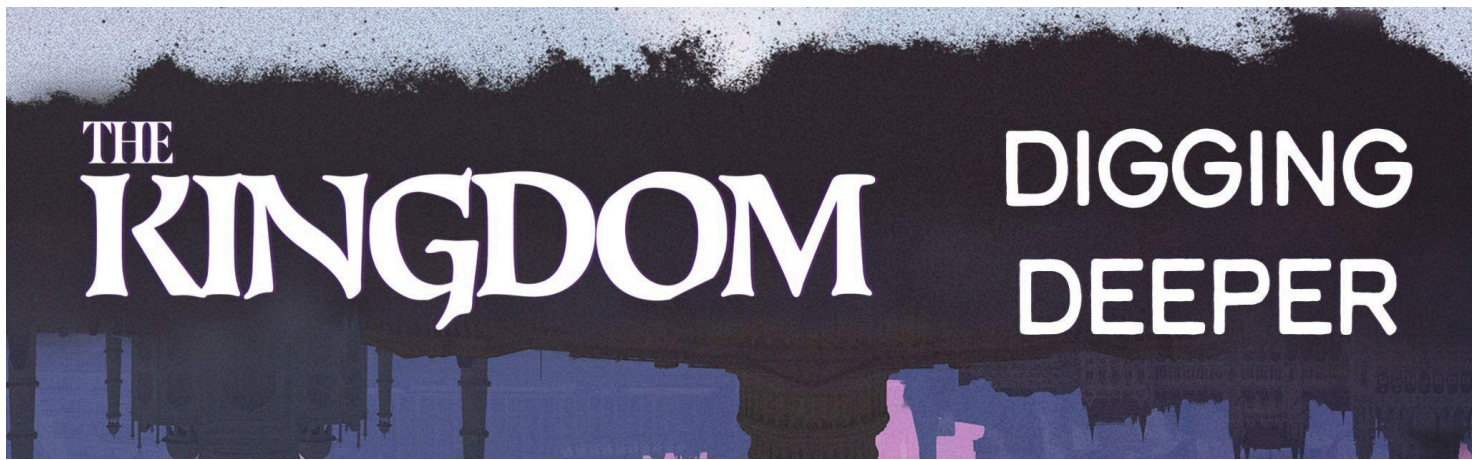




Our Character

October 18th, 2026

LEAN IN

Have you ever had an experience where you thought you knew someone well, but when they faced pressure, their true character surprised you? What did that experience teach you about the importance of character?

Our character reveals what is shaping us. As followers of Jesus, our lives are meant to reflect the character of our King.

LOOK UP — Receiving and Living in God's Kingdom

Read Galatians 5:13-26. As you discuss the questions below, practice **OIA: Observation, Interpretation, and Application.**

Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say?)

- What words, phrases, or ideas stand out to you in this passage? What are you curious about?
- What contrast do you notice between the acts of the flesh (verses 19–21) and the fruit of the Spirit (verses 22–23)?
- What does Paul tell believers to do with their freedom in verses 13–15? What does he say about walking by the Spirit in verses 16–18?

Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean?)

- What do you learn about God and the work of the Holy Spirit in shaping our character?

- What do you learn about humanity from the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit?
- **Why do you think Paul describes these qualities as the fruit of the Spirit rather than simply the works of the Spirit? What does that teach us about spiritual growth?**
- **How does using our freedom to serve others help make the Kingdom of God visible?**

Now make some applications (What's my response?)

- How are you encouraged, challenged, or convicted by this passage?
- **Which of the fruit of the Spirit do you most want God to develop in your life right now? Why?**
- **Where are you tempted to rely on your own willpower instead of depending on the Holy Spirit? What might it look like to surrender that area to Him?**

Additional Scripture

- Galatians 5:13–26 — Christian freedom, walking by the Spirit, the acts of the flesh, and the fruit of the Spirit.
- Romans 7:15–20 — The struggle between wanting to do what is right and continuing to struggle with sin.

Prayer

Pray through these themes together:

- **Surrender:** Ask God to reveal areas where selfish desires, pride, jealousy, anger, or other patterns are shaping your lives.
- **Dependence:** Ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk with Him in everyday decisions rather than relying on your own strength.
- **Transformation:** Pray that the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—would become increasingly evident in your lives.
- **Community:** Pray that Gateway would be a church where people serve one another humbly in love and reflect the character of Jesus.

Close by thanking Jesus that we do not have to earn God's acceptance. We can receive His grace and trust the Spirit to transform us.

STEP OUT

Choose one or two practices to live out this week.

1. **Practice the fruit of the Spirit.** Choose one quality from Galatians 5:22–23 to intentionally practice this week. Identify one specific situation where you can demonstrate it.
2. **Take one step toward loving someone well.** Use your freedom to serve someone rather than elevate yourself. Offer encouragement, extend forgiveness, listen patiently, or meet a practical need. Look for an opportunity to “love everyone life by life.”
3. **Keep in step with the Spirit.** Set aside five minutes each day to pray, read Galatians 5:16–26, and ask, “Holy Spirit, what do You want to shape in me today?” Invite a trusted friend or group member to check in with you about what you are learning.
4. **Remember:** The Kingdom of God is not simply a place. It is the reign and rule of God—where His authority is recognized, His will is done, and His character becomes the pattern for life. When the Spirit shapes our character, the world gets a glimpse of our King.