

## **Title: Walking in the Spirit: Conflict Between the Spirit and Flesh**

Continuation.

Walking in the Spirit is the most exciting, interesting, wonderful way to live. It is the direct opposite of routine, drudgery, and predictability.

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

As proof, consider the lives of three men; Paul, Peter & Philip, who did indeed walk in the Spirit.

**PAUL**:

* Doors close unexpectedly, and others open miraculously.
* Europe receives the gospel through the Macedonian call. Are you willing to lay down your will for His will to be done?

It would have been easy for Paul and Silas to escape thinking God provided another miraculous jailbreak.

But to them, the lives of others were more important than their own personal freedom and comfort.

In not escaping, they showed tremendous discernment.

**The *circumstances* said, “escape.” But Love said, “Stay for the sake of this one soul.” They were not guided merely by circumstances, but by what Love compelled.** Acts 16:8; Acts 13:30-34

**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved**: Paul’s answer to the keeper of the prison is a classic statement of the essence of the gospel. This is salvation by grace alone, received by faith alone.

**Bishop John Taylor Smith**, an old chaplain general of the British Army utilizeda unique test on candidates for the chaplaincy. He asked them to say how they would speak to a man injured in battle, who had three minutes to live, how to be saved and come to peace with God. If they couldn’t do it within three minutes, they weren’t fit for the chaplain’s service. Paul would have qualified.

**PETER**:

* The Gentiles receive the gospel from an unlikely source.
* Peter was led to people and places beyond his wildest expectations.
* Ideology (traditionally held belief systems that interfere with the Spirit of God) - Acts 10:19

**PHILIP**:

* He followed the prompting of the Spirit away from the revival.

An experiment was performed in which caterpillars were placed on the rim of a large pot containing dirt and several of their favorite plants. The caterpillars began to move along the rim of the pot—each one following the one in front, every caterpillar thinking the one ahead of him knew where he was going. They did this until they all died of starvation.

Do you feel like you’re drying up and getting dizzy?  Could it be because the Lord spoke to you at some point but, because you were so intent on following the caterpillar in front of you, you missed the adventure?

The key to the exciting, impacting Christian life is to be like **Philip** and obey when you hear the Lord’s voice or feel His pull—although you may not know the end of the story at the beginning.

Acts 8:26 & 30

**How did Paul, Peter & Philip know they were hearing from the Holy Spirit?**

The same way a child recognizes its parent’s voice in a noisy nursery or how we recognize each other’s voices even when we don’t see the individual.

It is all about **relationships and quality time**. I Thessalonians‬

**YOUR SOUL:**

The soul is you. Your soul is that part of you that contains your personality, memories, and intentions. Metaphorically, it is your heart and mind.

We might say the soul is that part of you that thinks, feels, and remembers.

Your body and soul are separate.

**“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”  Matthew‬**

You are your soul, but you are not your body. You are a soul inhabiting a body or “earthsuit”. Just as astronauts wear spacesuits when working in space, we wear “earthsuits” while living on earth. You have a very intimate connection with your body, but if you lose a finger or a limb in an accident, your personality does not diminish. You are still you.

What does a soul do?

Bill Gillham in his book ‘Lifetime Guarantee’ says your soul is the chooser (the will), the thinker (the mind), and the feeler (the heart).

**YOUR BODY:**

Your body is exquisitely designed to sense things in the physical world. Through your ears, eyes, nose, skin, etc., you can receive countless visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile stimuli. But these external stimuli mean nothing until they are processed in your inner soul.

For example, when your nose detects the smell of a delicious meal, your mind may recall a happy memory, activate an emotional response, and trigger a desire to eat. Your body does not have emotions, memories, and desires; these are stored in your soul.

Through your body, you and your soul interact with the physical world around you. It would be very hard for you (your soul) to enjoy a tasty meal without your mouth, taste buds, and digestive system (your body). That is obvious.

However, what you may not appreciate is how your soul also receives signals from the spiritual world via your spirit.

**YOUR SPIRIT:**

Your spirit is that part of you that makes you spiritually aware or God-conscious. For want of a better analogy, your spirit is like an antenna.

Just as our physical bodies connect us to the physical realm, our spirits connect us to the spiritual realm.

Just as we have natural senses (sight, smell, hearing, etc.), we have spiritual senses (e.g., intuition).

Put it altogether and you will see that the soul is connected to two realms

* the physical and the spiritual.

Just as a television can detect signals from both terrestrial transmitters and heavenly satellites, our souls can sense physical things via our bodies and spiritual things via our spirits.

**Recap:**

* Your soul is you (your personality, memories, and intentions).
* Your body is that external part of you that connects you to the physical world.
* Your spirit is that inner part of you that connects you to the spiritual world.

Application

**“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”** Galatians‬

What is the lust of the flesh?

**“The behavior of the self-life is obvious: Sexual immorality, lustful thoughts, pornography, chasing after things instead of God, manipulating others, hatred of those who get in your way, senseless arguments, resentment when others are favored, temper tantrums, angry quarrels, only thinking of yourself, being in love with your own opinions, being envious of the blessings of others, murder, uncontrolled addictions, wild parties, and all other similar behavior. Haven’t I already warned you that those who use their “freedom” for these things will not inherit the kingdom realm of God!”**Galatians‬

In the arena of liberty, **the key is not to suppress the flesh. The key is to surrender to the Spirit**. Legalism says, “Deal with the flesh through ritual, pain, and agony.” Paul says, “There’s a much better way. The solution is not to worry about the flesh, but to walk in the Spirit.”

Examples:

1. Luke 15:16-20
2. Deuteronomy 9:9 and 10:10. Moses’ fasts: he was just so entranced and enthralled in the presence of God, that he forgot to eat.