

WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Introduction

1. How do we “Walk In The Spirit?”
 - 1st we need to put our trust in God not the world and walk by faith
 - 2nd we need to be “in the spirit” if that walk is to successfully remain on the path of righteousness
2. We’ll look at this in 3 parts:
 - a) What does it mean?
 - b) How do we do it?
 - c) What the results?

Scripture

Our Scripture for today, **Galatians 5:16-25** is a familiar one that contains the **fruits of the Spirit**

- But we’re going to look at from a different perspective – **Read aloud**

What does it mean?

These verses **begin & end** with the admonition to “**walk in the Spirit**”

- But what does it **mean** to walk or be “in the Spirit?”
 - Do we walk around in a **daze**, hands **folded** in prayer, a strange **smile** on our face, and our eyes **gazing** up into heaven?
 - Do we constantly **spout Scripture** and **prophecy** as King Saul & the prophets did when the Spirit of the Lord came upon them?
 - Or do we **give up everything** in this world and become like a **monk**, completely separate from the world, **never uttering a sound**?

Obviously the answer to these exaggerated examples is no, but what does it really mean?

- **Can we really** walk in the spirit as we also walk **in the world**?
 - **Yes**, because to walk in the spirit simply means that:
 - a) We **see** everything through **God’s eyes**
 - b) We **think** exclusively through the **Mind of Christ**
 - c) We **say & do** everything according to the **guidance of the Holy Spirit** who dwells within us

At any given moment, you’re either **in the spirit** or **not**

- Keep in mind that **when you’re not**, you are walking according to your **own sight** and are interacting with the world through your **own flesh**
 - This doesn’t mean that you’re **doing evil** – in fact, you may be doing very “nice” things
- However, Jesus says that if we’re **not for him we’re against him (Matt 12:30)**
 - And even though we think we’re doing all right in our own ways, we may be **missing something** that the Holy Spirit wants us to do, because:

Prov 14:12 *There is a way that seems **right** to a **man**, But its end is the way of death.*

Full of the Spirit

There are several mentions in the Bible about men who were judged to be **full of the spirit**

- Men like **Joshua**, the first seven **Deacons**, and **Stephen** the martyr
 - To be **full of the Spirit** as they were means that they were
 1. **Seeing** through God's eyes,
 2. **Thinking** with their **renewed mind** (Romans 12:2)
 3. **Acting** according to the guidance of the **Holy Spirit** at virtually **all times**
- It couldn't be **all the time** because no man, except Jesus Christ, was, is or could be **perfect**, but they were **close to being in the Spirit at all times**
 - That leaves open the question of what it means to be "**baptized in the Spirit**" which we're not going to get into here,
 - but which briefly means that we're **not only full of the Spirit inside** but that we're **also fully immersed within and overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit** which leads to **ecstasy, prophesying and tongues**

But for our purposes today, I want to encourage you to **be in the spirit** more often

- And **eventually** grow to be one of those people who we see as being **full of the spirit**

How Do We Do It?

You can only get **in the spirit** if you have been **born again (John 3:3&7)**

- John 3:6 *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."*
 - If anyone here today has not been **saved**, not been **born again**, we will give you an opportunity to do so at the conclusion of the service

When we **confess** our sins, **believe** that Jesus is the Son of God, and **ask** Him to be our Lord & Savior, the **Holy Spirit** takes up residence within us

- John 14:16-18 *"I will pray the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may abide with you forever; the **Spirit** of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He **dwells** with you and will be in you"*

Every believer is given the **power or capability** to walk in the spirit -- but it is still a moment-to-moment **choice** to do so:

- Joshua 24:15 *"Choose this day whom you will serve"*

Every day, every moment we must choose to be "in the Spirit" for we cannot serve 2 masters at the same time

- Mat 6:24 *"No one can serve **two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

To be in the Spirit at any moment, means your **mind, heart and soul** are **aligned with the Holy Spirit**, not with the **things or ways of the world**

- This doesn't mean you give up your **unique personality**
 - But rather that you **choose to use** your unique skills, gifts, & personality **for the glory of God** and not for the **desires of the flesh** (v16)

When we are truly **walking in the Spirit** we are literally **on fire for the Lord**

- We call it a **fire** because that's just what it feels like within – like the **passion** we felt for our **first love**

- The Holy Spirit is like a **flame** that is lit when we accept Christ as our Savior
- That flame, though, can either be **quenched** and generate virtually no heat at all, or it can be **stirred** and **fanned** into an **internal inferno**

When I am fully **in the Spirit** I can feel the **warmth** of the Holy Spirit **flooding** throughout my **entire body**

- And so I've learned by **trial and error**, through **diligent practice**, how to turn that **internal switch** on that allows the **flame** to burn **hot and bright**
 - The only **problem** is, I have to **remember** to do so and, like all of us, I become **distracted** by the things of the world.

The way I **visualize** it to make it an **easier** thing to do is I **imagine** myself literally **plugged** into God

- When I'm in the spirit, an **extension cord** runs out of my body and **into His**
 - But when I'm walking about in the **flesh**, I am **unplugged**
 - When I come to **realize** this, I picture myself **plugging in** and instantly feel the **warmth** of His love and His Spirit.

That's why it's so **important** to come to **church** as often as possible

- Because where **two or three** or more are **gathered** together in Jesus' name, He is **here**, and His Holy Spirit is here to **stoke the flame** of the Spirit within
 - And the **more** of those here who **open their hearts** to Him, who **feed the flame** with the **oxygen** of His **Spirit**, the greater and **stronger is His presence** among us

This is how we get our **batteries charged** for the week ahead

- The **grind** of the world **wears out** the batteries so they must constantly be **re-charged**
 - So let us now, **right here, right now**, open our hearts together to **usher in** the **full power** of the Holy Spirit into this **place** and into the **innermost fabric of our being**

What are the results?

The results of walking **in the spirit** or **out of the spirit** are clearly listed in **verses 19-23**

- The results of **walking** according to the **flesh** are: **Read verses 19-21**
- The results of **walking** in the **spirit** are: **Read verses 22:23**

So God has even provided us with a **measuring stick**

- Of course, we're better at using it to measure the **performance of others**
 - What we need to do is to apply these measures to ourselves
 - And, it is also a good idea to ask a trusted loved one to give you an honest assessment as well, painful as it might seem

So we all need to examine our time and our actions to see how often we are indeed **in the spirit** by asking ourselves the following questions:

1. Are we truly only in the spirit when we come to church or are in prayer?
2. How about when we're at work or otherwise out in the world?
3. Or at home interacting with our family?
4. And how about when we're watching TV or at the movies?
 - You see, it is possible to be **in the spirit** when you're doing **all those things**

- The **danger** of doing those things **in the flesh** is that we **leave ourselves open** to the **lusts of the flesh** and to **attacks** of the **enemy**
 - Because we do not **war** against **flesh & blood** but against **powers & principalities** (Eph 6:12)

Christians are called to be a **holy people**

- And the world **holy** literally means **set apart for God and His service**
 - When we're walking in the **flesh**, we are **not set apart** and we are of **no use** to God because we're not in touch with His Holy Spirit
 - And if we're not in contact with the Holy Spirit, then we **aren't getting the moment-to-moment guidance we need** to avoid the snares and pitfalls of life in the world
 - As Children of God, we are **aliens & strangers** in this world, as Scripture says
 - The Bible also says that we are to be **in the world, but not of the world**

The problem with **today's Christians** is that many, if not most, are **living in the world and in the flesh**, just like everyone else

- They're only being "spiritual" when they come to church or when they take time to prayer
 - And, even in **prayer**, few truly pray **in the spirit** but merely **recite empty words**

1 Cor 14:15 *What is the conclusion then? I will **pray with the spirit**, and I will also **pray with the understanding**. I will **sing with the spirit**, and I will also **sing with the understanding**.*

We need to start **looking** at what we're **thinking, saying and doing** through the eyes of the Holy Spirit and then asking ourselves the question:

- Is this **what** God would have me **do**? Is this **what God** would have our **children do**?
 - Think about the "**entertainment**" that the world throws at us in the **movies**, on **TV**, over the **Internet** and in our **video games** -- So much of it is filled with **sex** and **violence** and **materialism**
 - All of it part of the **devil's agenda** being **foisted upon** unwitting, unsaved people who **don't know any better**
 - But they **would know better** if we provided a **better example** by standing **apart from this filth**

We're much **too concerned** about what the **world thinks** of us **than what God thinks** of us

- We're **afraid to stand out**, to be truly **set apart**
 - But **God is calling us**, calling you, to **account** very soon
 - And God is **calling us** to a life of **holiness**

The Challenge

So the **question** I have for you **today** – the question **God has** for you **every day** – is:

- What **proportion** of the time are you walking **in the spirit** or **in the flesh**?
 - I would **estimate** that the **average Christian** is **in the spirit** perhaps **5%** of the time
- Every one of us could be **in the spirit** more **often**, but we **first** need to get a **perspective** on where we are
- This week, **observe** how you **spend your time**, and whether at those times you are truly **in the spirit**:
 - Try to come up with a reasonable **estimate** of what **percentage** of time you are **in the Spirit**
 - And then, after you **apologize to God** for not **doing better**, ask for **His help** in doing a better and better job of being **in the spirit more often**

None of us is even **close to perfect**

➤ But the way to improve is to be **in the spirit more and more often**

- **Practice** it – it is a **discipline** that **improves** with **practice**

Make a **conscious effort** to:

1. **See** the world through **God's eyes**
2. **Think** with the **renewed mind of Christ**
3. **Say & do** everything according to the **guidance of the Holy Spirit**
 - Ignite the **fire within** by **plugging into God** no matter **where you might be**

WALK IN THE SPIRIT - SCRIPTURES

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

➤ **Gal 5:16:** (vv. 16,17) "Flesh" sometimes refers to the physiological frame of man, as distinguished from the immaterial aspect of man, which is variously called "spirit" or "soul" (cf. Acts 2:17). More frequently the N.T. employs the term to designate the sinful tendencies that exist in man, most of which are related to bodily appetites and ambitions. This latter sense is the way Paul uses the word here, concluding that the fleshly nature wages continual warfare against spiritual impulses.

Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,

Gal 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,

Gal 5:21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

➤ The phrase "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" should not be interpreted to mean that the person who, at any time, commits one of these sins will go to hell. The present tense of the participle "practice" (*prassontes*, Gk.) indicates that what is warned against here is a habitual lifestyle. One who habitually lives in such a manner will not "inherit the kingdom of God."

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Gal 5:23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

➤ The "fruit" of the Spirit refers to the attitudes of life and thought which become characteristic of those who "walk in the Spirit" (v. 16). A good test for those who claim to be "spiritual" can be formulated from the checklist in vv. 22, 23.

Gal 5:24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Gal 5:25 If we live **in the Spirit**, let us also walk **in the Spirit**.

Full of the Spirit

(Deu 34:9 NKJV) Now Joshua the son of Nun was **full** of the **spirit** of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

(Job 32:18 NKJV) For I am **full** of words; The **spirit** within me compels me.

(Ezek 37:1 NKJV) The hand of the LORD came upon me and brought me out in the **Spirit** of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it *was full* of bones.

➤ **Ezek 37:1:** There is an extended play upon the various meanings of the Hebrew word *ruah*, which is translated "breath," "wind," or "spirit" (cf. John 3:8, in which the Greek word *pneuma* is likewise treated). Beyond all these meanings is its usage in reference to the "Spirit of the Lord," which is like "breath" or "wind," which cannot be seen but moves throughout and governs the world. In Ezekiel's vision, God's Spirit deposited him in the midst of the valley in which Israel lay dead. The future generation he saw would be a creation of God, based upon His mercy and grace. Ezekiel was privileged to witness the glorious resurrection of the fallen nation. This was a message of hope. The first half of the chapter pictures the

national resurrection of Israel (vv. 1-14). The second half (vv. 15-28) presents the reunification of the two kingdoms. Though the doctrine of the resurrection is limited in the O.T., it is incorrect to say that it is not there. Obviously, this chapter would have no meaning without some concept of the resurrection. Israel's restoration was beyond human power, but not beyond the power of God. Her restoration was not to be merely physical, i.e., a return to the land, but also spiritual, based on a renewed covenant with the Lord.

(Micah 3:8 NKJV) But truly I am **full** of power by the **Spirit** of the LORD, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin.

(Acts 6:3 NKJV) "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, **full** of the Holy **Spirit** and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

(Acts 6:5 NKJV) And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man **full** of faith and the Holy **Spirit**, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

(Acts 7:55 NKJV) But he, being **full** of the Holy **Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

➤ **Acts 7:55:** (vv. 55,56) Jesus appeared to Stephen as "standing"; Paul wrote, "... seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1). This is not a contradiction because of the dual nature of the work of Christ at the right hand of God. First John 2:1 states "And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." An advocate is a lawyer. During ordinary court procedures the advocate is seated according to decorum. If his client is attacked unfairly, the defending advocate is immediately on his feet to object. So Christ appeared to be "standing" as He came to receive His "client" Stephen.

(Acts 11:24 NKJV) For he was a good man, **full** of the Holy **Spirit** and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

(Rev 17:3 NKJV) So he carried me away in the **Spirit** into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* **full** of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

Zeal/Zealous

(Isa 63:15 NKJV) Look down from heaven, And see from Your habitation, holy and glorious. Where *are* Your **zeal** and Your strength, The yearning of Your heart and Your mercies toward me? Are they restrained?

(Gal 4:17-18 NKJV) They zealously court you, *but* for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be **zealous** for them. But it is good to be **zealous** in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.

(Titus 2:14 NKJV) who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, **zealous** for good works.

(Rev 3:19 NKJV) "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be **zealous** and repent.

(Num 25:13 NKJV) 'and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was **zealous** for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.'

(Prov 23:17 NKJV) Do not let your heart envy sinners, But *be zealous* for the fear of the LORD all the day;

(Num 11:29 NKJV) Then Moses said to him, "Are you **zealous** for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets *and* that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"

➤ **Num 11:29:** Regarding the O.T. concept of "prophet," see Deut. 18:15, note.

Other key scriptures

(Eph 2:22 NKJV) in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God **in the Spirit**.

(Eph 4:23 NKJV) and be renewed **in the spirit** of your mind,

(Eph 6:18 NKJV) praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit**, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints;

(Phil 3:3 NKJV) For we are the circumcision, who worship God **in the Spirit**, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

(Col 1:8 NKJV) who also declared to us your love **in the Spirit**.

(1 Tim 3:16 NKJV) And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified **in the Spirit**, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

➤ **1 Tim 3:16:** Some Greek texts have "who" rather than "God." The six phrases which follow appear to be a quotation from an early Christian hymn. The term "justified" here has its Hebrew meaning of "vindicated," the idea being that Christ was vindicated in the resurrection, the agent of which was the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:32, 33; Rom. 1:4).

(1 Pet 4:6 NKJV) For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God **in the spirit**.

➤ **1 Pet 4:6:** The point of this verse is that the Good News of the gospel message was preached to Christians who are now dead. While these believers may have been condemned and put to death in the realm of the flesh, there will be a great reversal in God's judgment. God promises that believers will live in the new resurrection realm.

(Rev 1:10 NKJV) I was **in the Spirit** on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

(Rev 4:2 NKJV) Immediately I was **in the Spirit**; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne.

(Rev 17:3 NKJV) So he carried me away **in the Spirit** into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

(Rev 21:10 NKJV) And he carried me away **in the Spirit** to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

Zeal

(Num 25:11 NKJV) "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My **zeal** among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My **zeal**."

(2 Ki 19:31 NKJV) For out of Jerusalem shall go a remnant, And those who escape from Mount Zion. The **zeal** of the LORD of hosts will do this.'

(Isa 9:7 NKJV) Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The **zeal** of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

(Isa 42:13 NKJV) The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up *His zeal* like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies.

(Isa 59:17 NKJV) For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with **zeal** as a cloak.

(Ezek 5:13 NKJV) 'Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken *it* in My **zeal**, when I have spent My fury upon them.

(Zec 1:14 NKJV) So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem And for Zion with great **zeal**."

(Zec 8:2 NKJV) "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I am zealous for Zion with great **zeal**; With great fervor I am zealous for her.'

(Rom 10:2 NKJV) For I bear them witness that they have a **zeal** for God, but not according to knowledge.

➤ **Rom 10:2:** Israel is characteristic of many religious people. The zeal of the nation for her faith is fruitless because it is not according to full, correct, vital knowledge.

(2 Cor 9:2 NKJV) for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your **zeal** has stirred up the majority.

Zealous

(Num 25:11 NKJV) "Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was **zealous** with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal.