

HOW TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT

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Introduction

My Story

My story is probably not much different than yours. When I began my relationship with Christ, I had an assurance in my heart that I was forgiven of my past sins, and I would go to heaven when I died. I asked Christ to come into my life when I was 12 years old.

The church I attended did a good job of proclaiming the gospel - that Jesus Christ died for our sins, so we could one day go to Heaven. They did a good job as it was their specialty, and they preached this gospel every Sunday. Every sermon focused on what Christ did for sinners and concluded with an invitation to give their lives to Christ.

Now, I do believe an invitation to receive Christ needs to be presented at every church service, but those that have already believed, need to hear the second part of the gospel message - how to live the Christian life after they have believed.

I know some of you are saying, "I did not know there **was** a second part of the gospel". Well, there is a second part. It involves how to live the Christian life after you have received Christ.

There is a gospel to unbelievers. The gospel means good news. It is good news to sinners. This message is - Jesus died for your sins, and if you believe and receive what He did for you personally, He will place you in right standing with Himself allowing you to enter His presence when you die. Again, this is the gospel, but it is only **part** of the gospel. It is good news to the unbeliever. However, there is another part to the gospel. It is good news for those who have believed!

Many Christians have heard the good news, which led them to trust in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins, but they have not heard any good news since! Praise God, there is a gospel to the believer. This is what this book is all about. I want to proclaim by the grace of God, this great gospel to you - the believer, which involves walking in the Spirit.

After I began my relationship with Christ, I strayed from Him when I discovered cars and girls at the age of 16. I remember as a teenager imagining what awaited me out "there" in the forbidden things of life, much like the prodigal son did, which led him to leave his father for the far country. (Luke 15) Due to not being taught how to walk with Christ, I strayed from Him for five years. Praise God, He did not let me stray any longer!

One typical night at the local bar, He captured my

attention. A strong feeling came over me, and I no longer wanted to be there. The next night I returned to the bar, but the same feeling came over me again! Unable to ignore the feeling of wanting to leave the bar, I decided to head home. I turned on the television once I arrived and heard a preacher talking about giving your whole heart over to God. I knew within myself that God was talking to me. He wanted my whole heart.

I didn't know if I could give up some of my sins, but I was willing for God to help me overcome them, so my heart would be totally His.

I decided to start attending church again and see where it would lead me. I located the church nearest to my home, where I met some college students, and plugged into their group. They encouraged me to participate in a discipleship program that met at 6:00 a.m. in the morning. I'm guessing the early morning start was to develop discipline, or perhaps, just a way to see how dedicated and sincere we were!

I was taught what most Christians are taught. To live a victorious Christian life, you needed to do certain things. First, you needed a daily quiet time with the Lord, and it really needed to be the first thing in the morning, the earlier the better. Second, you needed to

read your Bible every day. Finally, attending church regularly and staying in an accountability group or meeting with an accountability partner was a must.

I could not argue with any of these disciplines since they are all found in the Bible. However, I was surprised to find, after diligently following these disciplines, I continued to struggle with certain sins in my life. I found myself in a cycle - the more I tried to apply the principles I was taught for a victorious life, the more I fell short, and sinned more than ever before!

I remember my feelings of anguish and disgust, causing me to cry out to God, pleading for His help to gain victory over my sins. I would remain depressed for days before concluding that I wasn't trying hard enough, then I would try again. Of course, it was only a matter of time before I fell again, starting the whole process over again. I came to realize, my failure to attain victory over sin wasn't due to not trying hard enough, but from trying to get victory in the first place. I realize this may sound strange, but bear with me. We are about to look into the truth of the gospel, which brings freedom and liberation from misconceptions and sin patterns that keep us in prison.

After years of living in defeat, the Lord showed me

what my answer was - walking in the Spirit. I had heard this phrase many times but did not really know what it meant, let alone how to do it! Thanks be to God who, in His mercy, showed me both. This book entails what God has shown me about walking in the Spirit. It has transformed my life and I believe it will do the same for you.

Chapter 1

The Two Sides of Grace

I have lived to see two major movements in the body of Christ, the Word of Faith movement in the 1980's, and the Grace movement we are currently experiencing.

These two movements complement each other. Faith without grace becomes works, and grace without faith is fruitless. The balance of grace and faith is imperative for a healthy Christian life. I am thankful God has brought the revelation of grace to the body of Christ. Without it, we are left to our own works in an

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attempt to merit salvation and blessing from God. This is futile, and impossible, because God can only accept perfection. There has only been one person who has met this requirement, and you are not the one! Jesus Christ is the One! He lived under God's law and completely fulfilled it in His perfect life and death.

Our vertical relationship with God is based upon the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ, not our imperfect version of obedience. Jesus is the reason for our blessing from God, not our own works.

I thank God this message is being preached in a growing degree throughout the body of Christ. It is the basis for the Christian life. I call this “cross grace”. This is the grace that comes by way of the cross. Through the cross, we have forgiveness of our sins and are justified vertically with God. However, there is an aspect of grace that has not been taught much at all. It is the horizontal aspect of grace. I call this “resurrection grace” – the grace that came to us through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

We received the new birth, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit through the resurrection of Jesus. We could not have received any of these gifts had Jesus not rose from the dead.

Cross grace governs our vertical relationship with the Father. However, resurrection grace governs our lives in this world, in our relationships at home, work, and toward all people. Resurrection grace is God’s power, strength, and ability, enabling us to live a supernatural life that we could not live by our own

strength. This resurrection grace is given to us that we may be a billboard for Jesus to everyone around us.

Walking in the Spirit has everything to do with walking in resurrection grace. If we don't walk in the Spirit, we are still saved but no one else around us would know it! I believe, if a Christian only understood cross grace, they would continue to live a similar lifestyle as they did prior to being saved, they just wouldn't feel as guilty about it!

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Jesus did not die and rise again so we can live like we used to. We are called to live a powerful life, energized by the Spirit, to be a testimony of God in us to all that we encounter.

This outworking of the resurrection grace of the Lord is referred to in the Bible as "walking in the Spirit". In this book we will look at what this means and how to do it.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the difference between cross grace and resurrection grace?
2. If a believer does not understand resurrection grace how will it impact their Christian life?
3. What connection is there between walking in the Spirit and resurrection grace?

Chapter 2

Spiritual or Carnal

Before we take on what walking in the Spirit is, let's first look at spirituality and carnality. What does it mean to be spiritual? What does it mean to be carnal?

For years, I thought in order to be spiritual I had to go through a long process of maturing to get there. However, I have discovered the Bible does not teach it that way.

Spirituality and carnality are not something you arrive at through a process. Walking in the Spirit is integral to being spiritual.

Let's look at the what the Bible says about being spiritual or carnal.

1 Cor. 3:1 *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.*

Here we see that a Christian can be either spiritual or carnal. A Christian is different than an unbeliever in that a Christian has been made spiritually alive unto

God. The Holy Spirit is joined to a believer's spirit. (**1 Cor. 6:17**) This enables a Christian to receive God's life and revelation. However, a Christian also has flesh. They can either live from the Spirit within them or they can live from their flesh. Being spiritual means that one is influenced by and walks in the Spirit. Being carnal means that one is influenced by and walks in the flesh.

We will look at what it means to walk in the Spirit later, but for now I want you to see that spirituality and carnality are not long processes, but rather decisions on what source to live from – the Spirit or the flesh. It is important to note, an unbeliever is never referred to as carnal in the New Testament.

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1Co 2:14 *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Here, we see that an unbeliever is called the “**natural man**”. An unbeliever is spiritually dead and does not possess the Holy Spirit. (**Rom. 8:9**) An unbeliever is completely natural, living by his five senses and his own resources. A Christian is connected spiritually to God and can receive His empowerment. A Christian is a superman or superwoman! However, it is also true that a Christian can walk naturally and live according to their flesh. Again, this means they are carnal.

