

## What is a Disciple? A Disciple Walks by the Spirit

### 1. Introduction

- a. Pet Peeve about “buzzwords” like “born again,” “saved” and “walk by the spirit.”
  - i. We associate meanings to them and never really give thought to what they mean.
  - ii. Some folks “zone out” when they hear a sermon on them because it sounds like something they already know.
- b. If you use the term “walk by the Spirit” too loosely, you will get a variety of negative reactions:
  - i. “Oh, you’re one of those”....whatever that is.
  - ii. “Do you jump over pews?”
- c. The term sounds as if you are doing something really, really spiritual – “I am walking by the Spirit...what are YOU doing?”

### 2. Today, I want to throw away all of your misconceptions about this biblical concept, erase the blackboard in your brain and start with a clean slate.

- a. Pretend you have never heard anyone teach anything on this concept.
- b. My goal this morning is to make this really practical so that when we are done here today, you will LIVE out what you have learned.

### 3. Where is and who is the Holy Spirit?

- a. In Ezekiel 36:26-27, the Lord says, *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.”*
  - i. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.
  - ii. I will take your hard heart and put a soft one in you.
  - iii. I will put my spirit WITHIN YOU and CAUSE YOU to walk....
  - iv. Do you see the correlation between “put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk..”
    1. Walking by the Spirit is something that God works in us.
- b. **The Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence within Christians..**
  - i. We ought to be shaken by this truth.
    1. When a person places his faith in Christ and is forgiven of his sins, God does something very remarkable. God Himself, in the person of the Holy Spirit, takes up permanent residence inside him.
- c. Several Scriptures about who the Holy Spirit is:
  - i. John 15:26 (NIV) *“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.”*
  - ii. John 16:13 (NAS) *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak, and He will disclose to you what is to come.”*
    1. The Holy Spirit will SPEAK! He produces an inner voice in our spirit.
- d. Where does the Holy Spirit dwell inside believers?
  - i. I Corinthians 3:16 says, *“Do you not know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.”*
  - ii. In the Jewish temple there were three courts: the outer court, the inner court, and the Holy of holies.
    1. Our bodies are like the outer court. – interfaces with the material world.
    2. The inner court is like our mind, our will and our emotions.
    3. But inside of us is our spirit, - interfaces with the spiritual world.
      - a. It is here in the Holy of holies where the Spirit of God dwells.
      - b. The Holy Spirit dwells inside our spirit.

- c. 1 Cor 3:17 says, "*The temple of God is holy, and that temple is what you are.*"

#### 4. What is Walking In The Spirit

- a. Gal 5: 25 (NAS) *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*
- b. Gal 5:25 (NIV) *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*
- c. Scripture calls it "walking with the Lord."
  - i. I like that statement because a walk consists of two simple steps, repeated over and over again.
  - ii. It is not a complicated thing.
  - iii. In the same way, the Christian life is a matter of taking two steps, one step after another.
    - 1. Then you are beginning to walk.
    - 2. Those two steps "Put off the old man," and "put on the new." Then repeat them.
    - 3. That is all. Keep walking through every day like that.
- d. The word translated "walk" is a present-tense command.
  - i. It could be translated "*keep on continually walking.*"
  - ii. Paul used this metaphor of walking to describe the Christian life--we're to take one step at a time under the direction and control of the Holy Spirit.
  - iii. The Christian walk is a habitual pattern. (You might notice on the back of your insert there is a list of memory verses about walking).
  - iv. As the Spirit moves and leads, we are to respond moment by moment, step by step, and day by day, relying on His power and direction.
- e. David Wilkerson says that "*Walking in the Spirit is simply allowing the Holy Spirit to do in us what God sent Him to do...*"

#### 5. Beware of Two Extremes

- a. **Being led by the Spirit is ONLY a supernatural event** – as if we have no role.
  - i. For some, being led by the Spirit is a substitute for using the mind and common sense,.
  - ii. They claim that the Holy Spirit guides them about what clothes to wear each day, what food to order from the menu, etc.
  - iii. They claim that God talks to them this way all the time and that you must be unspiritual if you aren't experiencing the same thing.
  - iv. It becomes an excuse for pride, laziness, anti-intellectualism, and even rebellion against God.
  - v. I have actually heard people say:
    - 1. The Holy Spirit is leading me to divorce my wife.
    - 2. God told me to move in with my boyfriend.
    - 3. God led me to spend two hours sharing Christ with my co-worker instead of doing my job.
- b. **The leading of the Spirit has NO supernatural component at all.** – as if we do everything.
  - i. Those who are usually intellectual or opposed to interpreting feelings, are uncomfortable with any subjective or unpredictable feature of Christianity.
  - ii. This is the danger --affirming God's existence but **denying** that he is personally involved in our lives in ways that we can recognize and cooperate with -- reducing spirituality to a **recipe of Bible verses and safe formulas.**
  - iii. This leads to a "Christianity" that is safe, predictable, boring and oftentimes legalistic.
    - 1. Examples
      - a. We become "corporate" in our mentality of how we run church.
      - b. We make a business plan, we invent budgets that exclude any possibility of faith or God's provision.
      - c. We plan our programs and then ask God to bless them.

