

The Spiritual Man

by Dr. Walter L. Wilson

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ... For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:1, 2).

"The law of the Spirit of life" is the law of liberty. It is spoken of again in James 2:12—"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." What is this "law of liberty" that is mentioned here? The law of liberty is the law that makes a person, or an animal, or gas, or metal, or anything else act in a certain way when it is free. If I had a balloon filled with hydrogen gas and gave it its liberty, it would go up and strike against the ceiling, because the law of hydrogen is to go up. If I had another balloon filled with chlorine gas and it gave it its liberty, it would go down and stay on the floor, for the law of chlorine gas is to go down. If I have some water in a glass it is a prisoner, for it will not go up, and the glass keeps it from going down. But the moment I release it, and give it its liberty, it goes down. The law of liberty for a fish is to swim in the water. If I hold it in my hand, it is a prisoner, but the moment I release it, it goes to the water.

How Young Lions Act

You judge everything by the law of liberty. Suppose you went to the zoo to look at the baby lions, and said to the keeper, "Are these lions docile and tame?"

"Oh yes," he might reply, "they are lovely. Watch, and I will show you." Then he goes up to one of the cages and starts to stroke the lion's ears and rub his neck and back. "See how nice they are," the keeper would say.

"But do they ever kill or hurt anything?" you inquire, and the answer would probably be, "No!"

Then you might ask, "Would you mind if I took one of them home to keep over Sunday?" Would you say that? Well I did, on one occasion.

The keeper looked at me and said, "Wilson, I wouldn't suggest that you do it."

"But," I protested, "they are so docile, and look how you play with them. If I took one home I could have all my friends come in to see it."

"Dr. Wilson," he said seriously, "they act one way in the cage. but they might act differently at your home."

"Well, if that's the case, I don't want it," I replied. I judged it by the law of its actions outside the cage when it would be free.

Our Lord said. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty," and the "law of the Spirit of life." If I could have put the spirit or nature of a shepherd dog into one of those lions, I could have taken the lion home. If I could have put a sheep's spirit in another of those lions, I could have taken it home, too.

Man Needs a New Nature

Our Lord has said that He wants to do just that with us. Man is born a wild ass's colt, and we therefore need a new nature. There must be another Spirit imparted unto us if we are to live a different life—"The law of the Spirit of life"—God's life, a new life, a strange, peculiar and heavenly life. When the "law of the Spirit of life" comes in, it enables us to live as Christians should live.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3). The law is all right, but the flesh isn't.

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:4). Here we have again the thought of walking after another Person; walking after the Spirit.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit" (Romans 8:5). Sometimes the things of the flesh appear to be very nice, but they that are walking after the Spirit will mind when the Spirit speaks and brings before them the way of life and peace.

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7).

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). That is the subject for consideration: "Another Spirit."

Being Made Like Another

I have a friend that is a wonderful "Hamlet" player because he forgets that he is the head of a college, and that he has many duties in the

college to look after, and he wraps himself up in "Mr. Hamlet." When he puts on his make-up and goes on the stage, he forgets all about everything else and lives only as "Hamlet."

Those who take part in the Passion Play in Oberammergau live the lives of the characters they impersonate. The one who represents Christ in the play lives all year round as he thinks Christ lived. He lives as a carpenter and seeks to do and act in such a way that it will be easy for him to impersonate Christ. If I were to be a Shakespearean player, I, too, would seek to imbibe the spirit of the man I was to impersonate.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is held out as the goal of salvation. "Repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift"—of wonderful peace? an honest life? No! "Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). That is the aim and object of salvation: having another Spirit.

When Peter baptized Cornelius, it was not alone because he had received Jesus Christ, for Peter asked, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost?" (Acts 10:47). The presence of the Holy Spirit proved that Christ had blotted out their sins.

I wonder how many of us would like to be as spiritual as it is possible for a redeemed sinner to be? Absolutely unworldly? Absolutely pure? Ask your own heart.

A Wholly Consecrated Christian

I had an unsaved girl named Bessie in my office. After I led her to accept the Saviour, she lived for God until she started to keep company with an unsaved boy, which is always a wreck and ruin to any Christian girl. One day I said to her, "Bessie, do you ever sing "Take my life, and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee?""

"No," she answered, "I never sing it, for I am afraid He might do it."

I wonder how many of us are "afraid He might do it," and so we stay away from the consecrated life! There are those who don't want to be considered fanatics or crazy on religion; they want the picture show on Saturday night, and a "harmless" game of cards once in awhile. Of course, you must not expect us to have a long face all the time, they say. We don't expect you to have it any of the time.

