

Christ in the Psalms

The Good Life

By the Power of God's Spirit

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A quick review...

Truth, The Nature of Mankind, and Worldviews

- **Truth** is objective, knowable, and personified in Jesus of Nazareth. (John 14:6-11; John 18:37; Acts 2:22)
- The **Natural Man** recognizes God's creativity and intelligence in the created order; *but suppresses the truth in unrighteousness.* (Romans 1)
- The **Moral Man** recognizes how things ought to be; *but falls short of God's goodness revealed via his own conscience and rationality.* (Romans 2)
- The **Religious Man** recognizes that God exists, and that God has expectations; *but succumbs to selfish pride, artificial authority, arrogance, and hypocrisy.* (Romans 3)
- The **Just Man** relies upon God's promise, lives by faith; *and receives the blessing of imputed righteousness.* (Romans 4)

The Spiritual Man – A New Creation

1 Cor. 2:6-16; 2 Cor. 5:16-21; Galatians 5; Romans 8

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Cor. 5:17)

- ***An Internal, Heart-Level Knowledge (Jer. 31:33)***
- ***A Personal Relationship mediated through Jesus Christ (John 14:6)***
- ***Obedience as a Sign of Knowledge; a Practical Test (1 John 2:3-6)***
- ***Love as the Outflow of Knowing God; a Practical Test (1 John 4:7-8)***
- ***The Witness of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:12-17)***
- ***The Fruit of the Spirit; a Practical Test (Galatians 5:22-25)***
- ***The Mind of Christ; a World-View Test (1 Corinthians 2:16)***

Psalm 1 – The Fruitful Life

Character and conduct exhibit God's Spirit

Psalm 1 describes the character and conduct that flow out of a life yielded to God's Spirit.

Key Verses:

Psalms 1:1-3 *Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.*

Connections:

- *Living the Good Life* : This psalm sets the tone for the entire book by showing that true blessing (or "the good life") is found in delighting in God's Word rather than following sinful paths.
- *Fruit of the Spirit* : Being "like a tree that yields its fruit" beautifully parallels Paul's "fruit of the Spirit" metaphor, underscoring that a life rooted in God will naturally produce godly qualities.

Psalm 51 – Renewal by the Spirit

Transformation in Spiritual Renewal

Psalm 51 describes the realization for change in repentance by the power of God's indwelling Spirit.

Key Verses:

Psalms 51:10-11 *Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

Connections:

- *Living In the Spirit*: Here we see one of the clearest Old Testament references to the Holy Spirit as David pleads for spiritual renewal and heart transformation.
- *Repentance and Inner Change* : The fruit of the Spirit begins with a renewed heart. David's prayer mirrors Paul's teaching that genuine transformation comes from God's work within us (Rom. 12:2; Gal. 5:16–17).

Psalm 139 – Life Under the Omnipresent Spirit

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Psalm 139 recognizes that God's Spirit dwells with us.

Key Verses:

Psalms 139:7 *Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence?*

Connections:

- *Living In the Spirit*: Although Psalm 139 focuses on God's omniscience and omnipresence, it explicitly mentions God's Spirit.
- *Relational Intimacy*: Recognizing the inescapable presence of the Spirit can encourage believers to walk in holiness and obedience, as Paul would later teach about "keeping in step with the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25, Rom. 8:10-11).

Psalm 143 – Led by the "Good Spirit"

Requires a “Teachable” Humility

Psalm 143 exhibits the teachable heart of a humble believer.

Key Verses:

Psalms 143:10 *Teach me to do your will, for you are my God! Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!*

Connections:

- *Living In the Spirit* : This psalmist’s plea for God’s "good Spirit" to guide him resonates with Paul’s exhortation to “walk by the Spirit” (Gal. 5:16).
- *Practical Guidance* : Just as the fruit of the Spirit shapes our day-to-day decisions and relationships, the psalmist yearns to be taught and led by God in every aspect of life.

Psalms – The Fruit of the Spirit

Other Psalms Highlighting Virtues Aligned with the Fruit of the Spirit

Psalm 15 – Describes the character of the one who may dwell in God’s holy place: blamelessness, truthfulness, integrity. These traits overlap with “goodness”, “faithfulness”, and “gentleness”.

Psalm 34 – Invites us to “taste and see that the Lord is good” (v. 8) and calls for humility, seeking peace, and pursuing righteousness—echoes of “goodness”, “peace”, and “self-control”.

Psalm 37 – Urges believers to “trust in the Lord and do good” (v. 3), to “delight” in the Lord (v. 4), and to refrain from anger (v. 8). This reflects virtues such as trust (faithfulness), goodness, and patience.

Psalms – Putting it all Together

Living the Good Life by the power of God's Spirit

"Living the Good Life" : In psalms like 1, 15, 34, and 37, the good life is portrayed as a life blessed by God - rooted in His Word, marked by integrity, and upheld by His covenant love.

"Living in the Spirit" : Although more explicit in the New Testament, the direct references in Psalm 51, 139, and 143 show an Old Testament understanding that God's Spirit is at work in the believer's heart (cleansing, guiding, sustaining), much like Paul's description of the Spirit's transforming power in Galatians 5.

Parallels to Galatians 5:22–26 :

- *Love* : Central to many psalms (e.g., God's steadfast love and the believer's call to love righteousness and neighbor).
- *Joy and Peace* : Prominent in worship psalms (e.g., Ps. 16:11; 23:2–3).
- *Patience, Kindness, Goodness*: Found in psalms urging us to wait on the Lord, to show mercy, and to do good (Ps. 37).
- *Faithfulness and Gentleness* : Modeled by the righteous man in Psalm 15 and others.
- *Self-Control* : Seen in the repeated theme of refraining from anger or sin (Ps. 37:8).