2. These are simply “works of the flesh” that exalt the flesh instead of God.
6. Walking by the Spirit involves three elements, just as physical walking involves three elements (balance, direction, locomotion) -
    - a. **Walking by the Spirit involves three elements:**
      - i. **"Set your mind on the things of the Spirit"**
        1. Romans 8:6 *“the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace”*
        2. Romans 12:2 *“be transformed by the renewing of your M\_\_\_\_\_”*
        3. Colossians 3:2 *And set your minds and keep them set on what is above (the higher things), not on the things that are on the earth*
          - a. Phroneo - to direct one's mind to a thing, to seek, to strive for
        4. Philippians 4:8 AMP –*“whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them].”*
          - a. LOGOZOMAI - to consider, take into account, weigh, meditate on.
          - b. Walking by the Spirit involves saturating my life with the person of Christ.
        5. What has your attention? If stuff from below consumes your attention and time, then you WILL STRUGGLE to walk by the Spirit.
      - ii. **"Keep in step with the Spirit"**
        1. Definition: To "keep in step with the Spirit" means to be alert and responsive to the Spirit's personal guidance in your life
        2. The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal Force that you learn to tap into and use to accomplish your agenda for your life.
          - a. **The Holy Spirit is a Person** who personally guides you into God's will and then empowers you to accomplish this as you choose to respond to his guidance.
          - b. **There are two ways to tour the museum: pay money for a map or get a personal guide. A personal guide is always better than a brochure.**
            - i. You follow your guide because he knows where he is going.
            - ii. So it is with the Holy Spirit.
        3. **How to Recognize the Spirit's guidance**
          - a. Word of God:
            - i. God's Spirit will never guide us in a direction that contradicts God's Word because the same Spirit who guides us also authored God's Word.
          - b. Opportunities & Circumstances:
            - i. We learn to recognize opportunities and circumstances as the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
            - ii. **If you are at Walmart and hear the person in line in front of you talking about a scary upcoming surgery, what do you think you should do?**
              1. If you are “paying attention” you should recognize God placed that person in front of you for you to minister to.
              2. Take a step of faith and ask if you can pray with them about their surgery!
            - iii. God sometimes whispers to our ears and other times He simply directs our paths to cross with someone in need.

- iv. That is what it means to be “in step with the Spirit.”
- c. **This is why we have a class on hearing God is so that you can learn to recognize the voice of God when He speaks or directs.**
- 4. If you aren't hearing the Spirit's guidance, prayerfully consider two questions:
  - a. do you ask for the Spirit's guidance?
  - b. do you want to submit to the Spirit's guidance?
- iii. We are told in Galatians 5:25 *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*
  - 1. Alt. Transl: *“If we draw our life by the Spirit let us stay in step with the Spirit”* (Spurgeon)
  - 2. WALK: Stoicheo stoy-kheh'-o to proceed in a row as the march of a soldier, go in order,
    - a. In military school, we had to learn how to march in formation.
      - i. Some of you may be in marching band and have had to learn how to do the same.
      - ii. It isn't easy, especially if you are new to it or have two left feet.
      - iii. Staying in step is why we have a drum beat or cadence counter who helps us to walk at the same pace.
      - iv. Hut two three four.
      - v. Left, right, left, right...
      - vi. Once in awhile you will get out of step. It is mighty hard to get back in step once you are out of step with your platoon. You try to watch their feet and try to get yours to match and you trip over yourself or step on the backs of the person's shoes in front of you.
        - 1. We were taught how to “skip step”, so that if you were one step out of cadence, you could change the foot that was ahead.
      - vii. God wants you to be in step with what He is doing!
      - viii. **His Holy Spirit whispers a cadence for us to walk to.**
    - b. Some of us here in this room are out of step with God.
      - i. Are you distracted by life? You know if you are. God seems so far away and His voice is hard to hear.
      - ii. You might be distracted by diversions. But God wants you to be able to hear Him and walk with Him.
      - iii. Today, you will be given an opportunity to get back in step with God.
      - iv. As a Christian, you ought to be living in the Spirit; but it is very possible to be a professing Christian, and still to be living in the flesh.
      - v. This is the implication of Galatians 5:25a, *“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”*
- iv. **“Sow to the Spirit”**
  - 1. Galatians 6:8-9 *7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*
    - a. Speiro - to sow, scatter, seed
    - b. Key: Whether we reap the fruit of the Spirit depends on whether we sow to the Spirit.
      - i. (Acts 2:42\*) And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

1. These 3000 new believers in Jesus were sowing to the Spirit by doing what? Teaching the word, fellowship, communal meals and prayer.
2. Note that "They were continuously devoting themselves to these things."
  - ii. Fill your life up with things that feed your spirit!
  - iii. Feed, nourish your spirit, so you can draw life from the Holy Spirit!

