

THD-043 and 044  
Galatians 5:16  
The Holy Spirit and the Christian  
Part 7:  
The Believer's Responsibility

*“Blessed [happy] are they that hear the word of God,  
and keep it.” (Luke 11:28)*

*Galatians 4:15*

*What has happened to all your happiness?*

*Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law, are under curse. For it stands written, Cursed is every one who is not remaining constantly in all things which stand written in the book of the law in order to do them.*

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

*Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

*Rom. 11:6, "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."*

*Gal. 2:21, "I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."*

*Gal. 3:24, "Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."*

*1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.'*

*John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."*

*Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue...*

*I am come that they might  
have life, and that they might have it more  
abundantly. John10:10*

*“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commands, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” – John 15:9-11 ESV*

The Galatian Christians had lost their joy, because the Judaizers had meddled in their Christian Lives and introduced the Law. Paul introduces, here, a clear delineation between the Law and the Spiritual Life. Previously we have looked at the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a Person and as Deity, and are currently studying the Role of the Holy Spirit in Relation to The Christian  
From L.S. Chafer's Systematic Theology



## **The Believer's Responsibility**

### Chapter XII

#### Introduction to the Believer's responsibility

Since they are void of experimental features, the ministries of the Spirit to the believer already cited—regeneration, indwelling, sealing, and baptizing—have served to establish the truth related to the Christian's positions and possessions. This body of truth may well be termed that which is fundamental and primary in all doctrine respecting the Christian; but there is also that which is rightfully termed *practical* features of truth.

These comprehend the believer's responsibility in thought and action toward God, toward his fellow men, and toward self.

With regard to importance, there could be no comparison between these two aspects of doctrine though in the one instance all is accomplished completely when one believes and in the other instance there is ceaseless obligation resting upon the convert; yet the situation, all the same, which every pastor confronts in the individual life to which he ministers is within the sphere of the less important, practical phase of doctrine.

It may well be called *life truth* since it concerns the outliving of that which is infinitely true and certain in the sphere of *positional truth*.

How helpless the would-be soul doctor must be who in his courses of training has never heard even one intimation of the specific instruction which God addresses to the believer, or of the divine plan so extensively taught in the New Testament whereby the Christian may be more than conqueror over evil forces through the power of the indwelling Spirit!

Seminary instructors, however, cannot be expected to teach subjects and courses—no matter how important—of which they in turn had never heard in the days of their own education and which they have consistently ignored thereafter. - L.S. Chafer

### **I. Intelligent Motives**

The Christian who is perfected forever, being in Christ, has, nevertheless, a life of imperfection to live so long as he is in this world.

The new problem which he confronts, as several times before stated, is not one of how he should live that he might be accepted and perfected before God, but rather of how he, an accepted and perfected person, should live after these stupendous realities are accomplished by the grace and power of God. Until this vital distinction is comprehended and received, there will be no progress made in the extensive field of truth which directs the Christian's life and service.

Until positional truth is recognized and received to the extent that the saved one acknowledges that he is saved and perfected in the sight of God on no other ground than that, on his part, he has believed on Christ to the saving of his soul, and, on God's part, he is justified, being both forgiven and constituted righteous through the immeasurable twofold substitution of Christ—bearing condemnation because of the believer's demerit and offering Himself as the source of merit—there can be only confusion and misunderstanding about the true motivating principle in the Christian's daily life.

It could not be denied truthfully that the mass of professing Christians have been deprived of the knowledge of positional truth and because of this have never conceived of any other idea of Christian conduct than that they are obligated to make themselves acceptable to God by their own works of righteousness. Naturally, being so deprived of the knowledge of positional truth they are correspondingly ignorant of the true basis and motive for life truth.

**Positional Truth AND Life Truth =  
Righteousness (Imputed AND Imparted)**

This one distinction between positional truth and life truth constitutes one of the most vital contrasts between law and grace.

It is declared that the Jew failed because he sought his righteous standing before God by means of the works of the law, being “ignorant” of the truth that God has provided all the standing and merit in and through Christ that His holiness could ever require.

Because of this ignorance, the Jew went about “to establish his own righteousness” and did not “submit” or come under the bestowed righteousness of God, Christ being “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

Salvation  
(Positional Truth)  
Righteousness  
IMPUTED

Spirituality  
(Life Truth)  
Righteousness  
IMPARTED



Over against this, some Gentiles—to whom the law was never addressed and who had therefore never attempted to be owned of God through law-works of righteousness—attained instantly to the bestowed righteousness of God when they received Christ as Savior through faith in Him (Rom. 9:30–10:4).

