Chase is one of these guys that -- you are such a Barnabas; you are such an encourager, and I know that you've done that for me over the years. You've sent me messages and made social media posts where you have encouraged me, and I've seen you do that for so many other people, and I just have so much respect for people that use their voice or their platform to lift others up and encourage others. And that's so lacking today, and I'm so thankful for people like you because you are demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit, which is actually what we're talking about today.

What we want to talk about today is the idea of being led by the Spirit, specifically from Galatians 5. But before we really get into Galatians 5 and what that phrase "led by the Spirit" -- what does it mean to be led by the Spirit, let's kind of just orient ourselves to the book of Galatians. Before we recorded, Chase, you said that this is one of your favorite books, so how would you go about just kind of getting somebody familiar or oriented to this book?

**CHASE:** Well, I think when we orient ourselves to any book in the Bible, because of the timeframe it was written, we really have to go back quite some time. And so looking at it being in the first century, not very far removed from Jesus, there's a lot of things to keep in mind dealing with the Spirit, their perception of the Spirit, and then how much different that is from ours today, because in so many circles today, the Spirit is minimized to almost no role at all, and then you have the opposite end of the spectrum, as well. And so thinking about the role of the law, the temple, the

mindset of people receiving the instruction of why circumcision, specifically, as we're going to see, was not as big of a -- or wasn't a mandate anymore, but the law they were going to live under was going to look a little different. So trying to understand that first-century, Jewish, old-law concept and the role of the temple, which some of that we'll talk about here in a minute, I imagine.

**WES:** Yeah. Oh, that's good. And you've already brought up so many good just themes that run throughout this book. And, as you said, the things that they're dealing with and the questions that they're asking are so much different than the questions we tend to ask, and so I often will warn or, you know, encourage people to not jump so quick to application that we skip over the interpretation. I don't know how you date the book of Galatians. I tend to think that maybe -- I tend to favor an earlier writing, maybe even before the Jerusalem Council. But for those that aren't familiar, Paul's writing to these churches in the region of Galatia, and they're dealing with the fact that there's what we call Judaizers, or people that have come -- as you said, the circumcision party that have come and are insisting that these Gentile Christians be circumcised in order to be considered part of God's family. And so there's these people that are coming and really disrupting the faith of so many Gentile Christians because they're being told that they have to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be part of the covenant family. And this is one of the things that Paul dealt with throughout his ministry, but especially there in the beginning stages of his ministry, and so he's writing this letter that is probably the harshest letter. It may be one of the first letters that he writes, but certainly the harshest letter that he writes, both sort of harsh towards those that have abandoned what he taught them, that you're saved by grace through faith, and are adopting this other gospel that is Jesus plus the law of Moses, and they're adopting this other gospel and he's admonishing them, but he's really angry with these Judaizers, this circumcision party that's insisting that if you want to be part of God's family, if you want to be saved, then you have to be circumcised.

Anything you'd add to that?

**CHASE:** I think just that Paul was no respecter of persons, either. Like you said, he's on a mission, and he uses a great example with Peter right there in chapter 2 of it doesn't matter who you are; if you're not living right, you need to be dealt with, and I think he does -- I mean, I think we could all agree he does a good job. But it's one of those things that his language, I think, speaks to sometimes how fickle people can be in general, and how influenced we can be. I think, at the time of the writing, these people had only been Christians, or the churches had only been established, about five years, and he says that's a very quick time. And so when I think about him getting into the role of the Spirit and living by the Spirit, being led by the Spirit, it's almost as though they didn't really understand the role of the Spirit, either, which, to me, speaks to the necessity of answering this question -- or these questions through the conversation today. If they really understood the role of the Spirit, then I don't think five years into their faith or their new life in Christ they would have had as many doubts as they did or been as open to the conversation with these Judaizing teachers.

