

Be a Disciple: The Power of a Disciple

Do you desire more in your relationship with God? Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:37-39).

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

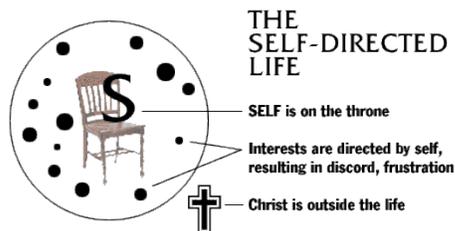
The Holy Spirit enables us to experience many things:

- A genuine new spiritual life (John 3:1-8).
- The assurance of being a child of God (Romans 8:15-16).
- The infinite love of God (Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:18-19).
- Guidance and council from God (John 14:16,17).
- Power for holy living and witnessing (Gal 5:16, Acts 1:8)

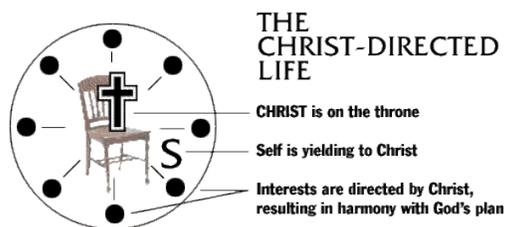
Which of these many benefits make you most excited? Which of these have you experienced recently?

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things.. We have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:14-16)

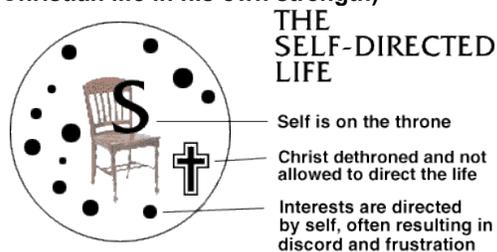
Natural Man (One who has not received Christ)



Spirit-filled Man (One who is directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit)



Worldly Man (One who has received Christ, but who lives in defeat because he is trying to live the Christian life in his own strength)



Our Urgent Need

We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all he has for us if we fail to depend on His Spirit. We cannot live the Christian life in our own strength. "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Galatians 3:3)

We cannot enjoy all God desires for us if we live guided by our self-centered desires. "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want" (Galatians 5:16-17).

Spiritual breathing

Exhale: Confess your sin the moment you become aware of it - agree with God concerning it and thank Him for His forgiveness, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. Confession requires repentance - a change in attitude and action.

Inhale: Surrender control of your life to Christ, and rely upon the Holy Spirit to fill you with His presence and power by faith, according to His command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14-15).

By faith, we experience God's power through the Spirit; "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:16,17).

Three important questions to ask yourself: 1. Am I ready to surrender control of my life to our Lord Jesus Christ? 2. Am I ready now to confess my sins? (1 John 1:9) Sin grieves God's Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). But God in His love has forgiven all of your sins - past, present, and future - because Christ died for you. 3. Do I sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit? (John 7:37-39)

By faith claim the fullness of the Spirit according to His command and promise:

God COMMANDS us to be filled with the Spirit. "... Be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18)

God PROMISED He will always answer when we pray according to His will. "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we ask of him" (1 John 5:14-15).

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. Sincere prayer is one way of expressing our faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear Father, I need you. I acknowledge that I have sinned against you by directing my own life. I thank you that you have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you commanded me to be filled, and as you promised in Your Word that you would do if I asked in faith. I pray this is the name of Jesus. I now thank you for filling me with the Holy Spirit and directing my life.

This is the basics of living the spirit filled life. As you continue to depend on God's Spirit moment by moment you will experience and enjoy intimacy with God and all He has for you – a truly rich and satisfying life. You will overcome temptations and see fruit in your life and ministry. God will show you more and more as you seek to obey him and trust him to work in and through you!

Discipleship Challenge: Go to transferableconcepts.org and read concept three entitled "The Wonderful news of the Spirit-Filled life" by Bill Bright. Keep up with your Soaps and prayer list and Memorize Eph 5:18.