The question of motive in the Christian's daily life is paramount in this discussion.

The body of truth now to be considered concerns the daily life of the believer, and no issue is more determining than that of the reason or principle which actuates the one who would attain to a God-honoring life in the way God appoints through the power of the indwelling Spirit.

The Holy Spirit cannot cooperate or engender any reality of experience when the very basis of a grace relationship to God is ignored.

How, indeed, could the Holy Spirit empower a life which is wholly misguided and wrong in its objectives, methods, and motives?

His benefits, of necessity, have significance only for those who recognize and believe that they are perfected once-for-all by simple faith in Christ as Savior and that their new obligation is not to make themselves accepted but rather to walk worthy of the One in whom they are accepted.

In John 15:1–16 the words of Christ relative to abiding in Him are recorded. In this context a fundamental distinction must be drawn between the believer's *union* with Christ and his *communion* with Christ.

Too often it is supposed that in this passage Christ is teaching that the branch, which represents the Christian, must maintain its union with the vine, which represents Christ.

That communion, however, is in view throughout the passage is clearly indicated.

In verse 2 it is written: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit," and the words *in me* declare the perfect union of the fruitless branch to Christ.

The obligation upon the branch is to continue in the relation to Christ which makes communion possible, whereby the divine life or energy may flow into the branch so that fruit may be borne.

Salvation, which is union with Christ, and the perfect standing which it secures continue always, since such benefits depend only on the believer's position in Christ.

However, the believer is ever facing the facts of his own weakness and of the masterful foes which are against him; and only by keeping Christ's commandments, which means adjustment to His perfect will (cf. John 15:10), is the way kept clear for the needed divine power to flow into the believer as sap flows into the branch.

This passage illustrates the importance of a right objective and method in the Christian's life if he is to be made spiritual through the imparted divine energy. Though in perfect and unalterable union with Christ, the believer will be fruitless except he remains in that obedient relation to Christ wherein the power of the Spirit may be realized in and through him. Christ declared in verse 10 that He kept His Father's commandments and abode in His love, and this is asserted as the pattern for the believer thus to abide in Him. Certainly, Christ was not striving to keep saved by doing anything required to that end; He did, however, keep in perfect communion with His Father through obedience to His will.

Union with Christ is God's undertaking and is wrought for, and continues as the portion of, the one who merely believes;

communion is the believer's undertaking—a specific plan of life which calls for an intelligent purpose and method of life, adapted to the precise will of God, on the part of the one who is saved.

## **II. Prescribed Obligations**

Because of the superhuman requirements which rest upon the believer, the Spirit's filling unto supernatural power is demanded.

This anticipates the right and true understanding of the Scriptures as well as the needed adjustments which secure divine power.



Three times the Apostle has divided the human family into threefold classification.

(1) As respects their essential character in relation to God, he identifies the unsaved Gentiles as the “Uncircumcision,” and declares of them, *“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world”* (Eph. 2:12).

In the same context (Eph. 2:11–12), the Apostle distinguishes the Jew as one who has received the “Circumcision in the flesh made by hands,” which physical change sealed to the Jew the covenant promises of Jehovah (cf. Gen. 17:11).

But in addition the same Apostle states that the Christian is set apart with a “circumcision made without hands” (Col. 2:11), which Scripture, as before noted, recognizes his vital union with Christ whereby he is partaking of all heavenly blessings, having been identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

The same threefold division is set forth in 1 Corinthians 10:32, which reads: *“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.”*

(2) As respects their supernatural relationships they are classified according to their attitude toward the written Word of God.

In this, as earlier pointed out, they are *natural* men, which is a reference to the unsaved of this age whether Jew or Gentile, *carnal* men, which term identifies the saved man, Jew or Gentile, who is living or walking after the flesh, and *spiritual* men, which terminology indicates the Jew or Gentile who is walking with God in subjection to His revealed will and in dependence upon His power.

(3) Finally, the Apostle divides men into three classes in respect to the exercise of divine law or authority over them.

