

How to Walk in the Spirit

Part 1

Introduction

Perhaps you're a new Christian. Or maybe you've been a Christian for many years but aren't experiencing the spiritual growth you feel you should. Or perhaps you've just received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and now find yourself longing for a closer relationship with the Lord.

Whatever your reason, with so much promise ahead, you are now in a vulnerable position. If you don't move forward in your Christian walk, then most surely you will move backward. One thing is certain, you will not stand still. In a very real sense you are like a newborn infant who needs proper food and training to grow into a strong, mature child of God.

Our Study

The Scripture: John 3:3

"I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

1. What is necessary in order to see the Kingdom of God? _____

Jesus referred to the act of accepting Him as Savior and Lord as being "born again." In His discussion with the Jewish religious leader, Nicodemus, He made it clear that salvation is a spiritual birth. Therefore, the Christian then has two distinct births: the physical (born of water) and the spiritual (born of the Spirit).

Just as proper food and training are essential to normal physical growth, so are their spiritual counterparts necessary for us to grow spiritually. Without spiritual food and training we become spiritually "stunted" as were the Corinthian Christians Paul reprimanded.

The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 3:1-2

"I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly--mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready."

2. What did Paul call the Corinthians? _____

3. What were they not ready for? _____

The Scripture: Hebrews 5:12-13

"You need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness."

4. What did the Hebrews need? _____

5. Why? _____

Christians without proper food and training will experience a rough spiritual childhood, and become ready targets for Satan's attacks. He can convince them to give up their Christian faith entirely or he can persuade them to become like the millions of lukewarm Christians the Apostle John described in Revelation.

The Scripture: Revelation 3:16

To the Church in Laodicea: *"Because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth."*

6. What is God's attitude toward the lukewarm Christian? _____

You can avoid many spiritual trials and errors by benefiting from the experience of other Christians. Here are five suggestions to help you move ahead in your ongoing Christian walk.

1. Receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit

The Scripture: Joel 2:28-29 in The Living Bible

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all of you! Your sons and daughters will prophesy; your old men will dream dreams, and your young men see visions. And I will pour out my Spirit even on your slaves, men and women alike."

7. What did Joel prophesy? _____

8. What would they do? _____

At Pentecost, the prophet's words were first fulfilled when the disciples and followers of Jesus, 120 in all, received the outpouring and empowering of the Holy Spirit.

The Scripture: Acts 2:3-4 in The Living Bible

"Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on their heads. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in languages they didn't know, for the Holy Spirit gave them this ability."

9. What happened? _____

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit that began at Pentecost is continuing all over the world today. Men, women, and children alike are being baptized in the Holy Spirit by Jesus. All Christians receive the Holy Spirit at salvation, but to become effective Christians they need to also receive the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

If you have not yet been given the baptism (empowering) of the Holy Spirit, don't wait another moment. Ask another Christian to pray for you to receive it or go directly to Jesus yourself. Confess any sins, particularly involvement in false religions, cults or the occult, ask Jesus' forgiveness and then ask Him to baptize you in His Holy Spirit. He is anxious to give you this gift, and when you receive it, you will find yourself filled with a new love for your Savior as well as experience His cleansing and His power.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit equips us for the spiritual warfare of this present age. With this baptism, Jesus' other gifts are available too.

The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12: 7-10

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge...,to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues."

10. What are the spiritual gifts? _____

When you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, God will give you a spiritual language, scripturally called "speaking in other tongues," that will enable you to praise and worship the Lord more effectively, entirely motivated by the Holy Spirit. In your spiritual language you will be able to tell Him adequately how much you love Him. Your spirit can speak directly to God and the Holy Spirit can pray through you and for you without your needing to understand the words.

The Scripture: 1 Corinthians 14:4

"He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself."

11. What happens to the person who speaks in a tongue? _____

Spiritually, your prayer language is your native tongue, and you should pray in it as often as possible. You will be blessed, refreshed and edified each time you do.

Through the working of the Holy Spirit in your life, you will increasingly reflect the life of Jesus within you, producing the kind of spiritual fruit that will be both food for your own growth and a witness to the world.

The Scripture: Galatians 5:22

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

12. What are the fruit of the Spirit? _____

In the next part of this study, we will look at the importance of studying the Bible. We will also look at the dangers of moving ahead of the Spirit too quickly.

The Answers

1. To be born again
2. Mere infants in Christ
3. Solid (spiritual) food
4. Elementary truths of God's word
5. Because they were still spiritual infants
6. He is about to spit him out of his mouth
7. That God would pour out His spirit on His people, even slaves and women
8. Prophecy, dream dreams, have visions
9. Everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit, and He gave them the ability to speak in languages they didn't know.
10. The word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, and the gifts of healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, various kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues
11. He edifies himself.
12. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control

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