

## EXPERIENCING THE POWER & CONTROL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Christian life is a "spiritual" life and a "supernatural" life. We cannot live it or experience it in our own understanding or strength. We face a:

- Supernatural warfare - overcoming spiritual powers (Eph. 6:10-18)
- Supernatural walk - overcoming sinful behaviors (Gal. 5:16-21)
- manifesting spiritual character (Gal. 5:22-25)
- Supernatural work - proclaiming the gospel (Mk. 16:15)
- making disciples (Matt. 28:19-20)
- being witnesses (Acts 1:8)
- special "works" for God (Matt. 5:16; Eph. 2:10)

Therefore, we need supernatural spiritual power to enable us to be and do all that God wants.

The "Spirit-controlled" life is the priority for every Christian - without Him we are nothing (Jn. 15:4) and will remain immobilized, powerless, useless, fruitless, and defeated! God has never intended that we live dejected lives. On the contrary, Christ said, "I've come, so that you can have abundant (fruitful, victorious) life" (Jn. 10:10). So how and where do we start? By realizing:

### WE ALREADY HAVE THE POWER THROUGH GOD'S SPIRIT

When a person transfers their trust to Jesus Christ alone for their salvation, depends on His work on the cross for them and receives Jesus into their life (Rev. 3:20) - God's Spirit enters into that one.

"You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him." (Rom. 8:9)

..."Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit..." (I Cor. 6:19; 3:16)

God has sealed us by His Spirit and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge (down payment, guarantee of eternal life) (2 Cor. 1:22)

"Greater is He (the Holy Spirit) that is in you, than he (Satan) that is in the world" (I Jn. 4:4)

### OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Since God's Spirit indwells us, it is therefore our responsibility to "experience" the reality of His working in our lives. We must begin to consciously apply the scriptures that define this "Spiritual relationship" that God has intended to be a daily part of our lives.

- Gal. 5:16 -
- Gal. 5:18 -
- Rom. 8:13 -
- Rom. 8:14 -
- I Thes. 5:19 -
- Eph. 4:30 -
- Eph. 5:18 -

These are not suggestions but they are stated as commands to all believers with no exceptions! (Men, women, children, husbands, wives, parents, teachers, students, employers, employees ...) All believer's are to "walk in" and "be led by" (yield to) the Spirit's control and influences in our lives ... continually - "be being kept filled, controlled by the Spirit". By constantly living under His influence in your choices, responses, decisions, thoughts, words and actions; one will experience the reality of spiritual power, victory and many other fulfilling and beneficial results!

WHY DON'T WE EXPERIENCE THE REALITY OF THE SPIRIT'S POWER OR CONTROL IN OUR LIVES?

Take time to do an honest evaluation (a spiritual inventory) right now before God. What has hindered His powerful spirited working in your life? Remember, there will be no legitimate "excuses" before God!

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
<p><u>UNBELIEF</u> - Some really don't believe that God will really work in them. They say, "That's for someone else."</p>	<p>Start believing God's promises, for you! God says it, I believe it, that settles it! Build your faith (Rom. 10:17)</p>
<p><u>SIN</u> - Some may be hanging on to deliberate willful sin; things in our lives that we're not willing to give up.</p>	<p>Confess (I Jn. 1:9; Prov. 28:13) Repent, turn away from those things and start <u>replacing</u> it with the righteous things God wants you to do instead. (Eph.4:20-32)</p>
<p><u>SELF-CENTEREDNESS</u> - our focus is on ourselves, my plans, my desires, interests, needs, wants...</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus on the Lord, set our minds on things above (Col. 3:1)</li> <li>- Seek first His kingdom &amp; righteousness (Matt. 6:33)</li> <li>- God wants us to meet the needs of others (Phil. 2:3-4)</li> </ul>
<p><u>SATAN</u> - he is a supernatural enemy who knows exactly how to hinder, tempt, and distract you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world (I Jn. 4:4)</li> <li>- Resist Him (Js. 4:7) &amp; He will flee - when you begin submitting to &amp; drawing near to God (Js. 4:8)</li> </ul>
<p><u>WORLDLINESS</u> - we're too caught up/ influenced by materialism, temporal values, man-centered goals.</p>	<p>Stop loving the world (I Jn. 2:15-17) and start doing God's will (Rom. 12:1-2) Find fulfillment in your "friendship" with God rather than making Him your enemy! (Js. 4:4)</p>
<p><u>OUR DESIRE</u> - we want to be in control; we don't really want to yield,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- relinquish control to God (Eph.5:18)</li> <li>- stop operating independently of spiritual truth.</li> <li>- "If you love me keep my commandments" (Jn. 14:15)</li> </ul>
<p><u>TOO FEELING-ORIENTED</u> - we tend to do only what generates good feelings ("if it feels good, do it")</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we think our emotions are the starting point.</li> <li>- we may be waiting to get "zapped" with some spiritual motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we walk by <u>faith</u> not by sight (experience) (2 Cor. 5:7)</li> <li>- don't rely on your own understanding (Prov. 3:5-6)</li> <li>- live as a volitional being - one who can make choices responsibly &amp; determine to please God (&amp; let the "feelings" follow)</li> </ul>
<p><u>APATHETIC/LAZY/INDIFFERENT</u> - we don't take spiritual things seriously; some just don't care about God's will/way; we're too comfortable (Rom. 3:15-17), too deceived, <u>UNDISCIPLINED</u> - not willing to persevere, <u>LACK OF COMMITMENT.</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness (I Tim. 4:7b) "budget" your time, and commit yourself to getting into the word and prayer on a daily basis. "Schedule God in" as a priority appointment/relationship! (Lk. 6:12; 9:18,28)</li> <li>- have someone hold you accountable (Heb. 3:13)</li> </ul>

IGNORANCE - some may just not know how to "tap into" these things; ones understanding or maturity hasn't grown in these directions; you really don't know what you're missing!

start where you're at, right now, purpose to get into the Word. This study will definitely change that - and give you the insight and necessary explanation.

TOO PROBLEM-ORIENTED -some may (even now) be overwhelmed with all their problems, deficiencies, weaknesses, limitations...that it "paralyzes" them. Their focus is on all the "negatives" and short comings.

we have a high priest who can sympathize with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15-16), draw near to Him, go to His throne of grace (honestly & humbly) so you can receive mercy & find help in time of need! Get your eyes off yourself & start looking unto Jesus (Heb. 12:1-2)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE CONTROLLED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT?

"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation (being out of control, degeneracy). But be filled (continually controlled) with the Spirit". (Eph. 5:18)

The Greek word that Paul uses in Ephesians 5:18, that is interpreted "filled", is the verb P L E R O O or PLETHO which means literally "to make full, to fill up to the fullest" (Eph. 3:19), or as seen in how it is used in the New Testament, "filled so as to be controlled by". In Acts 2:4; 4:8,31; 9:17; 13:9; Lk. 1:15, 41,67, for example, this "filling" of the Holy Spirit is something that controls the person. The same word is used to describe one being so filled with some emotion that it controls and influences their behavior. For instance:

Lk. 4:28 - filled with rage

Lk. 5:26 - filled with fear

Lk. 6:11 - filled with madness

Acts 3:10 - filled with wonder

Acts 5:17 - filled with anger

Acts 13:45 - filled with envy

In each context the people were so filled up to the fullest with this particular emotion that it literally controlled their responses and consequent behaviors!

(Being totally influenced and controlled by that which dominates them!)

Notice in the Eph. 5:18 reference, the interesting contrast with alcohol! When one is filled with alcohol they will walk, talk, think, respond and act differently (quite differently!) There is a transformation - an almost total personality change. Paul is telling us that as Christians, we should be so filled (influenced, captivated) with God's Spirit, that it radically effects and reorients our behavior and character.