A young man came to a friend of mine one day, and said, "I don't see any harm in a good motion picture; I learn good lessons from some of

them."

"The next time you are hungry," my friend replied, "come to my house; there is some good food in our garbage can."

You wouldn't treat our neighbors to that, would you? "The devil's garbage can" may contain some good things, but it is best to stay away from it.

I wonder how many of us would like to be as near like Christ as it is possible for a redeemed sinner to be! Would you like to answer that in your own heart just now? That is the test as to whether we are playing with this matter of your soul's salvation, or really mean business.

Minding the Spirit! "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." I imagine that it is a picture of a horse between the shafts of a wagon. The Christian is the horse, and the Holy Spirit is the Driver of the wagon. The horse is a tame horse, like the horse I used to have on my paper route. That horse obeyed the driver fully. "Blessed are the meek," and "meek" is the word for "tame." The Lord can turn things over to His tame ones, for they will do what He desires.

The Horse Obeyed Her Master

My horse was a wonderful horse! She knew my mind perfectly. And do you know I never caught my horse lying down, not once in five years. I took my horse out at 2:30 in the morning to deliver papers, but I never found her lying down. She was always on her feet when I went into the barn; she wanted to be ready when I got there. When I untied her and opened the barn door, she would back right in under the shafts of my cart and put down her head, open her mouth for the bit, and after it was placed, back the cart from the barn. I never had to say anything to her.

She would wait for me, and then off we would go. I never had to touch the lines; she knew where we were going. If a street car was coming, she would move over. When we reached the KANSAS CITY STAR office, she would back up under the chute to get the papers. She knew the papers came in three bunches; she wouldn't move until three had fallen into the cart.

She was a tame horse that knew my mind. My first customer was on the wrong side of the street going east, on the left-hand side of the road. That horse would stick back her ear to hear if anything was coming and go slowly past that house, because the elderly lady living there upstairs had a little porch, and I had to get the paper on that porch

or she wouldn't pay for it. That horse knew it, and if the wind was blowing and the paper missed the porch, she would stop so I could get the paper. She was like that all along my route.

That is what our Lord is talking about here. My horse might have had some notions of her own, but she never indicated them. She never said, "Oh, it's too cold; let's go tomorrow." She never yawned and said, "Oh my, do I have to get up this early? Tell them to wait." One morning it was twenty-two below zero, but she acted as though it were nothing out of the ordinary. When it was one hundred and fourteen degrees in the shade, she went along as usual. It was because she was mine and was absolutely obedient to my will. She never stopped to eat grass, though she might have wanted to. If I drove her into the mud, she went through it with no complaint.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God,"—another Spirit—"they are the sons of God." Let each one ask his or her heart, "Has that other Spirit taken charge of my life, my heart and my body, my money and my deeds, my time and my reading matter, or am I just in for a good time, to do as I please?" It's a lovely truth, isn't it? "As many as are led by the Spirit of God."

She Went to the Picture Show

Let me tell you about the old gentleman, a precious child of God who knew his Bible so well, and who came to the factory one day, and said, "Dr. Wilson, will you put an old man to work?"

"But your business is in the coal mines," I replied. "Why do you want to work?"

"Well, if you will let me be a janitor I will clean up slowly," he replied happily, "so I can talk to the employees about Christ." He got the job, and I often saw him in the factory talking to this one and that one, his Bible open, telling them how to be saved.

One day I said to him, "I wish you would hunt up Mrs. —. She is an old lady about sixty-five years of age, and lives at —, here in Kansas City."

"Dr. Wilson," he said, "I'll go and see her." He lived over that way, and one evening he saw her coming out of a picture show. The next night he called at her home, and said, "Sister, I haven't seen you out to the services lately."

"No," she replied, "it is difficult for me to get out at night; I can't stand the night air, you know." How could there be any other kind of air at

night but night air? He didn't tell her that he had seen her coming out of the Apollo Theatre the night previous.

"Have you given up reading the Bible?" he inquired. "Oh, no, I love the Bible," she responded.

"Is that so?" he continued with interest. "May I ask what is your favorite passage?"

"I always liked the Twenty-third Psalm the best," Mrs. — replied without hesitation.

"Let me see . . . how does that go," said my friend, thoughtfully, apparently trying to recall that particular psalm. "Oh, yes, I remember: 'The Lord is my Shepherd, He led me to the picture show.' I won't tell you what color she turned.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God" means going along in the shafts, with Him on the seat, wanting to know and do His will and please Him; wanting to know Him. The Lord is referring to those who have made the Spirit their Master, Lord and Sovereign.