Now that we see that being spiritual or carnal is a decision we make and not something we arrive at through a process, let’s look at the subject of walking in the Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. What does it mean to be carnal? What does it mean to be spiritual?
2. Does it take a long time of maturing to become spiritual? Why or why not?
3. According to this chapter what is an unbeliever called?
4. Why is an unbeliever called the natural man but a believer ruled by their flesh called carnal?

Chapter 3

A Bright Light Shining in a Dark Place

I don't think anyone likes to be stuck in a dark room. If you try to move around in a dark room you are liable to trip or fall over something you cannot see.

**THE ANSWER
TO A DARK
ROOM IS
SIMPLE -TURN
ON THE LIGHT!**

The answer to a dark room is simple – turn on the light! Although the solution is simple, when it comes to dealing with spiritual darkness in our lives, we seem to complicate things!

If a person tried to deal with natural darkness the way many Christians try to deal with the spiritual darkness of sin and addiction in their lives, it would be a sad sight to behold. Just imagine someone sitting in a dark room and trying to make it leave by yelling at it! Praying and fasting to make the darkness leave would only frustrate us with the lack of progress. Trying to bind the darkness would fare no better. Trying to take authority over it in Jesus' name would also fail to solve the matter. Some might even try to find out when, and how, the darkness started in hopes of finding an answer.

These things are really dumb, considering there is such a simple solution, are they not? Well, it is equally dumb trying to expel spiritual darkness in that way. The same way you overcome a dark room is the same way you will overcome the spiritual darkness of sin and addiction – by turning on the light!

Gal 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Here Paul offers a bright light that shines in the darkness. The lust and sin of the flesh are spiritual darkness. Walking in the Spirit is tantamount to turning on the light. I don't know about you, but I see hope in this verse! If I will only walk in the Spirit, I will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. There is our answer to sin and the flesh! But, there is just one problem, Paul did not tell us how to do it!

It appears like Paul had taught the Galatians how to walk in the Spirit when he was with them at a prior time, and here he just brings it up in his letter to them. I am reasonably confident

**WALKING IN
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they already had an understanding of what he was writing about, but it leaves me scratching my head 2000 years later! It does me no good knowing the answer to something if I don't understand the meaning, or how to arrive at it.

There have been times I wished I could have visited Paul up in Heaven, grabbed him by his robe collars and said, *“Paul, you told me to walk in the Spirit in Galatians, but what in the world does that mean and how do I do it? You did not leave me with that information!”* I can imagine Paul gently removing my hands from his robe and quietly telling me, *“Rick, I did tell you what walking in the Spirit means and how to do it, just not in my letter to the Galatians. I did however, tell you what it means and how do it in my letter to the Romans.”*

Romans is the first book written to the church. It is the first of 21 epistles, or letters, that he wrote to the church. God had Romans put first for a reason. Romans is the foundational book for the church. Every major doctrine established in Paul's writings, is first mentioned in Romans, then these doctrines reappear in subsequent books. This is true concerning walking in the Spirit. The Law of First Mention is foundational for Bible interpretation. The basic premise of this Law

is that to understand a word or subject in the Bible, it is important to study how the word or subject was first used.

The book of Romans is the first to define what it means to walk in the Spirit and how to do it. Based on the Law of First Mention, the context established in Romans sets the precedence for how we are to interpret walking in the Spirit when reading the book of Galatians or other epistles.

We see the first mention of walking in the Spirit, in Romans chapter 8. We will need to examine Romans 8 to see what walking in the Spirit is, but first we need to look at Romans 7 or we will not properly understand Romans 8.

Questions for Discussion

1. What are some ways the world, or religion, try to deal with the spiritual darkness of sin and addiction? Are these methods found in the New Testament letters written to the church?
2. What is the answer for darkness?
3. Where is walking in the Spirit first mentioned?
4. Why is it important to see the first instance of where a word or phrase is used in the Bible and how it is used?

Chapter 4

Paul's Struggle

In Romans chapter 7, we see the testimony of Paul as a young believer. He details his struggle against sin and his flesh. If we will be honest, we can relate to this struggle because we've either had, or are having, the very same experience. I am glad Paul left us his personal testimony of struggle because he leaves clues to what his problem was, and the solution he found.

Let's start by looking at the opening line of his testimony as there are a couple of key points to see. Then we can look at the rest of his testimony.

Rom 7:14 *For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

I want you to see in this verse that Paul called the law spiritual. This means the law can only be fulfilled spiritually. However, Paul calls himself carnal here. Please remember, only a Christian is called

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carnal. An unbeliever is called the natural man. Paul's testimony in this chapter is an example of a carnal believer striving to get victory over their sin and flesh. In nine verses, Paul lays out his testimony of carnality. In these nine verses he leaves plenty of clues about what his real problem was.

When I teach on this section of scripture, I like for the audience to count how many times he uses the word "I" as I read it. As you read these nine verses, please count how many times he uses the word "I" and how many times he uses the words "me" and "my".

Rom 7:14 *For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

Rom 7:15 *For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.*

Rom 7:16 *If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.*

Rom 7:17 *But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.*

Rom 7:18 *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.*

Rom 7:19 *For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.*

Rom 7:20 *Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.*

Rom 7:21 *I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.*

Rom 7:22 *For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.*

Rom 7:23 *But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

Rom 7:24 *O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

Did you count them? If you did, you will find that Paul used the word “I” 24 times in nine verses! He used the words “me” and “my” 11 additional times. So, in total he used 35 personal pronouns in detailing his personal struggle with sin and his flesh in just nine verses!

He left us many clues about his problem! **Paul had “I” disease!** Paul had his eyes on himself and was

**WHAT IS A
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trying to find deliverance in himself and by relying on his own willpower. Paul uses the words “will[s]” seven times. Paul’s testimony here is one of being a “navel-gazer”! What is a navel-gazer? It is someone who only has their eyes on themselves. Sin in the flesh is a spiritual power that can only be defeated by a higher spiritual power.

Trying to overcome sin and the flesh by willpower or fleshly schemes is absolutely hopeless and very exasperating! You can’t defeat the flesh with your flesh!

Paul finally came to the end of himself and cried out, “*What a wretched man I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*” This was one of the best days Paul ever had even though he was at his lowest point.

This was the day he tried for the last time to free himself, and finally, he looked away from himself and turned to another for deliverance. He ran up the proverbial white flag!

Notice Paul did not ask, “**How** can I get free from this body of death?” He instead asked, “**WHO** will

deliver me from this body of death?” He knew the answer was to be found outside himself and it was in the hands of another person, not himself.

This is when Paul received his life changing revelation! Paul turned from being a navel-gazer to a Son-gazer! In doing so, he found his freedom!

What was Paul’s answer to his struggle? It was, ***“thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”*** vs. 25. (ESV) I want you to notice how complicated Paul’s testimony was. Whenever you read about his struggle with sin in those nine verses, you can’t help but start smiling or laughing in the middle of it because it becomes a real tongue-twister! You can get tripped up quickly!

You will also notice that Paul seemed to frequently repeat himself and seemed to be going around in circles. That was on purpose folks! He wanted us to know that when we try to free ourselves from sin and flesh through our own energy, it can get complicated real fast! You will also find that you end up circling the same mountain again and again, hoping to produce a different result!

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That is insanity folks! Living as a carnal Christian is insane!

