

Walking In The Spirit



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Introduction

We are commanded to walk in the Spirit of God. The purpose of this command is so we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Listen to what was spoken to the 1st century Christians.

“This I say then,” Paul says, “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (**Galatians 5:16**). Then again, “if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (**Galatians 5:25**).

Although they appear to be the same command in English, there is a significant distinction in the original Greek language in which Paul penned the letters.

Both the **Romans 8:1** and the **Galatians 5:16** passages use the word *perepeto*, which carries the connotation to “walk around” and to “be at liberty.”

The second iteration in **Galatians 5:25** uses *stoicheo*, which means to “step precisely,” to “march,” or to “go in procession.” Same command but different emphasis. (Excerpts from an article by Henry M. Morris III, D.Min. Institute For Creation Research)

The use of two different words tells me that we have liberty to hang around with God in His Spirit to fellowship with Him but we also must walk precisely along the path He has shown us to achieve victory.

As a young Christian, I often wondered what it meant to actually walk in God's Holy Spirit. I was also curious to know how to live in the Spirit. Was there a set of rules? How does one live and walk in the Spirit of the Living God? Is it actually possible? As I grew in Bible knowledge, it all became clear to me. I do have to admit that it is still hard some times to stay in the Spirit and even walk in Him because the devil is hard after me to walk in the flesh. I falter now and then.

Galatians 5 offers a contrast between a lifestyle of fleshly behavior and a life controlled by the Holy Spirit. The "deeds" of the flesh and the "fruit" of the Spirit are diametrically opposed. They continually fight for control of our minds so as to manifest their image here on the earth through us. However, they cannot exist together; they are not co-rulers. **(Romans 8:5-8)** We either "mind" the things of the flesh or the "things of the Spirit." **(Romans 8:5)**

Only, "Born Again" Folk Can Walk In The Spirit

I'll bet you didn't know that you cannot be or live in Neutrality. We are created beings by God for one primary purpose...to reveal His image upon the earth. The original plan was that mankind would live and walk in the Spirit on this earth as a reflection of God. To see us would be like seeing God because we looked just like Him. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* **Genesis 1:27**

However, sin entered the world and replaced the image of God with the image of Satan. **(Romans 5:12)** Mankind now is ruled by evil instead of good. His nature and character reveals the sin that reigns in his heart. He has no choice but to live out this evil destiny.

All that God wanted for mankind 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. *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* **Romans 3:23**

God's Plan Of Redemption

But, God did not leave man in such a depraved state with no choice. He honored His own plan for the ages which was to allow man to have a, "Free Will" and to be his own free moral agent. His Lordship over man would not be evil but righteous as He restored man to a status of being able, once again, to walk in His Spirit. The choice was given back to man. He can now choose to live in sin or walk in the righteousness of God.

We also know that it was God that designed this 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, would not perish but have everlasting life. **(Ephesians 1:4, John 3:16, II Corinthians 5:21)**

So, only those that accept God's plan of salvation have the choice of walking in His Spirit. Those that do not believe and do not accept the free gift of salvation through faith are bound by their own evil nature to live out a destiny that is the image and likeness of Satan.

Two Natures In Conflict

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." **(Galatians 5:17)** We, that is, us Christians, are constantly being offered a choice. We can select the fruit of God's Spirit or the Works of the Flesh.

Galatians 5:22 describes the fruit and the works. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Galatians 5:19-21 tells us what the works of the Flesh are, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like:

of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now here's the kicker..."And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." **Galatians 5:24**

We crucify the flesh by denying it access to our emotions. We put it to death by not allowing it to be manifested in us. We will still get angry but we do not allow that anger to be released. Instead, we focus on the fruit of God's Spirit to overcome the flesh, thus filling ourselves with the image and likeness of God. Instead of getting angry, we pray for and demonstrate longsuffering and love.

How Do We Walk In This New Nature?

The phrase "walk in the Spirit" occurs not only in Galatians verse 25 but also in verse 16, "But I say, walk in the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh." So here we see what the opposite of walking by the Spirit is, namely, giving in to the desires of the flesh.

Remember, "flesh" is the ordinary human nature that does not relish the things of God and prefers to get satisfaction from a sinful lifestyle. When we "walk in the Spirit," we are not controlled by those things. This is what verse 17 means: the flesh produces one kind of desire, and the Spirit produces another and they are opposed or contrary to each other.

