

FIRST STEPS

Your personal guide to understanding the essentials of following Jesus.

2 | NEW POWER

FIRST STEPS | Book Two– “New Power”

Following Jesus isn't about being “religious” but about being in a relationship with God. He is God and you are his little child. From this point on you will grow daily with the ultimate goal of becoming more like Jesus. He understands that developmentally we are “learning” and isn't surprised when we fall down. That is a good thing because little kids fall down a lot! The following statements are some common ways that we get tripped up. Check the ones that are true for you right now.

- I currently feel discouraged or far from God.
- I am struggling with sin or a bad habit.
- I have little desire to read the Bible or go to church.
- I feel like I am just talking to myself when I pray.
- I am only happy when things are really good.
- I find myself feeling ashamed of being a Christian.
- I am often fearful or anxious.

If any of those statements are true about you then this lesson is for you!

You've Got the Power

Just like a child learning how to walk needs help (picture an adult holding them up by their hands) we can't “walk” or “make progress” spiritually on our own. It has been said that the Christian life isn't just hard but impossible: Impossible in our own strength that is. We need the strength of someone greater than ourselves holding us up and helping us change. That someone is God himself. He comes to live inside of us by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is your partner to help you become more like Jesus.

1. The Holy Spirit functions somewhat like the wind: We can't see him but we can feel and see what he does inside of us. Match the correct verses with some of the things that the Holy Spirit desires to do in our lives. (He is also called the Counselor in some verses)

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| He teaches/reminds | John 14:26 |
| He guides/speaks | John 16:7-8 |
| He tells us what to do | John 16:13 |
| He shows or convicts us of sin | Acts 8:29 |
| He helps/intercedes (helps us pray) | Romans 8:11 |
| He gives life | Romans 8:26 |

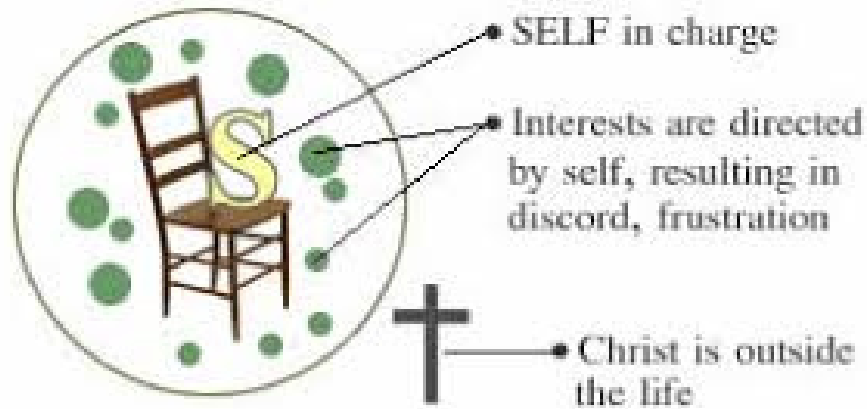
2. 1 Corinthians 2:14 – 3:3 talks about three types of people in the world and how they are related to the Holy Spirit. Who are these three types of people?

- 2:14 –
- 2:15 –
- 3:1 –

The following illustration has helped many understand what kind of relationship they have with God's Spirit. The circle represents a person's life. The chair or throne is the control center of that life, the big "S" represents one's self and of course the cross represents Jesus or the Holy Spirit. The question for each type of person is, "Who is on the throne of their life?"

People Without the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14)

The Self-Centered Life

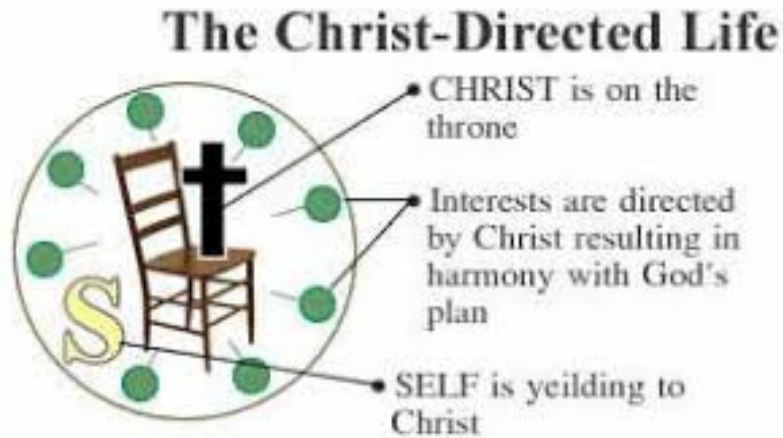


We all start out this way: Physically alive but spiritually dead.

Remember Nicodemus in John 3 from lesson #1? People without the Spirit may be really nice or religious people but the power that is running their lives is self. The answer to the question, “Who is on the throne of their life?” is “S” or self. They are trying to make life work by their own power. Their stubbornness and pride is keeping Jesus on the outside of their life.