In 1 Corinthians 9:20–21 this is disclosed, which passage reads: *“And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.”*

In this grouping, first the unsaved Gentiles of all ages and unsaved Jews of the present age are to be recognized as ones who are not under the Mosaic Law; but then at the time of the writing of the Scriptures in previous centuries all Jews had, and indeed until nearly that time when apostolic or Christian Scripture began to be formulated, their rightful place under the law. This, the old classification of Jews under the law, constitutes the second division here—men under the law.

In the present age, to be sure, in which the Jew is recognized along with the Gentile as one without merit before God, all mankind is equally without law.

The third division of men is that of Christians, whether Jew or Gentile, in which group the Apostle places himself as one who is neither under the law nor without the law but the rather *inlawed to Christ*.

“The law of Christ” (cf. Gal. 6:2) is contained in His teachings of Christians about their responsibility as having been perfected through the saving grace of God.

The phrase “my commandments,” significantly enough, was not used by Christ until His Upper Room Discourse.

The body of truth included therein is augmented by that which is presented in the epistles of the New Testament, written as they were by men commissioned unto the very task by Christ.

All together there is presented a peculiar obligation adjusted in character to the perfection which the believer sustains in Christ.

Never by one exception is this ground of appeal ignored.

Full recognition is taken of the revelation that the least of believers is partaking of the πλήρωμα of the Godhead (cf. John 1:16; Col. 1:19; 2:9–10). The

The directing of the life of one already complete in Christ is technical to the last degree; yet all this has been unobserved to a distressing extent by theologians of past generations.

These grace teachings are clear and apparent, and their neglect or the persistent confusion of them with other relationships cannot easily be explained.

The Holy Spirit in enabling the child of God to fulfill all the will of the Father for him in his daily life can be expected to work advantageously only within the range of that which God requires of the believer.



If through misguided ignorance the Christian sets himself to keep the Mosaic order when God has faithfully warned him that the keeping of the law is not His will for him and that God has saved him from the law, he must not expect any cooperation of the Holy Spirit in pursuing such a course of error.

Naturally, the Bible does not address itself to people who lived and whose obligations were completed before its text was written; however, it does address itself to the people of the age of law which began with Moses and ended with the death of Christ, it does address itself to people of the present age, and it also contemplates an age to come. Thus altogether three great rules of life are written down and each corresponds perfectly with the character of the divine purpose in the age to which it is related. Covenantism, which has molded the major theological conceptions for many generations, recognizes no distinctions as to ages, therefore can allow for no distinctions between law and grace.

This dominating attitude of Covenantism must account for the utter neglect of life truth in all their works on theology. No more representative theological dictum from the Covenant viewpoint has been formed than the Westminster Confession of Faith, which valuable and important document recognizes life truth only to the point of imposing the Ten Commandments on Christians as their sole obligation, and in spite of the teachings of the New Testament which assert that the law was never given to Gentile or Christian and that, as said before, the latter has been saved and delivered from it (cf. John 1:16–17; Acts 15:23–29; Rom. 6:14; 7:1–6; 2 Cor. 3:11, 13; Gal. 3:23–25).

Let it be restated that the Holy Spirit can be depended upon to enable the believer only as the believer's life and effort are conformed to God's will and plan for him in this age.

### **III. Dependence Upon the Spirit**

Yet again it needs to be emphasized that the divine plan for the believer's daily life incorporates the issue of method by which that life shall be lived.

Two procedures are possible, namely, dependence upon one's own ability and dependence upon the power of the indwelling Spirit.

These two methods are wholly incompatible, or, to use the Apostle's language, they are "contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5:17).

Any attempt to combine two opposing principles will end in failure.

Certainly any attempt to live by heavenly standards when depending upon human resources will be a disappointment even though motivated by the greatest sincerity. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to empower the believer, not only in choosing an intelligent manner of life which does not attempt to establish union with Christ but rather understands the need to maintain communion with Christ, never attempting other rules of life than that addressed to the heavenly citizen, but also in confronting the vicissitudes of daily life as he commits it all to Him with the consciousness of man's inability and of His infinite ability.

Thus is set forth the fundamental truth that the faith method of life, which stands wholly apart from human strength, is that alone which secures or realizes the Spirit's power and achievement.

#### **IV. Word of God**

The attitude of any person toward the Word of God is a certain indication of the innermost character and reality of that person's spiritual state.

Recognizing this basic truth the Apostle states that all men of this age are divided, as before indicated, into three classes, namely,

- (a) the natural man—the ψυχικός man who is unregenerate,
- (b) the spiritual man—the πνευματικός man who is saved and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and
- (c) the carnal man—the σαρκικός man who is regenerated as being in Christ, but who is living in the sphere of the flesh.