Paul said in **Romans 7:18**, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing." He also said "for the mind of the flesh is hostile to God's law and does not submit to it because it cannot." (**Romans 8:7**)

The new birth creates a whole new array of desires that want to please God. Therefore, "walking in the Spirit" is something the Holy Spirit enables us to do by producing in us strong desires that are in accord with God's will. This is what God said He would do in **Ezekiel 36:26, 27**: "A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you . . . I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes."

Thus when we "walk in the Spirit," we experience the fulfillment of this prophecy.

The Big Question

This brings up a big question in my mind that you too may be asking... ***Do I just sit back and wait for new desires before I can walk in the Spirit? Ofcourse not!***

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
¹⁹ Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” **Ephesians 5:18-20**

There are several things we need to do in order to establish and continue our walk in the Spirit. I offer these as a starting point for your consideration:

- **Pray to be filled with the Spirit...** “*And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*” **Ephesians 5:18**

Then do what Ephesians says...The more we sing, make melody, read psalms and pray, the longer we stay filled. When our thoughts are on the things of the Lord, they cannot be dwelling on the things of the flesh. Some folks refer to this action as “Practicing The Presence of God.”

- **Have no confidence in the flesh...** “*For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh*” **Philippians 3:3** (The Flesh is the unregenerate man that is led by Satan via a nature of sin)

When we have no confidence in the flesh, we do not put any faith in our own decision making power. We always consult the Lord about what to do in any given situation. *We do not rely on our emotions.*

- **Resist The devil and he will flee from you...** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: **I Peter 5:8-9**

When we resist the devil, we are resisting his many and different temptations to operate independantly from God. He wants us to live in the flesh because it is his nature and we will, if we do so, manifest the image and likeness of Satan, the evil one. *Thus the purpose of his temptations are to keep us from walking in the Spirit.*

- **Walk By Faith...**”For we walk by faith, not by sight” (II Corinthians 5:7)

When we walk by faith, we walk in the promises of God that are given to us in the Bible. We actually live in them. If God said it, We will believe it and apply it in our lives. We will hold on to every word, knowing that God will cause every promise He has spoken into our spirits to come true. *This keeps us free from any and all distractions that would lead us away from walking in the Spirit.*

Spiritual Breathing

By Bill Bright

The Christian life, properly understood, is not complex nor is it difficult. As a matter of fact, the Christian life is very simple. It is so simple that we stumble over the very simplicity of it, and yet it is so difficult that no one can live it!

This paradox occurs because the Christian life is a supernatural life. The only one who can help us live this abundant life is the Lord Jesus Christ who empowers us with His Holy Spirit.

One of the most important truths of Scripture, the understanding and application of which has enriched my life as has no other truth, is a concept which I like to call **“*Spiritual Breathing.*”** This concept has been shared with millions – with revolutionary results – through our literature and various training conferences and seminars.

As you walk in the Spirit by faith, practicing Spiritual Breathing, you need never again live in spiritual defeat. Spiritual Breathing, like physical breathing, is a process of exhaling the impure and inhaling the pure, an exercise in faith that enables you to experience God’s love and forgiveness and walk in the Spirit as a way of life. *(You breath in the Word of God and you exhale the negative destructive emotions)*

The moment you invited Christ into your life as Savior and Lord, you experienced a spiritual birth. You became a child of God and you were filled with the Holy Spirit. God forgave your sins – past, present and future – making you righteous, holy and acceptable in His sight because of Christ’s sacrifice for you on the cross. You were given the power to live a holy life and to be a fruitful witness for God.

But the average Christian does not understand this concept of Spiritual Breathing as an exercise of faith and, as a result, lives on a spiritual roller

coaster. He goes from one emotional experience to another living most of his life as a worldly Christian, controlling his own life – frustrated and fruitless.

If this is your experience, Spiritual Breathing will enable you to get off this emotional rollercoaster and enjoy the Christian life that the Lord Jesus promised to you when He said, “I came that they might have life and might have it abundantly.” **John 10:10** As an exercise in faith, Spiritual Breathing will make it possible for you to continue to experience God’s love, forgiveness, and the power of the Holy Spirit as a way of life.

