

CHAPTER 2

Walking In The Spirit

In the last chapter we learned that the Christian life is CHRIST LIVING IN ME (Galatians 2:20)! Christ wants to live out His life in me (Philippians 2:13 – "it is _____ which worketh _____ Y _____"). But why do I seem to have so many problems with living? Even though I know I'm saved and have eternal life, why don't I always enjoy this abundant life which I have?

Something must be wrong! Even though I'm trusting the Lord Jesus Christ and I know Him as my Saviour, I still have problems. I know that "CHRIST IN ME" is never unkind (see Chapter 1), but often I find that I am still UNKIND, even though I'm a Christian. Why is this so? Often I'm selfish. Sometimes I worry about things. At times I am afraid. I still have a problem with SIN (doing things I know are not right) and BAD HABITS. What's wrong? Why are there times when it seems as though the Lord Jesus is *not* living His life in me?

Was Jesus ever unkind? _____ Was He ever selfish? _____ Was He ever worried or afraid? _____ Did He ever sin or do what He knew was wrong? _____ If Christ is living in me, then why do I often do these things?

In Chapter 1 we learned how important it is to not get in the way but to let Christ live in me. That's often the problem. We get in the way of the Lord and do not allow Him to live His life in us. We live our life instead of letting Him live His life in us.

There are two ways that a believer can walk. One way pleases the Lord and the other way does not please Him at all! According to Romans 8:4, a person can walk after the F _____ or a person can walk after the S _____ (see also Galatians 5:16-17). The "FLESH is another way to talk about MY OLD SINFUL SELF. When I walk after the flesh, I am getting in the way of the Lord and not allowing Him to live His life in me.

Those things that **I do** always come out wrong. MY OLD SINFUL SELF gets in the way. Those things that **Christ does in me** always come out right! What I produce is BAD (unacceptable to God, not as God wants or requires, not pleasing to God – Romans 8:8); what God produces in me is GOOD!

Sally is a wonderful cook. She makes the most delicious soup you have ever tasted. Joe is a terrible cook. His soup is not very tasty and you can't even swallow a spoonful of it without making an unpleasant face. Now suppose Sally and Joe both make soup for you in the kitchen and when they are done they bring out two cups of soup (but you do not know which cook made which cup). The first cup tastes bitter and you don't even feel like finishing it. Which cook made this cup? _____ The second cup is so good that you do not even need to put crackers in it! Which cook made this soup? _____ We can easily tell who produced the good soup.

Doctor Flynn has terrible handwriting, but his secretary, Nancy, has very neat handwriting. Can you tell who wrote the following notes?

NOTE 1
 Please take these pills
 three times a day and
 you should begin to
 feel much better

NOTE 2
 Please take these pills
 three times a day and
 you should begin to
 feel much better.

Who wrote NOTE 1? _____ Who wrote NOTE 2? _____ We can easily tell who produced the bad handwriting and who produced the good handwriting.

Hank's Orchard produces the best apples in town. Henry's Orchard produces the worst apples in town. Most of them are rotten and no one really seems to enjoy these apples except the worms. One day your Mother comes home with a bag of the best apples ever tasted. Where do you think she got them from? _____

When I walk in the Spirit, God produces wonderful fruit (see GALATIANS 5:22-23). When I walk in the flesh, the things which **I produce** are terrible (see GALATIANS 5:19-21)! Suppose I have been jealous and selfish and unkind. Right away what should I realize? (circle the correct answer)

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. That's the flesh
(MY OLD SINFUL SELF) | b. That's the Spirit
(GOD WORKING OUT HIS LIFE
IN ME) |
|---|---|

If the Spirit of God is working in my life, what are some of the things that He will produce (Galatians 5:22-23)?

Do you think God wants to produce these things in your life? _____ Then what is it that sometimes goes wrong?

How Do I Get in the Way Of God Working Out His Life in Me?

1) I Get In The Way By GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In Ephesians 4:30 we read, "And _____ not the H _____ Spirit of God."

Normally parents have a love for their children and they are sometimes GRIEVED (made sad, even to the point of feeling pain) when their children go the wrong way or do the wrong things. In the same way, God is GRIEVED when a believer sins and goes the wrong way. Some of the sins that GRIEVE God are mentioned in Ephesians 4:25,28,29,31. Can you list some of these?

Sometimes when we travel on the road we will see a sign that says, "WRONG WAY!" (especially if we were about to turn the wrong way onto a one way street or onto a divided highway). God is grieved when a believer goes the WRONG WAY and God cannot work in that person as long as he is headed in the wrong direction.