HOW DOES THIS OCCUR?

It is a spiritual inward working of God. We do not need to receive more of the Holy Spirit, since He already indwells us totally, but He needs to "receive" more of us, by our yielding/submitting. The Spirit will gain more control of us, the more we fill our lives with the Word of God. How does a person get drunk? By drinking in the alcohol...in the same way, the more we "drink in" the word, the more He will control us! Notice these parallel passages from Paul relating this concept:

Ephesians 5:18-19

Colossians 3:16

Don't drink too much wine, for many evils lie along that path; be filled instead with the Holy Spirit, and controlled by Him. Talk with each other much about the Lord, quoting psalms and hymns and singing sacred songs, making music in your hearts to the Lord.

Remember what Christ taught and let his words enrich your lives and make you wise; teach them to each other and sing them out in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing to the Lord with thankful hearts.

Do you see the similarity? Do you see that Paul is saying that being controlled by the Holy Spirit and "letting the word of Christ dwell in us richly" are the same thing and result in the same things? Read on to Eph. 6:9 and Col. 4:1 to see the contextual similarities in Paul's teaching and how it relates into our everyday relationships!

You see the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit (Eph. 6:17) and the more we drink in the word the more we're giving the Spirit the "fuel" to work within, transforming and reorienting our behavior!

#### (GOING A BIT DEEPER)

In Jn. 7:37-39, Jesus said, "If any man is thirsty let him come to me and drink" and "from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water"... "this He spoke of the Spirit whom those who believe in Him (have) received..." Also, Jesus said, "the Spirit gives life...and the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life" (Jn. 6:63). The very word of God is what inwardly transforms us and gives us spiritual life, power and vitality. (See Matt. 4:4; Jn. 15:3; I Thes. 2:13; Js. 1:18; and Jesus is the "bread of life". (Jn. 6:35,48-51)

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

The more we are filling our lives with the word of God, the more we will experience the Spirit's control (influence) over us. As we spend time in the Word, we will become so captivated and overwhelmed by "spiritual \_\_\_\_\_" (truths, wisdom, understanding, joy, love, peace, motivation...) that it totally effects the way we live. Therefore, to be controlled by the Spirit means, my thought, words, motives, actions... are continually being brought in to conformity to Christ and His Word; continually operating/living in prayerful dependence on His power so that I will begin to reflect His character. It is a work of God by His Word and Spirit which we need to cooperate with by our obedience.

(Notice the balance of responsibility here, it is 100% God who is at work by His Word and Spirit, and also 100% our responsibility to apply God's truth as a "doer" of the Word (Js. 1:21-25). Paul clearly states, "... I labor and strive...according to His power, which mightily works within me." (Col. 1:29). See also I Cor. 15:10; Phil 4:13; Phil. 2:12-13; Gal. 2:20 and a study entitled, "Who Actually Lives the Christian Life?")

#### PRACTICAL STEPS TO EXPERIENCE THE SPIRIT'S CONTROL

1. Take the Word into your life (Col. 3:16), fill your heart (inner man) with it (Ps. 119). It's the same thing as Abiding in Christ (Jn. 15:1-15), Staying connected to the "source of all sufficiency" (2 Cor. 3:5; Col. 1:17-18; 2:2-3, 9-10), "Firmly rooted in Him". (Col. 2:7)

2. Prayerfully acknowledge and desire this working of God by means of the Spirit and the Word (Acts 4:29-31). Deepen your understanding of other related concepts (see #5 and the following pages). "Lord I want to cooperate with You in this."

3. Get sin/self (whatever is hindering) excuses out of the way. Humble yourself before God (Js. 4:6-10); honestly confess your sin (I Jn. 1:9); repent, turn away from it, forsake it (Prov. 28:13) and replace it (Eph. 4:20-32). We need to be a "clean" vessel, willing to have Him take control.

