

Living alive and free in the new year
Galatians 3:1-5

For fun with your group, pull out your phones and talk about the most ridiculous apps you've downloaded on your phone this year. When did you download it? What made you add it?

Are there any apps on your phone that need to be deleted so you have room for the good stuff? (like pictures of your kids, grandkids, friends, cats wrapped up in blankets. . .)

Read Galatians 3:1-9

The apostle Paul is battling against false teachers in Galatia that are trying to get the new believers in there to download false teaching about God, salvation, and their need to stay chained to the law. So, Paul spent considerable amounts of time trying to encourage them to stick with the Truth that they had already received. The Truth was that they had been set free from the Law of Moses and were now free to grow to maturity in Christ by being led by the Spirit.

When you think about growing as a follower of Jesus, what comes to your mind? Why? What are the apparent struggles? Be real.

Sometimes when we talk about being led by the Spirit it can feel very mysterious. Yet, Paul continues to push the Galatians to not trust in their works for growth but to trust in the Spirit to lead them. He says in verse 3, "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?"

Are there any hang-ups for you when it comes to following the lead of the Spirit?

Paul uses "growth through the Spirit" and "growth through the flesh" here in stark contrast to one another. They are diametrically opposed to each other. In fact, "growth in the flesh" could be considered an oxymoron. You can't spiritually grow by the flesh because the "flesh" is our attempts to gain, by effort, what can only be accomplished through Spirit. Spiritual growth can only happen through the Holy Spirit. Yet we try to live and grow in our faith by effort alone sometimes.

Why does it seem so natural or easy at times to attempt spiritual growth through effort alone?

Talk about the times in your life when you have truly felt like you were growing in your faith. Was it by your effort or when you were leaning into the Spirit to guide you? (It doesn't mean that you sat around and did nothing, but were trusting the Spirit to do the work in and through you.)

If we're going to live alive and free in 2018, it may mean that we need to delete some junk from our lives so that we have room to be led by the Spirit. Are you aware of anything that needs deleted from your life so that you are ready to be led by the Spirit this year? (Bad theology, bad ideas, or even toxic people and relationships)

The Spirit wants to lead you this year. Will you let Him?