

"God So Loved The World" Bible Study

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (NIV)

Study #9: Walking in the Spirit

Being a born-again Christian means you have become a new creation in Christ. Christianity is not a modification, or an improvement, or a purification of your old life. It is receiving a completely new life, the life of Christ, in exchange for your old sinful life that was executed on the cross of Christ. This is what the Bible means by the experience of conversion or regeneration, which we covered in our last study.

The moment you experienced the new birth, you passed from death to life, or from condemnation of the law to justification unto life. This is the beginning of the Christian walk. Now that you have the life of Christ, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, your goal in life must be to manifest that life, so that all may see "Christ in you."

The work of subduing the sinful desires of the flesh and reproducing the holy and righteous life of Christ in you is the work of the Holy Spirit. This work is the process of sanctification. And while this experience of sanctification does not contribute one iota towards your title to heaven, it witnesses the salvation you already have in Christ through justification by faith. Hence, sanctification, which is the fruit of the Spirit, is witnessing true justification by faith or the power of the gospel.

But for this to happen, you must learn to walk in the Spirit. In Adam, all you were capable of was to walk in the flesh, satisfying the drives of the sinful nature. But now, as a born-again Christian, you are able to walk in the Spirit as Christ Himself did when He was on this earth. This is what this lesson is all about—the experience of walking in the Spirit.

1. What is the only way you can overcome the sinful desires of our sinful natures?

Galatians 5:16 _____

Note: When God created our first parents, Adam and Eve, He created them with certain desires such as hunger, thirst, sex, etc. While these were created by God, they were supposed to be created with the Holy Spirit indwelling Adam and Eve. When Adam sinned, the Spirit departed from him and his mind became a slave to the flesh. Thus the natural desires God created in our first parents became lusts. This is what they passed on to us. If you try to control these desires in your own strength, you will meet with nothing but failure.

2. What happens to your lifestyle when you walk in the Spirit?

Galatians 5:22-25 _____

Note: Notice that when Paul talks about the flesh in verse 19 he uses the word “works” because works are what we humans can do. In verse 22 he uses the word “fruit,” because it is the Holy Spirit that produces fruit; we simply bear the fruit.

3. What blessing does a Christian experience in Christ?

Romans 8:1 _____

Note: The reason that there is no condemnation for the Christian who has accepted the truth as it is in Christ Jesus is because on the cross Christ condemned the law of sin that is in the flesh (read verses 2 and 3).

4. What will happen if you walk in the Spirit and do not live to please the flesh?

Romans 8:4 _____

Note: God wants you to walk in the Spirit so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in your life. This is not to save you but to witness that salvation.

5. Through what part of the body does the flesh or the Spirit control us?

Romans 8:5 _____

Note: The mind is the battle ground in the Christian warfare. The question is, “What is your mind occupied with?” Those who are walking in the flesh are always thinking about pleasing the desires of their sinful nature. When you walk in the Spirit, you want to please Christ. This is the battle of the mind from which you cannot relax. The moment you do so, the devil comes in with all kind of sinful ideas.

6. What is the result of being carnal or fleshly minded?

Romans 8:6 (first part) _____

Note: The word “carnal” means controlled by the sinful desires of the flesh, your sinful nature. The flesh can only bring death to you, not life, because all that the flesh can produce is sin and “the wages of sin is death” (see Romans 6:23).

7. When you are spiritually minded what two things do you have?

Romans 8:6 (last part) (i) _____

(ii) _____

8. Why is the carnal mind, the mind controlled by the flesh, hostile to God?

Romans 8:7 _____

9. What is the result of being controlled by the fleshly mind?

Romans 8:8 _____

10. Who should the Christian allow to control his or her mind?

Romans 8:9 _____

Note: By obeying the gospel you have said in your heart, "Not I, but Christ." You have chosen not the flesh but the Spirit to control your life.

11. If Christ's Spirit is dwelling in you, how should you consider your body?

Romans 8:10 _____

12. If the Spirit controls you, what will happen to your mortal body?

Romans 8:11 _____

Note: The mortal body is your sinful nature which cannot produce righteousness, but the Spirit can. The gospel does not only give you peace with God and the joy of salvation, but it can also give you victory over sin. That's the wonderful thing about the gospel. It is the power of God to save you from the guilt and punishment of sin as well as from the power and slavery of sin.

13. If you have been born of the Spirit, what is your obligation?

Romans 8:12-14 _____

Note: God says to every Christian, "Because of your faith in Christ, you have been born of the Spirit; I have given you peace, but remember that, by choosing the gospel, by choosing Me, you have also chosen not to walk in the flesh but in the Spirit."

14. Who is the one that gives you real life?

John 6:63 _____

Note: The source of real life is the Holy Spirit. When He comes and dwells in you He brings with Him the life of Christ which has conquered both sin and death.

15. Besides victory over sin, into what does the Spirit guide you?

John 16:13 _____

16. What transformation takes place in your life when you walk in the Spirit?

2 Corinthians 3:17, 18 _____

17. Who actually does the work of sanctification in your life?

1 Peter 1:2 _____

Note: The work of sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. Your part is to keep your eyes focused on Christ and to walk in the Spirit.

18. How should your baptism into Christ's death affect you?

Romans 6:4 _____

Note: Walking in newness of life means letting the Holy Spirit now control your life.

19. What kind of life will you live when you are walking in the Spirit?

Ephesians 5:1,2 _____

20. What will you experience when you walk in the light of the gospel?

1 John 1:7 _____

Note: Walking in the light is the same as walking in the power of the gospel, since Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

21. How much fruit (holy living) are you able to produce without Christ?

John 15:4-8 _____

Note: Walking in the Spirit is the same as abiding in Christ. If we abide in Christ, we will bear much fruit and God will be pleased.

22. In whose strength was Christ able to do what He did?

John 6:57 _____

Note: "Living by the Father" means "living by the strength of the Father." In the same way, you must live in the strength of Christ. That is what Christian living is all about.

23. Why is Christian living so important in witnessing the gospel?

Matthew 5:14-16 _____

Note: The world judges your Christianity by your works. By your love for your fellow men, said Jesus, all men will know that you are His disciples (see John 13:34, 35).

Mahatma Gandhi, one of the great leaders of this century, made a remarkable statement while addressing a large assembly of leaders and members of the Dutch Reformed church in South Africa. This statement was made as part of a speech which condemned the unjust system of apartheid during the time he lived there and was practicing law. He said to this vast assembly: "When you Christians live the life of your Master, all India will bow down to Christianity."

May your life be constantly led of the Spirit so that the world might see in you the wonderful life of Christ and be drawn closer to Him.

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