

How to Walk in the Spirit

Part 2

Introduction

In the first part of our study, we saw the necessity of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In this section we will look at the importance of studying the Bible and understand why we must learn not to move ahead of the Spirit in our new walk.

Our Study

2. Study Your Bible

The Bible, the Word of God, is our spiritual food; it has the power to satisfy our inner hunger as nothing else can do.

The Scripture: 1 Peter 2:2 in the Scofield Bible

"As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word that ye may grow by it."

1. What does desiring the Bible do for us? _____

Read your Bible daily. Commentaries and writings about the Bible are fine, but they are no substitute for pure Scripture. Reading Scripture lets us experience the reality of what is called "feasting on the Word." If possible, read your Bible first thing in the morning.

The Bible, whose accuracy is constantly being verified by archeology and science, is composed of many inspired writings; it includes an anthology of some of the most beautiful poetry and prose ever written; it contains biographies of Jesus; it traces a historical account of man's beginnings and of God's dealing with His creation. But what too many Christians fail to realize is that, in addition, the Bible is a road map for the Christian walk. God has given us this permanent record of His moving on planet Earth in order to teach us how to live!

The Scripture: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

2. Who inspired Scripture? _____

3. What four things does it do? _____

4. Why? _____

Don't just read your Bible; study it by topics and learn what God Himself has to say about how He wants us to live our lives. Discover for yourself the deep inner satisfaction and joy of having the Holy Spirit illuminate Scripture for you personally or give you understanding of a passage that was previously like a foreign language to you.

Although the Holy Spirit can speak directly to our hearts, He frequently uses Scripture to show us what He wants us to know. Once when I was having problems with a member of my family, the Holy Spirit opened up verse after verse of Scripture to me in a way that enabled me to relate it specifically to my problem. The beauty of the whole process was the fact that, while I had been familiar with all the Scripture He showed me, I saw it in an entirely new light. All of it consoled me and made me respond to my problem in a way that shortened its duration. We deprive ourselves of greater understanding if we read only one translation of the Bible. To study the Bible it is helpful to have a good concordance, a Bible dictionary, and at least one of the newer translations.

Join a Bible study group or class. There, you will benefit from the teaching and wisdom of more mature Christians. You will grow as you study and discuss a topic or book of the Bible and you will experience the Holy Spirit's enlightenment as you pray and seek God's will together.

Did you know that reading the Bible helps to keep us from being soiled by sin? Shortly before His death, Jesus, taking a servant's role, washed His disciples' feet. The ever-impetuous Peter at first refused to allow Jesus to wash his.

The Scripture: John 13: 9-10

“Then, Lord,’ Simon Peter replied, ‘not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!’ Jesus answered, ‘A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.’ ”

5. When Jesus insisted what did Peter say? _____

6. What was Jesus' response? _____

At our salvation we are completely cleansed by the blood of Jesus, but daily exposure to the pressures and problems of the world can "dirty our feet."

The Scripture: Ephesians 5:26

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word."

7. What is one way Christ cleansed the church? _____

A good friend found herself growing despondent but she didn't know why. Someone asked her if she were reading her Bible regularly. Because of an extremely busy schedule she had neglected this discipline. When she returned to studying the Bible first thing each morning, her depression lifted in a very short time.

The Bible makes many promises concerning itself:

The Scriptures: Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:72, 98, 105, 165; Jeremiah 15:16; 1 John 5:13

"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth, meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Great peace have they who love your law and nothing can make them stumble.

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight.

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

8. What are some of the promises? _____

3. Bloom where you're planted

Following Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection and just before He was taken up to heaven, He told His disciples:

The Scripture: Acts 1:8

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

9. Where would the disciples be witnesses? _____

10. When would that happen? _____

Filled with the excitement and fervor over the events since Jesus' crucifixion, undoubtedly, the disciples were eager to spread the gospel all over the world. But Jesus had a different plan, which He gave them. This was His sequence: First, they must witness in Jerusalem, then Judea and Samaria, and finally, to the ends of the earth. This is the sequential order of the spread of the gospel, according to our Lord.

When I first began to draw closer to the Lord and was absolutely certain that I belonged wholly to Him, I feared He was going to say, "Leave everything and go to India as a missionary." It was only after much upset and confusion that I learned that this is seldom the way the Lord works.

In sharing my experience I am often amazed to learn how many new Christians have gone through a similar experience of fearing that God would make undesirable demands upon them when they decided to accept Him as Savior and Lord.

Shortly after they became Christians, a young husband and wife decided to sell their prosperous family business, send their children away to live with relatives and go into full-time Christian ministry. Although their minister and many friends advised them to wait until they were sure this move was the Lord's will, they did not listen and went ahead with their plans. Two years later, when it became obvious that the Lord was not blessing their new venture, they saw that they had been deceived.

Fortunately, I was spared from making such a tragic mistake. Shortly after I took the "plunge" and rededicated my life to Jesus, I received my assignment from the Lord: "Raise your children," He told me so clearly that I never once doubted that it was the Holy Spirit speaking to me.

If you are married, caring for your family is your foremost service to the Lord. No matter what you hear through prophecy, well-intentioned friends, or any other sources, it is only Satan or your flesh, not God who would tell you leave your husband or neglect your children. Even older Christians are not immune to such deceptive guidance. I have known mature adults, who, almost on impulse, have left their jobs thinking that this was what the Lord required of them. Paul wisely told Christians:

The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 7:20

"Usually a person should keep on with the work he was doing when God called him,"

11. What did Paul say a person should do when God calls him? _____

He clarified exactly what he meant.

The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 7:21-23

"Were you a slave when you were called? Don't let it trouble you--although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman, similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. You were bought at a price; do not become slave of men."

12. What example does Paul use? _____

We must remember of course, that when Paul wrote this, slavery was acceptable. Paul had similar advice for the married and unmarried, the circumcised and the uncircumcised. For a fuller understanding, read the entire seventh chapter of First Corinthians.

When we come to the Lord, He usually gives us practical directions for our next step. For example, consider the demonic delivered of many spirits:

The Scripture: Mark 5:19 in The Amplified Bible

"Go home...and bring back word to them of how much the Lord has done for you."

13. What did the Lord tell the demonic? _____

Undramatic? Yes! Routine? Right! We may be dying to do great things for the Lord and He tells us to stay put or to go home!

Why? Because home is often our mission field and training ground. Home is where people really know us, where it will be most apparent if we've really changed. At home we can't get away with pseudo-Christianity and pretended righteousness; it's got to be the real thing or our family and friends will see through us. If our family and friends really see Jesus in us, they'll be interested in knowing Him, too.

It is a general principle of Christianity that we are called to be witnesses, first at Jerusalem (home), then Judea and Samaria (the neighboring areas) and, and finally, to the ends of the world (Acts 18).

In the next part of this study, we will look at the importance of fellowship with other Christians and learning how to know the Lord's voice.

The Answers

1. Makes us grow
2. God
3. Teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains us in righteousness
4. So that we may be thoroughly equipped for every good work
5. "Then, Lord, not just my feet, but my hands and my head as well."
6. "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."
7. Through the washing with water through the word
8. Prosperity and success; riches; light; peace, wisdom, joy, our assurance of eternal life
9. In Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and the ends of the earth
10. After they received the power of the Holy Spirit
11. To keep on with the work he is doing
12. That of a slave and a freedman
13. "Go home...and bring back word to them of how much the Lord has done for you."

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