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How to Walk in the Spirit



Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

In this piece, Steve Gregg explores the concept of "walking in the spirit," which refers to living a life according to spiritual principles. He highlights the importance of the Holy Spirit in guiding and empowering believers to live a holy life, and emphasizes the need to combine the insights of the Bible with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Walking in the Spirit involves cultivating a relationship with God, living within the parameters of His will, and relying on His power to overcome weaknesses and navigate life's challenges.

Transcript

I was asked if I would teach today on how to walk in the spirit. Now, walking in the spirit is a topic that's come up here before. I've taught, when I've taught on other things, I've mentioned walking in the spirit.

And so Nori wanted me to say something about, I guess, something practical about walking in the spirit. How do we do that? How do we walk in the spirit? And the truth is, the Bible doesn't ever just lay out an instructional method of walking in the spirit. It's not like you can go online, get a YouTube video showing you how to do it, like you can about almost everything else.

Or it's not that there's an instruction manual somewhere. I mean, the Bible, we could say, is an instruction manual. But one might properly say, everything in the Bible is related to walking in the spirit.

So almost every instruction in it could be included. And we don't want to do that today. So I want to talk as directly to the subject with the biblical passages that use the language, the similar language or identical language, to what it means to walk and what it means to be in the spirit.

Since the expression walk in the spirit has two parts to it. One of it is walking. And that's a very common word in scripture.

We have a lot of things in the Bible about walking. And I believe all of them are related to walking in the spirit, though they don't always use that phrase. Then, of course, we have

the expression in the spirit, which is itself a little nebulous.

In fact, to just let you know how nebulous it is, it's hard to find translations that can agree, various translations of the Bible, that can agree on the phrase. As a matter of fact, the main verse, there's two verses, really, that in the King James Version and the New King James Version, use the expression walk in the spirit only occurs twice. And it's not the same word for walk in the two places.

They're both in Ephesians. One is Ephesians 5:16. I say, then walk in the spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

And the other is in Galatians 5:16. And it's also then a few verses later, nine verses later, Galatians 5:25 says, if we live in the spirit, then let us walk in the spirit. So these are the only two times that the expression walk in the spirit are found in the whole Bible.

But walking with other modifiers is found quite a bit in the Bible. And I don't think there's, I don't think we're supposed to be seeing this as several different ways to walk. But one way we walk, we walk in the spirit.

And that includes all the other things that are said about our walk in scripture. But I wanted to just point out something I didn't know until today. And that is, apart from the King James and the New King James, there are no major translations of the Bible that even have the expression walk in the spirit.

Those two verses that we, that we just mentioned, Galatians 5:16, in almost all other versions of the Bible that are not the King James or the New King James, it says walk by the spirit. Now, I have no objection to that reading. I was just surprised that virtually all the translations other than those two have changed it from the traditional walk in the spirit to walk by the spirit.

And that conveys information of value, obviously. However, I wanted to point out that in the Greek, it can go more than one way. There's actually not a preposition always found there.

The word spirit, pneumatikoi, is basically a form of the word spirit that suggests sort of a relationship to what goes on before, but doesn't have a specific preposition that it always relates to. And so it could mean walk in the spirit or walk by the spirit. What I wanted to point out is I'm more familiar with the King James and the New King James.

I usually use it. So anyway, the expression that I've asked to speak on how to walk in the spirit is actually an expression that's not found outside the King James or the New King James version anyway. Now, interestingly, in Galatians 5:25, the other place where the expression is found in the King James and the New King James, that one is a different word for walk.

The word walk in the spirit in Galatians 5:16 is simply a word for walking around or walking. It's a metaphor for living, really, or for conducting oneself in life. But the other occurrence, which is much less common in our Greek New Testament, is a word that means to march in rank or in an orderly way.

And so some translations, when it comes to Galatians 5:25, instead of saying walk in the spirit, let me give you some of the different renderings I found just today in different translations. The NIV, the ESV, and the Christian Standard Bible, it renders Galatians 5:25 as keep in step with the spirit. I don't know if you've ever run into that translation before.

A lot of people use the NIV, and they would have run into it there. But keep in step with the spirit, like the word walk there means to march along in order, so to keep ranks, keep up the cadence of the march. And so that's how the NIV, the ESV, and the CSB all render it.

The American Standard Version, not New American Standard, but the older American Standard Version, and the Amplified, the Revised Standard Version, and A.T. Robertson render it walk by the spirit, which is, of course, the way that they also translate Galatians 5:16. Both verses, they actually have different phrases in the Greek, but those verses I just mentioned render both of them as walk by the spirit. The Net Bible, which is strictly an online Bible, but it's a pretty literal one in most cases, it renders it behave in accordance with the spirit.

And the New American Standard, in a footnote, says follow the Holy Spirit. And this is also the way it's rendered in the Holman Christian Standard Bible. Now, I mentioned that the Christian Standard Bible says keep in step with the spirit.

But the Holman Christian Standard Bible, which is the same Bible, earlier edition, says follow the spirit. Now, I'm just giving you these things, not to confuse you, but to let you know how there is some ambiguity in the phrase, that all these translations look at it a little differently. I think we can make sense of it, but I just want you to know what we're working with here.

Likewise, this follow the spirit is the New Living Translation uses that. And then we've got a few, the Phillips Translation, the Mounts Translation, and the New RSV, they say be guided by the spirit. So, all of those are different ways that major translations have rendered one verse.

And that is Galatians 5:25, which says, if we live in the spirit, let us walk in the spirit, in the King James. But now they're talking about being, keep living in accordance with the spirit, walking by the spirit, being guided by the spirit, following the spirit. These are all different ways that it's been rendered.

Keeping in step with the spirit is a popular. Now, having said that, I guess we have to

ask, what are we talking about? We're talking about walking in the spirit. There's nothing wrong with that, by the way, that translation, the New King James and the King James, obviously, use a different translation than most of the others are now using.

There's no reason that it can't be rendered that way. What does it mean to walk in the spirit? Well, walking, of course, is a metaphor for living. And so Paul is making it very clear that the way we live as spiritual people, people who have the Holy Spirit, is supposed to be such that it's different than the way other people live.

I was asked a question yesterday at a men's Bible study I was at. Somebody asked me, what did Christians do before they had the Bible? That is, before the New Testament was put together, for example. How did the churches get by? How did Christians live if they didn't have the Bible? And I thought it was an interesting question because, well, they always had the Old Testament, but they, of course, they weren't under the law, so they had to use the Old Testament slightly in a modified way.

They didn't circumcise or offer animal sacrifices, things like that, that the Old Testament teaches. But they did get their moral instructions from the Old Testament. And I think that's a main part of the answer, is that whereas we use our New Testament very largely to dissect esoteric theological questions.

Define? Define esoteric? Sort of abstract. I'll just say abstract. Abstract theological questions.

I think the early church was more interested in the way that being a Christian changed the way they lived from when they were heathen. When they were heathen, they were immoral. They were indulgent drunkards.

They were baby killers. I mean, they left unwanted babies out for exposure to die. They were idolatrous.