Wholly Relying Upon the Spirit

Old father R— was a great blessing to me when I was a boy. "Walter," he said to me one day, "I look to the Spirit for everything."

"Do you, for everything?" I asked.

"Yes, Walter, for everything. A few days ago I had to buy a pair of socks, and so I said to the Holy Spirit, 'Holy Spirit, don't let that fellow cheat me, for I don't know wool from cotton; and give me a color that will not cause people to look at my feet, but rather at what I have to say.' If the Spirit didn't help me in every little thing, I would wreck so much of my life.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." I wonder if you know Him, this wonderful Person, or do you just know about Him?"

A young preacher came to me at the hotel the other day, and told me a heartbreaking story of the failure of his life, though he had been saved for fifteen years. "When did you get acquainted with the Holy Spirit personally?" I asked him.

He appeared rather startled, and replied, "I don't understand you."

"When did you ever meet Him, and talk with Him, and make Him

your Lord, and give yourself and your life to Him, as Romans 12:1 says?—'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service'."

"Why, I don't know as I ever did," he answered.

"That is the reason you have had fifteen years of failure," I told him.

Upon Whom Do You Rely?

I want to ask you a question, a practical one, my reader, and I want you to answer it:—Would you rather have the Lord Jesus on earth with you, or have the Holy Spirit? You know you would rather have Christ; and do you know why? because the Holy Spirit doesn't mean much to you. You feel you can get along without Him, for He is such a stranger to you.

Our hearts are all right toward the Saviour, and we long for Him to come back, but He intended that the Holy Spirit should be just as precious to us as He, and the Spirit isn't, is He? The Lord Jesus said something very strange in John 14:28—"If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father," but how few Christians are glad that Christ went away and that the Spirit has come. Why? because the Spirit isn't a Person to them. We don't treat Him as a Person. That is why we treat Him like He were an it, or a thing, or an influence; or something that God works with, and not a lovely Person.

Now we read in John 14:17 the words of our Lord, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him." I wonder if we do know this lovely Person. I don't mean know about Him, but know Him personally. Do we have a personal knowledge of His precious presence, so that we commune with Him and love Him?

Did you ever notice that the Lord Jesus never went about preaching until after that day when He came up from the water, and the Holy Spirit descended and rested on Him? But wasn't He the eternal, holy Son of God as much before, as after? Yes, but He never preached a sermon until after that peculiarly strange experience, when that other precious Person came down to be with Him, and then immediately He began to preach.

Weren't the twelve with Him, and didn't they love and adore and worship Him? But He said, Don't you go forth to preach "until." They had been with Him three and a half years, and had forsaken everything

to follow Him; wasn't that enough? But He said, "Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

The Samaritans were saved through the preaching of Philip, and were baptized, and were gathered together as a Church of God; but the disciples sent Peter and John to tell them of the other Person whom Philip had forgotten to tell them about.

He is just as essential for a successful Christian life as Christ is for the unsaved soul. Do we know Him, and love Him, and trust Him, and give ourselves to Him? Are you saying just now, "I want another Spirit?" When the Saviour saved you, He made your body the temple of the Holy Spirit, and now He asks that you turn the temple over to Him. When people walk past you, do they smell tobacco, or do they sense the presence of the Spirit of God? "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Remember Galatians 6:1—"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one." He refers to the "spiritual" Christian.

What Do You Talk About?

There is a Christian in Kansas City whom I have known for forty years, and I am certain just what I will hear every time we talk together. I will get the "latest joke" and the "latest" on this and that. I've never engaged in conversation with him five minutes that was worth listening to.

Then there is an old woman in Kansas City who is close to eighty now, for I've known her more than forty years. I used to cut the grass for her when I was a boy, but I never was with her that she didn't tell me some gossip—she lived for that.

I remember a man who invented a mousetrap. His wife made the living by taking in washing, and he did the heavy "looking on." He talked of nothing but mousetraps, and finally he did invent a trap that would drown one mouse. After much more sitting and talking and thinking, he hit upon an excellent improvement; he enlarged the can so that it would drown two mice. He had the spirit of mousetraps, and talked about them all the time.

And there is another friend who has a "condition." That is all she talks about. I never ask her how she is anymore, for I know she will tell me all about herself for at least three hours.

What kind of spirit is filling you? What do you talk about? "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

I stood in the depot before leaving Kansas City one evening, and saw two sober men helping their companion who was drunk. He was leaning on the other two, and I said, "Thank you, Lord, for that lesson; the man who is filled with the Spirit will lean on the other two Persons of the Godhead."