4. Prayerfully acknowledge your "deficiencies", weaknesses, shortcomings, and limitations. When Paul was honest about his weaknesses, that's when he experienced the power of God the most, His strength was made perfect...(2 Cor. 12:9-10). Acknowledge our need for \_\_\_\_\_ (power, grace, wisdom, help...) When we do this, God is free to work in and through us.

5. Desiring Him to take control means you really do want Him to be on the "throne of your life", therefore - relinquish your control by surrendering to His Lordship, (I Pet. 3:15); abandon your self will by yielding submissively to His will and follow His truths. Make the conscious choice daily to live in trusting-obedience to the Word (Js. 1:22-25; I Pet. 2:2). Practice "Christ-consciousness" - seek to "apply Him" in everything you face and do. (I Jn. 2:6) Live as unto the Lord (Col. 3:17,23). Practically, it also means applying

Scripture (the sword of the Spirit) to specific areas of your life.

6. Move out in faith - depending on Him. When you are consciously applying God's truths to every area of your life, He will be more and more in control. Granted, it is a lifetime process, be patient with yourself - but persistent! Maintain the attitude of willingness to be open to God revealing His principles that are relevant to where you are at and how you can grow on spiritually (mature). With a teachable and ready heart before the Lord, you won't be "quenching the Spirit", but on the contrary you'll be free to live in dependence on His power, believing and acting as though it's true that He is in control ... because He will be. Genuine faith doesn't need feelings to confirm it; (but you will see/experience the results!)

#### WHAT ARE THE RESULTS (FRUITS) WHEN THE SPIRIT IS IN CONTROL

Certainly when we are vitally and consciously connected to the spiritual "source of all sufficiency" (Christ), there will be evidences or "fruit" that will be experienced. The Bible does reveal many ways that God's Spirit begins to manifest His working when He is free to work in ones life. In fact, these Biblical evidences can serve to be a "checklist" for one to examine themselves and see if they're on the right track in their understanding and experiencing the Spirit-controlled life. The following things will become more and more a reality to you.

1. Awareness of our unworthiness and sinfulness. In some ways even a "distance" from God because of our realization of who He really is as we draw nearer to Him. Also, we will become increasingly sensitive to our "shortcomings" and deficiencies. "GREAT" you say, sounds real attractive! Read Isaiah 6:3-5 and notice His response to "experiencing" the fullness of God. This is what Jesus said that one of the functions of the Holy Spirit will be, to convict of sin (Jn. 16:7-11). Instead of allowing this "result" to be "depressing", recognize that this is also part of the process (Js. 4:6-10) that brings us to humble honest confession - seeing ourselves accurately - who we really are, BUT, only so we turn to Him in greater dependence! This kind of "experience" deepens our appreciation of who God is and "enlarges" our capacity to be "filled" all the more with spiritual life, vitality, and motivation!
2. Concern and alertness to our spiritual struggle (above) and our spiritual warfare. (Eph. 6:10-18)
3. Victory and power in overcoming sin, putting to death the deeds of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:13)
4. Boldness and power in our witness - communicating to others the reality of God's love and forgiveness. (Acts 1:8; 2:42-43; 4:29-33)
5. A new confidence in our prayer lives (Rom. 8:26-27; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20; I Jn. 5:14-15)
6. Alertness and awareness to the leading and guidance of the Spirit in our lives (Rom. 8:14; Jn. 16:13)
7. A new ability to understand spiritual truth (I Cor. 2:10-16; I Jn. 2:27) Ask the Holy Spirit to "open your eyes" to comprehend God's Word, ask Him to teach you and expect it as you begin reading and studying the Scriptures.
8. Assurance of salvation (Rom. 8:16) and certainty of His continued working in your life to accomplish His purposes. (I Jn. 3:24; Rom. 8:26-29; Phil. 1:6)
9. A special love for others (Rom. 5:5; I Jn. 4:7-21; 3:16-18), our experience of God's unconditional self-sacrificial commitment to meeting our needs will motivate us to express the same to others. (2 Cor. 5:14)
10. A new desire and joyful experience of praise and worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Ps. 33:1-5; Acts 16:25)
11. An attitude of gratitude (Eph. 5:20), a thankful heart (Ps. 107:1,8,15, 21-22,31-32) I Cor. 9:15!

