

What it Means to Walk in The Spirit!

By David Wilkerson
8-15-94

God's Purpose for everyone of His children is that we surrender to the reign and rulership of the Holy Spirit: "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25). In other words, "*If He lives in you, let Him direct you!*"

In this message, I want to show you two things: **1)** What it means to walk in the Spirit, and **2)** How you can attain such a walk—but I am gaining ground!

I believe that Acts 16 is one of the best examples of what it means to walk in the Holy Spirit., We've heard this expression all our lives—to "walk in the Spirit"—but what does that mean?

Walking in the Spirit Means Incredible, Detailed Direction and Unclouded Decisions!

The Holy Ghost provides absolute, clearly detailed instructions to those who walk in Him. If you walk in the Spirit, then you don't walk in confusion—your decisions aren't clouded ones.

The early Christians did not walk in confusion. They were led by the Spirit in every decision, every move, every action. The Spirit spoke to them and directed them in every waking hour. No decision was made without consulting Him. The Church's motto throughout the New Testament was, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit has to say!*"

You probably have heard preachers and missionaries say, "The need represents the call. Jesus said, "Go"—So Go! "*Go unto all the world and preach the Gospel! And make disciples!*"

Beloved, this is only half-true. We are to go into all the world with the gospel; And the call is to the entire Church. We are to go only when and where the Holy Spirit leads us! The idea that we're simply to "pack our bags and go", has nothing at all to do with walking in the Holy Spirit.

I am ministering in New York city today because the Holy Ghost told me very clearly: "To to New York City and help raise up a church." And He told me *when* to come. No devil or demon can move me from this because the Spirit gave me detailed instructions. I remember standing between Broadway and 7th Avenue, weeping and raising my hands. The Holy Ghost said, "*In this very area I am going to raise up a church. Obey Me, David. Start a church in New York City!*" **Times Square Church is not just an accident. It is the result of clear, detailed instructions from the Holy Ghost!**

The Bible says, "*In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established,*" (2 Corinthians 13:1; Matthew 18:16). I want to give you three witnesses for my message: Paul, Silas and Timothy. Each of them was full of the Holy Ghost and walked daily in the Spirit; and in chapter 16 of Acts, these men show us what we can expect in such a walk.

Paul had chosen Silas and Timothy to go with him throughout the churches., to establish them: "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:25). Now, in Paul's day there was no continent more needy than Asia. That land was in total darkness; and, like many zealous ministers today, Paul wanted to go where the need was, but the Holy Spirit forbade him to preach in Asia on this occasion: "*...they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia...*" (verse6). They started to go, but the Lord said, "*No—you can't go right now!*"

Paul said, "*Well, let's go to Bithynia! The people are in darkness there, and we have been commanded to go, So let's go!*" But again, the Spirit didn't permit them: "*After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not*" (verse 7).

No wonder so many missionaries come home from the field after a short time. Many come back disillusioned and despairing because they haven't been let by the Spirit. They went with zeal—but without seeking the counsel of the Holy Ghost. They were not sent out by the Holy Ghost!

Paul and his men ended up in Troas, undecided and wondering where to go next. That's when Paul received a vision: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night:; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (verse 9).

Please note: It's a good thing the Spirit didn't tell Paul the whole story in this vision. You see, the man calling him was a jailkeeper—beckoning him to come spend a night locked in a stockade within the walls of his prison!

Beloved, you also will be tested when you begin to walk in the Spirit. Paul surely was, along with his two young servants. When they arrived in Philippi, a city in Macedonia, they didn't encounter any such man—only women!

"And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was meant to be made; and we sat down, and spoke unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple in the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened... And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us'" (verses 13-15).

Can you imagine what Paul must have said to his two young associates on the way to Lydia's house? *"I thought I saw a man calling for help. Yet there's nobody around here but young women—not a man in sight. I trust I saw the Lord correctly."*

We get upset when God tells us something and it doesn't unfold exactly as we heard it. We want every detail to fall into place. And if we don't "see the man" right away, soon we're ready to discount everything.