It was not until Paul took his eyes off himself and set them on Jesus that he found freedom. Notice that in contrast to Paul's complicated testimony in the flesh, his testimony of freedom was only nine simple words! Really, you could boil those down to one word - **JESUS!** Paul got the revelation of what it meant to walk in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit is all about Jesus, not about us! Now, let's look at Romans 8 to see what Paul learned about walking in the Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. Was Paul's testimony of defeat in **Romans 7** given about him as a young believer or before he knew Christ? What do you base your answer on?
2. Why is the law impossible to keep by your flesh?
3. What clues did Paul leave in his nine-verse testimony as to what his real problem was?
4. Can you relate to Paul's testimony of struggle with sin?
5. What was the answer Paul found to his struggle with sin? When did he discover the answer?

Chapter 5

Two Laws

In Romans 8, we find Paul's answer to sin and the flesh. It is our answer as well. The answer is going from being a navel-gazer to a Son-gazer. It is walking in the Spirit! The first thing Paul received victory over when he took his eyes off himself and put them on Jesus was condemnation!

Rom 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* (ESV)

CONDEMNATION IS THE PIT NAVEL-GAZERS ARE DESTINED TO FALL INTO

Condemnation is the pit navel-gazers are destined to fall into. Condemnation and guilt are byproducts of navel-gazing. When you focus on yourself and your failures, you will feel condemned. It is really self-condemnation, it does not come from God!

You cannot move on into the life of the Spirit while being under condemnation and guilt. You cannot live

and walk according to the Spirit and be a navel-gazer. It only works if you are a Son-gazer! You will find freedom from condemnation by looking unto Jesus Christ, your High Priest, who is sitting at the right hand of God interceding for you and unto the blood that speaks better things than that of Abel. (**Heb. 12:24**)

The next verse shows us that there are two competing laws that operate in every Christian.

Rom 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.* (ESV)

The first law mentioned in this verse is the law of the Spirit of life. This law works in our reborn spirit at all times. It is continually giving life to our spirit as a Christian. However, there is another law at work in us. It is the law of sin and death. This law operates in our flesh. It is always at work to bring us into sin and death. Both laws are wanting access to our soul, and our mind in particular. Our mind is the determinate on which law will have dominance over us.

Most Christians try to overcome the law of sin and death by their willpower or fleshly schemes. Did you know you can try to use biblical disciplines such as

prayer and other scriptural principles and they can end up being fleshly schemes? You try to use them to free yourself from sin, habits, and addictions. They were not given for that purpose! They were given to receive what Jesus did, not for you to try to accomplish what Jesus already did! The law of sin and death can't be overcome by willpower or fleshly schemes. It can only be overcome by a higher law. Just as gravity can only be overcome by the higher law of thrust and lift, the law of sin and death can only be overcome by the higher law of the Spirit of life. If this is true, then how can we operate in the law of the Spirit of life? By walking in the Spirit! Before you grab me by my lapels in frustration, like I wanted to do with Paul, relax, we are now ready to see what it means to walk in the Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. What was the first thing Paul got free from when he took his eyes off of himself and got them on Jesus? Why do you think this was?
2. What two laws operate in every Christian? Where do these two laws operate?
3. What do these two laws want access to?
4. How do most Christians try to overcome the law of sin and death in their flesh? Does this work? Why or why not?

Chapter 6

It is a Mind-Set!

Where is the first mention of walking in the Spirit in the New Testament? It is found in **Romans 8:4**.

Rom 8:4 *in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.* (ESV)

**THE
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Here we see that the righteous requirement of the law will be fulfilled **IN US**, who walk according to the Spirit. Notice how Paul says, “*in us*” not “*by us*”. The fulfillment of the law is something that happens in us and through us, not by us or through our own effort. Paul then for the first time explains what it means to walk according to the Spirit. The Law of First mention is established here.

Rom 8:5 *For those who live according to the flesh set*

their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. (ESV)

Rom 8:6 *For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.* (ESV)

These two verses give us the scriptural foundation for what it means to walk or live in the Spirit or in the flesh. This definition is the standard by which we should understand its use later in the New Testament. This would include when it is used in the book of Galatians. Again, this is based upon the Law of First Mention, which governs Bible interpretation.

Walking in the Spirit is equivalent to “walking according to the Spirit” and “living according to the Spirit”. It is three ways of saying the same thing.

In verse 5, we see that to live according to the Spirit means that one must set their mind on the things of the Spirit. Conversely, to live according to the flesh is to set one’s mind on the things of the flesh. Therefore, according to the scriptural definition, walking in the Spirit is based upon a **MIND-SET!** This is what it means to be spiritual. Someone who is spiritual sets their mind on the things of the Spirit. Someone who is carnal

sets their mind on the things of the flesh. Spirituality and carnality are both a **MIND-SET**.

Many people who try to define walking in the Spirit, use **Galatians 5:16** as their starting point, but this is not wise because it does not provide a sufficient foundation to do so. This leaves you trying to define walking in the Spirit yourself, rather than allowing the Bible to do that for you. It is always a good idea to use scripture to interpret scripture. When you try to define things based on a single verse, you are bound to veer off into the weeds! So, taking the scriptural definition of walking in the Spirit found in **Romans 8:4-6**, let's plug that into **Galatians 5:16** and you can safely translate the verse this way:

Gal. 5:16 *I say then: If you set your mind on the things of the Spirit, you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Actual verse:

Gal. 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Questions for Discussion

1. According to **Romans 8:4-6** what does walking in the Spirit mean and how do you do it?
2. According to **Romans 8:5-6** what is walking in the Spirit based upon?
3. Understanding that walking in the Spirit is a decision and not a long process, how is this good news for someone who has been carnal?
4. What will happen if you don't let the Bible define biblical words, phrases, or principles?
5. Why is it not wise to use **Galatians 5:16** to define walking in the Spirit?

Chapter 7

Flip the switch!

As we have seen, walking in the Spirit means that you set your mind on the things of the Spirit. It is not a long drawn out process of growth you must attain to do it.

Walking in the Spirit does not mean to walk around with your eyes rolled back in your head hearing heavenly voices! No, it means to set your mind on the things of the Spirit.

Walking in the Spirit and being spiritual is not a process, but a decision you make to set your mind on the things of the Spirit. This is good news folks! This means that if you have been carnal you can change in a split second by changing your mind-set!

You can go from setting your mind on the things of the flesh to setting your mind on the things of the Spirit in a snap. However, as with most good news there is also some bad news! The bad news is that you can switch from being spiritual and walking in the Spirit to being carnal in a moment as well.

What does it mean to set your mind on the things of the Spirit? It means that you set your mind and

focus on the spirit realm and what is true there. There is more to existence than just the physical world we see. Everything we see in the natural comes from the spirit realm. There is another realm more real and unchanging than this one! It is called the spirit realm.

Jesus is seated in heavenly places next to God the Father. This is true in the spirit realm. This is a good place to set our minds on! Anything that is true of our reborn spirits are the “things in the Spirit”. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus is in the spirit realm. It is operating in your reborn spirit right now. You can’t know what is true in the spirit realm by your five physical senses. You must receive revelation of what is in the spirit realm from the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

**YOU CAN'T
KNOW
WHAT IS
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SENSES**

It is comforting to know that the law of the Spirit of life is working in my spirit, but I need it to work in my soul and body, giving me freedom from the law of sin and death that operates in my flesh. How do you get the law of the Spirit of life to flow into your soul and body? You just need to flip the spiritual light switch

that controls the flow of the law of the Spirit of life. What is that switch? The switch is your **MIND!**

Whenever you are a navel-gazer looking down and your eyes are on yourself or just on the natural realm this switch is turned off. When you look up you become a Son-gazer, and you set your mind on the things of the Spirit. When we do this the switch turns on and the Law of the Spirit of life will flow into your soul and body. It is a law that will work whenever you cooperate with it. If you look back at any time in your Christian experience that you were flooded with life and peace, your mind was set on the things of the Spirit. There are no exceptions.