## 7. Advantages of Walking By the Spirit

### a. Sin will lose its grip over your life.

- i. Galatians 5:16 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh*
- ii. Walking by the Spirit is not so much a formula for insuring that you "act like a Christian"
  1. How many times have you made up your mind not to give in to that sin or that habit?—
    - a. "I will no longer get irritated with my husband;"
    - b. "I will no longer be impatient with my co-worker;"
    - c. "I will no longer watch that silly program;"
    - d. "I am no longer going to pig-out;"
    - e. "I have made up my mind; I am going to follow the Lord."
  2. You will not overcome the desire of the flesh through mere willpower.
  3. Focus not on the don'ts (the LAW) but instead, focus upon the DO'S, The Spirit. This promise is your means to victory. Learn to WALK by the Spirit and you will not be overwhelmed by the fleshly sins!
- iii. Did you notice that the text does not say that we won't have the desires of the flesh if we walk by the Spirit?
  1. What it does say is that *we will not carry out the desires of the flesh* if we walk by the Spirit.
  2. The desires will always be there. You must realize this fact.
  3. The desires of the flesh will never be totally eradicated in this life.
  4. Some of you will always have the (selfish) desire for position and status; some of you will always have the (selfish) desire for popularity; some of you will always have the (selfish) desire for wealth and security; some of you will always have the (selfish) desire for beauty and youth.
- iv. You will know whether you are walking by the Spirit...(instead of the law) if you are not governed by the flesh.

### b. You will experience the very Heart and Desire of God'

- i. "Walking by the Spirit" is something the Holy Spirit enables us to do by producing in us strong desires that accord with God's will. This is what God said He would do in Ezekiel 36:26, 27:
    1. *A new heart I will give you and a new spirit I will put within you ... I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes...*
  - ii. Thus when we "walk by the Spirit, we experience the fulfillment of this prophecy." The Holy Spirit produces in us God's desires. This leads us to walk in His ways!
- c. Extra: **You will never have a boring day in your life again!**
- i. God will be "in charge" of your life and you will see His hand go before you and be excited about praying, about getting up in the morning and about looking forward to what God is going to do tomorrow.
  - ii.

## 8. Barriers to staying in step with the Spirit:

### a. Avoidance of Spontaneity

- i. Churches have programmed the Holy Spirit out of the church!
  1. We like to plan everything to its final detail.
  2. Yes, God can be in the plans, but we have taken business principles and brought the business model into the church and left no room for God.
  3. Programming should always be only at the level necessary to make the church operate at its basic function.
  4. All ministry should be based upon the leadership and control of the Holy Spirit.
  5. We don't get a group together to "decide" what we will program next year.
    - a. If someone in our church gets an idea for ministry, and approaches me, then I will ask them to lead it! It is their burden and passion given to them by the Holy Spirit.
    - b. It is easy for a person attending our church to say, "I think the church should do such and such" and then become critical when our church doesn't respond to their "idea."
      - i. When they say "the church ought to be doing" what they mean is "the minister and the other volunteers and leaders..."
      - ii. Who is the church?
      - iii. You are the church
  6. If God has burdened you enough to come and tell me it is a ministry we ought to be doing, then you should be willing to do it.
    - a. He won't form a committee to get it done. He will raise up a passionate person under the leadership and power of His Spirit to accomplish it.
    - b. Awana example at Grace Baptist Church.
    - c. Young Adults group at GBC.
      - i. Didn't ask the church leaders or pastors to find them a leader!

### b. Not paying attention to God.

- i. Our attention, our gaze is set upon the things of the flesh, the things below, instead of the things above. (Remember earlier we talked about one of the steps to walking by the Spirit was to "Set on minds on the Spirit.")
- ii. The opposite effect occurs when we set our gaze on things below.
- iii. Romans 8:5 *For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.*
  1. v5 Wuest: *For those who are habitually dominated by the sinful nature put their minds on the things of the sinful nature, but those who are habitually dominated by the Spirit put their minds on the things of the Spirit.*
    - a. "Set minds on" is the single Greek word phroneo which speaks of a mind devoted to something, a determined focus set on something and means more than just the mind that entertains thoughts, etc.
      - i. It is a fixed mindset. It is all the person lives for.
    - b. Before I came to Christ, my mind was fixed a certain way - it was on the "AM Radio Band" so to speak.
      - i. When Christ came into my life and placed me in Christ, He "re-programmed" my mind to the "FM Band", a totally different focus now compared to when I was in Adam.
      - ii. Might stray a bit, but there is nothing in common between FM and AM. They are as different as night and day.
      - iii. This is what we mean when we say "set your mind" – "set the dial on your receiver to..."