So vital is this grouping of all men that the Scriptures bearing on these distinctions should be given specific attention. The natural man, it will be seen, cannot know the things of the Spirit of God, the spiritual man discerns all things, and the carnal man can have only the milk of the Word and cannot have the “strong meat.”

The central passage reads, *“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ...”*

*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1 Cor. 2:14–3:3).*

The declaration respecting the natural man regarding his incapacity to know the things of God is of great import as an explanation of the religious situation in the modern world. No injury to the effect of God's truth is more harmful in its extent than that wrought by unregenerate men who, on the ground of human scholarship, are allowed to interpret and define the things of God.

Men can hardly be saved who deny the only ground upon which any soul may be redeemed.

That great denominations, once known as Christian, are under the direction of educated men who renounce the very ground of salvation by grace through the death of Christ is obvious.

Instructors in colleges and universities are almost without exception committed to an unproved hypothesis which brands God's Word as untrue and attempts an inane solution of the problem of origin only because of the basic incapacity of the natural, unregenerate man to receive the things of the Spirit of God.

These things are "foolishness" to the unsaved, yet highly educated, man and he cannot—not being in vital relation to the Spirit of God—know them.

It still remains true that salvation with all the light it imparts is gained only through faith in a crucified and risen Savior, and no amount of education or ecclesiastical prominence will serve to dispel the spiritual darkness of unregenerateness.

On all spiritual themes the opinion and dictum of the unsaved are not only as nugatory as the prattle of a child, but become as injurious as the stand and influence of the false teacher can make them.

The basic need of unregenerate man is not education or culture—of great value as they are in their place—but salvation.

A sincere student will judge the opinions and utterances of a man on the ground of his primary consideration—is he saved and thus entitled to speak as one enlightened by the Holy Spirit?

The spiritual man is the theme of the remainder of this volume.

Suffice it to say at this point that he is called spiritual because he manifests a right adjustment to the Holy Spirit who indwells him.

This manifestation includes the enlightenment given to such by which the spiritual man may come to know the Word of God.

The carnal man, to whom a more extended consideration will yet be given, is such because he, though perfectly saved and safe in Christ, is, nevertheless, walking after the flesh.

In the portion of the context now under contemplation which describes him (1 Cor. 3:1–3) he is addressed as a *brother*.

When this title is used of a spiritual relationship it refers only to one who is definitely a child of God by a birth from above.

In the same context it is asserted also that a carnal man is in Christ.



These determining words must not go unobserved, because they afford the strongest possible evidence that he is saved and safe.

His union with Christ is established, and since it depends on the imputed merit of Christ it can never be broken.

The communion of the carnal believer, however, is disturbed by the fleshly manner of his life. More serious than all else, since he receives only the “milk of the word” he is deprived of the sanctifying power of the Scriptures and thus yields to envying, strife, and divisions. Whereas the spiritual man “walks in the Spirit,” those who are carnal “walk as men,” that is, as the unsaved walk. Instead of a “walk in love,” they prefer divisions and separations, violating the essential command that they “keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Of all the various evils in the Corinthian church against which the Apostle lifts his voice, the sin of sectarianism is first to be mentioned.

The intense sinfulness of sin is indicated here as fully as everywhere else in the New Testament.

The sectarian, then, if saved at all, is a babe in his spiritual development.

Every discourse which glories in his separate grouping of professed believers is properly classed as *baby talk*.

There is but one Body and one Spirit.  
Each Christian is called upon to love every other Christian on the basis of the unity of the one Body and the kinship in the one family of God.  
The fact of divisions and the promotion of them are an outward expression of the deeper sin of loveless carnality. One outstanding feature of carnality as here depicted by the Apostle is the separation of one believer from another. This is usually precipitated by the one of the two who deems himself holier than the other, being to that degree void of humility or consciousness of his own unspiritual manner of life.

Aside from those specific instances when the church must exercise discipline over erring ones of their number, the carnal man may well be left confidently in the hands of God.

As the Apostle warns, *“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand”* (Rom. 14:4).

A charitable attitude toward erring believers is sure to be engendered in the heart of the one who deals faithfully and truly before God with his own spiritual condition.