Isa 26:3 You will keep *him* in perfect peace, *Whose mind is stayed on You*, Because he trusts in You.

Here we see this spiritual law. God will keep us in perfect peace if our mind is stayed on Him. Where is God? He is a spirit and He is in the spirit realm. You can't keep your mind stayed on Him and have your mind set on the natural or on yourself at the same time! The Hebrew in the verse says that if your mind is stayed upon the Lord you will experience - "shalom

shalom". It is repeated twice. The translators did not know how to translate it, so they chose, "perfect peace". Shalom is an all-encompassing word of wholeness and peace. It is similar to the New Testament word for saved, which is the Greek word **SOZO**.

Let's see how this process works when you are at church. If you go to a good church, you really get into the worship time and your focus is completely on Jesus. You are filled with life, peace and joy. When the Word comes forth and Christ-centered messages are preached, you are pumped! You are full of life and peace. Why? Because during the entire service your mind was completely set upon the things of the Spirit.

However, the service has to end and as you walk into the foyer, sister Bucket-mouth says something that does not bless you, or brother Flip-a-lip has something negative to say. On top of that, all the problems you had going into the service are still there waiting for you and your mind goes back to focusing on them. You quickly lose that life, peace, and joy. Why? Because your mind moved from the things of the Spirit to the things of the flesh. You flipped off the switch to the law of the Spirit of life.

Questions for Discussion

1. What does it mean to set your mind on the things of the Spirit? What are the things of the Spirit?
2. What is the switch that causes the law of the Spirit of life to flow into your soul and body?
3. What do you think “perfect peace” means practically in your life?
4. Why do many people find themselves experiencing life and peace in church more often than out of church?

Chapter 8

Set your Mind

It is crucial where we set our mind. We have been conditioned our whole life to have a mind set on the natural realm. It will take a while to develop a new paradigm of spiritual thinking. However, it is more than half the battle knowing how to walk in the Spirit and operate in the law of the Spirit of life. It helps a lot when you know what walking in the Spirit is and how to do it. Let's look at a passage that talks about walking in the Spirit but uses different phrasing.

Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

Here in the book of Colossians, Paul tells us to seek those things which are above. He is not talking about physical things here. We are not to go on our roof and look for the things up there! He is talking spiritually.

We are to see those things above in the spirit realm. Paul goes on to say, *“Set your mind on things above.”* Do you remember what **Romans 8:5** said? Paul told us that those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. Paul is saying the same thing here in Colossians. We are to set our minds on the things of the Spirit, not natural things like our flesh or our circumstances.

Col 3:3 *For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

Col 3:4 *When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

In verse 4, we see that Christ is our life. He is seated in Heaven, but He is vitally connected to our spirit by His Spirit. There is an invisible connection between us and the glorified Lord Jesus in Heaven by the Spirit. When we set our mind [our switch] on the risen Lord, the law of life in Jesus flows into our soul and body. We experience life and peace. This is so simple most Christians miss it. They make it much more complicated than it is. That always happens when we try to serve God by our flesh. As we move forward to

verse 5, we see Paul instructing us to do something, but it is important to take this verse in context or we can miss how to do it.

Col 3:5 *Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.*

Paul tells us to put to death your members which are on the earth. Many Christian hear this and attempt to kill themselves! They try using willpower to kill the fornication and evil desires that lurk within their flesh. In doing so, they end up with the same testimony Paul had in Romans 7. It just seems we are never able to pull this off. God never intended for us to pull this off!

I want you to see a pivotal word in verse 5. The verse starts with the word “Therefore”. When you see this word, you need to ask yourself, what is it *there for*? It is a connective word from the verses that precede it. Therefore, the way we are to put to death our members on the earth is by doing what He told us to do in verses 1-2. How are we going to put to death our members which are on earth? It is by setting our mind on things above. When we do this, the Spirit will put

to death our members which are on the earth. Let's look at a verse in Romans that shows us this.

Rom 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.*

In this verse, we see how we are going to put to death the members of our body, or here, the “deeds of the body”. It is **BY THE SPIRIT!** Do you see that? It did not merely say for you to put to death the deeds of the body. It says **by the Spirit** you put to death the deeds of your body. That is a huge difference! How does the Spirit put them to death? It is when you set your mind on the things of the Spirit, the Spirit will flow into your soul and body and put them to death! The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus sets us free from the law of sin and death!

You might be thinking that this is just too easy! Beloved, salvation is simple. When you accepted Jesus, you took your eyes off yourself and put them fully on Him and the greatest transformation took place - you went from sinner to saint, from dead to alive. Why do you think the other transformations you need would

be any different or more complicated? We make things complicated!

Now I want to talk to you about rats!

Questions for Discussion

1. How do the verses in **Romans 8:5-6** correlate with **Colossians 3:1-2**?
2. How are we to fulfill **Colossians 3:5**? How can you know this?
3. According to **Romans 8:13** how are the sinful deeds of your flesh going to be put to death? Please explain how this works.
4. Why do many struggle with God's way of victory through walking in the Spirit?
5. Do you think if getting saved is easy, it would be hard to experience sanctification and freedom from addiction?

Chapter 9

Killing the Rats

No one likes rats! If you find one in your house you want it out as soon as possible! Sin and addictions are rats in our life. Many have tried to exterminate spiritual rats by using their own methods and willpower. This just does not work, it just makes the rats grow bigger and bigger! We must learn to deal with the spiritual rats in our life the way the Bible teaches us to.

An interesting story comes from an early aviation pioneer, Sir Frederick Handley Page. He tells an account of being midway through flight when he heard a rat in the back of his plane. One of those miserable creatures had hitched a ride and was gnawing on the fragile control wiring. If the rat was able to gnaw through it, the aircraft could lose control causing him to crash. He had to get rid of the rat quickly! Although Page could not leave the cockpit, he knew of a way to fix his rat problem. He immediately pulled back on the control stick and began to climb. The aircraft quickly ascended to an altitude so high it was hard for him to breathe, but the noise of the rat stopped! Page

understood he needed to take the rat to an altitude it could not sustain. As a result, the rat suffocated due to a lack of oxygen. This is how we are to deal with the spiritual rats in our life! We saw in the last chapter how we are to kill the rats of sin and addictions.

Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

Col 3:2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.

**HOW ARE
WE TO KILL
THE RATS IN
OUR LIVES?
WE NEED
TO TAKE
THEM UP
HIGHER!**

How are we to kill the rats in our lives? We need to take them up higher! Hallelujah! Take them higher folks! We need to take those rats to the throne of God where Christ sits! When we set our minds on the things above where Christ sits at the right hand of God, then those rats will suffocate and die!

Page did not have to kill the rat himself, he just made the decision to go up higher and the rarified air killed it. Likewise, we don't kill our rats ourselves. We just make the decision to go up higher and the Spirit

kills the rats!

Romans tells us that we are to reckon ourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Rom 6:11 *Even so consider yourselves also dead to sin and your relation to it broken, but alive to God [living in unbroken fellowship with Him] in Christ Jesus.*
(AMP)

What does it mean to be dead to sin? It is the same as someone disowning another person and saying, "You are dead to me!" What does that mean? It means that all remembrances of that person are removed. All pictures are taken down and thrown away. That person's name is never again mentioned. All thought of them is avoided.

Psa 31:12 I am forgotten like a dead man, out of mind; I am like a broken vessel.

This verse in Psalms gives us an idea of what it means to be dead to something. It is forgotten, out of mind! What does it mean to be dead to sin? It means

you do not focus on it anymore. To be made alive to someone, means you put all your focus and attention on them. Many struggle attempting to overcome sin by their own power. In doing so, their focus is on sin.