**WES:** Yeah, that's a really good point. I mean, we often think about the fact that somebody may not have been a Christian very long, and we tend to think of that in terms of their immaturity, that they haven't had time to grow. But one of Paul's points is that, hey, you were just taught this. Like, this is still fresh information. Like, you shouldn't have forgotten so quickly. Like, why are you forgetting so quickly? But to your point, it's really easy to point at other people, but we all have the tendency to be swayed and influenced. And I love that picture -- I love/I hate that picture of Peter being influenced. You know, earlier, I called you a Barnabas, this son of encouragement. But in Galatians we see Barnabas is led astray, and every time I read that, I think, no, not Barnabas. Peter, I understand, but Barnabas, come on, man. Like he's even being led astray by this peer pressure, because we all -- we like to say that we think for ourselves. We encourage people to think for themselves, but I often push back against that idea. The truth is none of us really think for ourselves. We all think with our friends. We think with our group, with our community. It's just which community are we going to think with, and are we going to think rightly with a group of people? And so we're all being influenced by the people around us, so much so that even an apostle like Peter, or somebody who's a tremendous leader in the church like Barnabas, who really brought Paul along, are being negatively influenced by this pressure to change what the core message of the gospel is.

**CHASE:** Absolutely. I think that's a very important thing to keep in mind. And I'm like you; I'm slow to make application of what we read. I really want to have a better understanding, because it's so easy to judge, and judge leads to condemnation. I mean, that's really what that word is about, and so we're so quick to do that sometimes and write people off as not a brother. When we look at what Peter was doing, and Paul, even to the rest of the people here still refers to them as brothers. He does that in Corinth. He does that in various books, where it's like we've got to keep, I think, a broader scope of fellowship with people before we write them off, and I think the role of the Spirit is there to help us with that, not hurt that particular application.

**WES:** Yeah, absolutely. So kind of zooming in a little bit, so that's kind of the broader context of Galatians. If we get a little bit more specific with like chapter 5, and as we get up to this part about being led by the Spirit, what's -- in your mind, what is the train of thought that Paul has as he goes through some of these things there in chapter 5?

**CHASE:** I, unfortunately, can't jump into chapter 5 just yet, just because in chapter 3:1-2, he asks two very important questions. One's rhetorical, but, "Who bewitched you?" And so they were going down the right path, something was going well, and then it was so drastic what was taking place that it was almost like somebody had cast a spell upon them. It was that drastic. And then he says in verse 2, "The only thing I want to find out from you, did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law or hearing with faith?" And so, to me, that -- we could launch into chapter 5 from chapter 3, with that in mind, of his overall train of thought, to me, concerning the spirit of flesh, is where do you receive the Spirit? Because I think that leads itself into that conversation of what is the balance in spirit versus

flesh here in the way that they were living?

And I love the different ways he uses the idea of "living," "led by." That was one of the things that was kind of hard for me to really wrap my mind around, because when I was studying through these phrases, keeping in mind that what is his point in using several different phrases of the Spirit, none of them are the same in the Greek. I mean, each of them have their own little word variants. Why does he do that? And so I think -- starting in chapter 3:2, and then in chapter 4:29, I think he brings up something. Whenever we get into the application of today, it really stands out. Looking at that comparison, he says, "But at the same time, he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit. So it is now also." And that -- reverting back to -- I try to put myself in that first century context of listening to these -- the Judaizing teachers were doing exactly what he's talking about there in verse 29, and so I see that going backwards in many ways, and he's trying to help the people here develop the mindset of "Get past the law. Get past the circumcision. The Spirit has something better for you," and I think he's so frustrated because they're missing out on something so good for them, and it shouldn't be that hard, in his eyes, looking at them.

**WES:** Yeah. Well, and let's talk a little bit about that contrast between flesh and spirit. I always like to say that flesh is -- the NIV had -- at least for a while, was translating that idea of "*sarx*," "flesh," as sinful nature. I don't know how it deals with all the things here in Galatians 5, but I think that kind of sort of gets to the idea of what Paul is saying with flesh, because it's more than just our skin, although there is that overlap with circumcision, with skin and flesh in a very literal way. But when Paul, I think, talks about flesh, he's talking about -- I always like to put it in terms of weakness. It's weakness both in a mortal sense, in the fact that our skin, our bodies are dying, and so we are mortally weak, but we are also morally weak, and that moral weakness that we have, that flesh -- I think what -- to me, what these Judaizers are doing, what these false teachers in Galatia are doing is that they are trying to use the flesh to restrain the flesh. They're trying to use things that are fleshly regulations, circumcision and the like, to restrain the flesh, and Paul is saying, you know, that's not going to achieve what you want to achieve.

