

WHAT IS TRUE BIBLICAL SPIRITUALITY?

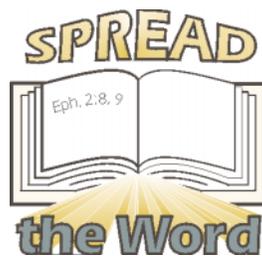
taken from
Ephesians 5 and Acts 17

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SPIRITUALITY FOR THE BELIEVER

Tonight we have a subject which is most important but very few people know about, called the **Spirit-filled life**. We've seen so far in Ephesians 5:14-18 the command to be filled with the Spirit. In verse 14 we had three analogies to the filling of the Spirit. The first analogy is sleep. The concept there is the sleeping believer is the believer that doesn't know the Word. You're asleep, you're out of fellowship. When you're out of fellowship you can't learn the Word. The only way that you can learn the Word is if you're controlled by the Spirit.

The second analogy that we had is death (verse 14). That means spiritual death and again it's being out of fellowship. There it's the importance of being in fellowship. **The only way to be filled with the Spirit is to confess your sin and get back in fellowship.** Thirdly, we have in verse 14 the analogy to light. Light is the result of the filling of the Holy Spirit. We had three analogies and they were in logical progression.

Then in verses 15-17 we have three more analogies. In verse 15 the filling of the Spirit is related to wisdom. In other words, when you're in fellowship, God the Holy Spirit controls your life. The word "wisdom" means that you can apply the Word that you know to your experience. In verse 16 we had the filling of the Spirit is related to time. There, if you're controlled by the Spirit, you're in fellowship, then you can redeem the time. Only people who are believers in fellowship can redeem the time.

In verse 17 the filling of the Spirit is related to God's will. **If you're in fellowship, then you will know God's will for your life, otherwise you'll never know it if you're out of fellowship.**

Then there's actually a fourth analogy which we mentioned in verse 18, under the negative command. It says, "*Be not drunk with wine, wherein its excess.*" We indicated a very interesting analogy there. When you put something into you, like wine, well, it changes your

behavior pattern for the worse. When the Holy Spirit controls the inside, then there's a change for the better. So, the negative command of verse 18, has with it a conjunction of contrast, "*But be ye habitually filled with the Spirit.*" The word "filled" there is a constant.

Before we move on to verse 19, I want to give you some principles of spirituality. A lot of people are confused as to what spirituality is, so I'll try to put it in a capsule for you. Under the concept of spirituality I'm going to give you seven passages of Scripture, so that these will help you understand what we're talking about. This is something that **every** believer should know. If you have accepted Christ as your Saviour, the next thing that you should know is what constitutes a spiritual believer. If you ask someone that question, I would guarantee you that 90% of them wouldn't have the answer, the Biblical answer. This is the whole academic background from the Word of God. Seven verses about the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The first one is Matthew 5:17. In this verse it says that **Christ fulfilled the Law**. We've already taken up in detail on how Christ fulfilled the Law by keeping Codex #1 perfectly. In other words, He lived a perfect life. Secondly, by fulfilling all the types of Codex #2, in other words the shadows. Thirdly, by living up to that which is found in Codex #3, He fulfilled all the facets of the Law.

The second verse I want to give you is Romans 10:4. **Christ is the end of the Law to all who believe.** For everyone who has received Christ as Saviour, you are no longer under the Law. So, we have 1) Christ fulfilled the Law, Matthew 5:17, and 2) you are no longer under the Law since He fulfilled it, Romans 10:4, Galatians 5:18 and 23, "*against such there is no Law.*"

The third verse says **there is a higher Law**. See, this is progressive. Christ fulfilled the Law, we're no longer under the Law. Are we lawless? The answer is NO. This third verse is Romans 8:2-4, "*For the Law of the*

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." That means that as believers, we're under a higher Law. There's a new Law, which has been substituted for the Mosaic Law, for those who have received Christ as Saviour. This is called in Romans 8:2-4, the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. If someone says to you, "do you keep the Mosaic Law for spirituality?" You say "No." Then they say, "Well, then you're lawless." Then you say, "No, I'm not. I'm under a higher Law." That's the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

The fourth verse is Ephesians 5:18, our passage. The new Law is accompanied by a **new commandment**. That's what we've been studying and are studying now. Ephesians 5:18, "*Be habitually filled with the Spirit,*" that's the new commandment. Sometimes it says, "*Love one another,*" that's the same thing. "*Love one another*" is the "*fruit of the Spirit is love,*" Galatians 5:22.