There were all kinds of evil conduct that were associated with being a pagan. And these pagans had become Christians. And so their main concern, I think, was not in trying to dissect abstractions, as we have the luxury of doing now, because we have a full Bible and we have, of course, the history behind us of theological controversies and decrees of councils and things like that that they didn't have.

They were mainly concerned about living for Christ, living a godly life. And they didn't need much more than the law, which laid out a basic moral standard, and the Holy Spirit. I think they depended on the Holy Spirit more than we do.

In fact, I think we may have a tendency to lean on the Bible as a written book more than on the Holy Spirit many times. And that's because it's somewhat easier to do, I think. I remember meeting some people back in the 70s.

They were in some branch of the Church of Christ who, in talking to them, it was clear that they identified the Holy Spirit with the Bible. It was almost like the Trinity was the Father, the Son, and the Holy Scriptures. And they didn't really believe that the Holy Spirit existed apart from just the Bible itself.

Now, I don't think any of us believe that. We have somewhat more orthodox understanding of the Trinity than that. And yet we might live as though that's the case.

We might think the Bible is really what distinguishes us as Christians. We live by the Bible. And I think we do.

But the reason we do is because the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit. And that's part of what it means to follow the Spirit's leading. We want to follow the Spirit's leading, and we have what the early church did not have, a far more complete New Testament written by inspired authors who have given us the mind of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, in writing, which they had to get more directly, I think, from the Holy Spirit.

I think the churches were much more dependent on the moving of the Spirit in the early days before they had a New Testament. I don't think that they had quite as much of a standardized liturgy. I mean, when I say liturgy, I'm not even thinking of high church liturgy.

I'm thinking we have a liturgy. I mean, we just broke the liturgy today to have the teaching before the prayer time. But normally, it's a predictable program.

And I'm not saying that's bad. I'm just saying that we have that. We're used to that.

And I don't know if they had it all quite so standardized. I think they got together as the body of Christ. They had the Holy Spirit among themselves, and different people had different things to say through the Spirit.

They might give a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, something, a teaching, a prophecy, or something. And the church services probably conducted much more in tune with what the Holy Spirit was doing there than we are accustomed to 2,000 years later, where churches become institutionalized, standardized. And in the case of churches like this one, which are not very institutionalized, not very standardized, but very biblicized.

Now, I hope you all know I love the Bible, and I believe every word of it. And everything I teach leans heavily on the Bible. So I don't want to have anything I say make it seem like that's otherwise than that.

But I remember a friend of mine years ago, he asked me a challenging question. He said, if you had to do without the Bible or without the Holy Spirit, which would you choose? I thought, that's not an easy, that's not a good choice. I don't know what I would do without the Bible.

Honestly, I mean, every decision I make, everything I believe, every controversy I resolve, I appeal to the Bible. If I never had a Bible, and I only had the Holy Spirit, how would I get along? Well, I'd have to get along like most people in the Christian church throughout history have. I remember thinking at the time, that was a horrible choice he was putting to me.

Would you rather be without the Bible or without the Holy Spirit? And I wouldn't like to be without either. And fortunately, we don't have to be without either. But given the choice, I think we'd all have to say, I guess I'd have to be without the Bible.

Because a person can be a Christian if they don't have a Bible. But they can't be a Christian if they don't have the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit has played a genuine role in authentic Christianity, that is indispensable.

Even in times when the Bible was not published in print. Even in times where people were converted who didn't have a Bible in their language. Or for the 1500 years of the first centuries of Christianity, when no one could afford a Bible, take one home.

They at least got to hear the Bible read in the churches. Although a lot of times it was read in Latin, and they didn't speak Latin. So I'm not sure how good that was for them.

But the point is, I think a church without a Bible is very impoverished. I think there are churches that don't have Bibles. We know very well, in communist countries and so forth, there was a time more than now.

But still, there's far more Christians than there are Bibles available. And Christians sometimes have to live without a Bible. But we also have heard stories, I've heard them, about the Chinese church meeting underground.

That people, they didn't even announce where they were going to meet. People just were led by the Holy Spirit at a certain time to go to a certain place. And there they found a meeting there.

I mean, it's a kind of Christianity that we don't know as well. Because, frankly, we do have a Bible. And the Bible is inexpressibly valuable to us.

Because we have the mind of the Holy Spirit taught by the apostles and by Jesus in the Gospels. Which is so invaluable, I can't even imagine trying to live without that. And yet, so many Christians in history have had to do so.

They didn't have the luxury of having a Bible. And in the first century church, the New Testament wasn't even written yet. I mean, it was being written.

It was being written as they were living it out. But it was not collected into a final canon of the New Testament until pretty late in the fourth century, frankly. So, walking in the

Spirit, we might say, well, that just means walking according to Scripture.

To a very large degree, it does mean that. Because, again, having just said that I'd rather be without a Bible than without the Holy Spirit, I would hate to be without a Bible. And, frankly, there are people who don't have to make that choice but make it anyway.

There are certain kinds of Pentecostal or charismatic people who just don't worry about what the Bible says too much. They don't think about it very much. I mean, they might read it a bit, but if there ever comes a time when they feel like the Spirit's leading them to do something, and you can point out in the Scripture that that's not right, they'll just say, well, the letter kills, the Spirit gives life.

They'll make this distinction between the Bible and the Spirit in favor of the Spirit and almost to the neglect of the Bible. Almost as if the Bible doesn't matter because we have the Holy Spirit. Well, that's not okay.

Because who do you think inspired the prophets and the apostles? It was the Holy Spirit. I mean, the reason the Bible is different than every other book is because it is inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is the words and the mind of the Holy Spirit.

So we don't have to do without one or the other, although some people have had to. We are not in that position. And if we have Bibles and do not read them and do not follow them and do not obey what it says there, well, then we're negligent and we're not going to walk in the Spirit as well as we can.

Because certainly having the Holy Spirit does not mean that we can't benefit from the means that God gives us that not everyone has. For example, it says in 1 John 2, 24, that the anointing that you've received of him, and he means the Holy Spirit, dwells in you or abides in you, he says. And you do not need that any man teach you.

But as the same anointing teaches you of all things and is truth and is no lie, you shall abide in him. So we abide in Christ as the Holy Spirit teaches us. And he actually says in that passage, you don't need any man to teach you.

Well, then why do you have someone standing up here teaching any given Sunday? Why do we read books by teachers? Why do we listen to audio from teachers? We don't need anyone to teach us, right? Well, not ultimately. What we need mostly is the Holy Spirit. And yet there is a spiritual gift of teaching.

When Paul lists the gifts of the Spirit, you know, there are those who are given a gift to teach. So presumably, the Holy Spirit can teach us with or without teachers, but with is one of the ways he chooses. He can guide us with or without a Bible if we happen to have none.

But we don't happen to have none. We have a Bible. And therefore, we shouldn't think,

well, being spiritual and walking in the Spirit means I don't have to go by what the Bible says.