MANY STRUGGLE ATTEMPTING TO OVERCOME SIN BY THEIR OWN POWER. IN DOING SO, THEIR FOCUS IS ON SIN. THIS IS NOT BEING DEAD TO SIN, IT IS BEING ALIVE TO SIN!

This is not being dead to sin, it is being alive to sin! If you are dead to sin, then when temptation comes, you turn your focus from the object of the temptation and turn it fully upon the Lord seated at the right hand of God. In doing so, the rat will be killed by the Spirit! It's just that easy folks.

Questions for Discussion

1. What spiritual rats have you dealt with in your past?
What spiritual rats are you dealing with right now?
2. How did Handley Page deal with the rat in his plane?
How does that natural example show us how to deal with the spiritual rats in our life?
3. What does it mean to be dead to sin? What does it mean to be alive to God?
4. If someone focuses on their sin trying to overcome it, are they dead to it or alive to it? Why is this?

Chapter 10

The Spiral Downward

After Adam and Eve ate us out of house and home, things went downhill pretty fast from the life in the Garden of Eden! They had enjoyed a perfect environment with all they needed. It also says something interesting about them in the Garden before the fall.

Gen 2:25 *And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

Here we see that they were both naked and were not ashamed. We know from Genesis chapter 3, it was not until after they ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that they knew they were naked. God asked them in chapter 3, *“Who told you that you were naked?”* **Gen. 3:11** Apparently they were not aware of it until that point. Some teach that Adam and Eve were clothed with glory before the fall, so they could not see they were naked. This is a fabrication! Where does it say that in the Bible? It doesn't. It does say they were

naked and **not ashamed**, which implies they were just that - naked!

So how could they not realize they were naked in chapter 2, but then realize they were naked in chapter 3? Before the fall they both were wholly God focused! Their minds were fully set upon the spirit realm. When they ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, the curse of self-awareness came upon them. I think this is the worst part of the curse - self-focus.

The fruit of self-focus is shame and fear. If you struggle with shame and fear, then you are self-focused. You my friend, are a navel-gazer! I believe that in Heaven we will return to a state of complete God-focus again. You can get some heaven on earth now if you will just shift your focus off yourself and put it fully upon the Lord.

**THE FRUIT OF
SELF-FOCUS IS
SHAME AND
FEAR. IF YOU
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FEAR AND
SHAME, THEN
YOU ARE SELF-
FOCUSED. YOU
MY FRIEND, ARE
A NAVEL-GAZER!**

We see that the downward spiral of humanity was similar to Adam and Eve's.

Rom 1:21 *because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

Rom 1:22 *Professing to be wise, they became fools,*

Rom 1:23 *and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.*

Rom 1:24 *Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,*

Rom 1:25 *who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

Rom 1:26 *For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.*

Rom 1:27 *Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

Rom 1:28 *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*

In these verses, we see the downward spiral of humanity. What was the problem? They moved their focus from God to the natural world [creation]. Verse 28 says they did not retain God in their knowledge [thinking]. They refused to think on anything that was spiritual and became carnal in their thinking. Once they did this, the law of sin and death in their flesh had full control over them. They were handed over to the lusts of their flesh and enslaved.

If that was how they spiraled downward then what would be the answer to move upward? It would be to reverse the process! Instead of focusing on oneself or just the natural, you would put your focus on God and glorify Him as God in your mind. In doing so the Spirit will keep you in holiness and sanctification! Let's see another verse that describes this process of a downward spiral.

**PUT YOUR FOCUS
ON GOD AND
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SANCTIFICATION**

Eph 4:17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. (ESV)

Eph 4:18 *They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.* (ESV)

Here we see that we are not to walk as the Gentiles walk in the futility of their **minds**. They were darkened in their own understanding because they alienated themselves from the life of God. They were alienated because of their ignorance. They were ignorant because of the hardness of their heart. Hardness of heart was their root problem. How does one become hardened towards God? It is by refusing to think on or focus on Him. The Gentiles were completely focusing on the natural realm. Whatever you focus on, your heart will be softened to. Whatever you neglect or don't focus on your heart will be hardened to. That is a law folks! Start moving higher today by putting your focus higher- where Jesus is seated at the right hand of God. You will soften your heart towards God and harden your heart against sin!

Questions for Discussion

1. Describe what it means to be God-focused rather than self-focused.
2. What was the reason for the downward spiral of humanity found in **Romans 1:21-28**?
3. What does it mean to be hard-hearted? How can you become soft-hearted towards God?

Chapter 11

The Law of Focus

The Law of Focus is the law that what you focus on will influence you and you will be conformed to. Although the phrase “Law of Focus” is not found in the Bible, neither is the “Law of Gravity”! However, it is a law all the same. The Law of Focus can be seen in the Scriptures.

Rom 12:2 *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.* (ESV)

How does one become conformed to the world? By focusing on the things of the world. We are told rather to be transformed by the renewing of our mind.

The actual Greek says the “**renewal**” of our mind. This does not just mean gaining new truths about different categories of things like healing, righteousness, faith, etc., but it also refers to an entirely new way of thinking. It speaks of a new

paradigm in the way we think - from the natural to the spiritual. When we focus on the things of the Spirit, we will be transformed by the Spirit.

Eph 4:23 *And be constantly renewed in the spirit of your mind [having a fresh mental and spiritual attitude], (AMP)*

What does it mean to be renewed in the spirit of your mind? The Amplified brings out that it is having a new spiritual attitude and way of thinking. It means to be renewed by developing a spiritual mind. When you focus upon the Lord you will be renewed!

We can see this law in the Old Testament in picture form. We can see this in what God directed Jacob to do when his uncle Laban was trying to cheat him out of his wages.

Gen 30:37 *But Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane trees and peeled white streaks in them, exposing the white in the rods. (AMP)*

Gen 30:38 *Then he set the rods which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the watering troughs where*

the flocks came to drink. And since they bred and conceived when they came to drink, (AMP)

Gen 30:39 The flocks bred and conceived in sight of the rods and brought forth lambs and kids streaked, speckled, and spotted. (AMP)

When the flocks came to drink, they looked through the water and saw the streaked rods, then gave birth to what they saw! This is the Law of Focus at work. This Law of Focus will also work for us when we look through the water of the Word and behold the Lord.

**THIS LAW OF FOCUS
WILL WORK FOR US
AS WELL AS WE LOOK
THROUGH THE WATER
OF THE WORD AND
BEHOLD THE LORD**

We also see the Law of Focus at work in the life of Moses. God called him up for a 40 day and night retreat on Mt. Sinai to get the law. This is what it says about the encounter Moses had with the Lord.

Exo 34:28 Moses was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he ate no bread and drank no water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Exo 34:29 *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of the Testimony in his hand, he did not know that the skin of his face shone and sent forth beams by reason of his speaking with the Lord.*

Exo 34:30 *When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they feared to come near him. (AMP)*

Moses spent 40 days and nights in direct face-to-face contact with the Lord. His complete focus was upon Him. This encounter with the Lord had a dramatic effect upon his physical body! It says he did not eat **nor drink** for 40 days. Many people have gone 40 days without food, but no one has gone 40 days without drinking! Moses' body was supernaturally sustained in the presence of the Lord. This encounter so effected Moses' body that when he came down off the mountain his skin was shining! What do you think would happen to you if you just focused upon the Lord? It will have a direct impact upon your soul and body!

The Law of Focus works in this life and will be in operation when you pass on to the next life.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

In this verse, it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. To the degree which we see the Lord Jesus, is the degree we will be like Him! One day when we see Jesus fully as He is, we will be made like Him by beholding Him! This transformative work in us can happen now to the degree we see and behold Him as He is now at the right hand of God! Behold and become!