The fifth passage gives us the purpose of the new Law. What's the purpose of the new Law of spirituality? The purpose of the new Law is to **glorify Christ and produce His character** in every believer. That's found in Philippians 1:20, 21, "*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*" Galatians 4:19, "*My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.*" Ephesians 3:16, 17, "*That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love.*"

Our sixth verse. There is **one Person who glorifies Christ** while a Christian is alive on

this Earth. The Person who glorifies Christ while we are believers in Christ on this Earth is **God the Holy Spirit**. In other words, only when God the Holy Spirit controls your life does He glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. That's John 16:14 and John 7:39. "*He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.*" "*But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.*"

Our last verse on seven principles of spirituality. "Operation Glorification" takes place **on the inside of the believer**. Christianity emphasizes what you are on the inside. What you think. How you are motivated. That's 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, "*What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*" That's the general concept of spirituality.

One, Christ fulfilled the Law. **Two**, Christ is the end of the Law to all who believe. **Three**, you're under a higher Law. **Four**, the new Law has a new commandment, "*Be filled with the Spirit.*" **Five**, the purpose of the new Law is to glorify Jesus Christ. **Six**, one Person only glorifies Christ, the Holy Spirit. **Seven**, the glorification takes place on the inside.

There are two concepts of experiential Christianity which we must have for a background before we finish Ephesians 5:18, "*Be ye habitually filled with the Spirit.*" Two concepts and you have to get these clear in your mind, because a lot of people are confused with what spirituality is. They confuse it sometimes with growth. There is a **Relative** concept and an **Absolute** concept. Under the **Relative** concept, no two believers are exactly at the same place. No two of us are at the exact same place. The Cross is where every believer starts, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*" Immediately many things happen to each and every believer. From that particular point the believer can move towards maturity. Along the way he's

an adolescent and he's also a baby when he starts. Every believer is some place experientially. On this point of progression the believer may be retrogressing. He may be going backwards and moving back to babyhood. You receive Christ as your Saviour and you're a baby. You start growing and you get disenchanted and you don't grow any more, so you start going backwards. That means that when you're retrogressing you're logging a maximum amount of time out of fellowship. This may be one thing which we have failed to take into consideration as far as the Christian life is concerned. No two believers have reached the same point.

We often try to impose a set of taboos and usually they are false in their concept. We usually try to enforce a set of standards on all believers, but we don't do that in life. We don't expect a baby to act the way a teenager should. And we don't expect a teenager to act as an adult would. We don't expect that. Yet, when it comes to the Christian way of life we expect every new believer, every baby, to suddenly snap his fingers and be exactly where all of the so-called "mature believers" are, or those who are heading towards maturity. That's one of the terrible concepts in setting up a series of taboos. Generally they are extra-biblical and then they try to build spirituality around these concepts. Nothing can be further from the truth.

This is why Christianity has no impact apart from the Gospel. The life of the believer has no impact because we have accepted, as it were, rationalism, emotionalism, and traditionalism as a criteria when it comes to the Christian way of life. In emotionalism we have the so-called "holiness crowd." In rationalism we have those who are trying to rationalize in the realm of asceticism and they think that if a person is an aesthetic, then they are spiritual. Then of course, we have certain traditions like taboos. Yet **none** of those things are spirituality. In fact, they confuse the whole picture. The average believer is not aware of the fact that every person in a congregation who is born again, runs the

gamut from babyhood to maturity. Obviously a mature believer knows a great deal more than a believer who is a baby. Yet, we expect the same standard from every person. That's the **Relative** concept. We're all saved. We're all in union with Christ. We all have eternal life. But, we're at different stages of growth. That's **Relative**.

