

How To Walk In The Spirit

Galatians chapter five

Introduction

The Bible tells us we should walk in the Spirit. If we can somehow figure it out, we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. This brings up a lot of questions that young Christians often ask and even stumble over as they try to find God in their lives.

Question #1--- What is the Flesh and what is the Spirit? If I am suppose to walk in the Spirit, I need to know what that means and if I am to avoid the flesh, I need to also know what that means.

The answer comes from Galatians chapter five where Paul tells us plainly what each is. The Spirit is the Spirit of God who is known by the fruit of His character, which is LOVE, JOY, PEACE LONG SUFFERING, GENTLENESS, SELF CONTROL etc. These characteristics are attributes that define the Spirit of God. There are nine listed but the Bible refers to them all as one, singular, not plural.

Question #2---How do we walk in the Spirit? To walk in this Spirit is to let the fruit of God's Spirit manifest, grow and live in you. This is what becoming more like Christ or Christ-like means. When we walk in Love, we are walking in God's Spirit. When we demonstrate self-control, we are walking in God's Spirit. When we are filled with Peace, even though confusion is all around us, we are walking in God's Spirit. That goes for Joy and all the rest of the attributes. We display the fruit of His Spirit in our lives and thereby show forth His glory upon the earth.

Some might argue: But what about me. To do this, when I am really a different sort of folk, denies me the right to exist and sets up a phony two-faced persona that will ultimately drive me crazy, because I can never really attain that elusive Christ-like nature. I want to be ME, whatever that is and it will take me a lifetime of exploration and emotional self-expression to find it.

Paul struggled with this, "I want to be me" scenario, more than anyone and wrote to the Roman Christians in his letter saying, be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the perfect and acceptable will of God. From the beginning, God designed us to be filled with and walk in His Spirit...why? So He could have fellowship with us. Think about that. He wanted to communicate with beings, of His own creation, that were on His level...not gods, but children of God. This is higher than the Angels, able to create, think, reason, plan, wish, dream and be the likeness of God in the earth.

We all know that Adam was the prototype of such a being and he rebelled against God, seeking to live outside of His love in a self-awareness that denied God the pleasure of his company. Man's will was aimed at self-realization based upon his own reasoning and power. All that God wanted for him was lost because he no longer dwelt in the Spirit of God. Even his love became distorted and his whole reasoning fell into a selfish gratification. God's race of Godly children, fashioned in His own likeness, was lost, seemingly forever. Man became a distortion of mind and body that led to a worldwide flood, a sentence of death for all who are called human after Adam's kind. We also know that it was God that designed a plan of redemption and set it in motion, even before the foundation of the world. That plan was Christ crucified, once for all, that whosoever believes in Him, this Jesus of Nazareth, who died as a penalty for sin, who was made sin for us, might be saved.

He came to seek and to save that which was lost...the Love, Joy, and all the other attributes of His personality...thereby filling the earth with His image and likeness. We only have to watch the evening news or read the morning newspaper to realize the depravity, rebellion and self-realization of man. It is all vested in pornography, fornication, same sex marriages, murder, road rage, divorce, hatred, and a host of other fruits that emanate from, what Paul calls, the Flesh or natural personality of man that is void of God's Spirit.

We are left with a choice, walk down the road of FLESHLY appetites or up the road of God's destined path for His children. It is truly a matter of free will. We ultimately decide our own future. The choices we make today shape our tomorrows. We can be transformed from wickedness to righteousness, from lust, and immorality to love and respect, from confusion and sorrow to peace and joy, from death unto life by the renewing of our minds. I, the me with the heart, that Jeremiah says is desperately wicked, must die before the new life of Christ can live. It's like a grain of wheat. If it abides alone, it abides alone and the newness or life in it cannot be expressed. But if it falls to the ground and dies, or is planted, it will bring forth new life. This is the principle of resurrection. The old passes away and out of its death comes a completely new creation.

The choice to give up our life is to understand that God will replace it with a new one that is fashioned after Him. We get rid of the desperately wicked heart and grow a new one that is full of love, joy, peace and all the goodness of God. It is most commonly referred to as being Born Again". We are reinstated into His original destiny. He never wanted man to experience evil, but he did...so now we are left to choose between good and evil, deciding which will express itself in and through our personality.

Question #3 – How do I get from the flesh to the spirit? We must deny the expressions of the flesh. That means, when we feel sad, we give thanks to God and rejoice in the knowledge of His love. When we are caught up in confusion, we ask the Lord for peace and so on. However, the move from one to the other is

not always a hop, skip and a jump. Often times, it is the hardest thing you will do. Why...because one must die in order for the other to live. That is why Jesus told His disciples that they must to take up their cross and follow Him.

The cross was and figuratively still is, an instrument of death. It is where life is extinguished through great suffering. We will suffer with Him if we deny anger access to our emotions for it is in the emotions that anger, and all the other ungodly traits, raise their nasty heads. They will fight us for life and expression. Let them live and they will distort and destroy all that is good. Nail them to the cross and they will die. The Bible says that the Spirit and the flesh war against each other and are contrary, the one to the other. They both strive to be seen, heard and showcased in human flesh.

The flesh, which is no more than fallen man, without God, full of pride, jealousy, lust, anger, adultery and so forth has no need for God. The Spirit, on the other hand, seeks after the things of God and enjoys the status of His likeness. Your soul is caught in the middle, in the valley of decisions with eternity hanging in the balance.

Paul shared his struggle as he passed through this valley of decision. He cried out, who shall deliver me from this body of sin? Then he said, Thanks be to God. If you can not seem to get out of the flesh to walk in the Spirit, cry out to God and ask Him for a personal rapture where He calls you up out of the miry clay and sets your feet on solid ground. His hand is not too short that it cannot reach down and save you. His ear is not too dull that He cannot hear your cry for help. It takes only a repentant heart and a serious desire to follow Jesus, even unto death...that is the death of the flesh. When you cry out, don't be surprised if God uses other people to nail you to the cross. He often uses that which is most aggravating to get your attention and keep it.

A final thought

Paul says, in his letter to the Philippians, the third chapter, "Finally my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" "Beware of dogs, beware of evil doers" "for we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit and rejoice in the Christ, Jesus and have no confidence in the FLESH."

We are to live and move and have our being in Him, (The Lord). Walking in the Spirit of the living God is directly dependant on having "NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH." This means that I can no longer count on my emotions, feelings, instincts and other human attributes to guide me. Now, I use my knowledge of God's Word and apply it to each situation. Like Paul, we declare that what things were gain to me, those we count as loss for Christ. I count all things as loss to gain the Excellency of Christ. Verse 7-8

We must let go of the petty issues and attitudes of this life to gain true fellowship with God, our Father, through Jesus Christ, His Son. Verse 10 of Chapter three says it all, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering, being made conformable to His death." We will never know Him until we conform to His death on our own cross. In other words, putting the fleshly appetites to death that the Godly attributes may live and shape our future.

Until next time

Rev. John Marinelli

info@ministryandmarketingservices.com