I have the Holy Spirit. It's like saying, I don't need to listen to any teachers because the Holy Spirit teaches me all things. Well, yes, he does, but the Holy Spirit has taught me a great deal, but mostly through teachers.

I mean, some not. Some, he's spoken to me just from the Bible itself, but a great deal. But what I've learned, I would say from the Holy Spirit's teaching me and guiding me, has been through what teachers who have the spiritual gift of teaching have.

It's still the Holy Spirit teaching. Just to say we have the Spirit doesn't mean we have a mystical life that we enforce against all understandable uses of means that the Holy Spirit has provided for us, whether it's teachers or whether it's the printed scriptures or anything else. Now, having said that, walking in the Spirit is contrasted to walking in the flesh.

And there's a major passage I'd like you to look at. Now, the passages I gave you before we started, I want you to hold your finger there. But I'd like you to look at some other passages that I want to read to you.

And this is in Galatians 5. There will be no one who is unfamiliar with this passage, I assume. Except maybe this one right here. In Galatians 5, verse 19, it says, Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like.

Of which I tell you beforehand, just as I told you in the time past, those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Now, the fruit of the Spirit is what Paul is obviously presenting as the alternative to living under the law. Because he says, well, you won't need any laws to keep you honest, to keep you godly, to keep you moral, if you're walking in the Spirit. The Spirit produces in you love and goodness and gentleness and faithfulness and these good things.

And if you're being led by and walking in the Spirit, these are the things that are coming out from you. And that doesn't violate any law. That is no law that God's imposing anyway.

Now, the point in Paul's context here is, of course, he's writing to the Galatians who were Gentiles, who were being subjected to Jewish laws by Judaizers who had visited their church and infiltrated them. But the Jewish laws they were being brought under were the ceremonial laws. Circumcision is mentioned.

Festivals, holy days. We might have assumed also perhaps dietary laws. And those kinds of things that were the distinguishing rituals of Judaism.

It's usually meant by the law. And when Paul says we're not under the law, he's thinking in terms of those Jewish distinctives. That we're not under them.

But Paul never suggests that there is a different moral code for the Christian than existed also in the law. And we remember that a lot of the moral code that was in the law was not distinctly for the Jews. It was a moral code that even pagans knew.

Murder. Most pagan countries don't believe in murder. Or adultery.

Or theft. They may practice it, but their law codes don't embrace it as good. There are laws that are moral in nature that all people are supposed to know and live by, Jew or Gentile.

It's the circumcision, the Sabbaths, the holy days, the special diet that were specially given to the Jews. They're not moral issues. They have to do with ritual cleanness and things like that.

And there's a big difference. Now what Paul seems to be saying is if you walk in the spirit, although you're not under the law, you will nonetheless live well within the boundaries of the moral requirements of the law. There's no law against being loving, being gentle, being honest, being faithful, being self-controlled.

There's no laws against those things, he says. So in other words, you will not have to govern your life by a written code if you're walking in the spirit. But of course, he makes it very clear what walking in the spirit looks like.

It looks like these things, the fruit of the spirit. If you don't have the fruit of the spirit, you're not walking in the spirit. By the way, we started out talking about two verses in Galatians that use the expression walk in the spirit.

One was in verse 16, one was in verse 25. Those verses bracket the verses we just read. This is a description of walking in the spirit.

If you love, if you're joyful, if you've got peace, if you're gentle, if you're faithful, if you're patient, these are things that if you have this going on in your life, no legalism need apply. No legalism needs to be considered. There are no laws against these things.

Now of course, if we were under the ceremonial law, there would be laws against being uncircumcised. And being circumcised is not one of the fruits of the spirit. Eating kosher is not a fruit of the spirit.

Keeping certain festivals, that's not a fruit of the spirit. The spirit of God working in our heart doesn't impose some kind of a conscience about rituals on us. And that's the point.

The only law that God cares about for us today is that which is behavioral in a moral sense, not that which has any connections with Jewish rituals. So the things that are produced in our lives when we walk in the spirit are things that, as far as God's concerned, doesn't have any law against any of those things. In fact, he wants us to do them.

But we don't do them because he has a law telling us to. Or because he has a law forbidding any other kind of life. We do them because that's what the spirit produces within us.

Let me show you something from Ezekiel, chapter 36. This is a prophecy about the new covenant. I think all commentators would agree about that.

I think all teachers agree about that. And it's not very often that I can say that about anything I say. But generally speaking, I don't know of any different views on this particular passage.

In Ezekiel 36, verse 25 through 27, God says, Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.

I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. Which just means a soft heart instead of a hard heart. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my judgments and do them.

Now, in other words, God says, I'm going to give you a different heart and a different spirit. I'm going to put my spirit in you. And that will cause you to walk obediently to me.

To walk according to my standards, basically, is what he's saying. So when the spirit is put into people, it causes them to walk in God's ways. Now, what that means is maybe the reason that the Bible doesn't give us a four-step plan or a five-step plan on how to walk in the spirit is because it's the natural way of walking if you're filled with the spirit.

If you're born again, you're born of the spirit. If you're filled with the spirit, which was commanded in Scripture and considered to be normative in the New Testament church, if you're filled with the spirit, then walking in the spirit is pretty much what's going to happen naturally. See, we live in a time where we're more intellectual in our approach to Christianity, probably.

And I'm not against it. I'm pretty intellectual in my approach, too. But because of that, we want to intellectualize.

Okay, what does it mean to walk in the spirit? That sounds mystical. Walking in the spirit. Spirit sounds like a mystical category, doesn't it? And so, I need to have some way of rationally saying, okay, then I have to make this decision to do this and this and take

these steps, and then I'll be entering into this mystical experience.

And it'll feel really mystical. It'll feel really spiritual when I do it because it's something new. It's something that was introduced by Jesus that wasn't in the world before and that non-Christians don't have.

So, I've got this spiritual phenomenon, this spiritual experience that other people don't have. That must be cool. That must feel really good, spiritually.

And we expect something subjective to be happening that we say, okay, I sense the spirit is telling me to go over here. I sense the spirit is doing this. I feel led of the spirit to pray for this person to be healed and things like that.

And there's a certain mystical, subjective thing that many of us have come to think should accompany being led by the spirit. And what I think is that when you've been given a new heart and a new spirit, like Ezekiel said, and the Holy Spirit's given there, well, Paul said in Romans 8, the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirits. Well, our spirit is a spiritual thing, and the Holy Spirit's spiritual.

I think when you're born of the spirit, you're living in a spiritual realm, and so spiritual things feel natural many times. I mean, it just feels unnatural to be carnal when you're a Christian. That's why John, in 1 John, frequently says, whoever is born of God cannot sin because his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin.

He means cannot live in sin. He's not saying it's impossible to commit a sin. He's saying a person who's born of God can't continue living in sin like he did before.

Some people say they're born of God, but they live in sin. Well, they're not born of God because you can't do that. If you're born of God, you have the Holy Spirit in you.

The Holy Spirit just doesn't let you live that way. You can do it, but the Holy Spirit won't make you comfortable with that. You will never feel comfortable with that if you've got the Holy Spirit in you.