The second point is the **Absolute** concept of experiential Christianity. What do I mean? Well, we have **Relative** and we have **Absolute** concepts. **Relative**, some believers are mature, some are adolescents, some are babies, some are going backwards. But under the **Absolute** concept, at any point of time after you have accepted Christ as your Saviour, you're either filled with the Spirit or you're carnal. You're either spiritual or carnal at any moment of time. So, a baby believer may be either spiritual or carnal and an adolescent believer may be either spiritual or carnal. And a mature believer can be spiritual or carnal. Generally speaking, a mature believer should log more time in the filling of the Spirit than he does in carnality. Generally speaking, an adolescent believer is somewhere in between. A baby is usually out of fellowship a great deal of the time and not as much in fellowship as the mature believer. Of course, there are many other factors involved with this thing. Every person, who is a believer here tonight, is either at this point, right now, carnal or spiritual.

You can't be part and part. I went to a school and they told me that this person was 51% spiritual and 49% carnal. Then another teacher taught that there is no such thing as an absolute. You couldn't be sure if you were in or out. And you could never get in fellowship with God because you had an old sin nature. There's a lot of stuff going around that's not true. You can't be 50% spiritual and then someone else is 60% spiritual and therefore, they are more spiritual than you are. You've heard the expression, "Oh, he's more spiritual than I am." Or "I'm more spiritual than he is." That's a wrong statement.

Spirituality is an **Absolute**. Either you're

filled with the Spirit or you're not filled with the Spirit. If you're filled with the Spirit, you are spiritual. If you're not, you're carnal. You're still saved. You may be a baby, adolescent, or mature. It hasn't changed that. You're either in or out. You're either walking "*in the Light*" or "walking in darkness." If you're not filled with the Spirit, you're out of fellowship and that constitutes carnality.

In other words, you have the Cross. The moment you're saved you enter into union with the Person of Jesus Christ. In a moment of time, and we **never** get out of our union with Christ, our position *IN CHRIST*. That's the principle of positional truth, which is part of the principle of eternal security. **We can never get out of our union with Christ, our position in Christ, our eternal life, our salvation.**

But, we also have another relationship and that's fellowship with God in time. Every time we sin we're out of fellowship with God in time. We haven't lost our salvation. We've broken fellowship with God. We're designated in 1 Corinthians 3 as carnal. If we confess our sins, or judge ourselves, or examine ourselves, we're restored back to fellowship with God in time and that's the area of spirituality. The believer who is in fellowship with God in time is spiritual. The believer who is out of fellowship with God in time is carnal. So, again you have the concept of carnality or spirituality as an absolute.

There's another way of looking at it that may help you. It's looking at it from the inside of every believer. Inside of every believer indwells God the Holy Spirit. Inside of the believer is also the old sin nature. When the Holy Spirit controls your life, the result on the outside is spirituality. When the old sin nature controls your life, the result is carnality. Again, at any point of time you are either carnal or spiritual. You **cannot** be both at the same time. **You're either one or the other.** That's the **Absolute** concept of experiential Christianity. In order to have a clear understanding of spiritual life we need to understand the two different concepts of experien-

tial Christianity, the **Absolute** and the **Relative**, and to be able to distinguish between them. If I gave you a test and said to you as a believer, "tell me the **Absolute** concept of spirituality and then tell me the **Relative**," you would say, "The **Relative** is that we are all at different stages of growth, but the **Absolute** concept is that I'm either in fellowship or out of fellowship every moment of my life."

Then, as we have suggested, there are false criteria for spirituality, emotions or feelings. You're not spiritual because of how you feel. I have met people who have had permanent diseases and felt really bad, terrible. That doesn't mean they're not spiritual, because they ache, because they're eaten up with cancer. They didn't feel well at all. They couldn't even concentrate on prayer because the cancer was so permeating their body. So, feeling has nothing at all to do with it. That's false.

You're spiritual because God the Holy Spirit controls your life. If I asked you for a one sentence explanation of spirituality it would be "**You're spiritual because God the Holy Spirit controls your life.**" At any point of time you're either carnal or spiritual, you can't be both at the same time. It's either or. That's the **Absolute** concept of experiential Christianity. In order to have a clear understanding of the Spirit-filled life, you need to understand the two different aspects of experiential Christianity. The **Absolute** and the **Relative** and we have to be able to distinguish between them.

