

## PNEUMATOLOGY (82)

The Spirit is quenched when the Christian resists or rejects the will of God for him, which body of truth as set forth in the Scriptures is usually within the scope of the positive side of the spiritual life, though it is possible to quench the Spirit by resisting God respecting issues which have to do with victory over sin as well as in issues which pertain to life and service” (Vol. 6, p. 251).

We quench the Spirit when we resist the known will of God, when we do not yield our lives to God (Rom. 6:1-23), when we do not follow the example of Christ (Heb. 10:5-7; Luke 22:42; John 8:29), when we do not pursue the perfect will of God (Rom. 12:1-2), and when we do not live a sacrificial life (Ex. 21:5).

The ultimate example of one who rebelled against God, who resisted God, was Satan. It needs to be remembered that Satan’s problem was clearly a problem of his will versus God’s will (Is. 14:13-14). When we resist the will of God and give in to our will, we quench the Spirit.

Dr. C. I. Scofield, in his doctrinal study on the Holy Spirit, said there were several ways one could quench the Spirit: 1) When we oppose His will; 2) When we refuse to speak for Christ when the Spirit is consciously moving us to do so; 3) When we refuse a definite call to definite service; 4) When we refuse His absolute sovereignty over what, where and how we shall serve Christ; 5) When we try to get everyone in church to have the same kind of ministry (pp. 57-59). These are truly some ways we can quench the Spirit and when we do, we are not filled with the Spirit.

**Conditional Prerequisite #3** - If a believer is to be filled with the Holy Spirit, he must continually walk in the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16

The verb “walk” is present/imperative meaning it is a continual command. One cannot be filled with the Spirit if one is not continually walking in or by the Spirit.

The word “walk” is a combination of two Greek words which literally mean to walk concerning the Spirit. When the word is used in composition metaphorically, not referring to a literal physical walk, it has reference to living, passing one’s life and conducting oneself (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 356). What this means, concerning this matter of pneumatology, is if one is to be filled with the Spirit of God he must live his life, he must conduct himself or govern himself continually in a way that is concerned with the things of God, and in a way that relies on the Spirit of God. Life must be lived with a continual focus on God’s Word and will. Although the responsibility for this kind of walk falls to the believer, by virtue of the fact that the entire phrase is “walk in the Spirit” or “walk by the Spirit” indicates that the Spirit is the empowering force of the walk.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer clearly saw this when he wrote: “The Authorized Version translation of a determining verse like Galatians 5:16 is misleading. By this kind of rendering the text seems to impose responsibility upon the believer to maintain a walk in the Holy Spirit, whereas the more accurate rendering of the text assigns such achieving of the walk to the Holy Spirit and enjoins upon the Christian the attitude of dependence upon the Spirit.

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It is obvious that the Christian has no power within himself, in spite of the new nature, whereby to enter, promote, or maintain a walk in the Spirit. It is because of this native incapacity that the Spirit is given to indwell him. The whole situation is reversed and impossible assumptions are suggested when the believer is urged to walk by his own ability rather than by the Holy Spirit. The responsibility resting upon the Christian is not that of attempting the walk; it is rather the obligation to maintain an attitude of confidence and expectation toward the Holy Spirit, which dependence will make the Spirit's promotion of the walk a blessed reality. ...To 'walk in the Spirit' means, then, to depend upon the Spirit. The use as a literary figure of the act of walking to represent the continued responsibility of living daily to the glory of God is apt. Every step in the process of physical walking is an incipient fall. In each step the body is thrown out of balance and onward without physical support, depending upon a step of the foot forward to recover balance and support. Thus the walk in the Spirit is not only a constant series of commitments, but a constant casting of one's self upon the Spirit with the confidence and anticipation that all needed support will be realized" (Vol. 6, p. 262).

In Galatians 5:16 there is a simple test that determines whether or not one is truly walking in the Spirit: "you will not carry out the desires or lusts of the flesh." There is a list of things given in verses 19-21 that determine whether or not one is filled with the Spirit or one is filled with the flesh. We may assume that since we have three enemies—the world, the flesh, and the devil, that we must take care in every step we take. These three enemies are out to trip up the believer; therefore, every day, in fact, every moment must be one of dependency on the Spirit of God.

By meeting these three conditional prerequisites—1) Not grieving; 2) Not quenching; 3) By walking, one will be filled with the Spirit of God.

**(Spirit Filling Question #5)** - How may we determine whether we are filled with the Spirit?

From various contexts, we may determine who is filled with the Spirit of God and who is not filled with the Spirit of God:

- 1) I Thess. 5:19 - From this passage we observe that a Spirit filled person will be faithful and active in God's church and will maintain a God-honoring attitude toward church leadership (5:12-13), others (5:14-15), worship (5:16-20), study (5:21), and sin (5:22).
- 2) Galatians 5:16 - From this passage we observe that one who is filled with the Spirit will be one who demonstrates the fruit of the Spirit, not the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:16-26).
- 3) Ephesians 5:18-20 - From this passage we observe that one who is filled with the Spirit will have a proper attitude concerning worship.
- 4) Ephesians 5:20; I Thess. 5:17-18 - From these passages we observe that one who is filled with the Spirit will be one who prays and takes prayer very seriously.
- 5) I Thess. 5:12-13; Ephesians 5:21-24 - From these passages we observe that one who is filled with the Spirit will be one who is submissive to God-ordained authority.