If you try to live the Christian life by your own fleshly effort, it becomes complex, difficult and even impossible to live. But when you invite the Lord Jesus to direct your life; when you know the reality of having been crucified with Christ and raised with Him by faith as a way of life; when you walk in the light as God is in the light in the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus simply lives his abundant life within you in all of His resurrection power.

I’m not suggesting that the Christian who walks in the fullness of the Spirit will have no difficulties. Problems of poor health, loss of loved ones, financial needs and other such experiences are common to all people. However, many of our misfortunes are self-imposed because of our own worldly, selfish actions.

The spiritual person is spared most of these self-imposed hardships. But when the problems do come, the spiritual person can face them with a calm, confident attitude because he is aware of God’s resources, which are available to him to deal with adversity. (Excerpts from Bill Bright’s article from The Power to Change)

There is but one indwelling of the Holy Spirit, one rebirth of the Holy Spirit, and one baptism of the Holy Spirit -- all of which occur when you receive Christ.

Being Continually Filled

The command of **Ephesians 5:18** is given to all believers to be filled, directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, however, is a continuous experience. In the Greek language in which this command was originally written, the meaning is clearer than that in most English translations. This command of God means to *be constantly and continually filled*, controlled and empowered with the Holy Spirit as a way of life.

If you look at the scripture from verse 15-18 you see a truth that few have really understood. See if you see what I see.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; ¹⁹Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” **Galatians 5:15-20**

Here’s what I see:

1. We are to use wisdom and not to be as fools. In doing so, we can redeem the time lost to the past in living in sin.
2. We are not to drink in excess but in contrast to that life style, we are to be continually filled with God’s Spirit. This is the will of the Lord.
3. The way we keep ourselves filled with the Spirit is to sing, make melody in our hearts and give thanks to our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus.

The process of praise, prayer and reading the psalms will keep you from the flesh and drunkenness. It will also continually fill you with the Spirit. We receive faith by reading the Word. We are filled with Joy by singing. We are blessed with peace by giving thanks. It all comes together inside of us to continually keep us in the Spirit.

Note: Some have said that we leak and the spirit, like water, drains out of us. This is nothing more than foolishness. We are faced with a choice in life, to dwell in the flesh and to ride the emotional rollercoaster or to be filled with the Spirit and walk in peace with God through this upside-down world.

Back And Forth

We can, however, fall back into the flesh. Paul wrote to the Galatians and said, “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? ²This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³*Are ye so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*” **Galatians 3:1-3**

The Galatians started out in the Spirit but somehow believed a lie and went back into the works of the law, which opposed the grace of God. Paul called them foolish. This example shows how the devil can lead you away from the truth and cause you to operate in the flesh. That's how he defeats Christians. He spins a lie and we get confused and end up believing it and eventually it changes our thinking.

Remember, non-believers do not have two natures. They can only operate in the flesh. Seeing the state of our current society with so much evil, the flesh is running rampant.

However, we are blessed with a new nature that is holy and righteous in every way. It is the same nature of Jesus and the very likeness of God. It is His image. We can choose the new and reject the old and walk in His Spirit. This is a benefit of the New Birth experience when we are "Born Again."

Some Hindrances

When we strive to walk with God and fellowship with Him, we are always attacked by the devil because the devil does not want us doing that. He wants us in the flesh so he can torment us. However, he cannot even get to us when we are "In The Spirit." He has to draw us away with some sort of temptation or lie.

Let's look at a few hindrances.

1. **Fear of Rejection...**"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." **Gal. 6:14**

In the above scripture we find that the cross is the *mark of distinction* between the world and me. Sometimes I hear people say, "I want to walk with God but I don't know how I could ever give up my friends." And my answer to that is very simple: If you begin to walk with the Lord, you won't have to worry about giving up your friends; you won't have time for that--they will give you up first. That is how the cross is a mark of distinction.

2. **LIVING BY YOUR FEELINGS AND NOT BY FAITH...**As we have already said, living in the flesh is living by your feelings. It offers only a terrifying ride on that emotional rollercoaster.
3. **FAILURE IN SIMPLE OBEDIENCE...**Again we look to Galatians where Paul tells the church, "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that

ye should not obey the truth?" Disobedience will always stop the flow of God's anointing and kick us out of His Spirit, back into the flesh.