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the Law of Focus?
2. What was the impact on Moses' body by being in God's presence for 40 days and nights?
3. How important is it that you accurately see Jesus as He is? What happens when you do?

Chapter 12

You Need a 4:8!

Walking in the Spirit is not something difficult to do, nor is it something that causes you to walk around with your eyes rolled back while hearing voices in your head. Walking in the Spirit is far from that, it is quite practical!

Let's take a look at how practical walking in the Spirit is as we talk about the subject of worry.

Php 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Php 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Php 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

First, I want you to see that worry is a focus on the natural realm. When we worry we cut ourselves off from the law of the Spirit of Life! Therefore, Paul tells us to be anxious for **nothing**. That is all inclusive! It is important to note that Paul did not say be anxious for nothing and then end it with a period. He continued talking. Why is this so important? Because Paul did not tell us we should try to stop thinking bad thoughts. Trying to stop thinking about something is useless. You will think about it more by trying not to think about it! Since everyone uses a pink elephant to illustrate this, I will use a blue gorilla instead! Try to not think about a blue gorilla. Do not think blue. Do not think gorilla. Do not think blue gorilla! What are you thinking about? A BLUE GORILLA! This shows how fruitless it is trying not to think of something. How do you forget about the blue gorilla? By replacing it with another thought. It is by taking your focus off the blue gorilla and placing it on something else - maybe the pink elephant!

**WORRY IS
A FOCUS
ON THE
NATURAL
REALM**

So, am I telling you in this book that you need to stop thinking about sin, temptation, and your natural circumstances? No! I am telling you to replace them by thinking of the things of the Spirit! We shouldn't try

to stop thinking about things that worry us. We are to take them to God in prayer. When we do this, where does our focus turn? That's right, to God in the Spirit. They are replaced by changing our focus. When we turn our cares into prayers and focus our attention on the Spirit what will be the result? Verse 7 says the **PEACE** of God will guard our heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Do you remember what the book of Romans says the fruit of being spiritually minded is? Life and **PEACE. (Rom. 8:6)**

I don't know if you are like me, but I have received peace from a time of prayer only to have the old anxious thoughts return later, causing me to dwell on my problem again. What happened to the peace I had? Yep, it went away. Paul goes on to say in verse 8, that to keep the peace we need to filter our thinking

**WHEN WE
MEDITATE ON THE
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PERFECT PEACE**

through eight things and meditate on them. The only things that can make it past this filter are the "things of the Spirit". When we meditate on the things of the Spirit, we will be kept in perfect peace.

When I was younger, there was a television commercial for V-8 vegetable juice. It depicted a

rundown person slapping his forehead and exclaiming, *“I should have had a V-8!”* I have seen so many down-trodden Christians in my life. When I see them I just want to yell out, *“You should have had a 4:8!”* A Philippians 4:8!

Questions for Discussion

1. Where is your focus when you are worrying?
2. How easy is it to not think something? Why?
3. How do you get free from negative thoughts?
4. Why is it important to take a **Philippians 4:8**?

Chapter 13

The Power of Beholding

Walking in the Spirit is really a simple concept. We need help to misunderstand it! Transformation and freedom are really simple to experience. We see this in the book of 2 Corinthians chapter 3.

2Co 3:14 *But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.*

2Co 3:15 *But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.*

2Co 3:16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Here we see a problem with the unbelieving Jews. They had a veil on their face when the law was read. When you have a veil over your face, your vision is restricted everywhere except upon yourself. The only thing to look at underneath a veil, is at yourself. You have no other choice but to be a navel-gazer when you

have a veil over your face! How do you get rid of the veil? By looking up to Christ. When you do this, the veil that causes you to be self-focused is removed. If you read the law and only see what you must do to

**WHEN YOU
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satisfy a holy God, you are putting a veil over your face. To a veiled person reading the law, the law is all about them. However, if you see that the law was a shadow, fulfilled by Jesus, and put your eyes on Him, that restrictive veil is removed! (**Col. 2:17**) Your gaze will be upon the loveliness of your Savior!

When we turn our focus upon Christ seated at the right hand of God, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus kicks in!

2Co 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

When the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus kicks in, you will experience freedom! Trying to change yourself into God's image by your own self-effort is complicated and constantly strains you. All that effort

doesn't even work! Folks, you don't have to try to change yourself. You can experience transformation by the Spirit of God!

2Co 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Here we see God's plan for transformation and just how easy it is. The one qualification for this transformation process to work is for us to have an unveiled face. This means our focus can't be on ourselves or the natural. Our focus must be on the risen Lord in the Spirit. Transformation takes place when we simply behold through a mirror the glory of the Lord.

The mirror we look through is the Word of God. We would not even know about Jesus without the Word. When we focus on the things of the Spirit shown to us in the Word, this process will take place. Also, notice where our focus is to be? We are to behold the glory of the **LORD**, not the ugliness of ourselves! When we simply behold the glory of the Lord and keep

our focus on Him, the law of the Spirit of life kicks in. We will be transformed into the same image, from glory to glory. Will this be by our works and willpower? No, it will be by the Spirit of the

**TRANSFORMATION
TAKES PLACE WHEN
WE SIMPLY BEHOLD
THROUGH A MIRROR
THE GLORY OF THE
LORD**

Lord! This is how simple it is folks. Many just can't believe it is that easy. **People stumble over the stumbling stone which is Jesus!** They think they change themselves more into the image of the Lord. No, child of God, just come and behold the Lord through the Word, and the Spirit will do it for you! This is the glory of God's grace! Grace is what God does for us! Stop struggling and start beholding! You will be amazed at the transformation in you!

Questions for Discussion

1. What does it mean to have a veil over your face?
2. How is a spiritual veil removed from your face?
3. How does transformation into the image of Jesus occur according to **2 Cor. 3:18**?
4. What is the stumbling stone many stumble over? Why is that?

Chapter 14

Let your Dagon become a By-Gone!

Many Christians have become enslaved to alcohol, drugs, food, smoking, pornography, etc. These have become idols in their lives. They seek these for comfort or pleasure, but instead of offering freedom and satisfaction, they bind and destroy. An idol is something that replaces God, putting our focus and affection on it, rather than Him.

As we have seen, the Law of Focus will cause the thing focused on to have dominion and control in our lives. If we focus on God, we will experience His keeping power of holiness in our heart and life. If we focus on things other than God to meet our needs, we will soon find those things exercising authority and power over us and we will be enslaved.

How do we break free from idols that have taken us captive? It certainly won't be by exercising our willpower. The more we struggle against an idol by telling ourselves not to submit, the more we strengthen sin in our flesh. Telling ourselves to abstain from something is operating under the law. Sin is strengthened in the presence of the law - I can't, I must

not, I shall not. Sin at its root is rebellion. Where there is no law, there can be no rebellion. Once law is introduced, rebellion can manifest. Again, if we try to break free from an idol by telling ourselves not to submit to it, our desire for it will only strengthen. It is a no-win situation. So, how do we break free from an idol? By bringing it into the presence of God!

We see this principle in the Old Testament when the Ark of the Covenant was taken captive by the Philistines and placed in the temple next to their idol, Dagon.

1Sa 5:2 When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon.

1Sa 5:3 And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again.

The Philistines set the Ark of God, which is also called the Ark of God's Presence, by Dagon, the great Philistine idol. They left it there overnight but when they arose early in the morning, they found their great

and powerful idol had fallen on its face in the Presence of God! Instead of falling down and worshipping God, the Philistines propped up their idol again and left it for another night.

1Sa 5:4 And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold; only Dagon's torso was left of it.