To your point, it's the Spirit. It's the Spirit that sets us free, and the law is about slavery. The law is being enslaved. It was a good type of bondage that brought us to a certain point. In Galatians 3, he uses that *paidagogos* idea of this servant that would take young children to and from school and would help them as they learned and grew, but these children that were under the tutelage of this *paidagogos*, then they were sort of enslaved. Even though they were free children, as children, they were enslaved to the rules and to the laws, but once they reached adulthood, they were free. And Paul is saying that in the Spirit and in Christ, you're free. You're not in bondage. But you keep putting these fleshly regulations on in order to restrain the flesh, and it's just this vicious cycle of fleshliness that doesn't bring about the freedom and the life that God -- as you said, that God wants you to have. They're missing out on something so good.

**CHASE:** Yeah, and I think that's -- 5:1, exactly what you said. It was for freedom that Christ set us free, and I wonder if part of Paul's frustration is their mindset, if they really believe what they're saying, and I think, at the end of chapter 2, he says,

"Then Christ died for nothing." And if you think about Paul's relationship and his suffering and what he's gone through because he wants to be like Christ -- and these people are negating all of it for something that's going to prove to be of no value to them at all. And if somebody came to us today and said Jesus' death was in vain, that would be infuriating, and not even from a look-at-all-the-things-I've-suffered-for-Christ standpoint, but just from an understanding-the-scripture standpoint and having that relationship. That would make you angry. I know some people that won't open their door to certain religious groups that come because they already know -- they're so infuriated by what they believe. And so I think some of that is steering Paul's ship towards really trying to show his frustration in a way that is helpful to get them back on the right track.

**WES:** And isn't that an interesting thought, that sometimes -- and Paul was really good about -- I mean, obviously inspired by the Holy Spirit, but Paul is really good at helping people to see the implications of their false teachings, things that they wouldn't necessarily say out loud. I don't think that these teachers would say Jesus died for nothing, but that's the implication of what they're saying, that if salvation and freedom and life was achievable through the law of Moses simply by being circumcised and by keeping the law, eating kosher, all of these things -- if that's how you become part of God's family, then why did we need Jesus? Why do we need a Messiah? Why do we need him to die for us? And so the implications of what they're saying is that Jesus' death was unnecessary.

And I think we have to be careful, in our day and time, when we adopt a legalistic, law-driven theology that says, basically, "What you have to do to be saved is follow these instructions, and if you follow these instructions, then you're saved." Well, hold on a second. You're making this about what you do rather than what Jesus did for you. Now, do you have to respond in faith? Of course you do. Paul would not argue with that at all. But this idea that all we need from God is a set of instructions to follow and then we can save ourselves, then Jesus died for nothing. And I think we have to listen to that admonishment and rebuke as much as they did, even if the law we're trying to impose on one another is different than his law. If the general sentiment that we're pushing on people is simply do what God says and you'll save yourself, then what we are implying -- even if we would never state that explicitly, we're implying that Jesus died for nothing.

**CHASE:** Absolutely. I think what they were doing here, like you said, is what we do today. They've made their faith transactional, not relational, and so many times today I see that, and it is a trap, I think, that we can fall into. And the relational side of our commitment to Jesus has to involve the Spirit, and I think that's one of the things we see Paul really -- you know, as he gets into chapter 5, really hammer in on, and he does that a lot in his other writings, as well. But the relational side of it has very little to do with the transactions that take place, and balancing out what is faith and trust and leaning and being led by the Spirit, relative to "Look at the good deed I did," or "Hear, believe, repent, confess" -- you know, that kind of mentality. If we don't teach the relational side of it, the other part's going to be really in vain, and I think that's what Paul's speaking here, maybe not specifically to, but I think the principle applies.

**WES:** Yeah. And I'm sure, because -- and we'll get into some of this in the second half of our conversation, but I'm sure that for so many of them, this was a scary idea. And for us -- I want to empathize with them as much as I can because I think that, for so many of us, when we talk about relational or we talk about being led by the Spirit or following the Spirit instead of the law, well, that sounds like, "Oh, well, are you saying anything goes?" In fact, I think that's what Paul is getting at in Romans 6 when he says, "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may abound?" I don't think anybody was actually saying that. I think they were accusing Paul of saying that. I think they were saying, "Paul, you're saying it's all about grace. You're saying it's all a gift from God. Should we just go on sinning so that grace can abound? If this is a good thing that God gives us grace, then, you know, so you're just" -- they're accusing him, I think, of saying things like that, and the false teachers in Galatia, I'm sure, were saying, "Well, wait. If you're saying we're free and we're not under the law, then what restraint is there? Like what is going to keep us from doing what's wrong?" And I think that's exactly what Paul is arguing for in Galatians 5, is, "Here's what will lead you. Here's what will guide you." Or better yet, "Here's WHO will lead you and guide you."

