***How to be Filled with the Spirit

Colossians 1:25-29

COL-212***

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Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

1 Peter 2:1-2: "Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, and all deceit, and hypocrisy, and envy, and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the Word, so that by it you may grow up in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord."

2 Peter 3:18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity."

This morning we direct your attention to the subject of "The Mystery of the Church," segment number 27, in Colossians 1:25-29.

Those of us who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, who live in the church dispensation, have special resources for living the godly life. Some Christians never seem to catch onto that fact. Some wake up after great damage, and great spiritual and physical injury has been done to them. We Christians are not helpless ninnies in our lives. We have, provided for us by God, a power system of living a godly. And when you live a godly life, it brings blessings socially, economically, physically, and every way. It all is affected by how we walk before God, and as the psalm we read this morning Psalm 25:14 repeatedly says: "Those who fear Him" – those who respect Him, and are afraid to thumb their nose at His leading and His word.

**A Completed Bible**

Believers who live today in the church age have magnificent resources that no other believer in previous eras has ever had for living the life of God. For example, Christians possess a completed Bible with all the doctrinal principles revealed, which show us the mind and the will of God. Others have never had that. We have it all. We also have the Lord Jesus Christ permanently indwelling us as believers. He is there to be our divine example as members of God's royal family, and the role model that we are to imitate. How many people (how many Christian people) say, "I have a role model within me that I am to imitate."

The apostle Paul put that up one step further. He said, "I'm your instructor. I'm your communicator of the Word of God. I'm calling upon you to imitate what you see in me, as I imitate Christ." There are some things in Paul that you should not have imitated. But those things that are confirmed in Scripture that imitate Christ (he's bringing it down to the human plane), you do imitate the God-Man Jesus Christ. And people who forget that (believers who forget that) will do the most outrageous things to themselves and to others. They will destroy themselves; their potential in life; and, their rewards in eternity, with sins that are just beyond belief. How can that be? It is because we watch television, which is banal, and mindless, and corrosive, and degrading, and stupid. And the only way they can get people to laugh is if they appeal to the lowest denominator: the lowest features appealing to the old sin nature; the vulgarity; and, the offenses, or they have to put a laugh track on the tape.

I have a hard time believing that the television companies can stay in business with what the programming is. But obviously people watch. People buy the products that are advertised, and they, therefore, commend what they see. And these people are usually loud, I was telling Mrs. Danish the other day, "Everything of these programs is loud; fast-moving; and, very highly emotional. And if you watch young people, that's how they act. When they get together, and they're in a group, they're imitating this raucous, undisciplined, mindless lifestyle, because these are the role models.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ wouldn't act like that. He is a Man of dignity. And He is, therefore, a person who makes us the finest examples of what God had in mind when He created us. In every moment of your life, there is within you the Lord Jesus Christ: to consult; to think back on Scripture; to view Him in circumstances as He walked this earth, and as He served God; and, how He conducted Himself, so that we have a real role model rather than this trash that is put out there by the world system. The role model out there on TV is Satan's – not God's.

**The Holy Spirit**

The Christian has the great resource also of the Holy Spirit permanently indwelling every one of us, so that we have spiritual power to do right, and to serve in God's will. We have the power to do right. Anybody who should be in church here this morning, as the Scripture says, "That's the right thing to do" (Hebrews 10:24-25), and is not, has no excuse. If he was able to do it, unless there were providential circumstances, that person is wrong. That person is sinning. And that person cannot say, "Well, I just couldn't make it, because of this. I didn't feel like going today. I didn't have that." I'll tell you what: you want to remember that someday, you're not going to be able to attend. Someday, you're not going to be able to come. Someday, it's going to be beyond those capacities.

**The Life of Moses**

There are not many people who can go 40 years through life, like Moses did, and get his basic orientation preparation from life, and go for another 40 years in God's special school of discipline and training, so that he gets to be 80 years old, and now he's *at the prime of life*. Moses was as sharp as 80 as he was at 40. Then he began the next 40 years at par excellence performance in the service of Almighty God. And yet, even this poor man, with that kind of a magnificent capacity, and opportunity, and an impact he made on history, let the people of God make him lose his orientation, as he got fed up and disgusted with the stupidity of those who should know better. So, instead of speaking to the rock for the water, he hit it with his rod, in his anger, and God said, "Moses, I've had you for 120 years. You've been my really great man, and I've kept your capacities to the full, because you were true to Me. You feared Me. So, I kept you at par all the time. And now you go and do this. I can't let you go into the Promised Land. The plum was lost.