- c. **Letting the Cross lose its centrality for your life.**
    - i. **The cross is central to living in the Spirit's flow..**
    - ii. I want you to see the context of the passage that we read earlier: Galatians 5:24-25 *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*
    - iii. Those who BELONG TO CHRIST have CRUCIFIED the flesh with its passions and desires.
      - 1. The flesh has been put to death. It is part of the past.
      - 2. But some of us are foolish enough to carry the dead corpse around.
      - 3. Paul's instruction is that from a factual standpoint before God, the flesh is dead.
      - 4. The power of its desires is broken by the NEW HEART AND NEW SPIRIT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN.
      - 5. Remember early in this sermon I said walking was simply two steps repeated over and over again?
      - 6. Put off the flesh, put on the spirit. That is the Cross!
9. Walking in the Spirit is impossible to do on our own.
- a. It is a day-by-day yielding to the direction of the Spirit.
    - i. If you aren't hearing the Spirit's guidance, prayerfully consider two questions:
      - 1. do you ask for the Spirit's guidance?
      - 2. do you want to submit to the Spirit's guidance?
10. Today, a choice is before you.
- a. Are you really walking by the Spirit? The word walk implies step-by- step progress. Are you accepting your responsibility to follow His leading one step at a time, or are you waiting for the Spirit to hurl you into a quantum leap? Many people want others to solve their problems for them because of their lack of discipline and determination. That philosophy is not uncommon in Christian circles. Don't expect the Spirit to miraculously make you holy. Holiness is a joint effort: The Spirit leads, but you must follow. Scripture teaches that we are involved in the growth process. We must discipline ourselves to work toward greater holiness on a daily basis. Make prayer and meditation of Scripture a regular part of your Christian walk as you let the Spirit lead you to the throne of grace and through the Word of God. As you are led, remember to follow.
  - b. Do you belong to God or not? Have you become His child by receiving His gift of forgiveness and the Holy Spirit? Have you turned your back on your old life? If you haven't, you can today. You can become a brand new creature. Every day can take on excitement as you hear God and learn to walk in His leadership and direction.
  - c. Some of you have become spiritually lazy.
    - i. You don't ask for God's guidance for His leadership.
  - d. Others of you have become selfish.
    - i. You only ask God's direction when you want something.
    - ii. God has so much more for you.
    - iii. Won't you start each day with a request that God lead you?
    - iv. Won't you start each day with a willingness to obey His direction?

### **1. Walking is deliberate.**

A. You must purposely put one foot in front of the other in order to walk. You may not always think about the mechanics of walking as you do it, but if you are going to walk you must intentionally put one foot in front of the other. Most people have a plan or purpose in walking. They walk to get somewhere or to exercise. - Likewise, walking in the Spirit must be deliberate. It is not something that just happens.

### **2. Walking is regulated.**

A. One foot goes in front of the other. The pace at which you do that determines whether it is walking, jogging, or running. - When we walk in the Spirit we are living according to Him, regulated by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25 says "**Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.**"

B. Strong's concordance defines the phrase "keep in step with" as "to proceed in a row as the march of a soldier, go in order." (Some translations use "walk" but it is a different Greek word from what is used in verse 16.) In other words, when we walk with the Spirit, we go His way. We follow His direction. We go at His pace.

### **McDonald's toy illustration.**

### **3. Walking requires trust.**

A. As you lift the one foot off the ground, you are depending on the other foot to hold you up and to keep you steady. When we walk in the Spirit we are depending on Him to support us and to keep us balanced.

B.

### **4. Walking is progressive.**

A. When you are walking, you are not standing still. Walking implies motion or advancement. - Walking in the Spirit is a pursuit of the things of God. It is going after what is important to Him. Walking in the Spirit and being a pew-warmer do not go hand in hand.

### **5. Walking is learned.**

We were not born walking. It was something we had to learn, possibly even be coaxed to do. - Walking in the Spirit is not something a new believer automatically does. As we grow and learn more about the Lord, we begin to take some baby steps. Even after learning to walk, we may still fall but we can get up and begin to walk again.

When we are accessing the Spirit of God by allowing ourselves to be controlled by Him, we will be walking by the Spirit. It will come as natural as walking with our feet.