

6. Developing Leaders Who Are Learning to Walk in the Spirit – Part 1

In our last topic, we talked about helping developing leaders learn to yield to the Holy Spirit. Today, we will build on that topic to focus on how we help developing leaders learn to walk in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16 says, “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Here, we see that the Lord wants every Christian to learn to walk in the Spirit.

The word that is translated “walk” speaks of something that we do as a continuous action. Therefore, when we talk about walking in the Spirit, we are talking about something that has become a habit or a lifestyle. Genesis 5:22 tells us, “And Enoch walked with God.” Later, Genesis 5:24 says, “And Enoch walked with God; and he *was* not, for God took him.” Then, in the last part of Genesis 6:9, we read, “Noah walked with God.” In these verses, we see that some people had learned to walk with God in the time prior to the flood. Sharing their lives with God had become a lifestyle for both Enoch and Noah.

This brings us to the question, “How do we learn to walk in the Spirit?” Learning to walk in the Spirit involves learning to let the Holy Spirit continue to minister to our human spirit. It also includes transforming our mind, emotions, and will. The result will be that we use our body to carry out the will of God.

First, we learn to walk in the Spirit by learning to let the Holy Spirit continually minister to our human spirit. In Romans 8:16, we read, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” Here, we see that the Holy Spirit communicates with the human spirit of those who have become the children of God. This communication of the Holy Spirit with our human spirit begins to reverse the effects of original sin.

Romans 1 shows that original sin affected the human spirit in several ways:

- natural light - man rejected what he could know of God through creation – Romans 1:19-20
- conscience – man became vain in his imaginations – Romans 1:21
- wisdom – man rejected the wisdom of God – Romans 1:22-23
- sensitivity – man became sensitive to his own evil desires – Romans 1:24-25
- creativity – man used his creativity to satisfy his evil human desires – Romans 1:25-32

As our human spirit begins to learn to communicate with the Holy Spirit, we see that the Holy Spirit begins to change and transform our human spirit. First, the Holy Spirit gives us a new view of God’s creation. Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.” Once we become Christians, we begin to have a whole new view of God’s creation. Instead of worshiping the earth and the stars, we express our gratitude to the Creator for His glory that is revealed to us through His creation.

Second, the Holy Spirit immediately renews our conscience. The Lord wants us to have continuous fellowship with Him. This happens as we walk in the light. 1 John 1:6-7 says, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood

of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” Our conscience causes us to become sensitive to sin again. This makes it possible for us to immediately confess our sin and restore our fellowship with Christ. In addition, God gives us the promise, in 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Third, the Holy Spirit helps us to begin to understand the wisdom of God. 1 Corinthians 2:13 says, “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” This is especially essential for a developing Christian leader. Human wisdom and spiritual wisdom are opposites and produce two totally different results.

James 3:14-16 describes the wisdom of the world and its results. Those verses say, “But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.” Here, we see that human wisdom is very destructive because it causes people to be very self-centered and selfish.

In contrast, the wisdom that the Holy Spirit gives us produces a very different result. James 3:17-18 says, “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” The wisdom that comes from above helps us to become peacemakers which means that the Holy Spirit guides us to help others learn to have peace with God.

Fourth, the Holy Spirit causes our human spirit to become sensitive to God and to others. When man rejected the wisdom of God, in Romans 1:22-23, we see that man began to create idols to replace God. Instead of reflecting the glory of God, man made idols that were in the form of men or animals or creeping things. Such idols are described in Psalm 115:4-8. “Their idols *are* silver and gold, The work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see; They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell; They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat. Those who make them are like them; *So is* everyone who trusts in them.”

In contrast, the Holy Spirit causes our human spirit to become sensitive to God again. That is due to the fact that the Holy Spirit now dwells within us. The night before He was crucified, Christ said many wonderful things. One of the things He said was the promise in John 14:16-17. That promise says, “...And 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.” The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost to live within the life of every Christian as the down payment and guarantee of our salvation – Ephesians 1:13-14.

The Holy Spirit also causes us to become sensitive to others. Again, this is very important for developing spiritual leaders to understand. As we grow in the Lord, the Holy Spirit causes us to

become less self-centered and selfish. Philippians 2:3-4 tells us the attitudes that the Holy Spirit develops in our lives as we mature in Christ. Those verses say, “*Let nothing be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

As a developing leader becomes more sensitive to others, he or she will also become a better listener. James 1:19-20 says, “So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” A person, who is sensitive to the Holy Spirit, will be quick to really listen to what others are saying. Such persons will also be praying that the Holy Spirit will give them wisdom as they answer and take time to weight their words so that they speak words that minister, instead of words that destroy.

Fifth, the Holy Spirit will develop the creativity of Christians as they learn to yield their spirit to the Holy Spirit. In Galatians 5:13, we read, “For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” True liberty is the power to live as we should, not to live as we please. Here, we see that the Holy Spirit helps us to find creative ways to serve one another as we walk in the Spirit.

Instead of a person using his or her creativity to satisfy evil desires, growing Christians will use the creativity given by the Holy Spirit to minister to others. In the verse just mentioned, we see Christians will use their creativity to find ways to serve one another in love. As we have mentioned in other materials, the New Testament gives us twelve things we are to avoid in our relationships with one another. The New Testament also gives us thirty-one things we are to do in our relationships with one another. Of course, the one that is mentioned more times than any other is that we are to love one another as Christ has loved us.

Growing Christians will also use the creativity that the Holy Spirit gives to find ways to share the Gospel with those who are not yet Christians. 1 Peter 3:15 says, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” As we let the Lord rule in our hearts, the Holy Spirit will communicate with our spirit ways to make the Gospel clear to those who are not yet Christians. In addition, the Holy Spirit will give us the boldness to share the Gospel.

As we help developing spiritual leaders learn to walk in the Spirit, we will see them change from the inside out. We will see the Holy Spirit begin to reverse the effects that original sin had on the lives of every person. May the Lord richly bless you as you help developing spiritual leaders learn to walk in the Spirit.