12. An attitude of servitude (Eph. 5:21), a submissive heart (Phil.2:3-11)
13. A new understanding of human relationships (Biblical roles and responsibilities)
14. Harmonious relationships (Eph. 5:22-6:9), a new understanding of the Biblical roles and responsibilities of husbands and wives (5:22-33) parents and children (6:1-4), employers and employees (6:5-9). Balanced, unified and fulfilling relationships occur when individuals are depending on the Holy Spirit's power to operate under the Lordship of Christ.
15. A new sense of freedom from sin and death (Rom. 8:2). Positionally, "in Christ" we have been set free from the bondage of sin and its "deadly" consequences (Rom. 6:1-23). Also, we no longer need to live in fear of death, period! (Heb. 2:14-15). No more "slavery" but freedom in Christ to experience new life with Him!
16. New life and peace (Rom. 8:6-11) resulting from being right with God (Rom. 5:1). A life with God - a personal relationship with Christ. (Jn. 17:3;15:14-15)
17. An inner strength (motivation) (Eph. 3:16; 2 Cor. 4:16).
18. A desire for Christ-likeness (Rom. 8;29; 2 Cor. 3:18) a new motivation to cooperate with God's Spirit in the process of "sanctification" - change - ongoing maturity where we can discern between good and evil (Heb. 5:14) resulting in Godliness (I Tim. 6:11) seen in ones honest, genuine lifestyle.
19. Being used of God in others lives by using our spiritual gifts given by the Spirit, to build up the body of Christ (I Cor. 12:7,11; Eph. 4:14-16 significant involvement with other believers in Jesus Christ. Heb. 10:25)
20. Righteousness (I Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22) or good works (Eph. 2:10) desiring to do the right thing, conforming to the example of Christ, (Heb. 1:9). Phil. 1:11 - "fruits of righteousness" - motivated out of love for Christ.

### THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians is not the only place where we have lists of the "fruits" that evidence themselves as results of our yieldedness to the Holy Spirit's Control. Other Scriptures identify spiritual qualities and characteristics that should be true in the lives of true believers. Are these things true in your life?

<u>Rom. 5:3-5</u>	<u>1 Tim. 6:11</u>	<u>2 Tim. 3:10</u>	<u>2 Pet. 1:5-7</u>	<u>Gal. 5:22-23</u>
Steadfastness	Righteousness	Teaching	Faith	Love
Approvedness	Godliness	Conduct	Virtue	Joy
Hope	Faithfulness	Faith	Knowledge	Peace
Unashamedness	Love	Long-suffering	Self-control	Long-suffering
(Confidence)	Patience	Love	Patience	Kindness
	Meekness	Patience	Godliness	Goodness
		Persecution	Brotherly-	Faithfulness
		Suffering	Kindness	Meekness
			Love	Self-control