Then, as I have suggested, there are three false criteria for spirituality. Emotions, or feelings. This means that you're not spiritual because of how you feel. That's false. You're spiritual because God the Holy Spirit controls your life. A great deal of ecstatic feeling has nothing whatsoever to do with spirituality. To the contrary, a lot of times, they are carnal when they feel this feeling.

The second false criteria is rationalism. The third is traditionalism. Anyone who follows any one of these three, or a combination thereof, will never get on the right track.

Because there are false criteria of spirituality, we have today **spirituality by works, which is not acceptable to God any more than salvation by works is acceptable to God.** To just give you some idea of what spirituality by works is, which is taught by some, here are 10 ideas which people teach that these are spirituality.

1). **Spirituality by taboos.** In other words, this person says, "I'm spiritual because I've given up certain things, like a good time, mixed bathing, I've given up something, therefore I'm spiritual." **No one is spiritual because of what he gives up.** Spirituality is based on the **filling of the Holy Spirit.**

2). This is **spirituality by relativity.** This says "I am more spiritual than someone else. When I compare myself to someone else, I look better because I'm looking at their weaknesses and I check them against my strengths." Let's say he has a problem with smoking. "I don't have any problem with smoking. I'm better than he is." But, he's stronger in his area of strength than I am in my weak area." See, that's relativity. No one is spiritual because of what he gives up and no one is spiritual because I am better than he is, or he is better than I am.

3). This is **spirituality by asceticism.** Some people have an old sin nature and it has a natural bent towards asceticism. So, we have the fact that people practice asceticism after they are saved. They are generally regarded as spiritual. In other words, they live on vegetables and herbs. They refrain from anything that might be construed as fun or pleasant. They never smile. They live a great deal like Gandhi.

Do you know that there are people that think that Gandhi was a Christian? But Gandhi died as an unbeliever and he's in Torments. Later on he's going to be cast right into Hell, for all of his abstaining, because he abstained from Jesus Christ, too. They forgot about that, along with the other stuff. He was not a Christian but a lot of people thought he was because they associate giving up things and asceticism with Christianity. This, of

course, is a false association. Asceticism is not spirituality.

4). Another false system is **aesthetics.** Just, all you have to do is get high, in some way. Go to some church where they have tambourines and sing "Do Lord" and get ecstatic and get into your closet and say, "Oh, God. Oh, God. Oh, God. Oh, God" and pray through until you get that "feeling" and then you're spiritual. That's not spirituality either. You can holler "Oh, God" for 9000 years and never get the filling of the Spirit that way. You can beat your tambourine until you beat yourself black and blue and you'll never become spiritual that way. You can stick pins in your body and rip pieces of skin off of you and you'll never be spiritual. **You can't be spiritual by the things that you do, like you can't be saved by anything you do.**

5). This system is one of **crucifying self.** I ran into this one in Florida. This guy got up and said, "Kill me God. Die to self. Crucify me." Self cannot crucify self. The old sin nature is self. You got it as long as you live. It's not going to die. You can't kill it. He's liable to take you right home. That's spirituality by works. That's a do-it-yourself kit and God is never honored or impressed by the do-it-yourself kit.

6). **I am predestined to be spiritual.** This is the extreme Calvinist. He says, "Well, if I am predestined to be spiritual, I'll be spiritual. If I am not, then I just won't be. So, I'll just sit around and wait until I am spiritual." So, you sit around and wait until you're predestined, til something happens. Spirituality under this system confuses the means with the cause.

7). This is spirituality by **prayer.** Prayer is the *result* of spirituality. It is never the means. You **don't** pray for the filling of the Spirit. There's another way in which we get it.

8). **Keeping the Law** is another system.

9). **Yieldedness,** that's the result of the filling of the Spirit, not the means.

10). **Discipline** is another. "I discipline myself to do certain things. I discipline

myself to love everyone. I discipline myself to be 'umble.' I practice a verse until I can do it well." None of those things are spirituality. They're all works systems.