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6) I Thess. 5:20-21; Acts 4:31 - From these passages we observe that one who is filled with the Spirit will be one with an intense desire to know the Word of God.

When these qualities begin to show up in our life and become more and more developed, the Spirit of God is filling us and we are well on our way to becoming the Spirit-filled and developed believer that God wants us to become. The fact of the Spirit's work and the force of the Spirit's work will not be seen in the manner in which the Spirit works, but in the results the Spirit produces. The Spirit of God, who indwells every believer is working in many unseen ways, but the evidence of the Spirit's work is seen in the quality of results which come through the individual.

Seven pneumatological works have been examined—restraining, conviction, regeneration, indwelling, baptism, sealing, and filling. It is this final work, filling, which God desires and expects the believer to adjust and cooperate as he journeys through life. As the believer yields to God's Spirit and becomes more faithful, he is more filled. It is the filled believer who is the spiritual believer and it is the filled believer who becomes the more God-honoring believer.

Having thus concluded this part of the study, we think it fitting to journey into an area which examines the believer's spirituality and responsibility. After all, "spirituality" is Spirit-related.

**QUESTION #11** – What is spirituality?

It is very evident from a text like I Cor. 2:15-3:1 that in the family of God, some believers are deemed spiritual by God and others are classified as carnal or fleshly. There is a general and obvious difference between these believers which is clearly seen in their character and quality of daily life. From this very context, we also learn that a key factor to spirituality is the Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:12-13). Therefore, it is very legitimate to connect the subject of spirituality to the doctrine of Pneumatology.

The potential for spirituality does not exist in an unsaved, natural man because the Spirit of God does not indwell him (I Cor. 2:14; Romans 8:9). However, once one becomes a Christian the potential exists for one to be classified by God as being spiritual. One is a Christian because one is properly related to Jesus Christ; one is a spiritual Christian because one is properly related to the Holy Spirit.

Having observed these realities, a working definition of spirituality is this—**spirituality is the work of the Holy Spirit, subsequent to salvation, in which He fully develops and manifests Himself to and through a believer's life and personality, which is evidenced by that believer's character and quality of life, which is rightly related to the Word of God and the Spirit of God, which are given to produce conformity to God's will and plan for that believer in this age.**

This definition breaks down into several parts worth noting:

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1) Spirituality is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Here is a very critical point to realize. Spirituality is not and cannot ever be a work of us. There are two ways to approach spirituality—1) Depend on yourself to accomplish it; 2) Depend on God's Spirit to accomplish it. The first way depends on one's own power and ability and the second depends on the Spirit's power and ability. These two approaches to spirituality are incompatible and, as Paul said, "in opposition to one another" (Gal. 5:17).

2) Spirituality is a work subsequent to salvation.

It is here that many believers are very confused. The problem of spirituality is not one of how a believer should live that he might be accepted by God, but rather how should he live in view of the fact that he is accepted by God. Dr. Chafer said it well: "The new problem which he (Christian) confronts...is not one of how he should live that he might be accepted and perfected before God, but rather of how he, an accepted and perfected person, should live after these stupendous realities are accomplished by the grace and power of God. Until this vital distinction is comprehended and received, there will be no progress made in the extensive field of truth which directs the Christian's life and service" (Vol. 6, p. 163).

No attainment of true spirituality is possible until the believer realizes that they are not obligated to live a God-honoring life in order to be acceptable to God, but that they are already acceptable to God by virtue of their position in Christ. It is right here where true spiritual thinking and true spirituality really begin. Spirituality requires that the believer draw a clear distinction between union with Christ and communion with Christ. The Holy Spirit will not ever produce true spirituality when positional truth concerning which is solely and totally by God's grace is denied.

3) Spirituality is the work of the Spirit in which He fully develops and manifests Himself to and through a believer's life and personality.

The acceptable, perfect will of God for a believer's life is a development of that life to a level that the Spirit of God can reveal the specific spiritual gift He has given and then work through that individual to use that gift for God's work and glory (Romans 12:1-8).

It is possible to attain a spiritual status of full, complete spirituality; however, it is not possible to attain a spiritual status of sinless Christlikeness (i.e. Philippians 3:13-14). As a believer walks in the Spirit and depends on the Spirit, that believer will not quench nor grieve the Spirit of God and thus a great transformation will take place in which the mind of that believer is renewed in accordance with the Word and will of God. The believer will begin to think as the Spirit is directing Him to think and ultimately the Spirit will take that one to the point in which He cannot only reveal one's spiritual gift, but can fully develop it and use it for God's glory.

As we yield to God's Spirit and permit Him to conform our will to His will, He develops us to the point that He may fully manifest Himself through us, and that is spirituality.