By various terms the Bible teaches thus that there are two classes of Christians: those who “abide in Christ” and those who “abide not,” those who are “walking in the light” and those who “walk in darkness,” those who “walk by the Spirit” and those who “walk as men,” those who “walk in newness of life” and those who “walk after the flesh,” those who have the Spirit *in* and *upon* them and those who have the Spirit *in* them but not *upon* them, those who are “spiritual” and those who are “carnal,” those who are “filled with the Spirit” and those who are not.

All this has to do with the quality of daily life in saved people, and is in no way a contrast between the saved and the unsaved.

Where there is such an emphasis in the Bible as is indicated by these distinctions there must be a corresponding reality. There is, then, the possibility of a great transition for those who are carnal into the reality of true spiritual living.

The revelation concerning this possible transition, with all of its experiences and blessings, is taken seriously only by earnest believers who are faithfully seeking a God-honoring daily life.

To such there is boundless joy and consolation in this gospel of deliverance, power, and victory.

It is probable that there are grades of differences within the group known as *spiritual* and within the group known as *carnal*.

Some who are classed as spiritual may be more spiritual than others in their group, while some who are classed as carnal may be more carnal than others within their company; but into these shades of distinction the New Testament does not enter.

This silence is reasonable.

Any relationship to God which is less than a complete adjustment must of necessity be classed as carnal to some extent.



LET'S LOOK AT THIS TO BE CLEAR:

Some who are classed as spiritual may be more spiritual than others in their group, while some who are classed as carnal may be more carnal than others within their company; but into these shades of distinction the New Testament does not enter.

"More Spiritual" = More Mature in Spiritual Life.

"more carnal" = Less mature in Human Good.

It might be more accurate to state that carnality extends over a very wide range of human experience, while spirituality, though latitude be allowed for varied personalities, for varied degrees of educational discipline, and for varied environments, is, nevertheless, standardized to the extent that the experience of the Spirit's filling is accorded to all within that group.

It will be remembered, however, that the aspect of the Spirit's manifestation which enters the field of Christian service must be, and is, adapted to the peculiar individual requirements that are appointed by the Holy Spirit.

The believer is not an automaton, but exhibits all the seemingly infinite variations found in human characteristics and personality.

Nor is he sustaining relations to a God who is no more than the embodiment of inflexible laws.

As an earthly parent may recognize the peculiar temperament of an individual child, so God, but to an infinite degree of effectiveness, recognizes the whole field of issues which a particular person presents.

What better interpretation can be made of the text “*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law*” (Gal. 5:18) than that the life is not only personally directed by the Holy Spirit to its last detail, but is contact with a living Person rather than mere conformity to a set of rules?

No attainment in Christian experience is more effective or far-reaching in its instructive value than that of coming to know God—not merely to know about Him, but to experience the rest to the soul which such intimate acquaintance with God engenders.

In this connection, the importance of not separating Matthew 11:27 from 11:28 may be seen.

The passage when connected reads, *“All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*

Spirituality cannot be defined properly as conformity to a set of rules; it is communion, cooperation, and compliance with a sovereign Person.

The principle of law may easily become a major hindrance to the spiritual life.

God does indicate in His Word that particular manner of life which becomes the spiritual believer and God recognizes the believer's limitations in understanding; but it may be noted too that all such directions for proper conduct may be observed by the Christian rather unwillingly, or out of a sense of necessity, or without the slightest consciousness of a relation to God as His child.

To be a spiritual Christian, however, is to walk with God in unbroken, vital companionship and communion in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

### **V. A Spiritual Transformation**

As there is a great transition from the estate of the unsaved to that of the saved, there is also a transition for the Christian from the carnal to the spiritual state. The former change is wrought by God in answer to saving faith in Christ, while the latter is brought about by a natural release of the Spirit's power in the believer when needed adjustments are made, which power has all been possessed though not necessarily experienced from the moment of salvation.

It is possible that the one saved through faith may, at the same time, be yielded to God and thus enter at once upon a true spiritual experience; but a spiritual state is not a once-for-all achievement: it must be sustained by the Spirit's renewal.

It would seem that the Apostle Paul entered into a Spirit-filled experience three days after he was saved and in connection with the visit of Ananias (Acts 9:17–18); yet the Apostle did not fully understand the conditions upon which he might be spiritual, from all appearances, since at a later time he passed through the experience recorded in Romans, chapter 7.

There he states, *“But how to perform that which is good I find not.”*



A serious distortion of doctrine has been promoted by zealous but unthinking persons to the effect that the terms of salvation must include, in addition to faith in Christ, a complete surrender to His authority.