There is never a time when we can say, "We can back off. It's fine. We don't have to worry about it." You'll drop like flies under a shot of Raid. You will drop if you do not understand what it is that God has given you in Christian resources, and the reality of the working of that God out there.

So, Moses got on the mountain, and God said, "There it is. This is what you've been spending your 120 years of life for. And I'm going to let you look at the Promised Land, but you can't go in. And when you're through looking, I'm going to put you to sleep, and bury you up here."

That's coming. Now is the appointed time. And Christians, who think that they have forever, have missed the realities of the fact that they have the power to do right now. We don't have to wait for a better day.

So, we Christians have all these magnificent problem-solving principles that we've looked at in detail, which have been provided for us to meet the circumstances of the believer's life. I can guarantee you that any young person who's been here to hear the series of principles that we enunciated, and laid out in such detail – that young person has got the major features of life at his fingertips now. He will never make a mistake that will be a big, big life scar, if he follows those principles. He knows them now. He knows the problem-solving features. That's part of the great power system.

So, we (Christians) have these great provisions, so that we can never claim that we didn't know better. We can never claim that we were ignorant of God's laws, and of right conduct. They're all in the Bible. There's no excuse for a Christian to live like a helpless ninny under the domination of the old sin nature producing evil. If you are, it's because the Holy Spirit is not running the show, but you're letting some religious operation of the world, through the sin nature of Satan, run the show.

God has provided the church-age believer with a system of spiritual power which enables him to live a godly life pleasing to his Heavenly Father.

**The Old Sin Nature**

Now while the Christian can do right, you are still under the freedom of your priesthood, and you can choose to do evil. Most Christians do. Most Christians choose to resist. Most Christians choose to do evil. But thank God, when you wake up, there's always the path of confession; of restoration; and, of getting back to where the power system works. But such a Christian, when He does that, is out of temporal fellowship with God. And he is now led by his old sin nature. This is a very tragic condition. And we should never forget how brutal the old sin nature is.

**"Compassion"**

This old sin nature has an area of weakness, and that produces sins. It has an area of strength, which produces human good out of our old sin nature. The world calls that "compassion." It's the old sin nature doing good. God has rejected both your sin and your human good because both of those come from the sin nature. Therefore we call that evil. So, when the world talks about compassion, it's inviting you to do evil. That's why the Bible says that the more human good you do, the more punishment you will experience as an unbeliever in hell, and the greater will be your loss as a Christian. The more human good you do, the greater will be your loss at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Unless you understand how the old sin nature works, you won't be able to figure that out. It's because what comes from this is evil.

However, it also produces a good image: legalism; and, asceticism. It also produces a wicked image of lasciviousness. That is the sin nature.

**Carnality**

Now, if you want that to guide your life, there's what you're going to have. And if you look at these Scriptures, they're very explicit, that all of this is what the Word of God condemns. When this happens to a Christian, he is called "carnal." A Christian who is run by the old sin nature – that is a carnal Christian. That means that he's no longer in the inner circle of temporal fellowship, in his experience. He has popped out into the outer circle, into control by the old sin nature. And while he's in this circle, he is still under eternal fellowship (the relationship of salvation), but this is the life that most Christians experience all their lives. All their lives, they are out here! They are good citizens. They are nice people. They go to church. They do some nice things out of the sin nature. And when they get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, they're shocked. They realize, "I thought I was in the inner circle of fellowship, serving God. I wasn't. I was out in the outer circle all that time. And we'll see why in a moment. All that time, I was in that outer circle. Instead of being a spiritual Christian, led by the Holy Spirit, I was a carnal Christian, led by the old sin nature.

Most Christians never get this together. No one has ever taught them enough about the Scriptures to even be able to give a diagram, so that they see what the relationship is, and where the hazards are, and where we must be on guard. This is the carnal Christian – out of fellowship with God the Father.

Christians who do not function on the divine, church-age, spiritual power system will go into spiritual reversion, and terrific loss of rewards in heaven. And they will have a lot of suffering on earth. For the Christian, this is the realm of suffering. When you're out of this inner circle of fellowship, you're going to get it socked to you. I can guarantee it.

I can also guarantee you something else. People who are irregular or negligent in their attendance at the local church services, inevitably live in the outer circle. As night must follow day, they will go into carnality, because they cannot be sustained without the pulpit ministry that God has provided in the local church. It is not possible.

**A Normal Human Being**

So, we're trying to talk about what is a normal human being – what God intended us to be. No human being is a normal person unless he is born-again spiritually, and he is filled (or controlled) by the Spirit of God. If you are not born again spiritually, you're abnormal as a human being. And if, as a born-again Christian, you are not living in fellowship with God the Holy Spirit, you're an abnormal human being. And when you're an abnormal human being, you become a slave of Satan, whether you're a Christian or an unbeliever. No human being can be out of that inner circle, and be normal. No human being can be in that inner circle unless first you are born-again spiritually. No human being can be in that inner circle unless all known sins are confessed, and you are subject to what the Holy Spirit wants you to do.

**Super-Grace Christians**

How do I know that? We're going to look at it in a minute. Most of the human race, along with some Christians, are abnormal slaves of Satan through the old sin nature. A Christian who is out of temporal fellowship, and so, in carnality, becomes a sorry, mean, selfish, heartless, mindless, blind, and destructive person. That kind of a carnal Christian is to be pitied, along with all those whom he injures. So, don't be shocked when Christians act like dogs. When they act like greedy, snarling dogs, that's because they're in the outer circle. They're in eternal fellowship (going to heaven), but completely out of touch with God the Father, Who is trying to make them a super-grace person.

Now, why anybody would ever want to fight the purpose of God not to become a super-grace believer, is very hard to comprehend. What is to be gained by that? What is the value of that? It brings loss in eternity, and it brings suffering on this earth.

So, what is it that God wants us to do? When we began this study about the church, from the book of Colossians reference, we raised that question? How should I now live, now that I'm born again? What is it that God wants me as a Christian to do? Well, there are two things. And every day that you wake up, these are the two things that you should preoccupy yourself with. Then everything else falls in line.

The first is found in Ephesians 5:18. These are things that you know, but things which we must remind you of. Paul says in Ephesians 5:18, "And do not get drunk (or high) with wine, for that is dissipation. But be filled with the Spirit;" that is, to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. What is the first thing that God expects of me every day of my life?

**Filled with the Spirit**

Okay, here it is, young people. You have a long life to make it good. Every day, God wants you, first of all, to see that you are in the inner circle of fellowship with God – that you are a spiritual Christian, and that God the Holy Spirit controls your life, and that you are true to Ephesians 5:18. You are "filled with the Spirit". How do I get filled with the Spirit?

**1 John 1:9**

1 John 1:9 is the operational direction, which says, "If we." This is a third-class condition 'if' – maybe you will, and maybe you won't, but you should have the sense to do it: "If we confess our sins; (that is, confess means to admit to God the Father), He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins." This has nothing to do with salvation. This verse has to do with people who are Christians. "He is faithful" means this: Peter said, "How many times should I forgive my brother for a certain sin?" And Jesus said, "7 times 70 time," which means "no end." God says, "Every time you confess, I'll faithfully fix things up between us, and I'll take you under My wing again." And "righteous" means that he will be just in forgiving your sin, because Christ has paid for that sin. And He will forgive your sin in terms of allowing you back into His inner circle of temporal fellowship: And to cleanse this (furthermore) from all unrighteousness." You may have sins that you have committed that you're not even aware of, or you've forgotten, and you didn't take care of.

So, what does God want me to do? First of all, He wants me to be a spiritual Christian. Every day I'm concerned, first of all, with being filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit – to maintain my spirituality status. Now, if you do that from the days of your youth, can you see what a magnificent life you're going to have; what a physical construction you'll have; what emotional stability you have; what great intellectual capacity you'll have; and, what great relationships you will enter into, in life with other people? I mean it is beyond what you can imagine, and beyond your fondest dreams. And all it takes is control by the Holy Spirit. This is not by your emotions; not by what you think what other people say; and, not by the hoopla of the religious world, but between you and God: "I know what's right. I know what's wrong on the base of the Word of God. And I know where I fall short, and 'Father, I want to admit it to you, and by that admission, to cease and desist.'"

**Don't Listen to the World**

Secondly, the next thing that God expects of us is stated in 2 Peter 3:18. This is what every Christian has to begin his life with. It is in a very important place in this book of 2 Peter. It's the very last verse. Peter says it, after all is said and done. 1 Peter 3:17, as a preparation for it, says, "You therefore, beloved (aha, 'beloved' means 'Christians'), knowing this beforehand". And what he has told about is what God is going to do to this world – God judgment is coming upon this world. That is what the context is: "Knowing all this beforehand (of what God is going to do to this world, in time), be on your guard, lest being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness." Don't listen to the world. Don't accept anything that unbelievers tell you, as the way things should be. If that appeals to you, it's because your sin nature is saying, "Yeah, yeah, go on." It's the devil urging you on. Don't be part of the world system. Don't live the way they live. Don't follow their styles, and their ways, and their actions. Don't imitate them. Imitate the magnificent person in you, the Lord Jesus Christ. So, you'll be a real man and a real woman, and not a dumb ninny.

**Grow in Grace (Feed on the Word of God)**

Then he says, in 1 Peter 3:18, in order for that to happen: "Grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." So, the second thing that he's telling us is that we are to grow daily. Our job is to take in the doctrinal principles of the Word of God – feeding upon the Word of God. Yes, you do get a major, major orientation to the Word of God, which is essential in those morning and evening church services, but ultimately, every day, there should be the reading of the Word.

Now some of you say, "Well, here's a time in my life. I'm going to sit down at such-and-such a time of day. I'm going to read the Word of God. I'm going to study: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**Church Attendance**

You have to connect verses together in the Bible to understand how to make these things work. This one should be connected to Hebrews 10:25, which talks about attending church services: "Not forsaking your own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near." The day of what? The day of the rapture? If you meet some believer who wasn't in church, say, "Hey, I missed you in church." Why? You show your concern that that was a great loss to him. Even if he had to be gone: he had to work; he didn't feel well; or, there was some providential prevention. Your heart should go out to them because the loss of a church service is always eternal. It's not just one of those things you can catch on the run, and get enough of, so you don't need to do it every time. That is never true.

The reason that it's not true is that you can't fulfill 1 Timothy 2:15, if you are erratic in that attendance. It says, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of Truth." I get very kind letters periodically from people who say that the Berean ministry has magnificently enabled them to handle the Word of Truth. Sometimes they say, "We get what a person has to go to a theological school to get. With us, it's commonplace. With us, that's the norm. The cookies are never put on the lower shelf. They're always put up on high, so that we have to stand up tall and straight to reach for them. But they're always there.

You don't need to be ashamed handling accurately the Word of Truth, but you'll not handle word of truth accurately if you don't know it, and if you haven't had it put together. And that is not the least of which, if you don't understand the dispensational system.

Matthew 4:4: "For man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

Now, why does God say, "I want you to do these two things daily? I want you to maintain your temporal fellowship with your confession of known sins, and readjusting your life to My will and My rules; and, I want you to constantly be growing in My grace that is in My favor and blessing, because you are growing in the knowledge of the Word of God." This word "knowledge" in the Greek is the Greek word "gnósis" (gno'-sis). It's information. That's why I tied it back to Hebrews 10:25. It's information – whatever you do with it. It is the exposition of the Word through expository preaching.

**A Spiritual Maturity Structure**

Now, when you maintain spirituality, you're in the inner circle, and you feed upon the Word of God. Then what develops within your soul is a spiritual maturity structure. You have grace orientation. You know how to live by the principles of freedom of grace. You have a mastery details of life. You're not a greedy, crunchy scrooge. You know how to hold your money loosely, because it doesn't belong to you anyhow. It belongs to God. You know how to maintain your integrity of what you keep, and what you give to him. You have a relaxed mental attitude. You have a rapport of love. You have an emotional attachment to people and to life. You're a person of significant feelings. You have a capacity to love in the "agape" sense of mental-attitude goodwill. And you have an inner happiness that is not dependent upon people's circumstances or things.

God rejects all your human good production, so He provides a means for you to produce divine good production. And it is this system that enables you to produce divine good works: "Every day, I'm conscious of staying in fellowship, and maintaining my being filled with the Spirit. And every day, I'm into the Word of God. I'm not starving myself spiritually, and certainly not on Sunday."

**Work out your Salvation**

What will that to? In Philippians 2:12-13, "Paul says, "So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only." Paul said, "You have been positive believers to the instruction that, I, as your communicator have given to you, but now much more in my absence (when I'm not there to do the preaching). Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." And of course, there are always the fools who twist Scripture, and say, "This means to work for your salvation." No, it says to work out the salvation you already have. How? "For it is God Who is at work in you, both to will, and to work for His good pleasure." That's what it is to work out your salvation – to work out your Christian life so that you are doing that which God has enabled you to do at that particular point in time.

I guarantee you that any Christian who stays in the inner circle of temporal fellowship, and who is feeding upon the Word of God: faithful in those church service attendance; and, faithful in personal reading of the Word of God – that Christian is going to develop a spiritual maturity. What will that do to you? It'll give you these facets of strength. And these facets will cause you to have less and less taste for evil. You'll just have less and less taste for the world. When some character comes along of the world system, either an unbeliever or a carnal Christian, spouting the world's philosophies to you, it'll turn you off. You'll never be drawn to it. You'll never want them.

I have received Christmas letters recently now, with Christmas cards, from people who make a little notation. And some of these people I've known for a long time. And some of them are a great inspiration, as I see the expression of their devotion to the Lord, as they just give a little summary: "Here's what I've been doing this past year." And their lives are in the hand of God. These are the magnificent beautiful people of our world. But does the world appreciate them? No, but they go about doing the Lord's business quietly, because He has given them capacity, because the power system is working in their lives: "Every day I maintain my fellowship."

Some Christians never confess anything. So, I give you Jesus's challenge to the Pharisees: "Which of you will stand up and accuse Me of sin." You and I aren't ready to say that. Jesus could. And since we cannot get up and say that we are without sin, how could we be without confession? It is because we have blinded ourselves. It is because we have deliberately made ourselves calloused toward the appeals of the Spirit of God. And then we think that all is well.

Some day in heaven, God is going to reward us for what the Spirit of God was free to do through us. What He's free to do through us is these divine good works. In 1 Corinthians 3:12-15, this is not what you kick up to do, and not what you get emoted to do, because some emotion is moving you, but it is what the Spirit of God leads you do. The means for the filling of the Holy Spirit is 1 John 1:9 – confess the evil: the sins; and, the human good.

**God's Character in the Believer**

There are certain benefits from spirituality that we are capable in the church age. First of all, it brings out God's character in the believer. It shows that we have become like Christ. In 1 Peter 1:3-4, this is pointed out, "Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness." Everything we need for life, and everything we need for a happy godly life, He has provided it: "Through the true knowledge of Him" (doctrinal understanding), Who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us the precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

God has made it possible for you to live the holy life of Christ himself.

**Imitate God**

Secondly, the benefit of spirituality is it enables a Christian to imitate God. You are able to do what the world tries to do.

I've been listening to some politicians on TV recently. And there's nothing so gross as when a politician starts quoting Scripture, especially if he's a liberal. You talk about getting hold of a meat grinder, and putting the Word of God in it, it comes out mutilated.

I heard one lady talking about: "Judge not, and you shall not be judged," etc. And she took off on that like a really pulpit-pounding expository. And I'm yelling at the TV, saying, "Yes, but the Bible says to judge. The Bible says: 'By their fruits, we're going to know you.'" What are your fruits? Your fruits are what you believe, and the consequences of what you do. The Bible tells us that we cannot judge a person's motive. Therefore, when it says, "Judge not," it means: "Don't try to judge why a person is motivated to do something. They may have a grief or a burden that you're not prepared to be able to explain. But if you lie, I can judge that. I know. If you are guilty of sexual sin, I can judge that. I know. I'm not making up something. If you steal something, I know it. I'm not making up something that is not true: "Judge not" means don't judge what you can't verify as being the truth.

So, God says; "Be imitators." Ephesians 5:1 says, "Be imitators of God as beloved children." That's it. Be imitators of God. And I must tell you that this phrase "be imitators" is a command in the Greek. It's not inviting you. It's not commending. It says you better do this, Buster Brown. Why? Because there is no life. You're abnormal unless you're imitating God. You cannot imitate God if you're not in the inner circle of temporal fellowship. And you can't imitate God if you don't know the doctrinal guidelines, and the rules of establishment to be able to imitate him.

This is not a matter of trying to follow Jesus' steps. I see that that book is back on the big list at the bookstores, that was written long ago: In His Steps. It was written by a man with great sincere intentions of how Jesus would do something, and to a certain extent, you might want to think that. But it isn't our trying to say, "Oh, this is what He would do, so this is what I'll do." No: this is what the Spirit of God will enable you to do. You're not just going to follow on your will the steps of Jesus. The spiritual Christian thinks; he acts; and, he feels as Christ does, without any conscious, studied effort. You just automatically do the Christ thing.

Galatians 4:19 says, "My children, with whom I am again in labor, until Christ is formed in you." Paul says, "I want to see Jesus Christ formed in you, so that what you do comes automatically to what Christ would do.

What is that? It is summarized in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In such things, there is no law."

**Christ is Glorified**

Another benefit of spirituality is that Christ is glorified by the Spirit-filled Christian. And that's the point of how we begin and conduct our day. It's all to the Lord's glory. The normal Christian has a life which glorifies Jesus Christ. And when you have to get that feeling in the pit of your stomach such that you're up to something that is not honorable, and glorifying Him, and that you wouldn't like other people to know about, that's not Christ in you, the hope of glory.

John 7:39 says, "But this Jesus spoke of the Spirit, Whom those who believed in Him were to receive. For the Spirit was not yet come, because Jesus was not yet glorified." But when the Spirit did come and filled us as He does, the Christian who has all sin confessed, that Christian is reflecting the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice John 16:14: "He shall glorify Me, for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you." The Spirit of God is the one who glorifies Jesus Christ in us.

Then 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 makes this very, very sober and clear: "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have from God, and that you are not your own. For you have been bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body." This is the key principle of the age of grace. You don't belong to yourself, and nothing that you have belongs to you.

Now, if that grates upon your soul, "Goodbye, brother. You've stepped out of the inner circle of fellowship, and you've stepped into the outer circle. It is all of Christ. It's all His. What you are is only what He makes you by His grace. In 1 Corinthians 15:10, Paul says, "I am what I am by the grace of God. And all that you have belongs to You. You have been bought with the price. Therefore, glorify God in your body. You are not your own."

When you're a spirit-filled Christian, you're very happy to do that. And the Christian fulfills the Law's standard. That's really great. The moral code is the spiritual Christian's way of life.

Romans 8:2-4, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the Law of sin and death." The Old Testament Mosaic Law – we are free from that. Christ fulfilled it, and we are enabled by Him to do the same: "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh (the sin nature), God did – sending His Own Son into the likeness of sinful flesh." He was a human being, and He looked completely like a human being, except He didn't have a sin nature: "And as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us." When do we fulfill all of the righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law? "We, who do not walk according to the sin nature, but according to the Spirit". Wow, there it is.

Our job is to walk according to the Spirit of God, not according to the sin nature.

Those are the benefits of spirituality.

**Christ is Magnified**

Also, here are the results. Here are the result of being in the inner circle of temporal fellowship. Christ is magnified in the inner life of the Christian. That is what we live for – that He is exalted and honored by our lives. That's what it is every moment of the day. And every time we act, or we speak, or we think, or we dress, or we go in a way that does not honor Him, then we have not fulfilled our mission of that day to magnify Christ.

Philippians 1:20-21: "According to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that, with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Oh boy. That's a pretty touchy thing to say: "For me to live is Christ". Yes, we live because of Christ. But Paul says, "I can tell you something else. When I get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, they're going to bring carloads of rewards in for me. For me to live is Christ living in me, the hope of glory. To die: what a magnificent future I'm going to have of reward."

And any Christian who maintains spirituality, and is in the Word of God, makes that possible for himself.

Spirituality enables you to understand doctrine. The reason some Christians can do horrendous, terrible sins (though one sin is not worse than another, but some are grosser than others), is because they're not able to understand the implications of doctrine, because they're out of the inner circle when they're sitting and being taught.

1 Corinthians 2:9-16, "But just as it is written, things which eye has not seen, and ear has not heard (doctrinal principles never seen in the Old Testament), and which have not entered the heart of man (nobody has ever even conceived of them), all that God has prepared for those who love Him." Do you see what I'm telling you – the superiority of the church-age believers' resources? "For to us, God revealed them through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of a man which is in Him. Even so, the thoughts of God, no one knows except the Spirit of God." And if you're going to know Him, the Spirit of God has to teach them to you. And He teaches them to you on the principles of doctrine, if you're in the inner circle: "Now we have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words."

The unsaved (the natural man) – he does not accept the things of the Spirit of God. They're foolishness to him. He cannot understand them, "because they're spiritually appraised." This is exactly the same condition of the carnal Christians. To the carnal Christian, here's a sin. The Word of God says it. The carnal Christian says, "I'll go and do it anyhow." You have to spiritually understand that this is a deadly disease, and you don't want to touch – this being out of fellowship: "But he who is Spiritual understands all things, yet he himself is understood by no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord that he should instruct Him. But we (Christians) have the mind of Christ."

The result of spirituality is that you're able to understand doctrine.

Furthermore, you're able to witness effectively. Acts 1:8 told us how we would go from the near to the far reaches.

**Guidance and Assurance**

Another result is that we received guidance and assurance. This great guidance is enunciated in Romans 8:14-16: "For all who are being led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a Spirit of adoption of sons, by which you cry out, 'Abba Father.'" This "Abba Father" is the Hebrew expression of "Dear Papa." Because everything you have, our Father in heaven ("Dear Papa") wants to give you. And he's ready to give you. He has adopted you as an adult son. That means you get all the privileges. You don't give little kids certain things, but these adult sons, they get it all: "For the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Only the people who are in that inner circle can come to church and really worship God. And those who are not able to worship God get tired, and they don't come to church. It becomes too burdensome. John 4:24: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Philippians 3:3 adds to this another discernment: "For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh." What is a worship service? It is not ritual. It is not ceremony. It is not religious surrounding. It is being in a room where the Word of God (the doctrinal principles) are being explained. That is because "worship" means "learning the worthiness of God." When God becomes more worthy, if you walk out of here this morning, and suddenly, God is more worthy in your estimation and understanding than He was when you walked in, because of something that you have had brought to your understanding by the Spirit of God about the Lord, then you have truly worshiped.

Ephesians 6:18 tells us that spirituality it causes our prayers to be granted: "With all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints." Yeah, I want you to pray for yourself, but I want you to pray for me too, and all the other saints who are under the gun. Don't forget us. All these other Christians who are going to be in that inner circle, they're under the devil's gun. Therefore, we need the protective custody of God.

In the Greek this is "with all prayer and general and petitions." That is urgent emergency prayer.

Jude 1:20 summarizes this in this way: "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith (that is, learning the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ), praying in the Holy Spirit."

**Spiritual Christians**

Another thing that is a result of spirituality is that it will help you and others to be spiritual Christians. Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, each one looking to yourself, lest you to be tempted." Some Christian among us sins; breaks down; and, steps out of line. If you're a carnal Christian (if you're in this outer circle), then butt out. Don't even call that person. Don't talk to that person. Don't contact that person, because you have nothing to offer. But those of you who are in the inner circle, in touch with the Spirit of God, and you understand the principles of these problem-solving techniques, then you are on the deck. You are on duty to look for openings to speak to that Christian, and say, "Here's a better way. Here's God's way, and I'm concerned for you, and this will be for your wellbeing."

However, don't go putting out a little speck in somebody's eye when you have got a beam in your own." In Matthew 7:4, Jesus made that very clear in what He was saying. Jesus was saying, "If you're not in inner circle, then you can't be very effective in helping somebody. That is because what you will do is that you will act in a way that you think that you're better than this person, and that you would never do such a thing. And you'll be grossly contemptuous. But the Word of God says, in 1 Corinthians 10:12 said, "Let him that thinks that he stands, take heed, lest he fall."

**Heavenly Rewards**

There is also one thing more in the results of spirituality, and that is that it enables us to have a meaningful life of producing divine good works for which God will reward us in heaven. That's good news. 1 Corinthians 3:12: "Now, if any man builds upon the foundation of his salvation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble" (human good or divine good works). 1 Corinthians 3:14: "If any man's work which he has built upon it, salvation remains. He shall receive a reward." In between is 1 Corinthians 3:13. which says: "God's judgment will act as fire, and will separate what is the wheat from the trash:" the real divine good works, which the Holy Spirit produced through you; and, what you produce on your own sin nature of human good. That's wood, hay, and stubble. It will be burned, and gone. But the gold, silver, and precious stones will come through the fiery judgment of God, and you'll be rewarded."

Now, there are a few more things that are magnificent things that result in the terms of spiritual growth by grace in the church age, and we shall look at those next time, along with how to work with the Holy Spirit successfully. Shall we pray?

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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