



St. Stephen's Traditional Episcopal Church

11856 Mays Chapel Rd., Timonium, MD 21057

The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, September 25th, 2011

✠ **In The Name of The Father and of The Son
and of The Holy Ghost. Amen.** ✠

“Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

The scripture lessons appointed for today are about the nature and the practice of the spiritual life. At baptism we are born again of water and the Spirit. We are born into a new spiritual realm which we call the Kingdom of God. In baptism, we embrace, or our parents and godparents embrace on our behalf the spiritual life of the Kingdom of Heaven, and our privilege and calling is to grow into and become mature in that spiritual life.

In the Epistle, Saint Paul tells us to “walk in the spirit.” But what does it mean to “walk in the Spirit?” It has to do with the basic direction and orientation of our lives: what we live for, what we take to be fundamentally important, what we understand to be the purpose and end of our lives. To walk in the Spirit means to live according to the will of God, according to the word of God revealed by the Spirit in the Scriptures and in the life of the spiritual community.

Saint Paul contrasts life in the Spirit with life according to the flesh. To live “after the

flesh” is to live totally for worldly ends. It means to regard the ambitions and possessions and comforts and pleasures of the present age as if they were absolutes. It is to set our hearts upon such things: and for the sake of such things, we compete with and prey on one another, provoking, harming, and envying our neighbors.

The Gospel is the story of the healing of the lepers: and what it adds to the message of the Epistle is that the cleansing and healing of man’s spirit is purely the work of God. Our spiritual life is to be nurtured and matured in a spirit of thanksgiving and cannot developed in any other way. Otherwise it turns into pride when we think ourselves to be something when we are nothing. Spiritual wholeness consists in giving glory to God. In the Eucharist, our thanksgiving, we give thanks to God for his spiritual gifts

to us which make us no longer strangers but citizens of God’s Kingdom.

“Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.”