

# what is sin?

## introduction

Can I smoke and still be a Christian? What about drinking an occasional beer? Can I watch R-rated movies? People thinking about becoming a Christian or those who have recently made the decision often ask these types of questions. Today's devotion from Galatians 5:16-26 will help answer these questions.

## message

Getting into an argument or a heated discussion about what the Bible says about sin isn't always a wise thing to do. We can accomplish much more by encouraging our friends to read the Bible on their own or by reading it together with them, allowing the Holy Spirit to work. We shouldn't let issues like these keep us from sharing Jesus Christ and His life-giving power.

1. Today's Bible passage teaches us about life by the Spirit. (Read Galatians 5:16-17.) These first verses simply say that the sinful nature of man desires what is contrary to the Spirit of God. These verses help us understand sin. We sin when our sinful nature takes control. Verses 19-21 list examples of sin. Keep in mind that these are only examples. Paul's letter to the Galatians would have been 10 times longer if he had tried to list everything that is considered sin. Notice Paul's warning in verse 21: "those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God" (NIV).
2. Today's passage draws a line between right and wrong. It gives us examples of what is wrong and tells us that the Spirit will guide us to what is right. Those who are not letting the Spirit guide them will try to make the Bible say whatever they want. That's why it's important to live by the Spirit.
3. Today's passage lists the fruit of the Spirit. (Read verses 22-23.) This fruit will naturally be a part of our lives as we live by the Spirit. They also provide good examples of what sin is not.

## salvation appeal

Do you feel controlled by your sinful nature? Do you find yourself living in sin, not by the Spirit? Maybe it's time to turn from a life led by the Spirit, a life under the control of Jesus Christ. You can do this today. Jesus Christ can give you power over sin and help you live by the Spirit.

## challenge

People will always have questions about sin. That's why it's so important to live by the Spirit and focus on preaching Christ and his love. Commit yourself today to this kind of life.