## DEFINED

## EXEMPLIFIED

## COMMANDED

## SOURCE

<p><b>LOVE</b> - not based on feelings  - unconditional self sacrificial commitment to benefit others &amp; meet their need.  - everything you do without self in view.  Rom. 5:8; 13:10; Gal. 5:14;  I Cor. 13!</p>	<p>Jn. 15:13  Jn. 3:16  I Jn. 4:9-10  Christ's sacrificial death in our place, paying for our sin.</p>	<p>Eph. 5:1-2  I Jn. 4:7,11  I Jn. 3:14-18</p>	<p>Rom. 5:5  I Jn. 4:8  Phil. 1:9</p>
<p><b>JOY</b> - a deep founded spiritual confidence &amp; excitement that motivates us to endure &amp; fulfill the will of God. An inner happiness or gladness not based on temporal things (values, circumstances, relationships...) but based on divine influence. (God's presence, promises, provision, power...)  Ps. 16:11; Jn. 15:11; 16:24;  Neh. 8:10</p>	<p>Heb. 12:2  Christ endured the cross because of the joy He experienced &amp; He alone can offer that satisfying joy! (holy-optimism)</p>	<p>Phil. 4:4</p>	<p>Rom. 14:17  I Pet. 1:8</p>
<p><b>PEACE</b> - tranquility of mind based on a right relationship with God; the inward assurance of adequate resources, satisfaction, contentment. (Rom. 8:28; Jn. 14:27; 16:33)</p>	<p>Isa. 9:6  Matt. 4:1-11  Jesus knew the Father would supply all He needed.</p>	<p>Phil. 4:6-7  Isa. 26:3</p>	<p>Rom. 14:17  Isa. 9:6</p>
<p><b>LONG-SUFFERING</b> - patience, tolerance, being slow to anger, opposite of being "short-fused". Able to endure with spiritual stamina, trying circumstances or relationships &amp; still press on victoriously.  Js. 1:2-4; Ps. 86:15</p>	<p>Rom. 2:4  2 Pet. 3:9,20  I Tim. 1:16  "courageous endurance"  "calm acceptance"</p>	<p>Col. 3:12  Eph. 4:2-3  2 Tim. 4:2</p>	<p>Eph. 3:16  Col. 1:11</p>
<p><b>GENILENESS</b> - tenderness, sensitivity, demonstrated by kindness treating others the way we expect them to treat us.  2 Sam. 22:36; I Thes. 2:7</p>	<p>II Cor. 10:1  Mk. 10:14  Mk. 11:29</p>	<p>2 Tim. 2:24</p>	<p>Js. 3:17</p>
<p><b>GOODNESS</b> - moral &amp; spiritual excellence demonstrated by doing &amp; saying practical tangible expressions which build up &amp; meet others needs; generous behaviors.  Ps. 23:6; 27:13; 33:5</p>	<p>Mk. 10:17  Neh. 9:25,35  (Love in action)</p>	<p>Gal. 6:10</p>	<p>Rom. 7:18  2 Thes. 1:11</p>
<p><b>FAITHFULNESS</b> - trustworthiness, loyalty, steadfastness, we can be trusted &amp; depended on in all our responsibilities &amp; relationships.. God is Faithful.  (Lam. 3:22-23; I Cor. 10:13)</p>	<p>Rev. 19:11  He will always keep His Word.  Rom. 4:21  (dependability)</p>	<p>I Cor. 4:2</p>	<p>Acts 6:5</p>

DEFINED	EXEMPLIFIED	COMMANDED	SOURCE
<b>MEEKNESS</b> - lowly, humble, accurate in our view of ourselves in light of who God is. Seen in three attitudes: (1) submissiveness to God's will (Js. 1:21) (2) teachability (Js. 1:21) (3) consideration (I Pet. 3:15). Knowing how to respond sensitively & appropriately to problems (Gal. 6:1) firm but gently; balanced.	Num. 12:3 2 Cor. 10:1 Mt. 21:5 Mt. 11:29-30 ("Power under Control")	I Tim. 6:11 Col. 3:12	Gal. 5:23

<b>SELF-CONTROL</b> - The ability to keep oneself in check; disciplined restraint over our responses & desires; consistency.	Heb. 13:8 I Pet. 2:21-23	2 Pet. 1:6	Gal. 5:23
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\* Compiled from:  
John Sanderson  
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Paul ends this list of evidences (fruit) of the Spirit by saying, "against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:23). John MacArthur says, "He is saying that if you're in the Spirit, you don't need the law which had one purpose: restraining sin. As the flesh produced evil, the law helped to restrain it. In the case of the Christian, the law is unnecessary because the Spirit more effectively restrains the works of the flesh." Therefore, the Spirit of God is producing in us Christ-like qualities and characteristics which have no need of being "limited". We can live life to the fullest as we walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:25), because "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with their affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). The old life is dead (Gal. 2:20), a new life is able to be experienced - HIS life through us, based on our yieldedness. The more we spend time in the Word, in the presence of God, the more we will understand this new spiritual life. This leads us to a greater dependence on God's Spirit in obeying God, which makes these things an ongoing experiential reality!

