

Seeking to Apply God's Word to Our Lives

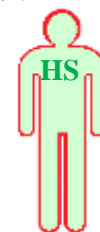
The Spirit-Led Life

This paper seeks to practically explain the biblical principles involved in living the Spirit-led life. Further explanations of these principles are located in the endnotes, located on the back of this paper.

We are a new creature in Christ, indwelt with the Holy Spirit:

When we placed our faith in Christ, we became new spiritual creaturesⁱ and we were indwelt with the Holy Spirit.ⁱⁱ In the diagram to the right, the light green represents our being new spiritual creatures, the red outline represents our sinful flesh,ⁱⁱⁱ and the green HS denotes the Holy Spirit.

We are new spiritual creatures in Christ, and the Holy Spirit indwells us



The Spirit desires to continually lead us by God's Word resulting in Christ being glorified



The Spirit continually attempts to lead our lives:

The Spirit continually attempts to lead our lives (mind, emotion, and will).^{iv} He does this by placing thoughts in our minds that represent God's Word and glorify Jesus Christ (John 16:13-14).^v When we choose to follow the Spirit's leading, we "*walk by the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:16).^{vi}

Our flesh opposes the Spirit and attempts to lead our lives:

The flesh, denoted by the red outline and arrow, is our physical body that is indwelt with sin. The flesh continually opposes the leading of the Holy Spirit by placing thoughts in our mind that contradict the Word of God and do not glorify Christ (Galatians 5:17).^{vii} When we choose to follow the flesh, we grieve and quench the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The Spirit desires to continually lead us by God's Word resulting in Christ being glorified



The flesh attempts to lead our lives and continually opposes the leading of the Spirit



The Spirit-led life is dependent upon what we allow our minds to dwell on:

The only way we can determine the source of a thought is by prayerfully examining it in light of God's Word (2 Corinthians 10:5).^{viii} When a thought reflects biblical truth and glorifies Christ, by faith we act upon that thought believing that the Spirit is leading us (John 16:13-14). When a thought opposes the Word of God and doesn't glorify Christ, by faith we reject that thought believing the flesh is attempting to direct our lives (Galatians 5:16-17). We cannot stop the flesh from introducing thoughts into our minds. When we walk by the Spirit, He leads us to not complete a desire of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).^{ix}

The Spirit-led life is motivated by our love for God:

Walking by the Spirit is motivated by our love for God. As we better understand who God is and what He has done for us, our love for Him grows (Luke 7:47).^x As our love for God grows, we will be more motivated to obey Him and submit to the leading of His Spirit (John 14:15).^{xi} Therefore, the Spirit-led life is a love relationship with God that takes a lifetime to cultivate.

Conclusion:

When we placed our faith in Christ, we became new spiritual creatures who were indwelt with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is continually attempting to lead our lives by introducing thoughts in our mind that represent God's Word and glorify Christ. Our sinful flesh opposes the Spirit and seeks to lead our lives by introducing thoughts that contradict the Word of God and do not glorify Christ. The only way we can determine the source of a thought is by examining it in light of God's Word. When a thought reflects biblical truth and glorifies Christ, by faith we act upon that thought believing that the Spirit is leading us. When a thought opposes the Word of God and doesn't glorify Christ, by faith we reject that thought believing the flesh is attempting to direct our lives. Walking by the Spirit is motivated by our love for God. As we better understand who God is and what He has done for us, our love for Him grows. As our love for God grows, we will be more motivated to obey Him and submit to His Spirit's leading. Therefore, the Spirit-led life is a love relationship with God that takes a lifetime to cultivate.

“Seeking to Apply God’s Word to Our Lives” papers represent an overview of various Bible doctrines. Each paper contains biblical truths that often set TVBC apart from other churches and religious organizations. We invite the congregation’s biblically based feedback as we seek to accurately handle the Word of God.

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- ⁱ In 2 Corinthians 5:17 the apostle Paul writes, *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.”*
- ⁱⁱ The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4), the third person of the Godhead (Matthew 28:19). He is called the *“Spirit of God”* (Genesis 1:2), *“Spirit of your Father”* (Matthew 10:20), and *“Spirit of Christ”* (Romans 8:9). In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon individuals to physically empower (Judges 14:6), to grant wisdom (Exodus 35:31), and to prophesy (1 Samuel 10:6). Jesus was with His disciples on the last night before His crucifixion. Jesus said it was to their advantage that He would leave because He would send another Helper, (John 16:7). The Spirit would be with them forever (John 14:16), He would teach them all things (John 14:26; 1 John 2:27), and He would testify about Christ (John 15:26). Since the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1), all believers are permanently indwelt with the Holy Spirit at salvation (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Before salvation, *“...you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest”* (Ephesians 2:1-3). When we placed our faith in Christ, we became new spiritual creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17), but our flesh remained *“sold in the bondage of sin”* (Romans 7:14). As new creatures in Christ, we are not to identify with the sin in our flesh. Paul writes of the sin in our flesh, *“so now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me”* (Romans 7:17). Although we are accountable for allowing our flesh to sin, we are justified before God and seated with Christ in the heavenly places (Ephesians 2:5-7).
- ^{iv} Romans 8:14 reads, *“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”* The phrase, *“being led”* is a present tense verb, denoting a continual action.
- ^v John 16:13-14 reads, *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the 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. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”* The Spirit guides us into truth (John 16:13) using the Word of truth, God’s Word (John 17:17; 2 Timothy 2:15). Glorifying Christ can be defined as magnifying who Christ is and what He has done.
- ^{vi} Galatians 5:16 says, *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”* The phrase *“walk by the Spirit”* is a metaphor that describes the continually living our lives under the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- ^{vii} Galatians 5:17 reads, *“For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.”* The phrase *“sets its desire”* is a present tense verb, denoting a continual action.
- ^{viii} 2 Corinthians 10:5 reads, *“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”*
- ^{ix} Galatians 5:16 says, *“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”* The Greek word for *“carry out”* is defined as *“to complete or fulfill.”*
- ^x Luke 7:47 reads, *“For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”*
- ^{xi} John 14:15 reads, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”*