The next morning, they once again arose to find their great and powerful idol, Dagon, prostrate before the Presence of God. Only this time, something else happened. Dagon's head and hands had been broken off! The head speaks of authority and the hands speak of power. The authority and power of this idol were destroyed by being exposed to the presence of God for a protracted period of time. Notice, the head and hands were not broken off until the second night the idol was in God's Presence.

How will the strong and mighty idol holding you captive be broken in your life? The same way Dagon was broken! By bringing the idol in your life with you

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into the presence of the Lord and beholding Him. Most people will not come to God with an idol in their life because they think God will reject them. God knows you can't free yourself from the power of the idol in your life. He will break its power for you! It may not break immediately, but most assuredly it will! Just keep coming into God's presence, beholding and worshipping Him, and your Dagon will soon become a by-gone! Focus on the Lord instead of the idol, and its head and hands will be broken off, and you find yourself free from it! Praise God!

Questions for Discussion

1. What is an idol?
2. Have you had, or do you have an idol in your life?
3. What does it mean to operate under the law when trying to say no to an idol that has taken hold of you?
4. What caused Dagon to be broken? How will an idol in your life be broken?
5. What do the broken head and hands of Dagon represent?

Chapter 15

Graze and Gaze!

We have seen the importance of setting our minds on the things of the Spirit. In the next few chapters, we will look at spiritual disciplines that help us do it. In the previous chapter, we saw the importance of beholding the glory of Jesus through the mirror. The Word is the mirror that shows us the glory of the resurrected Jesus Christ. Meditating on the word is setting your mind on the things of the Spirit!

Jas 1:22 *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

Jas 1:23 *For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;*

Jas 1:24 *for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.*

Jas 1:25 *But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

The Word of God is a mirror that shows us the glory of the Lord. Just as a man can look into a natural mirror to see His natural face, we look into the spiritual mirror to see the reflection of Jesus. In the new birth, we have

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been born again in the image of Christ. As we behold the resurrected Jesus and see Him as He is, we have a glimpse of our new self in Christ.

1Jn 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

John reveals to us, as Christ is, so are we in this present world. How can we know how we are in the present world in the eyes of God? By beholding how Christ is right now at the right hand of God. To do this, we must look regularly in the mirror of God's Word and see the perfect law of liberty, which is the gospel and person of Jesus Christ. We can't see how we are in this present world through the eyes of God without seeing how Jesus is right now at the right hand of God, and we can't do that without the Word. The Word is our only

way to see what is true in the spirit realm. We can't connect with the spirit realm with our natural five senses. We can only know and see what is true in the spirit realm by the Word of God and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, it is vital that we spend time in God's Word. If we look at the Word as a mirror for the purpose of measuring ourselves to God's standards, it will minister condemnation and death to us. However, if we use the Word as a mirror to behold the glory of the Lord, we will be transformed into the same image outwardly as Jesus is now at the right hand of God. When we look through the mirror in this way, the Word is spirit and life to us.

Joh 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

The words of Christ and about Christ are spirit and life. They are the connectors to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. They are the "things of the spirit". Any and all truths in the Word that reveal what is true in the spirit realm are called the "things of the Spirit".

We are to set our mind on the things of the Spirit. Doing this only produces life and peace. **Rom. 8:6**

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It is important to learn to **graze and gaze!** When we feed on the Word, we also need to see the glory of the Lord through it. The Word shows us what the Lord is like. Through the revelation of the Word, we can gaze at the Lord, causing us to be transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.

Without the mirror of the Word to see how the Lord is, you might think of Him to be quite severe or harsh. However, when looking at the New Testament, you see Him as love, having taken our sins and judging them at the cross. We can see His grace and mercy! Reading and meditating on the Word are disciplines that help us set our mind on the things of the Spirit and therefore walk in the Spirit.

I would encourage you to start in the letters written to the church and underline the verses that use the words, *“in Him, through Him, by Him, and by*

whom” and meditate on them. These verses show you what is true in the spirit realm and what is true in your born-again spirit. As your mind is set on these things of the Spirit, you will experience the divine flow of the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. You will see transformation outwardly into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord!

Questions for Discussion

1. When we look into the mirror of God's Word whose reflection do we see?
2. Why is it important to behold just how Jesus is?
3. What does the phrase "graze and gaze" mean to you?
4. Why is it important to focus on the Words of Jesus?

Chapter 16

Worship, Praise, & Thanksgiving

Meditating on the Word of God is a powerful way to set your mind on the things of the Spirit, but it is not the only way. In this chapter, I want to look at other ways we can do this. They are worship, praise, and thanksgiving. These are connected to the Spirit-filled life.

Eph 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

Eph 5:19 *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,*

Eph 5:20 *giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Here, Paul does not define walking in the Spirit. However, he does instruct us how - by giving thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts. What all these practices have in common is they put our focus completely in the Spirit and upon the Lord, and off

ourselves and the natural. When we do this, the law of the Spirit of Life is switched on and flows into our soul and body. The presence of God is directly tied to worship and praise.

Psa 22:3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. (KJV)

The presence of God is experienced when we praise and worship God because our focus is upon Him and not us! The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus flows to us.

2Ch 5:13 It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD; (KJV)

2Ch 5:14 So that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God. (KJV)

We see when the temple was dedicated, the priests praised and thanked God, and the house of the Lord was filled with the presence and glory of God. Again, the presence of God is connected to praise, worship, and thanksgiving. When we engage in them, the law of the Spirit of life goes into effect!

You cannot truly worship God and be focused upon yourself at the same time - that would make you cross-eyed! In worship, our full attention is upon the Lord as we behold His glory. As we do this, the law of the Spirit of life works in us to transform us.

I would encourage you to download Pandora® or Spotify® on your phone and make a playlist of many songs that exalt or speak of the person of Jesus. This will help keep your mind set on the Lord in the Spirit.

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Questions for Discussion

1. Why is worship and praise of God important?
2. Is the law of the Spirit of life connected to worship? If so, how?
3. How is self-focus and worship of God incompatible?

Chapter 17

Prayer

Prayer is another thing that will set your mind on the things of the Spirit. Prayer is communion with God. The Greek word for prayer is **proseuche**. This word means *face-to-face prayer*. You cannot rightly pray without being focused upon God. I have noticed, or rather my wife has noticed, that I can't have a real conversation with her until my focus is upon her.

Prayer is the language of dependence. It is interesting to note, out of the 613 commands in the Law, not one of them is to pray. The Law depended wholly upon your own strength and resources to meet God's demands. Under the New Covenant, God offers to satisfy His own demands for us, in us, and through us. That is why we see exhortations to pray day and night in the New Testament. As we draw upon God in prayer, we can see His power working in us and through us to fulfill His will.

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We have established that true prayer is a focused communication with God. Many people's prayers occur during the busyness of their day, either driving or working. I am not saying it is wrong to pray at those times, but we need consecrated times of undistracted focus upon God to engage in communication with Him, talking and listening. I find it works out best for me when I listen first and then speak!

I will be honest with you, I have struggled the most in this area. Much of my prayer happens while I am doing other things, like driving or working. For some reason, it has been a challenge for me to get quiet and talk with God. I have found that just sitting and beholding the Lord in my heart opens up times of communication with Him.

While we are on the subject of prayer, let's talk about praying in tongues. I think in some charismatic circles praying in tongues is the great panacea for everything. Praying in tongues is important and very useful, but it does not do everything for us. I was under the impression for years that praying in tongues was how I would be filled with the Holy Spirit. I would pray hour upon hour in tongues only to later fall into the same sins that plagued me. I thought praying in tongues would make these sinful habits disappear, but

they did not. The truth is, praying in tongues is not the way we are filled with the Spirit. Let's look at the book of Acts.

Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Notice the order in this verse, the early disciples were first filled with the Holy Spirit, and then began to speak with other tongues. It does not say, "they spoke in tongues and were filled with the Spirit."