When we get into spirituality by GRACE, here's what it is, Ephesians 5:18, "*Be habitually filled with the Spirit.*" We've already seen that "be filled" is a present tense, which means keep on being filled. **It's not a one shot thing**, where you come down an aisle and it happens and that's supposed to carry you for your whole life. In other words, every moment that we are Christians, we are commanded here to be habitually filled with the Spirit. The middle voice here is the believer and the subject, which is the believer, is benefited by the action of the verb. **We are personally benefited by being filled with the Spirit.** The imperative mood, everybody wants to know what God's will is for their lives. Well, the imperative mood is a command. This is an order for all Christians. God never gives an order without giving the means of execution. **The means of execution is ALWAYS GRACE, no works involved.** Principally, the means of execution is 1 John 1:9, "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" 1 Corinthians 11:30, 31, "*For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and may sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*" When you get back into fellowship, you're filled with the Spirit.

That brings up the concept of spirituality by GRACE. That's a part of God's Plan for the human race, those who are born again. From the negative side, we can do something to hinder the filling of the Holy Spirit. We can do something to break fellowship, but you can't do **anything** to gain it or possess it. "*Quench not the Spirit*" is one negative found in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. That's something that you can do to get out of fellowship. We've already studied from Ephesians 4:30, "*Grieve not the Spirit.*" Again, that's something that you can do to break fellowship. Those are negatives. They emphasize the fact that we

can do something to lose that Spirit-controlled life, but we can't do anything to gain it. That's why this command is placed in such a simple fashion, "*Be filled with the Spirit,*" because when the believer is in fellowship, when the believer is restored back to fellowship, the means is 1 John 1:9. Faith gives the reality of the filling of the Spirit, but it doesn't add anything to it. That's why we have the word, "walk." "*We walk by faith and not by works (sight),*" 2 Corinthians 5:7. Galatians 5:16 says, "*We walk by means of the Spirit, and if you do, you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*" John 7:37, 39, "*In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)*" Ephesians 3:16, 18, "*That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height.*" Galatians 3:1-5. The whole structure of the Spirit-filled life, as far as reality is concerned is faith.

Now we move into Ephesians 5:19 through 6:9, where we have the results of the Spirit-filled life. The reason why I emphasize that is because all of the rest of these are results, not causes. Let's check out some of the results of the filling of the Spirit. These are only some. This is not a complete result pattern. But the principles that are specified here will at least give us some concept of what it means to be filled with the Spirit.

This is a very practical passage, because it is going to be talking about all different relationships in life. Everything that we study now in this passage is the result of being filled with the Spirit. Without being filled with the Spirit, none of these things can be executed. **The next things that we read from verse 19 to 6:9 cannot be accomplished by an unbeliever. They cannot be accomplished by a believer who is out of fellowship either.** They can only be accomplished when a per-

son is in fellowship. This is the monopoly of the Spirit-filled life. Unbelievers cannot execute this, nor can the believer out of fellowship.

We're also going to look at nine principles of spirituality from the book of Acts. Please turn to Acts 19 where we will find some additional principles. In verse 17 we find a summary and in verse 18 it amplifies what was in verse 17, where it says that the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Verse 18 amplifies it, "*and many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.*"

Then verse 18 is amplified in verse 19. Actually, when it says here in verse 18, that they confessed, that's believers getting back into fellowship, restoration principle of fellowship. As a result of getting back into fellowship, they had a way of getting them out of the things that they were doing. Actually, they showed their deeds, which had to do with these different incantation activities. That's why it says in verse 19, "*many of them also which used curious arts.*" "Curious arts," here is actually a word which means magic arts or sorcery. It says they "*brought their books together and burned them before them: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.*" 50,000 pieces of silver is about \$10,000. These books are magical books.

This is not the so-called amateur or professional magician today, but we're talking here strictly about demon activity. These books which they destroyed were books on ways to get rid of demons. They knew a lot about demons in the ancient world and recognized that demons caused a lot of problems. The point is that they burned all their books because they were through with all of that type of "mumbo-jumbo" that they were involved with before. There were all sorts of activities, of which two are referred to here.

One of them is demon worship, which is illustrated by voodoo. In voodoo what they do is try to contact demons. In other words, get demon possession. You see people messing with voodoo and black arts, they are trying to contact demons. Then, there's a second demon trick and that's what we call exorcism.

