

DEPENDENT

vGroup Study



VINTAGE PRESS

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REDEFINE YOURSELF

We all have an idea of the person we want to be, and we do small things everyday to communicate that idea to the people around us. One very visible way that we tell others about ourselves is through the clothes that we wear. Scrubs could tell people that we work in the medical field, and work boots and a hard hat can say that we do blue collar work. A T-shirt with a band name on it can tell others about the kind of music we want people to think that we listen to. Even more so than our clothes, our actions tell people about who we are.

Psalm 1 and Galatians 5:16–26 help us get an idea of what our actions as Christians ought to look like. In Pastor Dustin's sermon on Sunday we learned what the Psalmist has to say about the characteristics of a righteous individual. Part of how we arrive at that picture of righteousness is through cultivating spiritual disciplines and habits. In Galatians 5 we see a fuller example of what some positive and negative spiritual habits are.

- How we are perceived is important. How do you want others to see you?

- How well do your actions and outward habits line up with how you want others to perceive you?

- Thinking back to Psalm 1, what are the benefits of maintaining good spiritual habits?

A common rhetorical tool in the ancient world was the vice list. These consisted of lists of vices to be avoided, and they were then contrasted with virtues that were meant to be cultivated by the audience. As we dig into this passage, be mindful of some bad spiritual habits that you might have and keep an eye out for others that you need to cultivate in your own life.

¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Galatians 5:16–18

- As Christians we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. How ought walking in step with the Spirit impact our attitude towards the flesh?

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- Even though we are being led by the Spirit, conforming ourselves to the image of Christ is a daily struggle. What are some difficulties that you regularly encounter in trying to be Spirit-led? How do you go about overcoming those difficulties?

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19–21

- What are some common themes that run through this list? How do those themes indicate areas where Christians will have a harder time breaking sinful habits?
- What are some items in this list which correspond to your own life?

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 5:22–26

- How do the fruits of the spirit contrast with the works of the flesh?
- What are the benefits of cultivating the fruits of the Spirit? (Hint: Look back at Psalm 1)
- How well do you see those fruits in your own life and in the lives of believers around you at Vintage?

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On Sunday Pastor Dustin ended his sermon with a very clear way of approaching how we can change our habits to better line up with the kind of person that we want to be and the kind of person that God wants us to be. The habits that we cultivate ought to reflect the righteousness that we are supposed to have through Christ. We must realize that even more so than the clothes making the man, the habits that we cultivate shape who we are and how we are perceived by the world around us. We are then left to answer the question, “Who do you want to be?”

If you followed through on the application from Sunday, please use what you have written down with your group. If you did not, then take some time to follow through on the application from Sunday’s sermon.

- Take a moment to define the change that you want to see in your life.

- Writing down our goals helps to make them more real and achievable. Write down the goal that you have to change a habit in your life.

Having others hold you accountable makes a difference in helping you let go of old habits or encourage new ones. Take some time to share your goal with your vGroup.