

Lenten Devotional Reflection
6th March, 2020 (Lent Day Nine)

Scripture: Galatians 5: 16-26 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, competing against one another, envying one another.

Message

St Paul has depicted the lust of the flesh and the Spirit as two forces fighting against each other and the man involved is the battlefield. The outcome of the battle will dictate the consequences the man faces. If the lust of the flesh won, the man would have to face the judgement of the law and would not be able to inherit the kingdom of God and would not be able to do what is desired. If the Spirit won, the outcome would be the opposite.

In the scripture reading today, it lists 15 kinds of the lust of the flesh which outnumber the fruits of the Spirit. What it shows is that the lust of the flesh takes many forms and is ever changing, making it very easy for mankind to fall into it. However, St Paul also points out that Christians have their key to win over the lust of the flesh as Christians live in Christ and have crucified lust of the flesh. Guided by the Spirit, Christians are bestowed with the ability to judge and act with a sound mind.

Verse 26 is connected to Chapter 6. It has alluded to the fact that mankind succumbs to the lust of the flesh as it is a result of the problems among people.

Reflection

1. Please take some quiet time and tell yourself that you are a blessed Christian and able to overpower the lust of the flesh.
2. Try to recall the last time how the Spirit or the Lord led you overpowering the lust of the flesh.
3. Meditate the fruit of the Spirit. (Verses 22 and 23)

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