As important as it is in its place, however, surrender is an issue which belongs only to the child of God.

Advocates of this idealism should consider that the demand for surrender—as is true of every other human obligation which men are wont to add to simple faith—does not once appear in the upwards of one hundred and fifty passages in which salvation is said to depend on faith or belief alone.

If surrender, or any other condition, is added, these passages become not only wholly inadequate but actually misleading.

John 3:16 does not read *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him and surrenders to him should not perish, but have everlasting life,”* yet those words or their equivalent must be added there as in all other similar Scriptures if any such text is to be depended upon for directions concerning the way of salvation.

It remains true, consequently, that there are well-defined conditions upon which the carnal believer may become spiritual and that these are wholly unrelated to the one requirement by which those who are lost may be saved.

The fact that Christians are too often carnal is recognized and deplored, and sermonic exhortations are many times addressed to them; but there is little teaching to show *how* the carnal believer may become spiritual.

The Apostle surely did not lack for ideals or for desire to realize them when he said, *“But how to perform that which is good I find not.”*

Still, he had not at the time gained the knowledge of God’s plan and provision for the spiritual life.

This, indeed, was later revealed to him since he, above all others, has set forth the spiritual life in all its marvelous reality and declared the precise conditions upon which it may be experienced.

## **VI. The Terminology Used**

Three phrases are used in the Word of God to represent the Spirit-filled life, namely, *the Spirit upon you*, *he that is spiritual*, and *filled with the Spirit*. In the first instance—the Spirit upon you—a distinction is to be made between the Spirit dwelling in the believer and His coming upon the Christian.

Anticipating the relationship that would obtain between the Holy Spirit and the believer after His coming into the world on Pentecost and declaring the relationship which the Holy Spirit then sustained to the disciples throughout the dispensation in which He was speaking, Christ said:

*“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you”* (John 14:16–17)

To this is to be added the further instructions given the disciples after He had breathed on them and said “*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*” (John 20:22), namely, that they were to tarry in Jerusalem—that is, undertake no mission or service—until the Spirit came *upon* them (Luke 24:49).

Later, He said that, the Spirit coming *upon* them, they would be His witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The reference to the Spirit descending *upon* the believer is thus seen to be identical with His filling.

In the second instance—he that is spiritual—reference is made to the estate of the one who is Spirit-filled. He alone is to be esteemed spiritual (1 Cor. 2:15).

In the third instance—filled with the Spirit—the phrase indicates a full and unrestrained manifestation of the indwelling Spirit.

The Spirit's filling is not a receiving of the Holy Spirit since that was accomplished as a part of salvation, nor is it a receiving of more of the Spirit.

He is a Person and no person is subject to subdivision, nor could a person be more or less present in any given location.

By a more complete release to Him of the believer's life and being, however, the Holy Spirit who indwells the believer may secure a larger sphere of manifestation. To be filled with the Spirit is to have the Spirit fulfilling all that He came into the heart to do.



This truth is far removed from the notion that the Holy Spirit is to be received as “a second work of grace” or “a second blessing.”

The Spirit-filled life is a realization in actual experience of what has been possessed from the moment one is saved.

Ephesians 1:3 reveals the truth that every spiritual blessing is secured when one is saved.

That verse reads: *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”*

Of all the five ministries of the Spirit to the believer—regenerating, indwelling, sealing, baptizing, and filling—the last-named is alone commanded and expected of the believer.

The implication is that this ministry, quite unlike the other four, depends upon human cooperation and adjustment.

It is clear that beyond the one responsibility of believing on Christ unto salvation, no obligation rests upon the Christian respecting the first four ministries named.

The command to be filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), being addressed to the child of God, not only indicates that it is an experience subsequent to salvation, but that the Christian's own faithfulness determines the degree of filling.

In the preceding chapter of this volume the filling of the Spirit has been contrasted with the baptism with the Spirit.

Because of the prevalent confusion of these ministries of the Holy Spirit, especial emphasis has been laid upon the distinction.

Little more need be added to what has already been presented other than to point out again the facts that the Spirit's baptism is wrought of God for all believers when they believe, that it engenders no corresponding experience by which its reality may be identified, and that it is in no way related to Christian service or action. Over against this set of facts are the truths that the filling of the Spirit depends upon human faithfulness, that not all believers are so yielded to God as to be filled, that it is the source of all right Christian experience, and that it is the sufficient force behind all Christian life and service.