Exorcists are those who try to get rid of demons. There were people who were trying to get contact with demons, the voodoo crowd as it were, and then there were people who were trying to get rid of them. Both of these are out of line. These believers here are involved with trying to get rid of the demons by magical incantations. You see, demons are controlled by the power of God and **demons are handled by the Word of God**, but demons are **never** handled by some magic formula. There's no "hocus pocus" by which demons are removed. So, these believers that were involved in this sort of thing, in this passage, were in kind of a mess.

Let's go back for a minute and take a quick look at the word "confess" that we find here in verse 18. It not only has great meaning here, but it has great meaning in **all of our lives**, any time that we are in a carnal condition. Outside of salvation being a free gift, I don't know of anybody who is more confused than the person who is confused about spirituality. I'm going to give you nine points about what the Bible has to say about spirituality. What spirituality is, what restoration back to fellowship is, under nine different concepts.

I talked to a person today who thought they could lose their salvation simply by getting drunk and then the fact that they had to do something to get back into fellowship, more than just confessing their sin. Their idea was that the only way they could get back into fellowship was to stop drinking and promise they would never do it again. There are a lot of people who are confused. This was a so-called fundamental Bible church.

Let's take a look at what, not churches say or people say, but what the Bible says about fellowship with God and restoration back to fellowship.

You know, in Psalm 23, a Psalm which people just go over and don't even think about, it says "*HE restoreth my soul.*" That's as clear as you can get if you understand that David's talking about the Lord. "*HE restoreth my soul,*" not me, not David, but God.

1). Restoration back to fellowship must be understood in the light of **positional truth**. That's Romans 8:1, "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.*" By that I mean whenever a person, who is an unbeliever who is then saved, at that moment they have eternal life. That person is saved and he can't lose his salvation or eternal life. So, restoration back to fellowship does not mean getting back your salvation or your eternal life. See, some people think that they sin so they lose their salvation and now they get it back again. There are a lot of people like that. Restoration never means that you're getting back your salvation. All that you do is get back into fellowship and as a result you receive the filling of the Holy Spirit. **When you're out of fellowship, you're carnal. When you're in fellowship you're spiritual.** So, restoration back to fellowship must always be understood in the light of positional truth. In Romans 8:1, the phrase "*in Christ Jesus*" refers to our position, our positional truth.

2). Restoration must be understood in the light of **eternal security**. That's Romans 8:38, 39. In other words, these two passages, Romans 8:1 and Romans 8:38, 39, the first verse of Romans 8 and the last verse of Romans 8, teach you the principle of eternal security. Fellowship has nothing to do with the loss of salvation. Romans 8:38, 39 says, "*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" "*In Christ Jesus*" again is our positional truth. This passage then says in effect that there is **no sin** that you could ever commit, there is no thought that you could ever have, there is no viciousness on your part, there is no stupidity on your part, there is no suffering, no disaster that could ever take you away from your salvation. **You can't do something to lose your salvation**, neither can anyone else do it.

3). Restoration must be understood in the light of the **old sin nature**. 1 John 1:8 and 10,

two verses around 1 John 1:9, refer to this fact. These two verses tie into the fact that the old sin nature was judged at the Cross, in part. The old sin nature has an area of weakness, which produces personal sin. It also has an area of strength which produces human good. When Jesus Christ died on the Cross, the sins of the world were poured out on Him and judged, and human good was rejected. Human good was not judged on the Cross. Only sins were. Christ died for the sins of the world, not for the human good of the world. That's coming up later.

So, a believer in time, in stage 2, confesses his sin. When you confess it you simply name it. It doesn't mean to feel sorry for it. You may feel sorry for it, but there are some sins which you won't feel sorry for. **So, it's not a matter of feeling sorry. You just name it.** It doesn't mean to renounce it and say that you'll never do it again. If you don't grow up as a Christian, you *will* do it again, and again, and again. It may be the sin which so easily besets you and you'll never stop doing it. It doesn't mean to take a vow that you'll never do it again. Don't ever tell God that you'll never do that again, because He laughs.

