

live a life worthy of your calling

THE LIFE

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“I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.” Ephesians 4:1

The Christian life is one of immeasurable purpose and adventure. However, many Christians find themselves wishing that they were more fulfilled and fruitful in their walk with God. Perhaps you wonder if you are doing enough to deserve his pleasure and earn his acceptance. Maybe a sense of condemnation hangs over you when you pray or read the Bible, and both feel like a chore rather than a pleasure.

Does this ring true for you? How do you get out of this vicious cycle of failure and frustration?

THE SPIRIT

“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you forever — the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him...But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” John 14:16-18

The night before his death, Jesus spoke to his followers about the Holy Spirit. Jesus called it a “good” thing that he was no longer going to be physically present among us because it meant that he would send the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, to live within each of us who put our faith in Christ. (*John 16:7*)

The incredible reality is that the Holy Spirit has made his home in us, giving us the means to enter more fully into all that Christ has already done for us. The Christian life is nothing less than Jesus continuing to live his life in and through us.

But if this is the life we are destined for, why is this not the experience of every believer?

THE PRESENT DANGER

“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”

Galatians 5:17 NASB

When we put our faith in Christ, our struggle with sin does not end. Paul acknowledged that the pull of our own self-indulgent nature (our “flesh”) is a threat to our spiritual growth. In the short term, it may seem easier to choose selfish desires over a Spirit-enabled life of adventure with God. But then we experience frustration and defeat. Our lives often look no different from those of people around us. That’s why Paul had to write to the Christians in Corinth:

“And I, brothers, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it...”

“...Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

(1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NASB)

The same problem of fleshly living afflicted the Christians in Galatia in a different way: *“Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?”*

(Galatians 3:3)

Paul was telling the Galatians that the Christian life is not about summoning up enough will power to behave in a “godly” or righteous way. They had begun by depending on the Spirit but now they were relying on their obedience to the law and their religious performance to change them and make them acceptable to God.

new LIFE, new MASTER



Unspiritual Person



Spiritual Person



Fleshly Lifestyle

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” Ephesians 4:22-24

Ultimately, there are only two kinds of people — those who are alive in Christ and those who are still dead in sin. When we put our faith in Jesus, we invited him to take his place on the “throne” of our lives. We submitted ourselves to his rule and trusted him to direct and empower us to live for him and his purposes.

However, when we fail to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life, we begin to run our own lives for our own ends. Pulled by our fleshly, self-indulgent nature, we end up on the “throne” of our lives instead of Jesus. As fleshly Christians, whether we are indulging in a worldly way of life, or depending on our own power to be “good Christians”, we will never experience the empowered, fruitful life God intends for us.

Which circle best describes you?

Which circle would you like to describe you?

FILLED & LED

*“... We are under obligation,
not to the flesh... for if you are
living according to the flesh, you must die;
but if by the Spirit you are putting to death
the deeds of the body, you will live.*

*For all who are being led by the
Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”*

Romans 8:12-14 NASB

Romans 6-8 reveals that it is the Spirit who brings about transformation, empowering us to live the life. Instead of feeding fleshly desires, we are enabled to invest our lives in God's purposes for the world.

Being filled and led by the Holy Spirit is the only way to live the Christian life. Christ lives his life in and through us as we:

- believe by faith that God is already resident in our lives by his Spirit
- allow Christ to remain on the throne of our lives
- choose to respond to the prompting, rebuking and urging of his Spirit to live in obedience to Christ
- believe by faith that when we act in obedience he will empower us

surrender

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20

We are filled by the Holy Spirit by faith alone. God will give you the power to live the kind of radically transformed life that Paul talks about in this verse. But there are three important questions to ask yourself:

1

Am I ready to surrender control of my life?

(Romans 12:1-2)

2

Am I ready now to confess and turn away from any known sin?

(1 John 1:9)

3

Do I sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit?

(John 7:37-39)

BREATHE THE LIFE

If you answered “yes” to the three questions on the previous page, then take a moment right now to “breathe”, asking the Holy Spirit to fill and empower you.

Spiritual breathing is a powerful word picture which can help you experience moment-by-moment dependence upon the Spirit.

EXHALE: Confess and turn away from any sin that you are aware of — agree with God that you were wrong, and by faith thank him that he has forgiven all of your sins, past, present, and future, because Christ died for you.

(1 John 1:9, Hebrews 10:1-25)

INHALE: Surrender control of your life to Christ, and trust the Holy Spirit to fill you with his presence and power by faith.

Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-off action, but a lifestyle of surrendering ourselves to God and trusting him to empower us as we obey Jesus as a way of life.

Here's an example of how you could pray:

*"Jesus, I want to live for you.
I am sorry that I have been relying
on myself instead of on you.
Please fill and empower me
with your Holy Spirit.
Thank you for taking the throne
of my life again. Amen."*

**Did you ask the Holy Spirit
to fill and empower you?**

If not, what is holding you back?

Being filled with the Spirit does not mean that we live a perfect life. But the “spiritual person” turns away from their sin as they become aware of it, allowing God to keep his rightful place in their life.

If you find that you do not have any desire to allow Christ to direct your life, no track record of repentance or have consistently chosen to live your own way, then you should stop to consider seriously whether or not you actually are a Christian.

***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love,
joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;
against such things there is no law.
Now those who belong to Christ Jesus
have crucified the flesh
with its passions and desires.
If we live by the Spirit,
let us also walk by the Spirit.”***
Galatians 5:22-25 NASB

AM I REALLY FILLED?

As human beings, our emotions are part of who we are. But while our feelings are important, they sometimes have a tendency to drive more of our decision-making, attitude and perspective than we realise. As Christians, we need to remember that our lives are grounded in the truth of God's promises (*1 John 5:14-15*), not our feelings. The Christian life is lived by faith — trusting God and his Word.

This train diagram illustrates the relationship between **fact** (God and his Word), **faith** (our trust in God and his Word) and **feelings** (the result of our faith and obedience).



The train will run with or without the guard's van. However, it would be futile to attempt to pull the train by the guard's van. In the same way, we as Christians do not have to be driven by our emotions all the time — we can trust God and the promises of his Word.

LIVING THE LIFE

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **Acts 1:8**

The life of the Spirit is not an inward-focused life. God's purpose for our lives is much greater. He has left us with a mission: to be his ambassadors in reconciling the world to himself. As the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit they were changed from fearful men and women into people who made a bold stand, often at great cost. God used them to change the course of history. This same Holy Spirit is available to us today.

**Thank God that as you walk in the Spirit,
you will:**

- Glorify Christ with your whole life (**John 16:14**)
- Grow in your understanding of God and his Word (**1 Corinthians 2:14-15**)
- See the fruit of the Spirit increasingly evident in your life as you are conformed to Christ's image (**Galatians 5:22-23**)
- Know power in speaking for Jesus and overcome fear in faith-sharing (**Acts 1:8**)
- Serve the body of Christ through spiritual gifts (**Romans 12; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11**)
- Become part of a radical, worldwide Christian community, characterised by love for one another and for those who don't yet know Jesus (**1 Peter 2:9**)
- Demonstrate a growing power to resist temptation (**1 Corinthians 10:13**)
- Develop a growing desire to please God and fulfil your part in his Great Commission (**Galatians 5:16-23; Matthew 28:18-20**)

If this booklet has been helpful to you, please give it or read it to someone else. In this way, you can help another believer understand how to live a life filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit.



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