Here it should be noted that in His filling the Holy Spirit causes the one whom He rules to manifest the individual's own personality, to exercise the gifts for service possessed by him—divinely bestowed as they are, and to achieve the work and to fill the place which God has designed for him.

Too often it has been supposed that the Spirit-filled life would cause one to conform to some standardized experience, manner of life, or service.

Yet there is nothing related to the believer more vital or more to be cherished than individuality.

It is not the Spirit's procedure in and through the believer to disannul individuality, but to work through individuality to the glory of God.

The Spirit-filled believer is God's normal, though he may not be God's usual, Christian.

To be Spirit-filled is not to have gained some extraordinary concession from God; it is to be enabled normally to fulfill the will of God in the sphere of that which is divinely intended for each individual.

It could not itself be extraordinary since it is enjoined upon every Christian and, apart from it, all must remain carnal. It is everywhere to be seen in the New Testament that God expects all who witness for Him to be empowered for this service by the filling of the Spirit.

And so while there may be sacrifice in the path, the prevailing note for Spirit-filled men is that of joyous experience and overflowing peace.

According to Romans 12:2 the yielded life makes full proof of the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

God's dealing with the early church is certainly the pattern for all believers since the records have been incorporated into the Sacred Text with that obvious purpose.

From these records it will be seen that it is the divine ideal for each individual believer to be filled with the Spirit before beginning any Christian service; and as the early Christians were refilled in preparation for each mission, in like manner it should be true with believers today.



As before noted, the disciples were bidden to tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49).

It was a waiting until the Spirit came *upon* them.

To them the Savior said: “*Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you*” (Acts 1:8).

The significant words, “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost,” precede the record of each important service they rendered.

The entire family—Zacharias, Elisabeth, and John the Baptist—are all said to have been filled with the Spirit; and unto Christ in the sphere of His humanity—which humanity is the most definite example left for the believer—the Spirit was given without measure (John 3:34), and the phrase, He “being full of the Holy Ghost” (Luke 4:1), qualifies all the things that He did.

In the light of examples which are set before the Christian and of the heaven-high calling he has respecting the character of his daily life, it is not strange that all without exception are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. In concluding this extended introduction to the more detailed consideration of the Spirit-filled life to follow, it is important to note that three times in the New Testament the effect of strong drink is put over against the Spirit-filled life (Luke 1:15; Acts 2:12–21; Eph. 5:18). As strong drink stimulates the body's physical forces and men are prone to turn to it for help over the difficult places, so the child of God, facing what seems like an impossible responsibility in his heavenly walk and service, is directed to the Spirit as the source of all sufficiency.

Every moment in a spiritual life is one of unmeasured need and superhuman demands, and the supply of enabling power or grace must be constantly received and employed.

*“As thy days, so shall thy strength be.”*

To be filled with the Spirit is to have the Spirit fulfilling in us all that God intended Him to do when God placed Him there.

To be filled is not the problem of getting *more* of the Spirit: it is rather the problem of the Spirit getting *more* of Christians.

None shall ever have *more* of the Spirit than the anointing which every true Christian has received.

On the other hand, the Spirit may get control of all of the believer and thus be able to manifest in him the life and character of Christ.

A spiritual person, then, is one who experiences the divine purpose and plan in his daily life through the power of the indwelling Spirit.

The character of that life will be such as to manifest Christ.

The root cause of that life will be nothing less than the unhindered indwelling Spirit (Eph. 3:16–21; 2 Cor. 3:18).

The New Testament is clear respecting just what the Spirit would produce in a fully adjusted life, and all of this revelation taken together forms the Bible definition of spirituality.

These undertakings in a believer's life are distinctly assigned to the Spirit, and so are His manifestations in and through the Christian.

There is a twofold development to the Spirit's work in and through the Christian, namely, the negative aspect and the positive aspect.

Following the present introduction without more delay, these two aspects will be considered in successive chapters.

### Power to Overcome Evil

The individual is a Christian when rightly related to Christ; the Christian is spiritual when rightly related to the Spirit.

Spirituality contemplates two achievements, namely, overcoming evil and promoting that which is good in the believer's life and experience.

The one is negative—a disannulling of evil, the other is positive—a realization of the supernatural qualities and accomplishments which belong to a superhuman manner of life.