The word, "confess," means simply to name it. That's all it means. It means to identify it. Why do you simply name the sin? Because that sin which you name today was already judged on the Cross in 30 A.D. That's trying to bring it down to a fine point. So, you name a sin and that sin you name has already gone to court. **That sin has already been judged and therefore, God is faithful and God is just to forgive you of that sin.** Faithful – He always does the same thing. His procedure is always the same. He's just based on the fact that the sin has already been judged, so He forgives you of that sin and He cleanses you from all unrighteousness.

All unrighteousnesses are the unknown sins in your life. You see, when Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, He was also judged for the unknown sins. Remember when Jesus Christ was on the Cross and He said, "*Father forgive them for they know NOT*

what they do." That's an unknown sin. **When you name a sin you know, then the unknown sins are cleansed on the basis of the known sins.** So, restoration must always be understood in the light of the old sin nature. Restoration is possible because the old sin nature, the sin part, has already been judged. Human good will be judged in the future.

4). This is the principle of the **mechanics** of restoration back to fellowship. The mechanics of restoration back to fellowship are actually two-fold. People want to know if 1 John 1:9 really works. Yes, it works! They say, "Well, I confess it, do it again, confess it, and do it again." It works, but this is the problem here. Under the mechanics of restoration back to fellowship we: 1. **Confess it**, 2. **We forget it**, and 3. **We isolate it**. That's the full mechanics.

1. **Confess it** means to confess the sin, 1 John, 1:9.

2. **Forget it** is Philippians 3:13, "*Forget those things which are behind.*"

3. **Isolate it** is Hebrews 12:15, "*Looking diligently lest any man fail of the GRACE of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*"

Let's take an illustration to see if I can clear up this point. You commit a sin and so here you confess it and you're forgiven for that sin. But because of the fact that you lived so long by your emotions dominating everything that you have a guilt complex about it. So, you haven't forgotten about it. See, God forgets when He forgives **immediately**. But, you keep on thinking about it under a guilt complex. **That guilt complex keeps you out of fellowship perpetually.**

If you have a guilt complex about a sin that you committed 10 years ago, then you're out of fellowship right now. **You see, the sin is not forgotten so the sin is not isolated.** The only way that you can isolate a sin is to try not to keep "lighting one sin on another." You know, the example is chain smokers. A chain smoker lights one cigarette on another. He never uses matches. When one cigarette

gets down a bit, then they light one from it and throw the old one away and then they light another one from this one, and they keep on smoking.

Well, we have a lot of chain sinners, by that I mean you confess a sin and you're forgiven for that sin and God blots it out. You have a guilt complex about it, or you have another mental attitude sin. You see, you may be bitter with regard to someone else involved in your particular sin. You're jealous, or maybe you're full of self-pity and as a result you didn't forget it and therefore you didn't isolate it and so you light one sin on another. We call that chain sinning.

So, the principle of forgetting it leads to the principle of isolating the sin. **Once you confess your sin, forget it and move on.** You have no right to go back over it or think about it. God never gives you that right. That sin is blotted out. That sin is past history. **Don't let any past sin become a basis for present failure.**

5). You have **free will**. The alternative to restoration back to fellowship is Hebrews 12:6, "*For whom the Lord loves He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receives.*" **Discipline.** This is an alternative. Divine discipline. The word "love" here takes in the fact that you have accepted Christ as your Saviour. God's righteousness and justice have been satisfied. In other words, you've passed the point of satisfaction.

God the Father has been satisfied at the Cross. Righteousness and justice are the holiness of God. God's righteousness was satisfied by the Person of Christ on the Cross. God's justice was satisfied by Him bearing our sins on the Cross. That's the doctrine of propitiation, which says the holiness of God is satisfied, or propitiated by the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Therefore, for believers on this Earth in time, God is free to love the believer without having recourse to His righteousness and justice and without being inconsistent with His other characteristics. Therefore, we call this the holiness bypass, because at the point of salvation, one of the

many things that happened to you is that you passed the point of propitiation.