The Holy Spirit will convict you. The Holy Spirit will tell you, don't do that, and it'll be an inward conviction of the Holy Spirit, and this is something that will just feel like your conscience, probably, in most cases. I'm not saying people don't get revelations.

There have been times in my life that I really feel like I've gotten, like a light went on in my head and it felt like, wow, God just showed me this. It's like a revelation. It's a little different than most of my thinking feels.

It feels different. I think God just showed me this meaning of this passage or something. That's happened before, but it doesn't happen all the time.

I have to confess, most of my understanding of the Scripture comes from studying it and

from meditating on it, and I think that's the Holy Spirit. But even when that happens, I don't always trust that it's the Holy Spirit because I've had so many people say, well, the Spirit just told me that the passage means such and such, and it just so happens they're taking it totally out of context. I know enough about the passage that it doesn't mean what they're saying.

They're just getting sort of a subjective vibe about it. I think that's not the way it really is. That's not what Paul is saying.

That's not what Jesus is saying. You shouldn't be as suspicious of those. If you get the impression that the Bible means something you've never thought about it before, never heard anyone say, that doesn't mean it's the Holy Spirit or not.

That means you have to test it. This is something Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 5, verses 19 through 21. He said, do not quench the Holy Spirit.

He said, prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good. He says, do not despise prophesied.

He says, prove all things. He says, don't quench the Spirit, don't despise prophesied, but prove all things, and hold fast to what is good. If the Spirit of prophecy speaks to you and gives you a revelation, well, it will be true for sure.

But when you think you've gotten something like that from the Holy Spirit or you've gotten some kind of an insight about a Bible verse that I haven't seen before, I always have to go look it up in the Greek. I have to see if there's any commentators who agree with me. If there's not, I could still be right, but I'm more cautious then.

I mean, certainly I have to make sure it works in the Greek or the Hebrew or whatever before I can be sure of it. And once I've studied it out, then I'll say, okay, I guess that was the Holy Spirit. But the thing is that most of the Holy Spirit doesn't feel mystical, doesn't feel weird.

It just feels natural. You know why? Because he's given us a new heart. It says in Jeremiah 31, he's written his laws on our heart.

That means our hearts already have embraced God's ways. By his Holy Spirit, he's engraved his own ways in our hearts. He's put his thoughts and his words in our minds.

And so, I think that we use the Bible to test the impressions we have because if they're not biblical, they're not true. But it may be that we feel like God is just, I feel like I should do this thing. I feel like I should go speak to that person.

I just feel like I should choose that school instead of that school. I think I should not marry that person. I should wait and see if someone else comes.

Or I should marry that person. I mean, those kinds of decisions have to be made. We want to be led by the Spirit of God.

But sometimes we assume the leading will come like an angel will appear and tell us. Or we'll get an audible voice. Or there'll be something inside that's as clear as an audible voice would be.

And it's not always that way. I believe that we walk in the Spirit because we live in the Spirit. And that's exactly what that passage in, I talked about earlier, Galatians 5.25 says.

If we live in the Spirit, well then let's walk in the Spirit. Or, as some translation, keep step with the Spirit or live by the Spirit. And these differences in translation actually bring out something of importance.

And that is, some of the translations I mentioned of Galatians 5.25, they render walk in the Spirit as follow the Spirit or be guided by the Spirit. Others say walk in the Spirit. Now walking by the Spirit would mean by the power of the Holy Spirit, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

But by the guidance or following the leading of the Holy Spirit, that's a different issue. And we have both of them in Romans chapter 8. And I think this is probably, apart from Galatians, the only other place we have anything that's a direct discussion of this narrow idea of what it means because Romans 8 kind of solves problems that are brought up in the first seven chapters. That didn't work.

Being Jewish didn't work. Circumcision didn't work. The law didn't work.

Good resolve didn't work. Well what does work? How can I live a holy life? And the answer is found in Romans 8.4 which says that the righteous requirement of the law is not the same phrase walk in the Spirit but it's clearly the same thought. Walking according to the Spirit.

The righteous requirements of the law are of course the moral standards that the law embodies. The righteous standards. They are fulfilled in us.

That is in our behavior, in our life. We live within the perimeters of the righteous standards of the law. When what? When we're not walking according to the Spirit.

Now that's that same contrast that Paul made in Galatians 5. The works of the flesh are this, the fruit of the Spirit is that. And if you walk in the Spirit you'll not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Now here he says if we don't walk according to the flesh but we walk according to the Spirit then the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in us.

But he doesn't really go into great detail here as to what it means to walk according to

the Spirit either. In Romans 8 verse 13 Paul says for if you live according to the flesh there's that phrase again which is in contrast in verse 4 that phrase is in contrast to living according to the Spirit you'll die. If you live according to the flesh you'll die.

But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. Now notice in verse 4 and in verse 13 he contrasts two things. In 1 and in 2 cases is living according to the flesh.

in verse 4 it's walking according to the flesh. In verse 13 is living according to flesh same idea walking is a metaphor for living. But in both cases that's contrasted with something.

In verse 4 walking according to the flesh is contrasted with walking in the Spirit. In verse 13 living according to the flesh is contrasted with no doubt walking in the Spirit but he puts it differently. He says, if through the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, then you'll live.

So walking in the Spirit involves through the Spirit, which must mean through the power of the Holy Spirit, putting to death the deeds of the body. You can't put to death the deeds of the body in your own fleshly effort because your body is you and you're not stronger than you. If there's a conflict between you and you, who's going to win that one? If it's between your flesh and your flesh, well then the flesh is going to win, even if the flesh loses.

Both sides are flesh and of course it's impossible for you to subdue your flesh in the power of the flesh, by your own natural fleshly power. So he says you have to, through the Spirit, you have to put to death the deeds of the body. The idea here is that the Spirit's power alone can cause you to put to what he calls the deeds of the body.

I think he's talking about the works of the flesh in Galatians. All those sins that are listed as the works of the flesh, you put those to death through the power of the Holy Spirit. So walking in the Spirit involves walking in the power of the Holy Spirit, for one thing.

Now to walk in the power of the Spirit, I believe, requires you to be filled with the Spirit. Jesus said you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you'll be my witnesses in Acts 1. The same author Luke, recording Jesus' statement in different words in Luke 24, says tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high, till you receive the promise of the Father, you'll be endowed with power. Now I think that a lot of Christians have not really seen the indispensability of this power from on high.

I think that in many cases, I don't know about us in this room, probably some, because it's common enough among Christians, but maybe not among everyone here, but I think it's very common among Christians to assume, okay, now I'm a Christian, I'm supposed to live by the rules. I'm supposed to live by Christian standards. I'm going to have to stop being cranky.

I'm going to have to give my envy. I'm going to have to forgive people. I'm going to have to kind of get my thoughts under control in some areas where they're kind of run rampant once in a while.

I got to get myself under control. And so the result is a life of frustration. Paul describes that frustration actually in Galatians 5.17, he says, the flesh lusts against the spirit, meaning the human spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these two are contrary to one another, so that you can't do what you want to do.