3. What are some common results of this kind of life? Write down at least 3 examples from Galatians 5:19-21.

The Spiritual Christian (1 Corinthians 2:15)

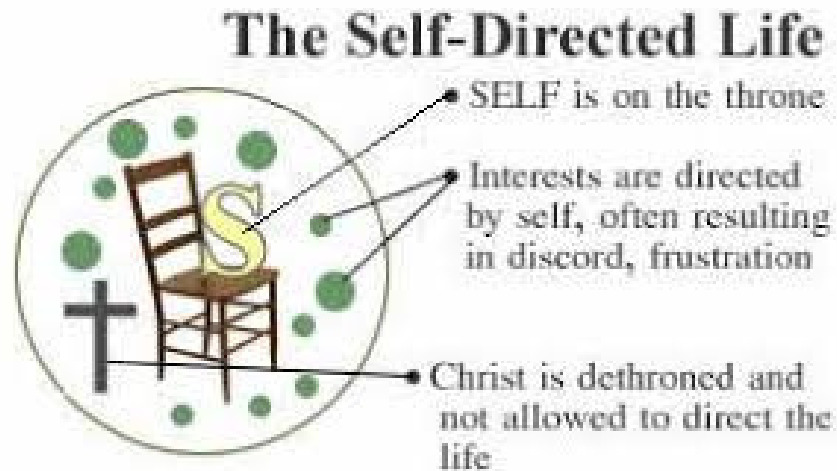


By faith, this person has asked Jesus into their life and are trusting him to forgive their past and empower their future (Represented by the cross inside the circle and on the throne). The answer to the question, "Who is on the throne?," is the Spirit. **This person is learning more and more to trust God's Spirit to control & empower their life.** It's a choice that they make moment by moment daily.

4. According to Galatians 5:22-23, what are at least 3 signs that we are allowing the Spirit to be in control of our lives?

The Holy Spirit is like the invisible current of electricity in the walls. **He is always available but we have to plug into him and depend on Him for strength.** The Spiritual Christian is the IDEAL life. Someone who is just starting out shouldn't be discouraged if they are not as consistent depending on the Spirit as more mature Christians. Growing up takes time!

The Wordly Christian (1 Corinthians 3:1)



Although the Spirit lives within every Christian, we don't have to plug into his power and depend on him. We can still live our life according to old habits, forget about God, & depend on our own strength rather than the Spirit. That is how most people in the "world" function. But the answer to the question, "Who is on the throne?," is now "S" or self once again. Every Christian experiences this: Some more, some less. **The issue is all about who is in control of our life at any given moment: Self or Spirit?**

5. When self is back on the throne which list will be truer of us: The list in question #3 or #4? Why?

The point of growing up in Jesus is to learn to walk with him, allowing him to direct our life and to fall down less and less. We will never be sinless but as we become more like Jesus we will “sin less!” **To walk with the Spirit is to live a life that is empowered, free, and full of joy.** There is no better way to live! But we will fall down. We will retake the throne and not like the results. The following section shows us what to do when that happens.

Remember to Breathe

Of course, breathing is essential to life. As a child of God you need to “practice” spiritual breathing until it becomes almost automatic like physical breathing. This is how we breathe spiritually.

→ **EXHALE** - When we sin we don't lose our relationship with God. We will always be his child no matter what. What we lose is his power and the blessings that come from the Spirit being in control of our life. Similar to physical breathing where we exhale poisonous carbon dioxide, in spiritual breathing we exhale our sin & brokenness. The minute you realize that you've retaken the throne of your life confess your sin to God. Tell him you're sorry for your words, attitude, action, etc. The longer we wait to confess our sins the greater the negative effects upon our life.

6. What does 1 John 1:9 promise when we "exhale" or confess our sin?

→ **INHALE** – After you exhale you inhale pure, life giving air. When we inhale spiritually we remember and receive **what is already ours in Christ**: His love and forgiveness. We don't have to walk on broken glass or beat ourselves up or be consumed with guilt! Jesus already paid for our sins when he died on the cross. When we inhale, we invite the Spirit to be back in control of our life again (on the throne). Just like physical breathing it is a process of “in and out” that helps us to keep growing spiritually.

7. You may feel like you have to “do” something in order to be forgiven. But that's not true. According to Ephesians 1:7-8, what has Jesus already completely done for you?

Putting it All Together

8. Before you said “Yes” to Jesus you were on your own but now you are in a partnership with God. God's Holy Spirit lives inside of you. How could the Spirit help you with the things you “checked” at the beginning of this lesson?

9. Looking back at the three types of people (3 Circles), which one describes you the best right now? How can you tell?

10. When we sin, the Devil would love to paralyze us with guilt. Instead, what should we do to get the Spirit back on the throne (in control of our life) again?

We want to resource you in any way we can!

Reach out to us at www.faithcommunity.church/connect or give us a call at
253-531-7162

Bible Verses Used in this Lesson

John 14:26 | But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

John 16:7-8 | But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

John 16:13 | But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Acts 8:29 | The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

Romans 8:11 | And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.

Romans 8:26 | In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

1 Corinthians 2:14-3:3 | The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things....we have the mind of Christ. Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?

Galatians 5:19-21 | The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:22-23 | But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

1 John 1:9 | If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Ephesians 1:7-8 | In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding

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