All these evidences, fruits, and results are a by-product of the life controlled by the Spirit, saturated with the Word of God. We can't "conjur" it up through our own efforts. He will do His part and produce it when we do our part and stay "plugged in" to the source of all sufficiency (Jn. 15:1-15; 2 Cor. 3:5; 9:8); being ready to submit to His will.

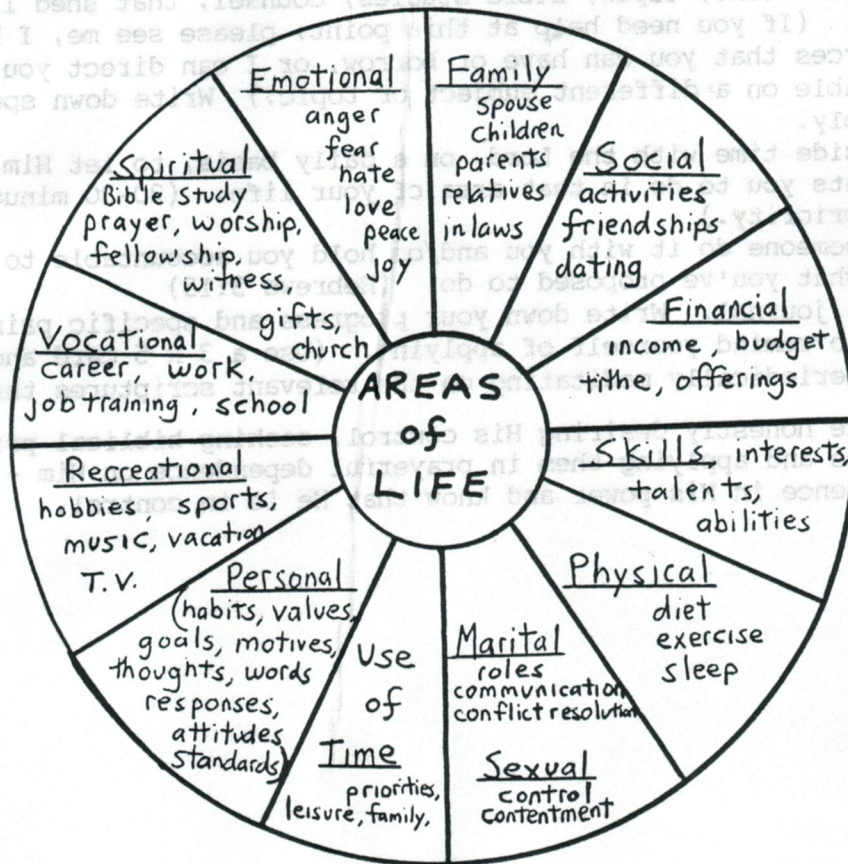
FURTHER STUDY REFERENCES  
(also used in this study)

- "How Can I Be Filled With the Holy Spirit" - Martin R. DeHaan II
- "Liberty In Christ" - John MacArthur
- "Have You Made the Wonderful Discovery of the Spirit-Filled Life" - Bill Bright
- "The Holy Spirit and the Believer" - Charles F. Stanley
- "More Than Redemption" - Dr. Jay E. Adams
- "The Fruit of the Spirit" - John Sanderson
- "Whatever Happened to the Holy Spirit?" - John MacArthur
- "The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit" (A thorough explanation of who He is and what He does) - Thomas F. Chambers



