

LIVING THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

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"And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors-not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live According to the flesh you will surely die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'" (Romans 8:10-15)

The Spirit gives life to the believers. When the Spirit comes to dwell in a person, the spiritual man is made alive. The spiritual man lives by the empowering of the Holy Spirit. A person is spiritually dead when he has not received Christ as his Saviour and Lord. This is why God said to Adam in the Garden of Eden, "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat or you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Since Adam's disobedience, man has been dead spiritually and his physical body is also in the process of dying.

Consequently, there is a principle of death working in man's physical body. No matter what we put on or how well we try to dress this body, it is a matter of time before death overcomes it. Day by day, it deteriorates; it decays as long as we live in this body. The Bible tells us that when Jesus comes into our heart, God quickens our spirit and we have a new life in Christ. As a believer, you can glorify God in this mortal body. "And whatever you do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Colossians 3:17). The Bible warns us, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of heaven" (Matthew 7:21). It is living the life God has called you to live that will usher you to the Father. It is not what you know or how much you know but what you do with what you know that makes the difference.

Romans 6:14-15 says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Just because God is forgiving, it does not mean that we should sin. If we have really embraced the love of God, the God of love through the Spirit within us will teach us not to continue to live in sin.

John 6:40 says, " And this is the will of Him who sent me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." We are called to live the spiritual life in this body. Though this body is dying, one day it will be raised up just as promised in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Jesus also said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, shall live" (John 11:25). A Christian does not fear death. Death is only a stepping stone and not a stumbling block. He knows that when his body is laid to rest, there is something glorious to look forward to. Jesus rose from the dead and so will we!

We have two assurances; the first assurance is that we will have a new body because of Jesus' resurrection and victory over death. The second assurance is that we have the Holy Spirit who dwells within us. Therefore, we do not need to live after the flesh, we can live after the Spirit.

As Pentecostals, we place great emphasis on speaking in tongues as the initial physical evidence of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. In fact, an equally important evidence of a spirit-filled life is being a witness for Christ. It is stated in Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." If you are not a witness, there are grounds to doubt whether the Holy Spirit has filled you. If the Holy Spirit is in this Church and fills this church, then we should be reaching out to the lost and being a testimony to the world.

The Spirit also gives you power to overcome evil deeds. That is why Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). If you want success, you need to have the Holy Spirit in your life. You need to call upon Him everyday. The flesh has nothing of real value because it is weak, sinful and carnally minded and it has no hope but death. It is the opposite of life and peace and it cannot please God. Paul says we are not debtors to the flesh. To be a debtor is to owe or to bound by duty to someone; you do not owe the flesh anything. You do not have any obligations or duty to the flesh. Why? Because it is sinful. A man is a fool to feel indebted to the flesh! We need to make sure that our body is subjected to the spirit so that God is glorified in everything that we do.

Romans 7:18 says. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. "Do not ask the flesh how to glorify God. God has already given a verdict on the flesh-it is to be destroyed. As it is said in 1 John 2:16-17, "For all that is in the world-the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of the Father. We are indebted to the Spirit because it is He who gives us life; He sets us free from sin and death and renews our minds. The Spirit who gives life and peace assures us that our mortal bodies will be resurrected. Therefore, obeying God is wise.

Believers can determine their own fate. If we choose to live after the flesh we will die but if we choose to live after the Spirit, we live. Do you want to live a life of victory? It is really up to you. You are not fated to live a life of sin for the rest of your life and

go to hell. You have a choice! By choosing the life of the spirit, you can put to death the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. When we say "no" to the flesh, the Spirit will give us the power to act on that rejection. The Spirit will not intervene unless we exercise our will to obey righteousness. Therefore, it takes two-the Spirit and you, to live after the will of God. Our part is to will to be obedient to the Spirit and the Spirit's part is to break the power of sin which rules over our lives. Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23). Self has to be put on the cross daily. A man dies because of sin. On the other hand, a man lives because of righteousness. Start today. Let Jesus be Saviour, Baptiser and Lord of your life.

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