4. **ALLOWING OTHERS TO HINDER YOU...**Again in Galatians, it was someone or many that hindered the church from obeying the truth. We cannot allow others to sway us from the truth.
5. **GIVING IN TO TEMPTATION...**Temptation will do it every time. It will cause you to fall if you give into to it. Paul, in **Galatians 3:1** said, "*Oh foolish Galatians*" He knew that they had given into the pressures and expectations of others. Their desire to be politically correct was stronger than their desire to obey the truth. We can never give in.

Seeing What's Not Visible

As I mentioned before, the Christian has two natures and must choose one or the other. Both natures will calmer for attention and the chance for expression. One is Holy and the other is Evil.

The evil nature has polluted our souls, invaded our DNA and dominates our emotions. Its rule over us is cruel. Its goal is to manifest wickedness as a lifestyle and image.

The holy nature is newly fashioned as a "Born Again" experience where we repented of our sin and put our faith in Jesus. Its goal is to manifest the fruit of God's Spirit through a gentle Lordship where we can be blessed and live an abundant life.

Because we have the dominant nature of evil ruling, we see life through its eyes and process events on an emotional level. The new nature of holiness is equally capable of sight but looks only into the spirit realm. It sees and discerns spiritual things. It processes events based upon the Will of God and the believer's divine destiny.

Most Christians see only with their human nature, which relies on its emotions. Seeing with Spiritual eyes is different. The holy nature in you relies on divine revelation from its creator. The result is divine wisdom that enhances our ability to make Godly decisions. You cannot walk in the Spirit

without seeing in the Spirit. The eyes of the Spirit are the scriptures. It is there that our eyes are opened and our focus made clear.

Now that you kind of know about how the two natures operate in us when called upon, it is important to realize that there is another, “Free Will” choice to be made...which nature to call upon. We are bent on the evil nature. Holiness is contrary to our natural feel. To allow it to advise and control our decisions is not automatic. That’s why we are encouraged to deny the flesh by crucifying it with all its lust and evil affections. We have to deny the evil in order to live in the Holy/Spiritual nature.

When we are faced with a situation or happening, we automatically make a decision on what to do. As a Man, I am often confronted with women crossing my path or coming into my line of sight. If my human nature is ruling, my emotions will spike and I will most likely fall into some sort of fantasy. If, on the other hand, my holy nature is in control, I automatically hear the scriptures speaking in my head telling me what the Word of God says about the situation and what I need to do to stay in the Spirit.

If you do not know the scriptures, you will walk as a blind man and be unable to discern the times you live in, the snares of the devil, the demonic temptations that, as fiery darts, are hurled at you and the many day to day decisions that fill your life.

The psalmist said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” **Psalm 119:11** Without the hiding of God’s Word in your heart, you have nothing to draw from to make a holy decision. You are blind and usually fall back into the human nature that once ruled your life and wrecked your emotions.

Conclusion

The Christian walk has great liberty (**Romans 8:21**), but that liberty must “step precisely” in honesty (**Romans 13:13**), good works (**Ephesians 2:10**), and in truth (**2 John 4-6**).

Our walk is expected to be by faith and not by sight (**2 Corinthians 5:7**) We are to conduct spiritual warfare in the Holy Spirit’s power (**2 Corinthians**

10:3-5) We are to protect ourselves by putting on the full armor of God **(Ephesians 6:10-18)**.

However, the most important thing to remember is that we need to stay in the Spirit and we can only do that by reading the scriptures to gain faith, singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord and giving thanks to our heavenly Father in the name of Jesus. *That is what keeps us in the Spirit.*

As Christians, we are faced with not one but two natures, one of evil that came with our physical birth and the other that is Holy and righteous that came to us in our Spiritual birth. It is our choice to walk in one or the other. We cannot walk in both at the same time.

I will caution all that read this eBook. It is not advisable to move back and forth from one nature to the other because it creates an emotional rollercoaster that will drive you crazy and keep you from your divine destiny.

May our Lord bless you as you walk with Him. If you are not a believer, I suggest you read one of my other eBooks called, "How To Be Born Again".