So, let's talk about some of those phrases that he uses in Galatians 5: Led by the Spirit, walk by the Spirit, keep in step with the Spirit. What are some of your thoughts on those?

**CHASE:** I wrote down a couple of words, and a lot of it takes me back to Deuteronomy, and I think about the way the law was given and where they were to put it and when they were to listen to it, and the parental guidance, so to speak, to their kids. And so when you look at, you know, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, body, soul," I think "Walk by the Spirit, keep in step with the Spirit, live by the Spirit, led by the Spirit" -- in some way, you end up with knowledge of the Spirit, that it exists, and so there's a head-knowledge component to -- you don't know the Spirit exists unless you've read or been taught, one of those two things. And then, from there, after you know and then you make some application, then there's an emotional -- there is a feeling of that Spirit within you, and Paul addresses that in here and in Romans, as well, about how do I know when something is of me or something is of the Spirit? That whole concept starts in your head, not in the way you feel.

And so I think there's a head knowledge of, one, it's a choice that we make to be led by the Spirit, to walk in -- or keep in step or walk with the Spirit, and so we have to make that choice, that head-knowledge choice. And then it's being open to our feelings, which, I think, for men, sometimes may be harder than it is for women. But just as a whole, if we're closed off emotionally, it's a lot harder to read this and make some application of how is the Spirit leading me. "Well, he's not. I'm doing everything on my own." Well, that's a horrible existence, and I think, really, when Paul's getting into this, he's like, "You're not by yourself. You're not being led by this physical act of circumcision. These teachers are not just teaching you the law that is very head-based. There's something better for you." And so how can we be led by the Spirit? How are we living by the Spirit? I think those are the things he addresses here primarily before he gets into, you know, the deeds

of the flesh/fruit of the Spirit conversation.

**WES:** Yeah. Yeah, and I love some of the things you've brought out already about "relational" because this is incredibly relational. The language that he uses, "walking with someone," like the Spirit is not an idea or a concept or a doctrine. He is a personal God. He is the presence of God with us, and we're walking with him. That's relational-type language. And like you said, we have to be educated and informed that we are walking with the Spirit, but so much of what the false teachers were doing was about, as you said, what you do and trusting in self, and that's -- maybe that might be a word that we might use more than "flesh" is "self." You know, that we put so much emphasis on self, and it -- sometimes it's what we do, how we dress, the rituals that we go through, the things that we think, our intelligence, our intellect, our training. But we're putting the emphasis on me and on how good I am or how smart I am or how well I keep the rituals rather than on God and on how God is providing the strength, the power to do what needs to be done, that it's his power and strength that we are constantly relying on. And I think that there's so much of that dependency and reliance language that has to be a part of our discipleship, of our following Jesus, where we are constantly confessing, "It's not me; it's him. So if there's any goodness, if there's anything that is right in what I've done, it's not self; it's Spirit. It's God who is providing me the strength or the insight or the discernment, or whatever, to do what needs to be done."

**CHASE:** No, it's -- I think it's exactly right. I think about -- one of the questions -- and we don't have time, I don't think, to dig into answering this question, but I'd like to engage the conversation of, do you really need God in your life, and how is God tangibly affecting your life right now? Because a lot of us, we work, we get a paycheck, and we provide, and there's a lot of "we" and "I" in that, and we don't see God physically giving us a job. We don't see God physically doing something. And so how does the relational component of our relationship with God come into something tangible, one, that's good for us, but, two, that we can share with other people without it becoming a prosperity-gospel approach to life? And I think the role of the Spirit in that is something that is so relevant here, but also today, that will help people better understand the family of God and why we choose to belong to that or why we chose to be adopted in as sons and daughters.