Since we passed the point where God is satisfied, God is now free to love us under an entirely new system. He can love us without being inconsistent with His own holiness. This involves the concept of the holiness bypass and therefore in this discipline, **our discipline is based on love**. We **never** get what we earn or deserve. When it says in Hebrews 6, "*Whom the Lord loves He chastens, and skins alive every son,*" that's talking about believers. But He never disciplines us for what we earn or deserve. It's all based on love, our position. Therefore, God does not discipline out of His justice. God disciplines out of His love. "*Whom the Lord LOVES He chastens.*" **He says, if you're not disciplined, then you're not a child of His**. So, this is a holiness bypass which says God is free to love us without recourse to His justice, without any inconsistency involved therein.

6). There is **discouragement** to restoration back to fellowship. In Luke 15:11-32, **legalism** discourages people when they confess their sins and they're back in fellowship. **Legalism** comes along and says, "You can't just confess your sin and get back. You don't know what you've done." Remember the elder brother in Luke 15, of the story of the prodigal son? He was a legalist, the elder brother. The greatest discouragement in the world to restoration back to fellowship is **legalism**. People who do not understand GRACE restoration and say you couldn't possibly do that and be a Christian, and then confess it and be back in fellowship. That's Luke 15:11-32.

7). There is **assistance** in restoration. That's Galatians 6:1. There you can restore someone to fellowship. You can help someone. Remember this, you can only help someone else to get back into fellowship if you're in fellowship yourself. Galatians 6:1 says, "*He that is spiritual restore such a one.*" "Spiritual" means that you're in fellowship. That involves a forgiveness principle of Colossians 3:3. It also involves rewards. There are special rewards for believers helping other believers

to get back into fellowship. That's found in James 5:19, 20.

8). This is the **purpose** of restoration. The purpose of restoration back to fellowship is the **means of the filling of the Holy Spirit**. That's found in Proverbs 1:23. Restoration is the **only** way to be filled with the Spirit. Restoration is the **only** means of producing Divine Good. That's Galatians 5:22, 23.

9). This last principle is very important. There are **synonyms in the Bible** for restoration back to fellowship. One time, in Florida, a fellow told me that I make an emphasis out of 1 John 1:9, and if God thought it was so important, why there would be more passages on that concept. I said, one is not enough for you? He said, no. Well, here are some more, if you need repetition.

Here are some synonyms for restoration. There are at least seven or eight different ways in which the Bible presents, or expresses, restoration back to fellowship. There are many ways in which the filling of the Spirit is described.

For example, the filling of the Spirit is expressed by the phrase, "*Walk in the Spirit,*" that's one way. Then there's another one that says, "*Walk in the Light,*" which is the same thing expressed another way. Then there's another one, "*Walk worthy of your vocation.*" And then "*Walk in love,*" and "*Walk circum-spectly.*" These are all expressions of the filling of the Spirit. "*Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.*" That's another expression. Now we have some synonyms for restoration back to fellowship.

The most obvious, and the one that is stressed in our passage is "confess." They confessed their sins. That's 1 John 1:9. Then there's another one, self-judgment. That's 1 Corinthians 11:31, which says, "*If we judge ourselves, we should not be judged with the world.*" Then another one in Romans 6:13 and 12:1 the word, "yield" there in the aorist tense. "*Yield yourselves unto God.*" Then, "*Present your bodies,*" in Romans 12:1. Both of those words are the same. It's the same word

for “yield” as “present” and it refers to the restoration principle. There’s another one found in Hebrews 12:1, which says, “*Lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily besets you.*” That’s another way of saying it. In Hebrews 12:9 it says, “*Be in subjection to the Father of Lights.*” That’s another one for restoration. In Hebrews 12:12 it says, “*Lift up the hands that hang down.*” Hebrews 12:13 and Matthew 3:3 say, “*Make straight paths for your feet.*” All of those are synonyms for restoration back to fellowship, apart from confess.

We have more than just confess. We have the principle of judging ourselves, examining ourselves. We have all sorts of words like

“yield,” “*laying aside every weight,*” “*be in subjection to the Father of Lights,*” “*lift up the hands that hang down.*” People then lift up their hands and say “Praise God,” and they think that puts them back in fellowship, when that’s just an illustration. “*Make straight paths for your feet.*” They ought to walk a tow line down the aisle. These are just overt things to tell you what’s going on inside.

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