Though so widely different in their immediate aim, both lines of work are essential and to some extent inseparable, though it is quite conceivable that a deliverance from evil might be attained without also a manifestation of the Spirit's power in the sphere of vital achievements for good.

The reverse surely could not be true, that is, the experience of the Spirit's power for good would not be enjoyed if evil were not overcome to some degree.

But on the other hand it is hardly to be expected that the Holy Spirit, when free to work in the child of God, would not do all that He desires; and both aspects of spirituality, to be sure, belong to His undertaking. Here arises what seems to be a paradox: Evil cannot be overcome apart from the energizing power of the Spirit, yet all this latent power cannot be experienced where evil is not being overcome.



The answer to this problem is found in the truth that the Holy Spirit who indwells, when trusted to do so, will accomplish both ends of spirituality and in such relation to Himself as may be necessary.

No burden, therefore, is placed upon the Christian to order or arrange respecting the Spirit's undertakings; the Christian is rather enjoined to maintain nothing but a right dependence upon the Spirit regarding all His work in the individual heart.

Since evil is ever arising in the heart because of the active power of the sin nature, the power of the Holy Spirit is ever needed to overcome it; and since the obligation to live and serve to the glory of God is always present, the same enabling power of the Spirit is unceasingly required.

A poorly thought-out and eccentric notion obtains, namely, that spirituality is achieved when there is a cessation of some outward forms of evil, that spirituality consists in what one does *not* do.

Spirituality, however, is not suppression alone; it is also expression. It is not only restraining self; it is the outliving of Christ who indwells.

The unregenerate man would not be saved if he ceased sinning; he would still be without the new birth.

The Christian would not become spiritual should he abstain from worldliness; he would lack the positive manifestations of the Spirit.

Spirituality is primarily an output, a vital living, and a fruitful service for God.

However, both the negative and the positive aspects of the spiritual life are essential and each must be given due consideration here.

The central passage, to which reference must often be made, is Galatians 5:16–23.

In this Scripture there is first an unfolding of the Spirit's work toward the evil flesh and in spite of all the opposition that the flesh engenders.

*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 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. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:16–21).*

Over against this, the portion which records a positive, constructive, spiritual output from the believer's life wrought by the Spirit reads: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law"* (Gal. 5:22–23).

Attention may now be given to one of these features of a spiritual life.

The Christian experiences an unceasing, simultaneous, threefold conflict—with the world, the flesh, and the devil.

The Christian's life is likened to a race, a walk, and a warfare.

In the race (Heb. 12:1–2) the weights which the world would impose must be laid aside, in the walk (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16–17) the power of the flesh is to be overcome, and in the warfare (Eph. 6:10–12) Satan and his hosts are to be vanquished.

The conflict with the world is outward and calls for drastic separation therefrom, the conflict with the flesh is inward and calls for a complete reliance upon divine strength and for an intelligent and worthy understanding of the innermost forces of human life, the conflict with Satan is largely in spiritual realms and involves the same utter dependence upon the sufficient power of the indwelling Spirit.



Satan is the most powerful, the most iniquitous, the most despotic, the most delusive, and the most deadly foe.

Conflict with the world is against influences, conflict with the flesh is against inward desires, but conflict with Satan is against a person, unrelenting and cruel, a person who, were he not compelled to gain permission from God for all that he does toward the saints (cf. Job 1:11–12), would destroy every Christian in a moment of time.

It is no meaningless figure of speech which declares that Satan as a roaring lion goes about seeking whom he may devour.

At no moment of life is the child of God free from anyone of these foes, at no moment of life is he able to face even one of these foes, and at no moment of life is he without the infinite enablement of the indwelling Holy Spirit who is given to him as his resource in this immeasurable impact against evil.

Christ said, "*Without me ye can do nothing*" (John 15:5).

Over against this, as the other side of the picture, the Apostle declares, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*" (Phil. 4:13).

Again, he declares, “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death*” (Rom. 8:2).

Not one of these foes is superior to the Holy Spirit. To discover this, to believe this, and to claim His sufficiency by an attitude of faith is the key to a victorious, God-honoring life.

It is an *attitude* of faith and not one act either of faith or crisis experience.

Fighting “the good fight of faith” means to maintain a reliance upon the Spirit to fight the foe. This conflict continues as long as there is a foe. Never in this life is the influence of the world eradicated, never is that of the flesh, and never is that of Satan. These foes may well be given an individual and more comprehensive examination.[next week]