**WES:** Yeah. Well, even just you saying that, you know, how do you need God or in what ways do you need God -- I mean, it makes me think of the reverse of that. And so if somebody asked you, "If the Holy Spirit was taken from your life right now, would you even notice? Like would you notice if the Holy Spirit was taken from you" -- I mean, honestly, that question -- I've never really thought of it that way before, but that question almost makes me have an anxiety attack. I mean, I get anxious just thinking about that. That's like somebody asking me, "Well, if I took away your head, how well would you do, or your heart?" I mean, it's like, "Well, I would be dead."

And I think that that's Paul's point. I mean, I come back to the fruit of the Spirit so often, this love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness, that Paul, I think, is saying that these attributes, these characteristics are

produced by the Spirit's presence in your life. And if you have these attributes and characteristics, give glory to God. Like that is from the Spirit of God. It is evidence of the Spirit's presence in your life. But so often, even when we teach on the fruit of the Spirit, we're teaching it in a very self-driven way that says, hey, you need to work on this. You know, be more loving, be more kind, be good, be faithful. And it's like, no, that's not the point. The point is walk with the Spirit, and the Spirit will produce these things in your life, and when these things are present -- that doesn't mean that we don't have work to do to align ourselves with the Spirit. Of course we do. But as we see these things produced in us, if we take even an ounce of credit for these things, then we're stealing glory from the Holy Spirit.

**CHASE:** Oh, yeah. And just wrapping up chapter 5 into chapter 6, which I think is one of the worst chapter breaks in all of scripture, because you get done with the contrast of the deeds of the flesh, the fruit of the Spirit, then he says, "If anybody's caught in temptation, you who are spiritual restore such." So what do you do with this fruit that's evident in your life? Well, you go and help people. You go find people who are caught up in something. And we forget that. It's like, "I just need to start working on being better." That's not it. The instruction is completely different if you jump into chapter 6.

**WES:** Yeah, no doubt. Well, there's some more questions that I want to ask, especially around like sort of subjectivism and emotionalism, but we'll get to those right after we take a quick break.

*My family absolutely loves movies, but of course we don't love the bad language, gory violence, and sexuality depicted in so many movies. One scene or a handful of profanities can make it so we just won't watch that movie. That's why we love VidAngel. Believe it or not, the VidAngel app allows us to filter our movies and television shows. We connect our Amazon, Netflix, or Apple Plus account to VidAngel and then we can filter the shows and movies through VidAngel. It allows us to customize our settings so that if we wanted to, on a certain show, we can remove all the bad language, but none of the violence. We can set the filters however we want them. My family has used VidAngel for years, but now you can help support Radically Christian and try VidAngel for free for 14 days. Just go to [RadicallyChristian.com/VidAngel](https://RadicallyChristian.com/VidAngel). I hope you enjoy it as much as we do. Okay. Thanks for listening. Now back to our Bible study.*

**WES:** Okay. Well, let's continue our conversation on being led by the Spirit, but specifically, I want to ask, every time things like this come up -- and you kind of hinted at this earlier, Chase. You said, you know, there's sort of a spectrum when it comes to sort of Christian thought around the Holy Spirit. On one end of the spectrum, there is those that talk a lot about the Spirit and almost everything revolves around the Spirit, and even some things that are pretty wild and kind of out there, and it's ascribed to the Holy Spirit. And then, on the other end of the spectrum, there are those that basically deny the Spirit's existence, you know, have



replaced the Spirit maybe with the Bible. We often joke sometimes that, in some people's mind, the Trinity is Father, Son, and Holy Bible instead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and so, on the other end of the spectrum, it's almost this denial of his existence and his presence in our life.

So how do we walk this path or talk about the Holy Spirit in a way that is wise and discerning, that avoids sort of the extremes and avoids some of the pitfalls here? And I think that it's a fair question that people ask when they say, "When you say 'be led by the Spirit,' are you just saying subjectivism, emotionalism?" You know, just follow -- you know, the secular world says, "Follow your heart," and sometimes when the religious world says, "Be led by the Spirit," sometimes they end up at a very similar place, and sometimes maybe what people are doing when they say they're following the Spirit or being led by the Spirit, is maybe they're just following their own heart. So what's the difference between being led by the Spirit and kind of subjectivism?

**CHASE:** You know, when I saw that question, I wrote down, "I don't know." My first thought was, I don't know how you do that in a way that, for lack of better terms, is fruitful, because you end up engaging in conversation sometimes -- and especially if it's somebody that you're close to who's making a really maybe life-altering decision. And something I've seen recently that's -- I'm going to say a frustrating challenge is when somebody throws something out there that has no spiritual implications at all, and they will preface whatever this is with, "I received this from the Spirit of God that we should do this." And I'm going, "I don't think the Spirit of God cares one bit about whatever this particular activity is. It has nothing to do with the church, has nothing to do with our relationship with God." And so a lot of times it becomes a power play because what are you going to say to that?

And I think one of my reservations in trying to really -- "keep peace" may not be the right term, but to make sure people understand where my heart is in trying to understand where they're coming from in using the Spirit's presence, or their perception of the Spirit's presence, is I think we have to be careful. And, you know, when we read in scripture that there's something called the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, and when somebody says, "Wow, the Spirit has led me to do this," and they really believe that, and I say, "Oh, there's no way," in their mind, what am I doing? I'm speaking against the Holy Spirit who has revealed something, in their mind, to them.

And so how we keep it from becoming subjectivism, I think, in many ways, is relevant to, one, how important is the topic at hand? What exactly are we talking about? Is this a church leadership issue, or is this do we go to Florida or New York for vacation? I mean, I think there are some weightier matters to consider when people bring the Spirit's involvement into it, and I do think there's a great deal of prayer. If we're going to consider revelation from the Spirit of God in our own lives for something, I think it's going to involve some meditation, some prayer. And then, for me, personally, if I feel the Spirit moving is something that I want to communicate with other people, I'm going to go to some people I trust that are led by the Spirit and say, "You know what? This is what I'm feeling. This is what I'm thinking. What do you think, and what do you feel about that? And will you join

me in praying about whatever this is?" That, to me, helps get rid of some of the subjectivity to whatever we're going to be looking at doing based on where we feel the Spirit's moving us to act.

**WES:** Yeah. I think that's so wise, and I think that there's so much -- there's so much of that example in scripture, and in some ways, it sounds rather boring. Like I was doing a class with some college students not too long ago, and I was talking about aligning ourselves with the Spirit. The way that the -- both in Hebrew and in Greek, the word "Spirit" is also the same as like "wind" or "breath," and so I like to think about like the sails of a ship, and the sails of a ship can be aligned in such a way that they are filled with the wind so that they can be driven along, and I think that's the idea behind aligning ourselves to the Spirit so that the Spirit can fill us. Paul commands people in Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit, and I often ask people, you know, how are you doing at obeying that command of being filled with the Spirit? Or would you even know if you're obeying that command? And so we have to align ourselves to the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit, but how do we do that? It's very ordinary things, and it's things that Christians have been doing for 2,000 years. It's things like you said: read the Bible, pray, meditate, think deeply, and then be in community with other Christians. Go to church. Talk to your brothers and sisters about your struggles, about your hopes, your dreams, your plans. Talk about these things and work them out together. Submit to your elders and to your leadership. So I said to these college students -- because we were talking specifically about spiritual warfare, and I said, "I know it sounds like what I'm saying, that the way you engage in spiritual warfare is read your Bible, go to church, sing songs, pray, these kinds of things," and I said, "That's because I am. Like that's how you do it."

But it's, I think, putting on a spiritual imagination where we are imagining what is true. We're not imagining something that's false. We're imagining what is true, and what is true is that the Spirit of God is working not just in me individually or in Chase individually, but in his people. And so much of what the New Testament says about the Holy Spirit and his role and his presence is about his presence in us collectively. We're very individualistic, and I think individualism and subjectivism go hand in hand. And I think that we avoid subjectivism by doing what you said, Chase, is talking to other brothers and sisters, being in community, and understanding that the Spirit is empowering Chase to benefit me and empowering me to benefit Chase. Like the Spirit is equipping and empowering each of us to be a blessing to other people, and we can't just have this solo experience and walk with the Holy Spirit. We only can walk with the Spirit in the community of faith, in the family of God.

**CHASE:** I think that's spot on with the community. I love that you work with college students because if there is an age group that really needs some help right now, that is the most -- I mean, we say that when our kids are at our house, that's their most formative years, and I believe they are, but when they leave our house, there's another formation that takes place. And in so many homes I think we're missing teaching on this topic. In churches, we don't address it. I mean, not very many preachers want to talk about the role of the Holy Spirit from the pulpit because you have a split line in the congregation, and you're going to appease one

and get fired by the other, but if we believe this to be true, then it's in our homes that we really need to be engaging this conversation.