Or more extended in Romans 7, he talks about, I do the things I hate, and I hate the things I want to do, I don't do. I don't understand it. There's something really going on here in my mind.

I agree that the law of God is good. I want to live by those standards, but there's another force in me. There's another law in my members.

It brings me to the bottom. I don't get it, he says. But both passages, Galatians 5.17 and Romans 7, which were those two descriptions of that conflict are, are the same context where he talks about walking in the spirit as the solution to the problem.

Now, walking in the spirit means there is something that can overcome the power of my flesh. It's not going to be my flesh, it's not going to be my resolve, it's going to be power from on high. Tearing Jerusalem till you receive power from on high, Jesus said.

You'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. When this actually happened to the disciples, in Acts chapter 2, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. And so, the power on high, the spirit coming upon you is equated in Acts with being filled with the spirit.

And by the way, the apostles were filled with the spirit more than once in Acts. There was a time later on when the apostles were threatened with death if they didn't stop preaching the gospel, and they had to go to prayer with the congregation, and the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the spirit again. Being filled with the spirit is not a one-time thing.

Receiving the spirit as a convert is. You don't have to receive the spirit more than once. Being born again means you have the Holy Spirit.

Paul makes that very clear in Romans 8 and 9. He says, you are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be the spirit of God dwells in you. And if any man does not have the spirit of Christ, he is not of his. So, everyone has the spirit of Christ who is one of his, but having the spirit of Christ doesn't mean you're filled with the spirit because in Ephesians 1, Paul tells the Ephesian Christians that they have the Holy Spirit.

He says, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit when you believed. But he tells the same

people in chapter 5, verse 18, be filled with the Holy Spirit. And as you've no doubt heard, probably heard me say, if not others as well, be being filled with the spirit is kind of how that Greek word implies.

That you have been sealed with the spirit when you were converted. You have received the spirit when you were converted. You live in the spirit because you are a Christian and the Holy Spirit has dwelt in you, if you're really born again.

But even if you are really born again, even if the spirit is in you, there's still this mandate, be filled with the spirit. And it was that experience of the apostles about what Jesus said, you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And they were filled with the spirit then.

So, I guess the main thing I would suggest is that if we've thought that being filled with the spirit or living our lives with divine power from outside ourselves, or we might say inside ourselves, that comes from outside from God, then we have missed out on what it really means to be a Christian. How did the early Christians get along without a whole new Testament? They had the Holy Spirit and that spirit set them apart. That's what the book of Acts emphasizes so much.

Continually, it says, they were all filled with the spirit or Peter filled with the spirit, spoke up or Paul purposed in the spirit to go to so-and-so. And it's all this certain brothers spoke through the spirit to Paul and said, don't go to Jerusalem. There's all this through the spirit.

Everything in the book of Acts, the emphasis seems to be, it's through the Holy Spirit all this was done. I think if someone were writing a similar history of the modern church, they'd say through the organization, through the programs, through the dynamic leadership, through the great theologians and authors, through the great musicians, the church spread. But in the book of Acts, it's always through the Holy Spirit.

We have a lot of talented people in the church as they did in the first century, I'm sure. But the difference is that we have come to perhaps put our trust in abilities that are really flesh. They may be commendable abilities.

I'm not talking about bad things. I'm talking about good things, they're not empowered from on high. Let me just show you something Paul said in 2 Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 1, verse 8, for we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead. Now, Paul says we were in Asia, we went through some stuff I can't even describe to you, it was off the charts.

He said we were burdened beyond measure, above strength. Now, above strength

means beyond our strength to endure. Now, I've heard people say God won't let you face anything you can't endure.

Well, He will let you face things you can't endure in your own strength. He says we suffered things that were beyond our strength to endure, but it was so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead. In other words, God puts us in situations where we can't help ourselves so that we know that we have to trust Him.

And Paul faced that regularly, facing death in ways that we usually do not. But then in chapter 3 of the same book, he said, verse 5, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God. We are sufficient for what God has called us to do, including living the Christian life, not because of any sufficiency that's in ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.

Later on in the same book, Paul said in chapter 9, verse 8, for God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you always having all sufficiency in all things may have an abundance for every good work. Now, our sufficiency is not our substance of God. God's grace is given to us to make us have sufficiency in all things.

And then later in chapter 12 of the same book, he said he prayed three times for God to remove this thorn of the flesh that was such a pain to him. And he says, Jesus spoke back to him and said, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength is made perfect in weakness.

That's in chapter 12, verse 9 of 2 Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians, Paul's talking a lot about things he suffered. In fact, we have a bigger catalog in 2 Corinthians than anywhere else of all the sufferings of Paul.

He lists all kinds of things he suffered. But he also says repeatedly, but we're sufficient for this, not in ourselves. We have a sufficiency.

Grace. God gives us grace. His grace is sufficient.

His grace abounds toward us. So we have all sufficiency. Our sufficiency is not of ourselves.

We were pressed beyond our strength, but that's so we would trust not in ourselves, that we wouldn't think we're sufficient. We'd find our sufficiency in God. I think that it'd be nice if we don't have to have such huge trials to get us to realize our sufficiency is of God.

If we don't realize it otherwise, then those trials will be the times when it becomes evident. The trials, I've been through a few trials that were pretty serious ones. And I remember when I did, I mean, God drew near to me and I drew near to God.

And I remember thinking, how could people who don't have God go through this? I knew that people did. I knew that things I was going through, many thousands of non-Christians go through, but I just didn't know how they did it. Because I was pressed beyond strength.

I could not have held up without God. But you see, that's walking in the spirit is trusting in God to provide grace, which is a function of the Holy Spirit. He's called the spirit of grace in the 10th chapter of Hebrews, the spirit of grace.

The Holy Spirit gives us the grace because He fills us with that grace and His strength is made perfect in our weakness. So if we are weak, maybe we're morally weak. Maybe we struggle with certain kinds of sins that beset us that we've determined to stop doing them, but frankly, they're just bigger than we are.

And I know Christians who have struggled with things like, well, quitting smoking, things like that, which I don't even think smoking is necessarily a sin unless God has convicted you of it. I can think of good reasons not to do it. I've never done it, but I mean, smoking isn't one of those things the Bible lists as a sin, but there are things the Bible lists as sins that Christians do struggle with.

And we don't get over it until we recognize that we can't handle it ourselves, until we totally surrender. Like Corrie ten Boom, who suffered in Nazi death camps and came out of it to become a global witness for Christ through what she'd done. She liked to bring to her talks a cloth, a white, you know, silk glove.

And she'd say to the audience, do you think this, what can this silk glove do? Do you think this glove can pick up this Bible off the podium in front of me? Let's see. And she'd bring it into contact and lift it up and say, no, it doesn't seem to be able to do that. You know, it doesn't even have the strength to lift the Bible.

She then put her hand in and says, now, what do you think this glove can do? Well, this glove now, it can do anything I can do, but it's because it's not its own strength. It's my strength. Now, when I heard her say that, I thought of even a further step to that illustration, because I remember once I bought, this is back before they had all the modern ski equipment they have now, but I was moving to an area where there's snow.