In the meantime, however, God had opened Lydia's heart. A number of women were getting saved. God was moving—but there wasn't a man in sight! Indeed, God will perform all kinds of wonderful, unexpected miracles on the way to the vision—and on the way of obedience!

Philip and Peter Also Walked in the Spirit—And They Got Very Detailed, Incredible Directions!

- God was using Philip powerfully to lead a revival in Samaria. People were being saved, healed, delivered from demons. But the Spirit directed Philip to leave Samaria—and to go instead to the desert of Gaza. So, in obedience, Philip packed it in, said good-bye and started walking to his destination.

Along came an Ethiopian eunuch in a chariot, reading the book of Isaiah, *"Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot, and Philip ran thither to him..."*(Acts 8; 29-30).

Suddenly Philip was opening the message of Isaiah 53 to this man, revealing Jesus. And the next thing Philip knew, the man received Christ and was baptized. Then, "...when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more..." (verse 39).

Many people have a problem with this last verse. *"The Spirit caught away Philip..."*. But I don't. The Spirit has been present when the heavens and earth were created; He was Co-Creator with the Father. So He certainly could carry a man to his next preaching assignment!

- Peter was on the rooftop praying when God showed him a vision. The Lord was teaching him, *"Don't call anything unclean that I have said is clean."* As this took place, three men stood at Peter's gate, calling, *"Is Simon Peter in the house?"*

The Spirit said to Peter, *"Go downstairs—there are three men standing at the gate. They're going to ask you to go with them, and you are to go. Don't doubt anything—just go!"* (see Acts 10:19-20). These were absolutely clear, detailed instructions!

Later, in Jerusalem, Peter told the brethren why he ate with uncircumcised Gentiles: *"and the Spirit bade me go*

with them, nothing doubting—“ (Acts 11:12). Peter said, *“The Spirit told me to do it. I ate with them because the Holy Ghost spoke clearly to me!”*

The early church never sent out workers or missionaries unless the Holy Ghost chose and ordained them. A person who didn't just walk up to the apostles and say, *“Look, I've got a call to Cyprus, to Paphos, to Perga, to Pergamos. Please anoint me, ordain me—send me forth with your blessing!”*

No—the Holy Ghost spoke clearly in prayer meetings, appointing those who were truly anointed of God: *“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work where-unto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed...”* (13: 2-4). If you ask the Holy Ghost, He will tell you everything you need to know – including where and when to go!

Included in these incredible directions are precise warnings about what is coming. The Holy Spirit will warn you in order to prepare you: *“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come”* (John 16:13).

Jesus isn't talking merely about prophecy and future events. He's talking about your life! Walking in the Holy Ghost is about being led by Him in very practical, daily living. For example, He showed the early church a famine was coming: *“And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea”* (Acts 11:28). The Holy Spirit warned them a famine was coming—so they began to take offerings to share with other believers.

The Spirit also warned Paul that his trip to Jerusalem would result in his being taken prisoner. *“...there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem blind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles”* (21:10-11). Paul was being warned—told to prepare! The Holy Spirit always warns us!

Walking In The Spirit Means Never Being Intimidated by Demonic Harrassment!

If you walk in the Spirit, you will constantly be harassed by demonic power, but you do not have to be intimidated by any demon power—anywhere at any time! Paul was continually harassed by demonic powers. He was preaching to Sergius Paulus, deputy of the isle of Paphos, when demons attempted to interfere: *“...a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus...withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith”* (Acts 13:6-8).

Barjesus means “*Son of Jesus*” or “*angel of light*”. This was the devil standing up against Paul! But the Holy Ghost welled up inside the apostle: *“Then Saul...filled with the Holy Ghost...said...thou child of the devil, fhou enemy of al righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord”* (verses 9-12).. Paul, “*filled with the Holy Ghost,*” brought down all the powers of darkness!

In Acts 16, the devil again came against the ministry of the Holy Ghost—and again, Paul responded: *“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the Spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour”* (16L16-18).

I want to stop here and challenge every Christian who claims o walk in the Spirit! It is not enough to “be grieved” by the attempts of Satan to harass you! Paul was grieved—meaning “*disturbed, troubled.*” And he allowed it for

many days. But how long should you put up with Satan's troubling you—putting unnecessary grief on you, hindering you in your work? This could have gone on with Paul for a long time. It might have affected his physical body; but the Spirit of God welled up in Paul, and he said, *“That's it—that's enough! In the name of Jesus, be gone!”*

Beloved, we take too much from the devil! There comes a time when we've got to stand up in the power of the Holy Ghost and say, *“Enough—that's it! I command you in Jesus' name to go!”*

Walking in the Spirit Means Being Worry-Free, No Matter What Happens to You!

When you take authority and command devils to flee, Satan will come at you with everything in his arsenal. He'll bring down all kinds of trouble and crises on you!

Just after Paul had cast the demons out of the possessed girl, Satan started stirring things up. He enflamed the crowd against Paul and Silas—and suddenly they were in a terrible crisis!

The city magistrates had hem whipped and cast into prison. And with every stripe on their backs, I can hear the devil saying, *“So you think you've won the victory? You think you are going to cast out my demons, and take authority over me? Take that! I'm going to beat you, cast you into prison, lock you up hands and feet. The let me see how much you praise the Lord.”*

The devil didn't seem to know: The more you whip a servant of God who walks in the Spirit, the more praises you whip up from him! If you throw him in a crisis, tie him up with problems and troubles, he'll sing, shout and worship!

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them” (Acts 16:25).

If we are to walk in the Spirit, then we must believe God for supernatural deliverance from every bondage of Satan. It doesn't matter if God has to create an earthquake to do it. In fact, that is exactly what he did for Paul: *“And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed”* (verse 26).

Satan will try to bring upon you the most dreadful temptation or trial you have ever faced. He wants you to get bogged down in guilt, condemnation, self-examination. Dear saint, you have to arise in the Spirit and get your eyes off your circumstances and bondage. Don't try to figure it all out. Start praising, singing, trusting God—and He will take care of your deliverance!

Walking in the Spirit Means Never Again Fearing Man!

When the Magistrates ordered Paul and Silas out of jail, Paul refused to leave. He said, *“They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out...? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out”* (Acts 16:37).

God does not want you to sneak away from men who have been the devil's tool to harass you. He wants you to experience deliverance with your head held high. He wants to prepare a table for you in the presence of all your enemies!

“Let them come themselves and fetch us out!” This was not Paul's pride speaking. It was the Holy Spirit in him, saying *“Those who walk in the Spirit of our God do not fear men; and the shame they tried to put on you is going to come down on their own heads!”*

God, give us Paul's Holy boldness! We know we are more than conquerors through Christ who strengthens us. Let the devil and his people be put to shame—but those who walk in His Spirit will never be put to shame!

Now, for the second part of my message:

How Can You Obtain Such a Walk in the Spirit?

The Command to walk in the Spirit is given to all—not only to a few supersaints! Here is how you can obtain this walk in His Spirit:

First, You must go after this walk with everything in you! First, ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide and friend: *“ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you”* (Lk 11:9-13).

If you are saved, then the Holy Spirit has already been given to you. Now ask Him to take over; surrender to him! You have to determine it in your heart that you want Him to lead and guide you. Moses, speaking of the latter days, said, *“But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him, if thou shalt seek Him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul”* (Deuteronomy 4:29). *“...he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee...”* (Verse 36).

Second, focus on knowing and hearing the Spirit—and get your eyes off your troubles and temptations. Paul, Silas and Timothy would have wallowed in fear and depression if they had focused on their troubles. Instead, they focused on God—praising, and worshiping Him!

Most of the time when we go to prayer, we focus on past failures. We replay our defeats time after time, saying, *“Oh, how far up the road I could be if I hadn’t failed God and messed up in my past!”*

Beloved, you’ve got to forget everything in your past! It’s all under the blood—and worrying about it is a waste of time. So forget yesterday—forget about the future too, because only the Lord knows what’s ahead. Instead, focus only on the Holy Spirit, with your whole mind and heart. Give yourself completely to loving Him!

And Third, Give much quality time to communion with the Holy Spirit. He will not speak to anyone who is in a hurry. All of God’s Word is about waiting on Him!

When in prayer, you dare not think of the first thing that enters your mind is the voice of the Spirit. No, your flesh and the devil know your desire to hear His voice—and they will rush in and inject words that are not right. Wait patiently. Seek the Lord and minister praises to Him. Take authority over every other voice that whispers thoughts to you. Believe that the Spirit is much greater than these, and that He will not let you be deceived or blind. Be willing to set your heart on Him as Jacob did—and not let go until He blesses you!

A Higher Meaning of Walking In The Spirit!

I thank God for all the things I’ve described about walking in the Spirit: incredibly detailed direction, power over demonic interference, worry-free dependence on the Lord, freedom from fearing men. But each of these blessings should be only a by-product of a higher walk in the Spirit. I believe the highest form of walking in the Spirit goes beyond all these things!

Our example is found in 1 Samuel 9. In this chapter, Saul was sent by his father to find some runaway donkeys. Taking a servant with him, Saul searched throughout the lands of Ephraim, Shalim, Benjamin and Zuph. Finally, He got discouraged and was ready to give up the hunt. But then his servant told him about Samuel, a seer; maybe he could tell him where to find the donkeys.

On this occasion, I see Saul as a type of believer who seeks direction only. All he had in mind was: *“Where are my donkeys? Where should I go? I’m at my wit’s end!”*

Meanwhile, God had already told Samuel a young man was going to come to him, and that he was to anoint him. Samuel here is a type of the Holy Spirit, who knows the mind of God; he has more on his mind than just direction. He knows Saul has been chosen by God to play a part in heaven’s eternal purposes!

The first thing Samuel did when Saul arrived was to call for a feast: *“...go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me today, and tomorrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thy heart”* (1 Sam. 19:19). This is exactly what the Holy Spirit desires of us: to sit at the Lord’s table and minister to Him—having quality Time alone, hearing His heart.

Samuel asked Saul to clear his mind so they could commune together: “*And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found...*” (Verse 20).

Samuel was saying, “*Don’t focus on getting direction not—that’s all settled. There’s something more important at hand. You’ve got to know God’s heart—His eternal purposes!*”

Samuel laid a whole shoulder of meat before Saul, and they spent time communing: “*And...Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the house*” (Verse 25). After that night of communion, Samuel asked Saul to send his servant out of the room, so they could have an intimate, face-to-face-session: “*...Bid the servant pass on before us...but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God. Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?*” (9:27, 10:1).

Do you see what God is saying here? “If you really want to walk in the Spirit—if you really want My anointing—you need to seek more than direction from Me. You need to come into My presence and get to know My heart, My desires! You see, I want to anoint you—to use you in My kingdom!”

Beloved, forget direction—forget everything else for now! Allow the Holy Spirit to teach you the deep, hidden things of God. Stand still in His presence, and let Him show you the very heart of the Lord. ***That is the walk of the Spirit in its highest form!***

When you do this, direction will come—and you won’t even have to ask! As Saul was leaving, Samuel said, “By the way—go to Rachel’s sepulcher and you’ll get the information you need about your donkeys” (see 10:2). Then Saul received some of the most incredibly detailed instructions in all of God’s Word!

God has a precious oil of anointing that He wants to pour on you. He wants you to come out of His presence with the aroma of His anointing on you. And as you’re leaving, He will whisper, “Oh, by the way—here’s what you wanted to know...” His promises:

“And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard...” (Isaiah 30:30).

To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. (John 10:3)

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. (John 10:16)

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (John 10:27)

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. (John 18: 37)

Do you want to walk in the Spirit? Then set your heart to seek Him today. You will learn to know His voice with clear detailed directions.

Amen!

Blessings from Christ’s Bondservants

www.christsbondservants.org