

A WALK, NOT A TRIP



Bringing Forth Life
Jeanette Sthamann

But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16 & 25

Sometimes a strange thing happens when people get "spiritual." It's as if their spiritual experience puts such a strain on them that they split in two. The upper half of their personality begins to float free and soar heavenward – this part of them is just burning with zeal for God.

- They come to fellowship with glory in their souls.
- They have the most marvelous insights into the truth of the Word.
- They have faith for healings, miracles, casting out of demons.
- They have a tremendous confidence in the testimony that pours forth from their own mouth.
- When they pray it's almost poetry.
- They have an insatiable appetite for "spiritual books", especially the really heavy books that get into the deep truths.
- They are strongly attracted to people who are spiritually as "advanced" as they are and generally prefer to fellowship where they don't have to wait around and listen to those who are spiritually slow.
- They like to be part of a prayer group, or a community, or a camp, where the restraints are off and you can "really worship."

But while all this spiritual excellence is going on, the lower half of the personality of these same people is sinking like a lump of lead in the Nile River.

While the upper half is floating heavenward, the lower half is sinking into the very things that Paul describes in Galatians as works of the flesh.

Who would ever guess that these ultra-spiritual people, who speak such marvelous words, who know such marvelous truths of God, pray such magnificent prayers, have lives which are thinking, imagining, speaking, and sometimes living in "fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like"?

The higher the upper half soars into the spiritual stratosphere, the lower the under half sinks into the works of the flesh.



Uncommitted
Krieg Barrie via Goodsalt

At bible studies and prayer meetings they're radiant, but at home they make the people who live with them taste a lot more Hell than Heaven.

Then one day, perhaps after months or years of living this split life, the upper half of their personality suddenly begins to falter. Like a wounded bird it flutters and falls and plunges down into the depths to rejoin its other half.

This is the story of Cain who appeared to be a spiritual man until the day his spiritual half fell and he slew his brother.

This is the story of King Saul, Judas, and countless others down to this day.

When Paul warns against the works of the flesh, he's talking to people inside the Body, warning that you can profess faith in Jesus Christ even while your down-to-earth life, your day-by-day life, your home life, produces nothing but bad fruit.

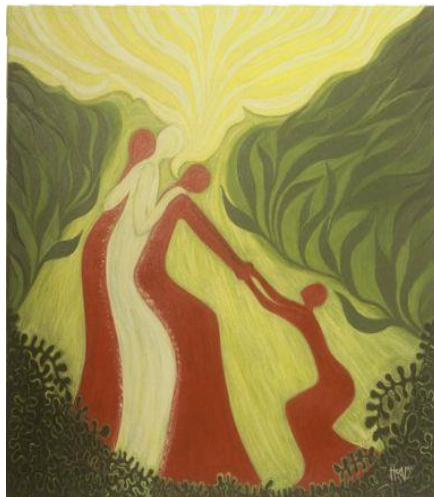
Walk by the Spirit! When Paul says walk, he means just that! The life you actually live when you move around on those two feet.

If we live in the Spirit let us also walk by the Spirit.

- Let's translate our spiritual life - our communion with Christ - into a life actually lived in this body.

- Let's take the atmosphere of Heaven our Lord breathes into us as we worship before His throne, and turn it into

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control



Love Mercy, Do Justice, Walk Humbly with Your God
Hanna Cheriyan Varghese

not just at prayer meetings, but at home,
and in our driving,
and in our daily work,
and in our day to day dealings.

There can be little doubt in the minds of those who have their eyes open in the slightest degree that the Lord Jesus is pouring out the Holy Spirit upon us – here as He is doing in many places these days.

What else is it that draws us together?

What else is it that causes us to swallow our racial pride, our institutional loyalties, or our anti-institutional bias, and come together, but the knowledge that God's Son is breathing life upon us as we gather in His name?

Jesus Christ is breathing on us as He breathed on the apostles of old.

- He is causing that mighty rushing wind to be heard and felt.
- He is anointing His saints with tongues of fire, giving them a door of utterance to proclaim the wonderful works of God.
- He is giving us power to stand against the kingdom of darkness.
- He is giving us authority to minister the life of God to others.

