

In the Spirit

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Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

- I. "In the spirit" is a phrase found in the Bible twenty-eight times; three times in the Old Testament and 25 times in the New Testament.
 - A. Nine times in the New Testament the word "Spirit" is capitalized, showing that it is referring to the Holy Spirit of God.
 - B. The other sixteen times the word "spirit" is not capitalized, showing that it is referring to our own spirit, or some other spirit.
 - C. To be "in the spirit" basically means to be in a state of mind and of heart where the influence of the spiritual is dominant over the influence of the earthly and temporal.
 - D. To be "in the Spirit" means to be in a condition of mind and heart where the Spirit of God has the preeminence over all earthly cares, concerns, and influences.
 - E. It does not mean that we are in some kind of trance or supernatural state where our mind is taken over by another power, not even by the Spirit of God.
 1. God does not work that way or deal with us that way.
 2. Our submission to God and his influence over our mind and heart and life is always voluntary, never by force on God's part.
 3. The grace of God is the only means to be "in the Spirit" as grace is the "divine influence upon the heart and mind and life."
 4. God calls, and woos us, and invites us, but does not drag us in against our will.
 - F. So to be "in the Spirit" is to be voluntarily under the influence and guidance of the Spirit of God as the dominant influence on your mind and heart and life.
 - G. To be "in the spirit" is to be focused on the spiritual and dwelling there in your mind, and seeking those things which are above instead of those which are below; the earthly and temporal.
- II. How do we know what it means to be, or to walk, "in the Spirit?"
 - A. The same way we learn anything about God or anything spiritual.
 - B. First, we must look at all the Scriptures which refer to the subject we are trying to understand.
 - C. Then we must pray for God to give us understanding.
 - D. When we believe the Spirit of God has given us an understanding we must go back through the Scriptures that deal with this subject again and make sure that this understanding we have fits in all the verses where it is mentioned.
 - E. If it does, then we know God has given us an understanding; if it does not then we know that this understanding we have is flawed and did not come from God, but from our own heart, or the devil has tried to lie to us.
- III. To walk "in the Spirit" or "in the spirit" is contrary to walking "in the flesh."

Galatians 5:16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

- A. The command of the Scripture is to “walk in the Spirit” and not after the flesh.
 - 1. We must stop and understand something here: there is an ongoing battle and struggle to walk in the Spirit and not after the flesh.
 - 2. This is not referring to sin and righteousness, but walking in the Spirit or walking after the flesh.
 - 3. There will always be this struggle as long as we live in this world.
- B. We live in a physical world and in a physical body and so we have physical needs and concerns and obligations that demand our attention.
 - 1. The struggle we have is to not allow these physical things to dominate our mind, our thoughts, our lives, and attach themselves to our hearts.

Galatians 5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

- 2. This works both ways: There are times we cannot do the things that we would concerning walking in the Spirit because of the demands of life.
- 3. We must acknowledge the true fact that our minds are not focused on the things of God and spiritual matters all the time, nor can they be.
- 4. The victory is found in staying close to home and touching base often.
- 5. We must discipline our mind to remember God often and call home often, and not go for hours without thinking of Him, and forgetting the spiritual while we are immersed in the physical cares of life.

2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Revelation 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Romans 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

- 6. It also works the other way: if we walk in the Spirit we cannot do those things that we would do if we were walking in the flesh.

Galatians 5:18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

- 7. The works of the flesh are listed here in Galatians 5:19-21 and then we are again reminded that these will not be a problem or a part of our life if we are walking in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:24-25 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

IV. This is the whole subject of Romans 8:

Romans 8:1-9 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for

sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

- A. So, what is the dominating influence in your daily life, and in your daily thoughts?
 - 1. Is it the Spirit of God and the Word of God?
 - 2. Or is it the cares of life, the drama, the affairs of others, the problems of life, the problems, sins, and foolishness of others?
- B. How often do you call home?
- C. How often do you touch base with God during your busy day and in all the confusion and demands of your daily life?
- D. Do you know what it is to have victory over this world?
 - 1. In the daily problems, burdens, responsibilities, and cares?
 - 2. Over the influence of others to control your thoughts, your moods, and your spirit?
- E. Are you satisfied with where you are in this matter, and in the measure of your spirituality in all this?
- F. How spiritual are you? Or maybe we should ask, “How carnal are you?”
- G. Do the cares of life get you down?
- H. Or do you find victory?
- I. If you find victory you will find peace and contentment amidst the problems and cares of life and you will not be feeling overwhelmed and defeated, and downcast, and depressed and hopeless.
- J. What comes out of your mouth comes from your heart and so you can know as well as everyone else knows about you, where you are walking – after the flesh, or in the Spirit.
- K. Murmuring and complaining and self-pity are absolute sure signs of walking after the flesh, which means you are not walking “in the Spirit.”

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

- L. Why don't you make up your mind to walk in the Spirit more and after the flesh less?
- M. Why don't you resolve to pay more attention in this spiritual battle and be a participant and a good soldier of Jesus Christ instead of pawn?