I stood in New Orleans in front of a Western Union telegraph office, and learned something about being full of the spirit of giving. As I was sending a telegram, I heard boys yelling out in front, and occasionally I heard a man's voice. When I went out I saw the man leaning against a lamp post, and fifteen or twenty boys were out in the street scrambling around in the dirt. Pretty soon the man put his hand into his pocket, got a handful of change, and threw it out to the boys. "Thank you, Lord, for that lesson on giving," I said, for the Lord loves the hilarious giver. The man was full of wine, and didn't stop to count the change; he just threw it out to the boys.

Be Controlled By the Spirit

The Spirit of God keeps you from wasting your time or anything else. You are glad to spend it on the church and the Sunday school and the mission board. Be drunk with the Spirit until you don't care about the weather or the distance; and are anxious and willing to spend and be spent for Christ.

If you are filled with the Spirit of God you won't waste your time. You will be glad to go to Sunday school and stay for church. Perhaps you go to the young people's meeting, but leave before the evening service, when the preacher is trying to win hearts for Christ. So when the Spirit has control, you will not be drunk with wine, but, will be saturated, permeated, and filled in every part of your being with the Holy Spirit.

Did you ever notice that the Lord Jesus gave us bread and wine — something to take inside? The bread represents the precious body of the Lord Jesus, and when you take it, it goes into every part of our body:—part into the feet, and part into the ears and mouth, and part into the hands and eyes and brain. That which represents Him goes into every single part of your body; so we take in Christ. The Spirit of God enables us to appropriate the Lord Jesus, and He affects our feet and brains and eyes and ears and hands. If you pretend to belong to the Lord Jesus, and your feet are taking you elsewhere, there is something wrong.

I wonder how many of us would like to let the Spirit of God have complete charge of our being, so that we just move out and let Him

move in; just vacate for Him and to Him. Would you like that? It is like dying, as far as your living as you want to live, and then letting Him live as He wants to live. It is a wonderful thing to go to your own funeral, and be done with your old self that gives you so much trouble. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all did that—"die daily"?

Have You Received the Holy Spirit?

The first concern Paul had when he heard of the converts at Ephesus was whether they had met the Spirit or not. His first question was, "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" not, "Did you receive the Lord Jesus?" He never asked unsaved persons if they had received the Holy Spirit, but he asked this question of those who had received Christ under the preaching of Apollos. He realized that their lives would not be profitable unless they knew the Spirit of God.

Are you longing to know Him, and make Him Lord of your life? When the Lord Jesus went away He breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22). Will you receive this blessed Gift—this wonderful Gift?

How we do prize a gift. Some of my friends gave me a new automobile recently, and how I prize it. Some friends gave me a lovely watch, and how I prize it, too. My Bible class gave me a suit of clothes, and I prize that gift. A Christian doctor gave me my glasses, and I prize them. A dentist gave me three bridges, and I prize that gift.

I wonder how many of us prize the gift of the Holy Spirit, so that our hearts go out in adoring worship to God that we are not being left alone and are not alone. We have Somebody to talk with us, and to love us, and be at home with us now on earth, while Christ is up there in heaven. We are watching and waiting for His return, but He has given us Somebody to make us like Christ. Do we appreciate Him? Have we made Him our own? Do we know Him personally, so that we do not treat Him as a stranger? Have you ever said, "Lord Jesus, I thank You for sending me the Holy Spirit? You went away and didn't want me to be alone, so You sent Him to me." And then have you turned to the Holy Spirit and welcomed Him, and told Him, "You are just like my Lord Jesus"?

Christ said about the Holy Spirit, "Whom the Father will send in my name," as though He had the Name of "Jesus" Himself. Do you welcome this Gift? Have you said, "Hallelujah, You can possess me"?

I saw a dog once, and I didn't have to guess who was his master. The man was walking up the street, and the little rat-terrier was running

along between the man and the buildings; the ear towards the man was up, but the ear towards the buildings was down. As he walked along, he kept the ear towards his master always up. If he ran in front of the man, he ran backwards, with both ears up towards his master. Then when the dog came back behind his master, he put up the ear that was towards his master. Did I have to guess who he belonged to?

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). Would you like to be a "spiritual" Christian? If you are unsaved, just let the Lord Jesus wash you in His precious blood, and then it will be possible for the Spirit of God to fill you. He never fills an unsaved person—only Christians. You may be saved, but wouldn't you like to be a "spiritual" Christian? Not only orthodox, but spiritual as well? One who lets the Spirit own and control him?

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