I thought I might ski. I saw some ski gloves I liked in a store and I had some money. So I bought these gloves, but they were leather.

They were leather inside and out. And then they had thick, probably cotton padding in them. They were really stiff.

I could hardly bend my fingers. I was thinking, you know, I'm weaker wearing these gloves. Then why don't I have them on? Because I can't even move my fingers.

You know, the glove's too strong in itself. You know, a weak glove can exploit all the power of my hand that's wearing it. But if the glove has too much of its own strength, it hinders my hand.

And that's why I think God said to Paul, my strength is made perfect in your weakness. It's when you are not trusting in yourself and can't trust in yourself that, and then you trust and ask God to enable you and give, fill you his spirit, that the power from on high becomes yours. I think that this is something that should be an experience that all Christians have on a regular basis.

Though we don't, we're not living with the kind of crises in many cases that the Christian church has had in times of severe persecution or things like that, which has been most of its history. But, but we do have trials. I mean, we don't, we're not at this point being persecuted.

If you read some of the books about what's going on, I've read some of Mark Stein's books. I don't know if you know who Mark Stein is, but he's, he's a conservative Canadian commentator. He's written several books about the direction America's going and the Islamic, you know, invasion of the whole world basically and stuff.

It's, it looks pretty dark. You know, I mean, we might face some of that kind of persecution too. The early church was born in persecution.

So they had to trust in the Holy Spirit all the time. I think if the church in America faces persecution in the near future, it'll be too much for many because we're not accustomed to trusting God. We get along pretty well with or without him.

Frankly, the unbelievers who we live around handle life about as easily as we do because there's not that many differences in their circumstances as ours. We don't live with the same challenges that Christians sometimes do. It's not until we do that we find that we need and have available the power of the Holy Spirit so much.

But we should recognize the need for it every time we're tempted, especially with things that we have not mastered in our lives yet. There are, there are sins you give up as soon as you get converted. I mean, almost every, well, you kids who are raised in a Christian home, I don't know what sins, you, you know, you probably didn't have scandalous sins before you got saved.

You probably got saved when you're four years old, but, like I did, but adults who get saved usually have some pretty serious sins they give up right away when they get saved. But as Christians, there are still, there's still the flesh. There's still sins.

They might be more subtle sins. There may be attitudes more than actions in some cases. There's certainly more likely to be mental sins than physical sins once you've been a Christian a while.

But, but they still are stubborn. It's hard to get over them. The only way to beat them is to recognize, I can't do this.

It's not by me being a more devoted religious person that I'm going to be better about this. I need supernatural help. I just, this Christian life cannot be lived without supernatural help unless we redefine the Christian life down to what's about average among Christians.

In that case, you're going to have people suing each other, people getting divorces. You're going to have people cheating on each other physically or in their minds. You're going to have, you know, feuds in the church.

You're going to have all kinds of carnality because that's about average in churches that don't have the supernatural element as, as their main expectation for their Christian life. Being filled with the Spirit is this supernatural power to put to death the deeds of the body. That's what Paul said there in Romans 8, 13.

If we live according to the flesh, we'll die. But if through the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you'll live. Now that's part of walking in the Spirit is the power of the Spirit.

The other part is the guidance of the Spirit. The very next verse in Romans 8, Romans 8, 14 says, For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Now notice how many, what percentage of Christians are led by the Spirit of God? As many as are sons of God.

The same number, the same number of people who are converted are led by the Spirit. Now this is interesting because I've been asked hundreds of times in the past 50 years by Christians, how can I be led by the Spirit? How do I know the voice of God? You know, and, and they want something certainly out of the ordinary. They want to know, do you get visions and dreams? You know, are there, are there audible voices? Do you get a, a word from the Lord in your head that stands out? It's like a different, different voice than your own.

And you know, it's not you, it's God. I mean, how do you know if something you're thinking is from the Lord or not? This is what Christians really wrestle with. And it's, frankly, it's a very positive sign that Christians ask this a lot because it means they want to follow God.

I mean, people who don't want to follow God don't wrestle with that question, but almost everybody at some time or another says, is this God leading me or is this not God leading me? Is this just me? I feel like I should say something here, but maybe it's just me. How do I know if it's the Lord or not? Well, that's a good question. And the Bible doesn't come out and answer it.

It assumes that Christians will walk in such a relation with the Holy Spirit that they kind of get a sense and know when the Holy Spirit's telling them to do something. Now, of course, as I mentioned earlier, the Bible is one of the places where the Holy Spirit speaks. I would say the primary place, now that we have it, when there was no Bible available, I suppose it wasn't the primary means that the Holy Spirit led people.

And I don't believe it's the only way he leads now. I still believe in the gifts of the Spirit for today, but I believe that the Holy Spirit has given us his greatest gift, in some respects, for guidance in the Bible. I mean, David said, your word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path.

That means it illuminates the way I'm supposed to go. And I've met people who tell me they're waiting for God to lead them to do something that God has plainly commanded that all Christians do. They haven't done it yet because they're waiting for the Holy Spirit to lead them because they're looking for something a little more mysterious than just reading it on a page and saying, oh, that's the thing I'm supposed to do.

Well, we have to remember when we read the Bible, we're not just reading somebody's good advice. We're reading the Holy Spirit's inspired instructions. And being led by the Spirit certainly includes being led by what the Bible teaches.

This requires some serious attention to the Bible. And what I mean by that is more than just a light reading through. I've known people who say, well, I've, you know, Christians who've said, well, I read through the Bible when I first got saved and pretty much know what's in there.

I don't read much anymore because I read it. You know, you don't read through very many books more than once unless there's a Bible. The Bible is your food.

The Bible is the way that the Holy Spirit speaks to you most of the time. Or if he speaks some other way, it's the book that you use to test to see if that's him or not, you know? And there's been times, I won't give examples now because of the lateness of the time here, but there's been times when I was praying for a specific guidance on a specific point. And then I opened the Bible to do my regular Bible reading for the day.

And it wasn't like, okay, God just wasn't like, okay, God, I'm looking for guidance. And I throw the Bible open, put my finger down and say, oh, there it is right there. That's not how it usually happens.

But it's usually just as I continue my regular course of Bible study day by day that I've often found the very question I was looking for guidance about is in that day's reading. And it doesn't have to be in that day's reading because a lot of times you can remember something from another day that's there. But being led by the Spirit certainly means for us who have the advantage of having the spiritually inspired Word of God following the

Scripture.

But clearly, there are people who disagree about what the Scripture says about this or that subject. And that means we have to spend time. We have to be responsible.

We have to treat the Bible like it's something extremely valuable because it is. It's more precious than rubies. It's sweeter than honey in the honeycomb, more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold, the Bible says.

And yet, I mean, if we had the charge, if we were asked to take care of our neighbors' plants while they were on vacation, and these were very delicate plants and needed some very special kind of care, we'd give a lot of attention to them because we don't want them to find those plants dead when they come back. Well, God gave us something to cultivate, His Word, which we have to give as serious attention to to make sure that when He comes back and His Word returns to them, it doesn't return void. When He sees what it has produced in our lives, it's what He wanted to produce.

But that has to be cultivated. That has to be meditated on. We have to discipline ourselves to believe what we see there, to meditate on it, to study it, to do it.

All those things are part of allowing the Holy Spirit's guidance in our life to be brought to us through the Word of God. Now, I do believe in addition to simply reading the Bible and finding out what the Holy Spirit has said there to people before us for our benefit, the Holy Spirit will speak to you too. It won't always be as obvious as others.

Sometimes it'll be more obvious than others. It's the Holy Spirit. But if you're saying, I'm not sure, I mean, I feel kind of convicted I should do this thing, but I'm not really sure.

I would say, ask God for clear guidance, then move in the direction you feel the conviction. If you're making a mistake, well, first of all, you probably won't make a very disastrous mistake because presumably you're going to be also checking your convictions by what the Bible says. So, if you're within the realm of what the Bible says, you're probably not going to do anything very disastrous.

And if it just happens to be a wrong move, you can trust that God who leads you is going to lead you by other ways. If you think you're going the right way, He can put a block in your way. He can close the door.

He can bring somebody wiser to you and say, hey, that's a mistake. Don't do that. I think you better be careful about that.

And you realize that's the voice of God too. It's managing a relationship. Walking in the Spirit is managing a relationship with God.

God is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God. He's part of the Trinity.

And management of a relationship isn't just something where you lay out four rules and just do those things and it works out just fine. Just try that being married. You got to manage things.

You got to adjust things. You got to listen, try to understand it. I mean, how many husbands have thought, okay, I'm going to keep my wife happy and never upset her.

So, I'm going to just... I've done this before in my previous marriage that I thought, okay, my wife's not a very happy person. So, every time I get a clue from what she says that she doesn't like certain things or she does like certain things or she wants certain things, I'm going to make a note of that. Either a mental note or write it down so I have a list of all the things I can avoid doing to make my wife unhappy and things that she wants me to do to keep her happy.

Well, I had to find... I found out that the list had to change sometimes. It had to strike things out because she didn't always know what was going to make her happy. She was... You know, I had to manage the relationship kind of day by day, not just by rules because not everything that she wanted on day... on Monday was something she wanted on Wednesday, you know.

And so, you can't just manage a relationship with somebody that you're trying to live in harmony with. Like the Holy Spirit, you're living in relationship with him. You don't manage that by just making rules.

Although the Bible will give you the perimeters, you can't go outside those perimeters. But within them, there might be any number of ways that the Holy Spirit will be guiding you on issues that clearly are not going to... you're not going to hear your Bible verse about it directly. Who you marry, for example.

What you're going to do for a living. What clothes you're going to put on tomorrow. Those things, the Bible's not going to give you guidance about that.

Well, it might give guidance of sorts. There'll be principles. But you're going to make some decisions on your own.

I will say this. Some people, and they may be right, have a very different approach to this than I have been suggesting. And that is that some people believe that God doesn't have any specific guidance for you or for me.

That there's just generic guidance in the Bible that we're supposed to basically live by the principles of the Bible. And when it comes to specific decisions, God doesn't really care which way we go as long as we're not violating some biblical principle. So, as I was talking about marriage, you know, that you can marry this person, that person, that person, and be all the same for God as long as they're Christian and, you know, and you're not... you know, as long as your motives are right and things like that.

And those people might be right about that. But they sometimes go so far as to suggest that God doesn't give any specific guidance individually. And that just isn't true.

I mean, in the Bible, you do have God giving specific guidance for Paul and for his travels and things like that, and for other people. Ananias, you know, Jesus told... Jesus appeared to him, told him to go and meet Saul and baptize him and things like that. I mean, those are specific things.

I think probably the truth lies somewhere in a balance. I think for, in general, a lot of the things that we do, that the Holy Spirit wants us to do, are just to live within the perimeters of what we know to be within the will of God. And those are perimeters that the Bible gives us.

I think a lot of choices we can make. I don't think that God cares that much which way we go. The person who has to pray and get a word from God before he knows which breakfast cereal to eat is probably on the extreme end of overly mystical in their approach to being led by the Spirit.

Probably God doesn't care which cereal you eat most of the time, unless one of them's poison and you didn't know it and he does or something like that. Then he might give you a check in your spirit about that. But in general, most of the things we do probably don't need specific guidance.

God may not have an individual thing that, you know, you have to do this way or it's just going to go wrong for you. But there are certainly times when he does have something specific and we need to be able to be listening to that. We need to be sensitive to conviction in our spirits.

I'll just give one more verse. The verses I gave you to look up. I'm going to actually have you read them.

They're going to be done. But let me just read one verse from Romans 9. Then we're going to look at... I'm going to have you guys read those verses, then I'll be done here. But in Romans 9, 1, Paul said, I tell the truth in Christ.

I'm not lying. My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great sorrow and so on and so on. But what I thought was interesting is that he says, my conscience bears witness in the Holy Spirit.

Now, what is your conscience? Your conscience is your capacity to know what's right and wrong. And he says, my conscience is I'm telling the truth here. And I'm trusting the Holy Spirit in this.

I'm not just trusting myself in this, but in the Holy Spirit, I'm trusting that my conscience is okay on this matter. I'm not lying to you. That's true.

And I think that just the fact that we can ask God to speak to us through our conscience. If something we're doing or thinking of doing is wrong, God just put it in my conscience to alert me to that so I can follow my conscience and be following you at the same time. Following the leading of the Holy Spirit is not just a three-step plan.

It's really just cultivating a relationship with him, which in general follows larger principles, but is also open to hearing him give you specific guidance about specific things when he wants to. Now, the scriptures I gave you to read, they all have to do with walking. And we're just going to comment.

I was asked to talk about walking in the spirit. Well, I believe that walking in the spirit is just the Christian walk. And yet the Christian walk is described by various modifiers, which are all no doubt aspects of what it means.

I think these verses would be what I'd call a description of the walk. They're not telling us how to do it. They're just telling you how to tell if you are doing it.

If you are doing it, it looks like this. And if it doesn't look like this, you're not doing it. And so, I'm just going to read the references and have people read the verses that I gave them to read on.

Okay. So, how about Ephesians 4.1? So, walk worthy of the calling. You've been called to be a disciple of Christ.

You bear his name. Make sure your walk or your life is worthy of that calling, that you're not bringing shame or you're not walking unworthily of that high calling. Okay.

Romans 6.4. Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. So, we're to walk in a newness of life. Let's talk about how we're baptized into death.

And as Christ was raised from the dead, so when we come out of the baptism, we're supposed to walk in with a new life, as new as the life that Jesus had when he came out of the grave. It was a different kind of life, different species of life. There's a supernatural life, the power of the resurrection that raised him.

We have that power that we're supposed to know Christ and the power of his resurrection too. So, it's a newness of life. It's a renewed kind of life.

Romans 4.12. And the father of circumcision to those who are, to those not only, I'm sorry, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of faith, which our father Abraham had still while uncircumcised. So, it talks about walking in the steps of faith that Abraham walked in. So, walking in the spirit is a way of walk by faith.

And each step is a step of faith. It's not just walking by faith, it's walking in the steps of faith, the specific steps. As you study the life of Abraham, the paragon and the prototype of godly faith and justification by faith, you see how God called him to trust him in various stages.

There's different points in his life. You see him called on to trust God newly and more than before. Taking those steps of faith are the model for us that we have to walk in the steps of faith too.

If we walk in the spirit, he'll be leading us to walk in faith like that. How about Ephesians 2.10? For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared for us. Walking in what? Good works.

God has foreordained that we should walk in good works. So, if you're walking in the spirit, it's going to be characterized by good works. And by good works, it doesn't mean like Boy Scout merit badge type good works, where you just have to go out and find something good to do and do it, so you get a merit badge.

We're talking about good behavior in general. Good works just means a good life, good behavior, godly behavior. That's interesting that that verse follows verses 8 and 9, which say, by grace you're saved through faith, that not of yourselves.

It's the gift of God, not of works. Thus they mentioned both, but we are his workmanship created in Christ for good works. So, we're not saved by our works, but when we're walking in the spirit, we'll be walking in good works.

How about 2 John verse 6? This is the commandment that just as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. Walking in his commandments. Now, I would take this to mean in Jesus' commandments, you know.

Walking in the spirit doesn't mean we're keeping the Old Testament law, but it does mean we're keeping Jesus' commandments. And his commandments, of course, are found in the New Testament. And walking the way Jesus said to walk, obviously, is what walking in the spirit will look like.

How about Ephesians 5.15? Okay, Joe. Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time because the days are evil. Okay, so what was that? How did the sentence begin in that translation? Look carefully then how you walk.

Look carefully how you walk. Actually, yeah, it's in the older translation, it says, circumspectly. Circumspectly means looking around, so looking carefully, being cautious.

You notice when you're walking in the spirit, you're going to be walking like a person in a minefield or like a person through the jungles of Vietnam, knowing that behind every

tree there might be an enemy because there are spiritual enemies. Temptations, sins. A person walking in the spirit is going to be watching out for those things to avoid them and to not be overcome by them.

How about 2 John verse 4? Cheryl? I was very glad. So walking in truth, which would mean walking according to the truth, what we know is true, obviously from scripture. So walking in the spirit is going to be walking in the truth that God has revealed and that's revealed in scripture as well as any other place he may reveal it.

1 John 1.7, that's a slight paraphrase, as if we're living in the light. In the Greek, it says if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another in the blood of Jesus Christ. What does it mean to walk in the light? I think John is using the term the same way he uses it in his gospel in John 3 when he talks about this is the condemnation that light came into the world, but men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

But he, you know, he who does evil hates the light, but he who does good comes to the light that his deeds might be exposed that they're done in God. It says that in John 3. Same author wrote 1 John about walking in light and he is talking about, you know, being transparent. He's talking about being, letting your deeds be seen because the next verse says, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

So he says, but if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins. So walking in the light is confessing your sins. Not walking in the light is deceiving yourself about denying that you have sins.

Covering your sin, hiding your sin, being transparent and bringing it to the light is what walking in the light is. It means you walk with general accountability to the body of Christ and to God and honestly about your own defects. And the final verse is Ephesians 5.2. Okay, so walk in love or walk in the way of love.

That translation said just as Christ gave himself for us. So walking in the spirit is going to produce the fruit of the spirit and the fruit of the spirit is love. It says in Romans 5.2 that the love of God, no I think it's 5.5, says the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

So the Holy Spirit, as we walk in the spirit, it means we let him govern and control and guide our lives and that will result in us loving people that we wouldn't otherwise love because he gives the supernatural power to love those that we would not otherwise love. So all these different expressions, you walk worthy of the calling, you walk circumspectly, you walk in the steps of faith, you walk in love, you walk in the light, these are all different aspects of walking in the spirit. And while they don't all tell you exactly how it's done, which is what I was asked to teach about, they do describe what it looks like.

As I said, they don't so much tell you how to walk in the spirit as they tell you whether you are or not. If you're not walking in the light, if you're not walking in love, if you're not walking worthy of the calling, then you're not walking in the spirit. But walking in the spirit would be being led by the spirit and being empowered by the spirit and trusting in the spirit.

Basically it comes down to having a basic mindset that I'm no longer going to assume I'm capable of doing anything that I'm supposed to do on my own. I need to trust God moment by moment. I need to trust God for everything to enable me to be like Jesus because it says in 1 John 2.6, he that says he abides in him ought himself also to walk even as he walked, even as Jesus walked.

We're supposed to walk even as Jesus walked. Well, how did he walk? He walked in the spirit. That's how he walked and we're supposed to walk in the spirit and it's supernatural.

I'll close with this illustration and I've given it probably here before. I can't remember what all I've said here before because I teach so rarely. But when Jesus was walking on the water in Matthew chapter 14, Peter saw him doing it and said, Lord, if that's you, command me to come to you on the water.

And Jesus said, okay, come on. And so he got out of the boat and he walked on the water until he saw the wind and the waves and got concerned and then he began to sink and he had to call out to Jesus and Jesus spared him. And Jesus said, where's your faith? As if Peter should have been able to keep walking on water if he'd had the faith.

What's the problem? Where was your faith? How come he had to sink? Now, what's interesting about that is that Jesus walked as no man can walk. Jesus lived as no man can live in his own flesh. Jesus could not walk on the water in the flesh.

He was walking miraculously. He walked in the spirit. That's how he lived.

And Peter wanted to walk as Jesus walked, but people can't do that. Jesus could walk on water. People can't walk on water normally, or can they? They can if Jesus tells them to.

That's why Peter said, if that's you, command me to come to you on the water. He didn't just say, hey, I'm coming out, Lord. I'm going to be just like you.

He said, no, you tell me to do it and then I can do it because God won't command you to do anything that his spirit won't enable you to do if you're obedient. And so Peter's desire was to walk in the unique way that Jesus walked, which people cannot generally walk, in that case on water, in our case in the spirit. Jesus walked in the spirit.

We can walk in the spirit because he commands us to. If he commands us to, that should be taken as a promise that what he commands he'll enable us to do. He wouldn't

command us to if he wasn't going to enable us to do it.

He commands us to do impossible things, but nothing's impossible with God. And so walking on water, Peter managed it as long as he was trusting, as long as he was counting on the fact that Jesus commanded it. If Jesus commanded it, I can do it.

And I think we will walk in the spirit supernaturally also, as long as we're counting on the fact that if he said to do it, we can do it. If he said to do it, he'll enable us to do it. And that's the main thing we need to know.

It's not rules about walking in the spirit. It's knowing that it's all about a relationship with Christ where we trust him and his spirit to make us what we're to be day by day, moment by moment, and to give us the power and the guidance to do the thing he wants done. So that's all I wanted to say about that, like Forrest Gump.