But this power of the Holy Spirit never splits us into halves – one half floating toward Heaven and the other sinking toward Hell.

The power of the Spirit of God is given to us to enable us to walk this earth as Jesus walked.

**Whoever says they abide in him
ought themselves also so to walk even as He walked.
John 2:6**

Walk by the Spirit means three things:

1. We let the Spirit lead us in our ordinary life

- Not in exotic adventures you'll be able to write a book about and have everybody trying to imitate in the "fellowship farthest out."
- Not in some spiritual balloon ride far above the maddening crowd.

You're not floating in the Spirit, you're walking in the Spirit!

As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

And in this age of grace, the only place the Spirit leads us is on this God-created earth. Through hardships, calamities, watchings, fastings.

Not above them – *through them!*

"I had such a wonderful time with the Lord last night I couldn't go to work this morning."

"I was so uplifted by the things of the Spirit I forgot to pay my light bill."

"Sorry about these peanut butter crackers for supper, but I was so deep in prayer I didn't have time to put the roast in the oven."

If you're walking by the Spirit of God,

- you'll get to work,
- you'll pay your light bill,
- you'll have a decent supper for your family.

2. By the Spirit we put to death the works of the flesh.

You don't just "reckon" these works of the flesh dead and then go right on doing them. By the life-giving power of the Spirit you destroy these things of death.

***Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh
with its passions and desires.***

Galatians 5:24

***If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will
live.***

Roman 8:13

This doesn't mean you quit eating and stop making love to your wife or husband. It means that fornication, impurity, licentiousness, strife, jealousy, anger, are put to death,

Stop thinking of yourself as some kind of special case;

... as if you're the only person in the world with twisted thoughts, and a weird imagination, and a vile temper. That's part of the sin-warped human nature we all share.

But now, by the power of the Spirit, we reject these things even as our Lord did. We die to them.

We crucify them.

The first thing the Spirit did with our Lord was to drive Him out into the wilderness to be tempted – so that He could crucify the flesh with its passions and desires.

Crucify the flesh!

Put off the old nature!

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, anger, wrath, malice, slander, foul talk.

Deny yourself.

This is not just for St. Francis of Assisi or Catherine of Sienna – this is for you and me!

One of the primary reasons why the Spirit of God is being poured out on us today is so that by His power we can destroy the works of the flesh in our own lives.

3. By the Spirit we bear the fruits of righteousness in ordinary life – even as our Lord did.

He didn't wait to forgive until He got back to Heaven, or until He was carried away in a state of ecstasy. He forgave when the weight of His body was pulling on the nails in His hands, when every breath He drew was torture, and the people who put Him there were right in front of Him, sneering and goading.

Our Lord manifested love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, when the pressure was on, when even His closest disciples were letting Him down. There was always time for a troubled widow, or a leper, or a prostitute, or a tax collector, or a dying thief.

And now we have His Spirit brooding over us, stirring within us, so that we can be that way too.

- If speaking in tongues will help us bear the fruits of the Spirit in ordinary life, then may we all speak in tongues – seriously, may we all speak in tongues.

- If prophesying will help us to bear the fruits of the Spirit in ordinary life, then may we all prophesy.

But if tongues and prophesy are going on in your upper half, while your lower half is loveless, joyless, restless, impatient, unkind, then it's very doubtful whether your inspiration is the Holy Spirit.

The best thing you can do is flee to the Cross of Jesus and cry for help.

"Lord, help me to conform my daily life to your will! Take control of my heart and mind as I walk through my house, as I pass through the door of the place where I work! Lord, help me!"

If Jesus heard the thief on the cross, He'll hear you.

Is there one of us who doesn't need to flee to the Cross? Is there one of us who doesn't need to cry for mercy and help to make our salvation real in our daily life?



At the Foot of the Cross Ira Thomas

May God help us all to draw near to His Son and be healed. May our split lives be joined together, not in Hell but at the foot of that Cross, this day.

May we open our hearts now and receive help to walk by the Spirit here on this earth until the trumpet blows.

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THE LAMB
WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN

