

Series Title – What I Believe
Lesson Number 4

I Believe in the Holy Spirit

Read: Galatians 5:16–23 (Don't read yet)

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

Theme: Your biggest problem is your old nature, but you can overcome that problem through the Holy Spirit.

Introduction:

We've been in a series of lessons based on this statement of faith:

"I believe in the inspiration of the Bible, and in the deity of Jesus Christ, God's Son, in Whom we have salvation from sin by grace through faith. I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and gives guidance and power as we surrender to the Lordship of Christ. I believe that God has given to the church the responsibility to evangelize the world through the preaching of the gospel and personal soul winning. I will seek to live today so as to be ready to meet Him at His coming."

Review what we've learned so far.

This morning we begin to address what we believe about the Holy Spirit. **"I believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer and gives guidance and power as we surrender to the Lordship of Christ."**

Let's talk a little about the Holy Spirit, and let's start with a discussion.
(Powerpoint presentation of the following questions)

QUESTION – The Holy Spirit is a very important doctrine in scripture. We'll explain why in this series of lessons, but for now, just take my word for it. If that is so, why do we spend so little time talking about the Holy Spirit? Why don't we hear more about it?

QUESTION – What or Who is the Holy Spirit? Tell me what you know about Him?

QUESTION – What does the Holy Spirit do? What is His purpose?

QUESTION – There are some terms in the Bible that are used in conjunction with the Holy Spirit. For example "baptism." What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?

QUESTION – What is meant by the filling of the Holy Spirit? Is this different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit? How?

QUESTION – What is meant by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? Is this different from the baptism of the Holy Spirit or the filling of the Holy Spirit? How?

QUESTION – Did the Holy Spirit function the same in the Old Testament as He does in the New Testament?

QUESTION – What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Name some of them? Are they for today? What purpose do the gifts of the Holy Spirit serve?

QUESTION – Which people have the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

QUESTION – What impact does the Holy Spirit have on your life as a Christian?

QUESTION – Can we hinder the ministry of the Holy Spirit? How? Are there specific sins against the Holy Spirit that are mentioned in the Bible?

These are the questions we will look at and answer in this lesson, and in the next week or two. This morning, let's begin with a vital piece of introductory information about the Holy Spirit. **Let's think about the fact that the Holy Spirit is the answer to your biggest problem.**

What is your biggest problem?
Health? Marital strife? Career decisions?
Away from God?
Money?

ILLUS. "A man went to a very high-priced psychiatrist and said, "Doc, I've got a problem. I hope you can help me." "What is your problem?" asked the doctor. "Well, I'm married. I've got a Jaguar, my wife has a Cadillac, we have three children all in good health, and we have a home in the country and one in the city." "You don't seem so bad off," replied the doctor. "What is your problem?" The patient said slowly, "I only make \$45 a week."

YOU WILL HAVE PROBLEMS UNTIL JESUS COMES!

QUOTE "There is a special place for people with no problems, it's called a cemetery".

But there is one problem that is your biggest. Let's read about it.

READ *Gal. 5:16-23*

I. Your biggest problem is your sin nature. (5:17)

A. Wonderful things happened when you got saved.

QUESTION – Name some? What kind of things happened to you when you got saved?

ANSWER – You became justified – **JUST AS IF YOU HAD NEVER SINNED.**

ANSWER – The blood of Jesus Christ was applied to your life, cleansing you from all sin.

ANSWER – You were adopted into the family of God, placed into His family with the status of an adult son.

ANSWER – You got a new address in heaven.

ANSWER – You received an eternal inheritance.

ANSWER – You were indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God.

QUESTION – What happened **TO YOUR BODY** when you got saved?

ANSWER – **NOTHING.**

B. **BUT**, nothing happened to your sin nature.

QUOTE "We dwell in enfeebled bodies." Tom Malone

C. Until Jesus comes, you have a dual nature.

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I AM CARNAL, sold under sin." Romans 7:14

"Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that DWELLETH IN ME." Romans 7:17

"For I know that in me (that is, IN MY FLESH,) dwelleth no good thing..." Romans 7:18

"Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but SIN THAT DWELLETH IN ME." Romans 7:20

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, EVIL IS PRESENT WITH ME." Romans 7:21

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which WAR AGAINST THE SOUL." 2 Peter 2:11

QUOTE – "I have had more trouble with myself than with any other man I have ever met!" Dwight L. Moody

D. Most of your other problems stem from this problem.

E. (PARENTHESIS – This is a good point in our discussion to talk about a related topic – our 3-FOLD Salvation)

READ *Titus 2:11–13*

1. When you trusted Christ, you were immediately and forever saved from the PENALTY of sin.

2. When you trusted Christ, you began a lifelong journal of wrestling with and realizing salvation from the POWER of sin. (This process is referred to as SANCTIFICATION in the Bible.)

3. When you trusted Christ, you received the promise that one day you would be delivered from the very PRESENCE of sin in your life.

II. Your sin nature is ACTIVE. (5:17,19–21)

QUESTION – What key thoughts do you see in vs. 17?

ANSWER – We are in a war – flesh against spirit, and we **CANNOT** win that war on our own.

A. It leads you to commit SENSUAL sins.

Adultery ("Unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another." – Vines)

Fornication ("Sexual immorality, all kinds." PORNEIA)

Uncleanness ("Moral uncleanness, lewdness, incontinence in general." – Zodhiates)

Lasciviousness ("Wantonness, readiness for all pleasure, one who acknowledges no restraints." Zodhiates)

The news is filled with such. Our churches today are filled with such.

QUESTION – Why is it so? Why are our churches so filled today with these types of sins?

B. It leads you to commit WORSHIP sins.

Idolatry is FALSE worship, or worship of a FALSE god.

Witchcraft is SORCERY, OCCULT, DRUGS

NOTE – The emphasis in Christian churches used to be on prayer, praise and preaching. These days, it is more often on psychology, meeting peoples' needs, making people feel good, and gaining consensus. These are all just subtle forms of idolatry. They are not of the Spirit, but of the flesh. Churches are powerless today because they are in the flesh, and not in the Spirit.

C. It leads you to commit SOCIAL sins.

Hatred(s) (Refers to hatreds of groups as well as to individual hatred for others.)

Variance ("Contentiousness")

Emulations ("Jealousy")

Wrath ("Fits of rage, boiling anger") THUMOS

Strife ("Selfish ambition")

Seditious ("A standing apart," an active type of heresy or division)

Heresies ("Divisions, factions," differs from sedition in that heresy can be within a group, but sedition is when it causes the group to divide.

Envyings

Murders

Drunkenness

Revellings ("Partying, riotous behavior")

QUESTION – Do you see yourself in this list? Are any of these things present in your life?

ANSWER – If by some miracle of spirituality, you were able to say that NONE of those things are in your life, don't get too cocky yet. Notice the next phrase... "and such like."

D. It leads you to commit all types of sins!

"... and such like..."

(This list is not exhaustive!)

III. Your sin nature is DEFEATED! (5:16)

A. You are no longer ENSLAVED to it.

"... ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

(NOT = OU ME, negative imperative, strongest negative in the Greek language!)

And so, your biggest problem (your sin nature) is overcome by God's provision of the Holy Spirit. You CANNOT solve this problem on your own (vs. 17), but He HAS solved it by the gift of the Holy Spirit!

"For sin SHALL NOT HAVE DOMINION over you..."Romans 6:14

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John 5:4-5

ILLUS. Paul cried in anguish, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24) Later, he said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7:25) HE FOUND THE POWER TO OVERCOME THE PROBLEM IN JESUS!

ILLUS. Dr. Paul Vanaman tells of looking in his mirror one morning and thinking about a particular temptation that was strong in his life. He said to himself in the mirror, "Haven't you gotten the victory over that yet?" Then, after thinking for a few more minutes, he again

said to himself, "No, but it hasn't gotten the victory over me yet, either!"

B. You have the POWER TO PREVAIL over it.

"Walk in the Spirit..."

Walk = CONTINUAL, HABITUAL, REPEATED ACTION

In the Spirit

- Listening to His promptings.
- Obeying His promptings.
- Seeking His wisdom.
- Acting on His advice.

QUOTE (MacArthur Study Bible note) – "All believers have the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19–20) as the personal power for living to please God. The form of the Greek verb translated WALK indicates continuous action, or a habitual lifestyle. Walking also implies progress; as a believer submits to the Spirit's control – that is, responds in obedience to the simple commands of Scripture – he grows in his spiritual life."

QUOTE (Barnes Notes on vs. 16) (Here is a) "... statement of an important and deeply interesting truth that the only way to overcome the corrupt desires and propensities of our nature, is by submitting to the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is not by philosophy; it is not by mere resolutions to resist them; it is not by the force of education and laws; it is only by ... yielding ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. If we live under the influences of that Spirit, we need not fear the power of the sensual and corrupt propensities of our nature."

QUOTE (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown commentary on vs. 16) "The best way to keep tares out of a bushel is to fill it with wheat."

C. You have the Spirit's PROVISION to prevail over it:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is..." (vss. 22–23) **(READ THEM)**

The individual manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit are the subject of another lesson.

NOTE, however, that the FRUIT (singular) of the Spirit includes them all.

- ♦ You have the provision of the Holy Spirit – all of it.

- Therefore, you have the FRUIT (all of it) of that Holy Spirit.
- You need only to avail yourself of it.

ILLUS – A preacher friend of mine struggled with his weight. He tried various diets with no success. One day he came to me with the solemn pronouncement that he had solved his problem. I asked how. He took me to Gal. 5:23 "The fruit of the Spirit is TEMPERANCE." That word means self-control, he told me, and said that he had come to understand that he did not need to pray for self-control. He already had it as an aspect of the Fruit of the Spirit. He had really gotten hold of that truth, and it did, indeed, change his life. He lost weight like it wasn't even an issue. We, too, have the same fruit of the Spirit, if we have trusted Christ and are saved.

Conclusion:

What is your biggest problem?

- Money?
- Health?
- Marital strife?
- Career decisions?
- Away from God?

NO, your biggest problem is your old nature, but it is a problem that you can overcome through the Holy Spirit.

Now, a final, extremely practical thought. HOW do we walk in the spirit? We've talked about its importance, but really haven't discussed the HOW? Let me answer that with an illustration:

ILLUS – Recently National Geographic ran an article about the Alaskan bull moose. The males of the species battle for dominance during the fall breeding season, literally going head-to-head with antlers crunching together as they collide. Often the antlers, their only weapon are broken. That ensures defeat. The heftiest moose, with the largest and strongest antlers, triumphs. Therefore, the battle fought in the fall is really won during the summer, when the moose eat continually. The one that consumes the best diet for growing antlers and gaining weight will be the heavyweight in the fight. Those that eat inadequately sport weaker antlers and less bulk. There is a lesson here for us. Spiritual battles await. Satan will choose a season to attack. Will we be victorious, or will we fall? Much depends on what we do now, before the wars begin. The bull-moose principle: Enduring faith, strength, and wisdom for trials are best developed before they are needed."

And so, if we would walk in the Spirit, we need to fill our minds with Spiritual things. I know it sounds like I preach the same thing all the time, but you know what those things are. We need to fill our minds, fill our time, fill our lives with the Word of God and with prayer.

QUOTE (John MacArthur) – "The secret to the Spirit filled life is the word filled mind."

May God help us today to WALK IN THE SPIRIT, so that we will NOT FULFILL THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH.

Next week we will continue our discussion of the Holy Spirit, as we look at the answers to some of the questions we asked earlier in this lesson.

You see it's vital to understand what we believe about the Holy Spirit, because He is the answer to our greatest problem!

"I BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS EVERY BELIEVER, AND GIVES GUIDANCE AND POWER AS WE SURRENDER TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST."

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

*Please direct questions, comments, and submissions to William E. Johnson
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