When I think about -- kind of before this question about subjectivism, about how the Holy Spirit's operating in the lives of believers today, my mind really went back to Exodus and with the temple, and when the Spirit moved, the temple moved. You know, God dwelt in the temple, and then that overlap that existed when he was there is the parallel of the overlap when the Spirit is in God's people today. That's heaven on earth, that overlap where I think a lot of times, we don't think about it. We may know it's there, but if we don't think about it, we don't enjoy the presence. And yeah, it's probably there, but I'm too busy to really stop and -- and that's one of the things for our family, is we have a Sabbath practice. You know, we take a rest every Friday night to Saturday, you know, and that is just -- that's where we really focus in on the Spirit's presence in our lives as a family, and being able to take that into Sunday and then into the week is so helpful for us. And so I think we've got to talk about it more in community, like you said.

**WES:** Yeah. Well, and there's a -- you know, I think a very real concern that people have when we move in our discussions about the Spirit or our -- the way that we, like you said, kind of use the God card, the trump card, where we say, "Well, God put it on my heart." And I think there's a very wise concern when we get so far away from the scriptures themselves of what do the scriptures teach us to say -- or teach us to do, and we're almost doing something over here, saying, "Well, the Spirit told me to do this," or, "God put it on my heart to do that," and we're getting away from, "Well, actually, what the Spirit told you to do, he recorded 2,000 years ago in this book, and you probably need to be following that." So I think there is wisdom in saying -- while I wouldn't go so far as to say, well, the Spirit of God just works in your heart through the Bible -- I think that's wrong, and I think that's an overreaction -- but I think there's wisdom there to say, whoa, I think we have to be deeply rooted in what does scripture say for us to do? And we are going to cooperate with the work of the Spirit when we are deeply rooted in scripture and studying scripture and meditating on how does this apply to my life and shape my life.

**CHASE:** Absolutely. I think the role of the Spirit, I mean, is to walk alongside us, to help. That is the role of the Spirit in our lives, and a lot of times we don't accept the help that's right there beside us. It's there, and you go back to chapter 4 when he's talking about like the idea of a parent or a tutor beside you, helping you get to where you need to be, and I just think about our kids today. I walk alongside my kids and I try to keep them in line. They walk beside me. Just like all of the verbiage here, I want part of me to be in my kids. You know, when my kids do something that I've taught them to do, I'm proud because they're walking in step with the way they've learned. And I think, for Paul, it's a big -- you guys had something special that was walking beside you. You were living. Everything was good, and now you're not. And, you know, getting into chapter 5, we see that reinforcement of, one, getting over the subjectivism, and, two, trying to figure out what is going to help us see what is leading us truly; us or the Spirit? How do we do that?

**WES:** Yeah. So what would you say if somebody says, like, what are the -- what are the guardrails? One of the preachers here before me, he talked about rumble strips on the highway, where, you know, when you go too far to one side, there's this, you know, sound that kind of wakes you up. What are some of the rumble strips? What are the guardrails that we have to know, am I following my own thoughts, my own feelings and desires, or am I really being led by the Spirit?

**CHASE:** I think, for me, is when people question -- people I respect, when they question where I'm at, that's a guardrail for me. If I feel like I'm going in a direction and I feel like the Spirit's leading me to something, and somebody comes along and says, "Hey, I really think you should consider the implications, maybe, of what you're allowing to guide you, or what you're saying is allowing to guide you, because I'm concerned, not that you're wrong, but that maybe either because of pride or whatever that blind spot might be." I think, for me, listening to the voice of people I trust is a guardrail. I know that's not -- that's more tangible. That's the easy guardrail to think about for me.

I think sometimes, too, with the Spirit, we might have some internal conflict, and, to me, internal conflict is a good guardrail, as well. But that's usually going to lead me to talk to somebody I trust about the direction that I'm going. So if I've got an internal conflict with -- I feel like the Spirit's calling me to do this, or to teach on this, or to present this in a certain way, but I have some reservations about that, I need some more input from other people.