Speaking in tongues does not automatically cause the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus to flow into your soul and body. What does? Setting your mind upon the things of the Spirit! So, while praying in tongues, I encourage you to set your mind on the things of the Spirit to get the maximum benefit from praying in tongues.

Questions for Discussion

1. Where is your focus when you rightly pray?
2. Why is it important to have undistracted time for prayer?
3. Why is prayer the language of dependence?
4. Will praying in tongues itself cause the law of the Spirit of life to flow into your soul and body? Explain

Chapter 18

What about Maturity?

In chapter two, we covered the subject of spirituality. We learned spirituality is not the end result of a process or something you grow into, but rather a mind-set - a decision to focus on the things of the Spirit. **(Rom. 8:5)** If we don't grow into spirituality, then what is spiritual maturity? Spiritual maturity is seen in how long we maintain a spiritual mind-set and how fast we can get back to that mind-set when our focus shifts to the things of the flesh.

A common trait amongst small children is their short attention spans! You can assign them a task, yet it won't take much to distract them from it. The same thing goes for young Christians. They are easily distracted from spiritual things by fleshly things. They spend more of their time focused upon themselves, the natural things of life, and their problems. They often focus on their sins and try to overcome them by their self-efforts. As we saw with Paul in Romans 7, this is carnality. A young Christian is not able to start growing spiritually until they put their focus on the Lord through the Word of God.

1Pe 2:2 *as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,*

It is possible for a Christian to remain a baby for an indefinite period of time if their focus remains on themselves and the natural realm. This was true of the saints in Corinth.

1Co 3:1 *And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.*

1Co 3:2 *I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;*

1Co 3:3 *for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?*

The Corinthians were stuck in baby stage. Why? Because they were so self-centered! Paul, in 1 Corinthians, dealt with many problems in the church, and all of them were rooted in self-centeredness.

We can see the same thing in the church today. There are some Christians who have never grown past

babyhood although they have been saved for 30 years! Would it seem strange if you looked into a bassinet expecting to see a beautiful little baby, but the occupant had a beard? Yes, of course it would! This happens every day in the church and it should not be!

It is possible to remain a baby, but when a young believer sets their mind on the things of the Spirit, they will start growing. Their maturity level will be seen in how long they can maintain a spiritual mindset and how fast they recover from a carnal one. Let me say this... One cannot start growing, spiritually speaking, unless they are spiritual first. This means to have their mind set on the things of the Spirit.

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SPIRITUALLY
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Progress in the Christian life is not static. You are either maturing or you are digressing in maturity. It is possible to have grown as a Christian and then digress back to being a baby again. This happened to the saints in the book of Hebrews.

Heb 5:12 *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the*

first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

Here we see, these Christians needed to be taught again the first principles of the Word of God. They had come to need milk. This means they had at one point advanced beyond just milk, but they had come again to need only milk because they could not handle the meat anymore. What happened to these Christians? These Hebrew saints got saved by looking to Jesus for salvation. They also heard the message that Jesus was returning quickly and started witnessing to their fellow Jews about the soon coming King. However, years had gone by and the Jews started mocking them and asking where this Jesus was. They were being persecuted for their faith and began to waver. Some had left church and returned to the temple and were even sacrificing animals that represented Jesus. They returned to the law. The law is based upon you and your own abilities to perform for God. They took their eyes off Jesus and looked to themselves. They became carnal. In doing so they reverted to babyhood stage again. What was the antidote for their problem? The writer of Hebrews tells them towards the end of the book.

Heb 12:2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

How would they start growing again? It was by **LOOKING UNTO JESUS!** This is how we will become spiritual and start growing ourselves. This is how we are to walk in the Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. How can you see maturity in a Christian according to this chapter?
2. Why do many Christians not mature in their Christian life?
3. What is needed to start growing as a Christian according to this chapter? Explain
4. Why did the Hebrew saints regress in their spiritual maturity? What was the answer for them to start growing again?

Chapter 19

The Discipline of the Mind

If we are going to walk in the Spirit, we will need to set our mind on the things of the Spirit. Our mind needs to be disciplined and trained to think spiritually and not carnally. A carnal Christian will immediately start trying on their own to discipline their mind. This is a focus upon yourself and is the definition of carnality! We are not called to do anything in our own strength. No, we are to discipline our mind by the aid of the Spirit of God and His grace!

2Ti 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Here we see we have been given a spirit of a sound mind. The Greek word for “sound mind” literally means *saved thinking*. The Holy Spirit will lead and empower us to discipline our minds. You need to invite the Holy Spirit to do this. The Holy Spirit helps some Christians much more than He helps others. Not because God is a respecter of persons, but because some Christians depend a lot more on the Holy Spirit

than other people do. We only need to ask the Spirit to help us with this and to remind us when our mind is on the things of the flesh, and He will. We are not called to control ourselves. One of the fruits of the Spirit is self-control. Self can't control self! The Spirit will help you control self!

When you start practicing the discipline of setting your mind on the things of the Spirit you will notice how often your mind strays back upon the natural realm. Most people do not realize just how carnal they are until they start practicing setting their mind on the things of the Spirit! Don't be discouraged with yourself. When you notice your mind is downward on yourself, your problems, or just natural things, look up and focus upon Jesus. The law of the Spirit of life will kick in. You will experience life and peace! You will find yourself more proficient at this as you practice this as a new lifestyle.

I think it is important that we make this a lifestyle and not just something we try to do when we are tempted with sin. I have found that as I have made this my lifestyle, I am not tempted very often with areas that held me in bondage for years. I have found new freedom. Praise God!

Questions for Discussion

1. How does the Holy Spirit help us with walking in the Spirit?
2. Why does the Holy Spirit help some Christians more than He helps others?
3. Why is it important to make walking in the Spirit a lifestyle and not something you just try to do when you are tempted with sin?

Chapter 20

In Conclusion

In conclusion, to walk in the Spirit you only need to keep your eyes on Jesus and get them off yourself and the natural realm. As you keep your mind off yourself, you will find a new level of life and peace in your soul. Just enjoy Jesus! Don't make it more complicated than that.

When you are tempted with a sinful habit, resist the urge to focus on it and don't try to overcome it with willpower. In the end, you will lose this fight. Instead, just look up and focus on Jesus who is on the throne in Heaven. In doing so, the Spirit will put that sinful thing to death for you. Remember how we kill spiritual rats!

Spend time in the Word, looking for and beholding Jesus! Spend time worshipping and praising the Lord as this keeps your mind fully set on Him.

When you find yourself anxious about life, or find yourself upset, this is a sign your mind is set on the things of the flesh and this world. Don't get condemned, just look up and pray! Your answer is found up, not down! Your main objective should be to

continue to behold the Lord and then walk in the flow of grace that comes from that.

I hope this book has been a blessing to you and the simple but profound revelation we studied will make a huge difference in your life! Now, go and walk in the Spirit!

If you have a testimony on how this book has helped you, I would love to hear about it. You can send it to howtowalkinthespirit@gmail.com

Questions for Discussion

1. What will you find if you keep your mind off yourself and your problems?
2. When you are tempted by something sinful what should you do?
3. What should your main objective be?

Epilogue

This book has been designed for personal and group use.

If this book has impacted your life, please consider sharing it with others by holding a small Bible study. I encourage you to find four friends with whom you would like to share this book.

I advise five sessions be held. At each meeting one chapter can be read per member followed by a group discussion of the questions at the end of each chapter. The chapters are short and four chapters could be completed during each meeting. If you prefer to progress more slowly, adding more session times would be appropriate.

When the book study is completed, I encourage you to ask if any members in the group were impacted by the study and if they can then find four other people to hold the same kind of Bible study.

Rick McFarland