

Steps to Spiritual Freedom
Part 2 Gaining Control Of Your Spiritual Life
Understanding the problem

Sunday October 11, 2009

To review a little from last Sunday let us read our “ I Am ” list.

For us to establish our lives as Christians we need to live what we believe, not on how we believe. For that we need a firm grip on the truth of God’s word.

2 Timothy 2:15

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

A fruitful Christian’s life is the result of living by faith according to what God said is true, everything including himself. Your success in living a spiritually free life starts with getting right with God, and that starts by accepting and settling once and for all, the fact that God is your heavenly father and He loves you and accepts you just as you are. You are called of God. You are created in his image. You have been justified, and cleansed by God, through the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and your faith in him.

We do not serve God to gain his acceptance. We are accepted, so we serve him. We do not follow Him to be loved, we are loved so we follow Him. It’s not what we do that determines who we are, its who we are that determines what we do. As long as you believe that, and walk accordingly you will grow in God.

But there is a problem

The Nature Of The Problem

Ephesians 2:1 – 3

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Remember that since the fall of Adam and Eve, we are all born physically alive

but spiritually dead. We do not have either the presence of God in our lives or the knowledge of his ways; consequently, we all learned to live our lives independently of God. This learned independence is one of the chief characteristics of the flesh.

Galatians 5:17

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

The spirit and the flesh are in opposition because the Holy Spirit will not operate independently of God. But the flesh does. The flesh may be defined as existing apart from God, a life dominated by sin. The flesh is self servant, rather than God dependent, it is self centered rather than Christ centered. Fallen man lives in the flesh and as it says in

Romans 8:8

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Christians are no longer in the flesh but because the characteristics of the flesh remain in believers they have a choice. They can choose to walk according to the spirit or according to the flesh.

Grafted

Paul wrote about us being grafted into Christ by faith and about us being cut off because we choose not to continue in God's goodness

Romans 11:17 - 22

17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

19 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Lets look at it another way. The ornamental orange tree is allowed to grow to a cretin height; then it is cut off and a new life the Navel orange sprout is grafted into it. Everything that grows above the graft takes on the new nature of the sweet orange. The physical growth of the tree is still dependent on the roots. That which grows above the graft has the nature of the new life. Jesus said in

Matthew 7:20

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

From that time on the tree is **known** by the Navel oranges it produces. Paul stated in 2Corinthians 5:16

2 Corinthians 5:16

16 Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

The tree is never again recognized as an ornamental orange tree but as a Navel orange tree. In other words we are not supposed to recognize Christians for who they where in Adam, but for who they are now in Christ. That is why the bible doesn't identify believers as sinners but identifies us

as saints. The natural person is like the ornamental orange tree it may look good, but can not bear fruit that isn't bitter.

Colossians 2:6 – 7

6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:

7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

God has promised us a new spirit and a new life.

Ezekiel 36:26

26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Hebrews 10:16

16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

In other words all the ornamental orange trees (sinners) that put there trust in God will become Navel orange trees (believers). This is clearly seen in Paul's testimony from Galatians

Galatians 2:20

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Why do you need this new nature in your life? So that you can be like Christ, not just act like Him. God has **not** given us power to imitate Him. He has made us partakers of **His nature** so that **we can actually be like Him**. You do not become a Christian by acting like one or hanging around church. That is why we are to read the "I Am" list over and over. We need to hear again and again the wonderful identity and blessings we have in Christ. That way we will be better prepared to receive instruction and assume the responsibility for living the life God has for us as Christians.

We can never forget that our entire being was morally corrupt before we came to Christ. Our minds were programmed to live independently of God and the desires of our flesh are in opposition to the Spirit of God. Therefore it will take the rest of our lives to renew our minds and conform to the image of God. The graft that was performed in us was only the beginning.

The natural man

Ephesians 3:1-3 contains a description of the natural man Paul identified in 1 Corinthians 2:14

Ephesians 2:1 – 3

1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

1 Corinthians 2:14

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This person is spiritually dead, separated from God. The natural man sins as a matter of course. Let's at the description of the natural man.

The Natural Person

Life "In The Flesh"

1 Corinthians 2:14

Flesh Romans 8:8

Romans 8:8

8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Flesh can mean the body, but it is also the learned independence from God which gives sin its opportunity. The natural man, who tries to find purpose and meaning in life independently from God, is going to struggle with inferiority, insecurity, inadequacy, guilt, worry, and doubts.

The Mind is occupied with

Obsessive thoughts, fantasy, negativity exc.

Will actions

Galatians 5:16-21

16 This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

(walk after the flesh)

immorality

jealousy

sorcery

envying

impurity

disputes

enmities

drunkenness

sensuality

dissensions

strife

carousing

idolatry

factions

outbursts of anger

Emotions

Bitterness, anxiety, depression, etc.

Spirit well it's a big hole, an empty void

Mans spirit is dead to God thus, the natural man is unable to fulfill the purpose for which he was created, which is to love God and serve Him. When you lack life from God, sin is inevitable. The natural man can think, feel and choose; however his mind, emotions, and will, are directed by his flesh, which acts completely apart from God. The natural man may think he is free to choose but because he lives in the flesh he invariably will walk according to the flesh, and his choices reflect the “deeds of the flesh”.

There are many consequences that come from a life lived in the flesh and benefits from living a life in the spirit. Medical doctors tell us that 50% of the population is physically sick for psychosomatic reasons. Possessing peace of mind and the calm assurance of God’s presence in our lives positively affects our physical health.

Romans 8:11

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

The Spiritual Person

Let’s go over the description of a spiritual person.

The Spiritual Person

Life “In The Spirit”

1 Corinthians 2:15

Flesh

Galatians 2:20

20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Galatians 5:24

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

The crucifying of the flesh is the believer's responsibility on a day-by-day basis as he considers himself dead to sin.

His Mind is Transformed

Romans 12:2

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

He is Single-minded

Phil. 4:6 – 8

Philippians 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

His mind is girded for action

1 Peter 1:13

13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

His Will is crowned with the fruit of the spirit.

Galatians 5:22, 23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Walk after the Spirit

love

joy

peace

patience

kindness

goodness

faithfulness

gentleness

self-control

Body has becomes the Temple of God

1 Corinthians 6:19, 20

19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Presented as a living sacrifice

Romans 12:1

1 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.

His Emotions are

Peace

Colossians 3:15

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Joy

Philippians 4:4

4 Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.

And his core is filled with the Spirit of God

Romans 8:9

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Our needs the blessings that Adam lost to us in the Garden are now met via Christ

Salvation

John 3:3;

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

1 John 3:9

9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

Forgiveness

Acts 2:38;

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Hebrews 8:12

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Assurance

Romans 8:16

16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Security

Ephesians 1:13, 14

13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Acceptance

1 John 3:1

1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

Worth

Ephesians 2:10

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

His mind has been renewed and transformed, his emotions are characterized by peace and joy instead of turmoil. He is also free to choose ***not*** to walk according to the flesh, but to walk according to the spirit. As the spiritual man exercises his choice to live in the spirit, his life starts to exhibit the fruit of the spirit.

Galatians 5:22 – 23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

The body of the spiritual man has also been transformed. It is now the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit the new nature out of the old root and is now used to worship and serve the living God. The flesh, conditioned to live independently of God is still present with the spiritual man but the spiritual man takes control and crucifies the flesh and it's desires as he concedes himself to be alive in Christ and dead to sin.

I have another list for you to study and read over daily that will help you claim the blessings that God has for you. This list is called "Since I am In Christ". Let's close this service by reading these statements knowing that they are already true. Have no doubts church. "You are in Christ".