**WES:** Yeah, I think that's incredibly wise. One of the things I would add is in Galatians 5, you know, Paul lays out, in very tangible ways, what it looks like to walk by the flesh and what it looks like to walk by the Spirit. And he says the works of the flesh are evident, and he lists those kinds of things to say this is what it looks like when somebody is walking by the flesh: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery. And, you know, so many times -- this is just -- I'll get really real. I've heard people use God -- you know, "God put it on my heart," or, "I really feel like God is leading me in this direction," or, "The Holy Spirit is leading me in this direction," and sometimes what they are proposing is sexual immorality. It's something that is forbidden for them by scripture, but yet they're ascribing their own emotions to the Holy Spirit, and I think this is very clear. You know, there are all kinds of things that we could get into debates about, but some of the things that are fleshly versus spiritual are just laid out, and the fleshly things are laid out to say, if they're this, if it's this, then it's not God. It's not God that is leading you towards these things. It is your own desires. It's your own passions. It's your own fleshly wants and hungers. And we live in a culture and an age that says, you know, follow your heart. Be true to yourself. You do you. Live your truth, all of these kind of cliches. And then we baptize those cliches and say, the Spirit is leading me in this way, or God is putting it on my heart to do this.

But I think that these works of the flesh -- and this isn't the only sort of virtue or vice list that Paul gives. He gives these kinds of lists several times in scripture. But anything in these lists or anything that bumps up against these things, that should be a red flag to us to say this isn't from the Spirit. This is my own broken, fleshly, carnal desire that I need to mortify. I need to not give into and

indulge this desire. And then, by contrast, he also lists the fruit of the Spirit, and so if these things are being produced -- love and joy and peace and patience -- like those are indications and signs that this is from God and not from myself.

**CHASE:** We had this conversation last night, same ideas, like, "Oh, I'm so in love with someone else's spouse." No, that's not love. That's a direct contradiction of what love actually is. And so when you look at the fruit of the Spirit and you line them up against the deeds of the flesh, it's interesting. It's not perfect, but if you just drew lines across, the order he goes in with the flesh is combated, it's helped to be defeated, by the order that the things -- the fruit of the Spirit are listed in. He starts with sexual sins in the deeds of the flesh, and he starts with love in the fruit of the Spirit, and it kind of filters down from there.

A great indicator -- he says it's evident, it's obvious what these deeds are, and in his letter to the church at Philippi, kind of the same thing: "Whatever's true, noble, lovely, if anything is excellent, worthy of praise, think on these things." When we think about decisions we make and what is leading us, if we just went to Philippians 4 and said, is it at least one of these things? Okay, we're good. If it's not congruent with anything on this list, we probably need to check ourselves.

**WES:** Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. There's so much here. We've covered so much good stuff, and I hope people will really think about these things because -- and even to that point that you just made about checking what we want to do or what we're desiring to do or what we feel like we should do against these sorts of lists, I think a warning to all of us, how easily we're self-deceived and how much we can say, oh, yes, it is true; it is noble; it is right -- but to go back to something you said earlier and bring someone into your life that's wise, who is filled with the Spirit, in whose life you can see the fruit of the Spirit and ask them -- you know, ask them to hold you accountable. Ask them to correct you if you're wrong, to bring to your eyes, to your vision what you can't see. Because the people in -- if Peter can be self-deceived, if Barnabas can be self-deceived, then I can be self-deceived, and we all have to constantly be examining ourselves and asking whether or not this is from the Spirit or from the flesh.

**CHASE:** Yeah, that's -- I don't think any of us really want to be admonished, but I think a fair question, if we have a question about someone else or ourselves, is just asking someone, "If I felt like you were not in step with the Spirit, would you want to be admonished? Would you want to be addressed about this?" Because if the answer is no, then I'm not going to. You know, it's -- but if you are genuinely seeking counsel and the Spirit's guidance in your life, I don't think it's possible that any one person has a complete grasp on that, and I think anybody that I would perceive like, wow, they have it all together, I'd be willing to bet that person has a circle of men and women around them that are helping guide them; I just don't see it. And I think there's so much wisdom and community and fellowship that way.

**WES:** Amen. Amen. Well, Chase, thank you so very much for this conversation. It's been rich. It's been a blessing to me. The Spirit has worked through you to bless me today. Thank you, Brother.

**CHASE:** Thank you so much for having me. Really, really enjoyed it.

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