A PRACTICAL EXERCISE TO APPLY THIS STUDY

1. Ask God's Spirit to help you to understand where you are at presently in relation to these things. Ask Him to give you understanding of these concepts. Reread through the study looking up the verses and write down what is appropriate to each point.
2. Review the "problems and solutions" (pp. 2-3) personally evaluating what you need to overcome regarding hinderances.
3. Read over the practical steps (pp. 4-5) and condense each down to a few statements that will help you remember them. Write the steps down and post it somewhere where you will be reminded daily. Even carry it with you.
4. Review the results of God's Spirit working (pp. 5-6) to motivate you to really want these things. Pray them into your life - ask Him to make them a reality!
5. A final way of understanding more practically the Spirit's control in our lives, is seen in our willingness to apply Biblical principles to the specific areas of our everyday living. We do possess all of the Holy Spirit - but the question is, does He possess (control) every area of us? It's true that the more we're in the Word the more He will be in control; however, that's only a reality when we're applying it! If I'm not applying God's word to my finances or marriage, for instance, than how can I say He is in control of it? Or Jesus is Lord of my "time" but yet I'm not consciously budgeting my time wisely with the scriptural priorities? In other words, I can be sure that God's Spirit is gaining control of my life as I maintain a willing attitude to apply God's truth to the specific areas of my life. Notice from this chart, a helpful break down of practically every area of life. As you look at these areas, ask yourself, "Is Christ Lord of \_\_\_\_\_? Is the Spirit controlling it because of my yielding to His guidance? Have I specifically, consciously applied Biblical principles to this particular area?" If so, what principles are governing these things?



You may feel overwhelmed and even frustrated looking at things this way, but remember, this is a process! God knows we're not instantly perfect! None of us have arrived! (Phil. 1:6) The point is that we are maintaining the continual attitude before God that when His Spirit convicts us of principles of truth that relate to a particular area - rather than quench Him - we prayerfully depend on Him as we apply it!

Also, it is our responsibility to look at a specific area one at a time, and search out God's wisdom/plan/will pertaining to that area! Do this devotionally as unto the Lord, asking for wisdom (Js. 1:5), reading His word, and writing down what He teaches you for your own "journal of spiritual progress"! The exciting thing is to realize that God does have insight and instruction that relates to every area of our lives, and we as His children have the right to it. We can live His way, not as a burden, but to give us confidence in His control over these areas. When we know we're operating within His guidelines, we experience true freedom and increase our sensitivity to the Spirit's leading as He gains the control.

PERSONAL EVALUATION QUESTIONS

- What areas are controlled by the Spirit? What specific Biblical principles can I say are governing these areas?
  - What areas have I not given Him? What doesn't He control? What areas am I living in that I haven't deliberately applied God's truths? Why not?
  - Am I willing to submit them to His authority and Lordship?
  - Am I open to His control over these areas? (Why? Why not?)
1. What is the top priority area that you need to get spiritual guidance on in order to begin experiencing His control? Identify it. Move one step at a time.
  2. Prayerfully commit the area to Him right now and ask for wisdom, guidance regarding His will/teaching in this area.
  3. Get some books, tapes, Bible studies, counsel, that shed light on these areas. (If you need help at this point, please see me, I have numerous resources that you can have or borrow, or I can direct you to what's available on a different subject or topic.) Write down specific principles to apply.
  4. Set aside time with the Lord, on a daily basis, to let Him teach you what He wants you to do in that area of your life. (20-30 minutes a day should be a priority.)
  5. Have someone do it with you and/or hold you accountable to follow through with what you've proposed to do. (Hebrews 3:13)
  6. Keep a journal. Write down your progress and specific principles you need to remind yourself of applying. (Use a 3 x 5 card and carry it with you, periodically meditating on the relevant scriptures throughout the day.)

When we are honestly desiring His control, seeking biblical principles to govern our lives and applying them in prayerful dependence on Him - we will experience confidence in His power and know that He is in control.