Would you eat off of a dirty plate (covered with the remains of breakfast)? _____ Would you eat off of that same plate after it was washed and made clean? _____

Suppose your toothbrush were to fall on a dirty floor. Would you use it to brush your teeth? _____ Would you clean it up and then use it? _____

Suppose you were waiting to see the dentist who has already seen four people before you. Would you want him to wash his hands or put on clean gloves before he puts his fingers in your mouth? _____

God wants to use His believers. He wants to use you, but God will not use a believer who is filthy. God will not use a believer who is unclean. But God will use a person as soon as he is clean. Of course, we are not talking about the filth that comes from dirt, but the filth that comes from SIN. Has God made a way for the believer to get clean (1 JOHN 1:9)? _____ What must the believer do (1 John 1:9)? _____ In the next chapter we will try to better understand what it means to CONFESS OUR SINS.

2) I Get In The Way By QUENCHING THE SPIRIT.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we read, "Q _____ not the _____."

Suppose you built a fire outside in a fireplace at a campsite. Could this fire be made to work in useful ways? Could it be used to boil water? Could it be used to cook hot dogs? Could it be used to toast marshmallows? Would it be able to throw off heat to warm those bodies that huddle up close to it?

What would happen if you were to quench this fire with water? Could it be used to do those things mentioned above?

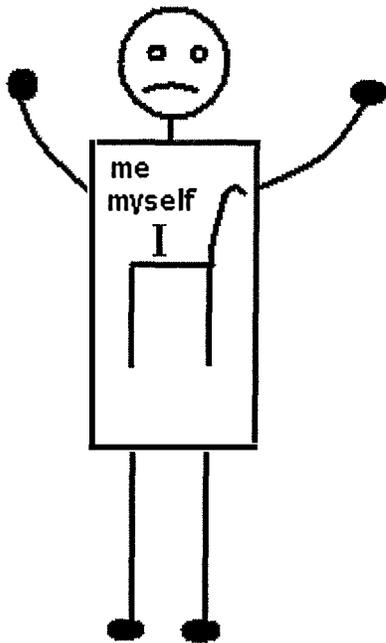
The Spirit of God wants to do a mighty work in each believer. He is like a mighty flame and He is able to help the believer burn brightly for the Lord. He wants to produce wonderful fruit in us as we have already seen. He wants to live out the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in us. But often we QUENCH HIM, and we do not let Him do His wonderful work!

Driving in the car, you have often seen a sign that says "YIELD." This sign means that you are to let the other car have its way. You are not to have your own way, but you are to allow that other car to have its way. God wants us to YIELD to Him (Romans 6:13) and to let Him have His way. We QUENCH GOD when we do not allow Him to have His way.

The believer who quenches God is like the person who goes through a red light and stops at a green light! Sometimes God says "NO!" and we go. Sometimes God says "GO!" and we stop. We are not letting God have His way. We are saying, "Not God's will, but *MINE* be done!" (compare Luke 22:42).

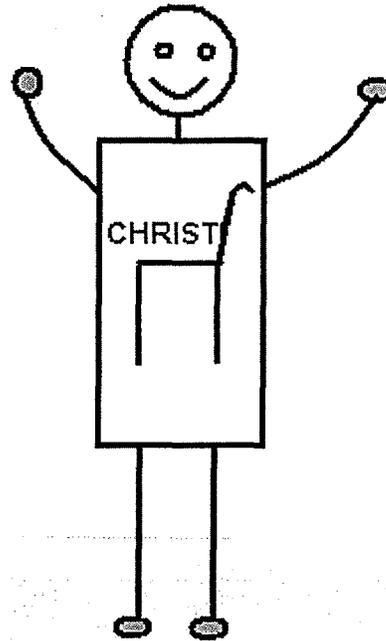
Who is on the THRONE of my life?

FILLED WITH SELF



(Write your own name)
is the **BOSS** of my life!

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT (Ephesians 5:18)



The **LORD** Jesus Christ
is the **BOSS** of my life!

The person who YIELDS to God is able to say and to pray:

"Lord, I'll be whatever You want me to be!"
"Lord, I'll do whatever You want me to do!"
"Lord, I'll go wherever You want me to go!"
"Lord, I'll say whatever You want me to say!"

God does not force Himself on a person. He works out His life in the believer who is not standing in God's way (not being a pain or a grief to God) and who is **YIELDED** (letting *God* have *His* way)!

3) I Get In The Way By **NOT WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.**

In Galatians 5:16 we read, "W _____ in the Spirit and ye shall _____ fulfill the lust of the F _____."

Walking in the Spirit means that I am **DEPENDING** on the Spirit to help me to walk in the right way, which I cannot do by myself. If I try to live the Christian life without the Spirit's help, I will fall and fail (Isaiah 41:10,13,14).

Imagine a person walking high above the ground on a tightrope. This person is very skilled and he does very well. In fact, he does so well that he says to himself, "I'm really good at doing this! I'm so good that I don't even need this rope. I'll just walk on the air!" Of course, as soon as he stops depending on the rope, he falls! A tightrope walker needs the rope every second, and without the rope, he would fall!

Imagine a woman who is water skiing. Suddenly she thinks, "Water skiing is so easy! Who needs this rope? I do not want to always stay behind the boat. I want to go wherever I please on this lake." So she lets go of the handle and immediately begins to sink! She did fine as long as she allowed herself to be pulled by the rope, but as soon as she tried to do it by herself she failed and got all wet! [Note: With water skiing you have to allow the rope to pull you. If you pull on the rope (that is, pull it towards you), you could easily lose your balance and fall. This is a good illustration of letting God carry us as we hold onto Him and stay focused on Him.]

A Christian cannot live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit! Jesus said, "Without Me, ye can do _____" (John 15:5).

It is easy to forget that the Lord's help is needed at all times. For example, you might be having a difficult test in school and you might silently pray to God, "Lord, help me to do well on this test!" You are depending on God to carry you through and to help you to do what is right. But after the test is over you go out for recess to play some sports. You might think, "Who needs the Lord to play sports? I really needed God to help me on that test but I don't need Him to play." Before you know it you find yourself in an argument with a friend!

Here is another example: You come to church on Sunday morning and in Sunday School class you really depend on the Lord: "Lord, help me to pay attention in this class because the teacher might ask me a question and I want to do well and learn what I should!" After Sunday School you go to the morning worship service and you think to yourself: "I don't really need to ask God for help now, because during the service I just sit and no one is going to ask me anything." As you think back over the morning you realize that you learned much from your Sunday School class but you did not get much at all from the morning worship service!

How many fish did the disciples catch without the Lord (John 21:3)? _____ And remember, these were experienced fishermen who really knew how to catch fish! How many did they catch with the help of the Lord Jesus (John 21:6,8,11)? _____

Trying to live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit is like trying to drive to New York City without a car! It's impossible!

The Lord Jesus Christ wants to live out His life in every believer by the power of the Holy Spirit! We need to make sure that the FLESH (our old sinful self) does not get in the way!

"Channels Only, Blessed Master,
But with all Thy wondrous power,
Flowing through us, Thou canst use us,
Every day and every hour!"
--Mary Maxwell

Can you say in your heart:

Thank you Lord Jesus for God the Holy Spirit!

Thank you God the Holy Spirit for the Life of the Lord Jesus!

	CONDITON #1 "GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT" (Ephesians 4:30)
---	--

Meaning: Do not be allowing sin to go unconfessed, thus causing sorrow and grief to the Holy One who indwells you. He refuses to fill and use an unclean vessel.

Key Word: CONFESS (1 John 1:9, acknowledge, don't hide, don't cover up but face up, be honest before God, judge yourself, see sin as God sees it, admit to it, say the same thing about sin that God does).

Surgeon's glove illustration:

Obviously a surgeon would refuse to use a glove that is dirty. When he begins to do his work, he always uses a clean glove.

Personal questions: Am I clean and fit for the Master's use? Is there any unconfessed sin in my life (Psalm 139:23-24)?

Passages to Study: 1 John 1:5-10; John 13:4-11; James 4:8-10; Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 51 and Psalm 32.

	CONDITON #2 "QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT" (1 Thessalonians 5:19)
---	--

Meaning: Do not be hindering or limiting God's mighty working in your life by saying "NO" to God or by being unwilling to do His will.

Key Word: YIELD (saying yes to God, a complete willingness to do God's will – whatever, however, whenever; saying "NO" to self and letting God have His way and His sway. It involves presenting myself to God and placing myself at His disposal (Rom. 6:13).

Surgeon's glove illustration:

Quenching the Spirit would be like the surgeon's glove clinging to a chair or some other object, refusing to allow the surgeon access to the glove (refusing to be used). The surgeon says, "Just let me put my hand into you so that I can do a marvelous work!" But the glove refuses!

Personal Question: Am I willing to do God's will no matter what it is, or am I insistent on having my own way and doing what pleases me? See Luke 22:42 and Christ's example in John 4:34.

	CONDITON #3 "WALK IN (BY) THE SPIRIT" (Galatians 5:16)
---	--

Meaning: Constantly be walking or living by the power of God the Holy Spirit who dwells within.

Key Word: DEPEND (rely, trust, cling to, have God as your sufficiency).

Surgeon's glove illustration:

Not walking by the Spirit is like the glove saying to the surgeon: "I don't need you at all! I'll do this operation all by myself!" How foolish! What the glove should say is this: "I can do nothing apart from the hand of the surgeon which can fill me and use me!" (John 15:5 and Philippians 4:13).

Tightrope Illustration: *As the tightrope walker desperately needs the rope every step of the way, so the believer needs the Holy Spirit every moment.*

Personal questions: Am I depending on the Lord for help and strength moment by moment, or am I struggling in my own strength and trying to accomplish things by myself in the energy of the flesh? Am I God-conscious and God-dependent? (Eph. 6:10; Jn. 15:1-7)