

Basic Faith Conversations:

3 – Depending On Your Relationship With God

How would you describe a life spent well?

In **John 10:10** Jesus said that one purpose in His life was to give us a full and meaningful life (abundant). His desire is for you to experience true fulfillment and become all that He created you to be.

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

John 10:10

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What does **Ephesians 2:10** indicate is another of God's desires for us as Christians?

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

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In what ways do we struggle to live life the way God designed?

It is impossible to live a life that is abundant and fully pleasing to God in our own strength, but God has provided the resources we need to live life the way He intended.

God's Spirit Gives You the Power to Live Life Fully

Read **John 14:15-17**.

If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

John 14:15-17

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When Jesus asked His followers to live a certain way out of love for Him, what did He promise to give them in order to help them do this?

Who has the Helper available to them, and who does not?

Jesus promised to give His followers God's Spirit to help them live as He designed because they would not be able to do it themselves. No matter how good our intentions are, we cannot fully love or follow God. But God solved this problem by placing His Spirit in our lives to direct us and give us the power to do all that He designed for us.

According to **Romans 8:11**, how does God give you life?

He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Romans 8:11

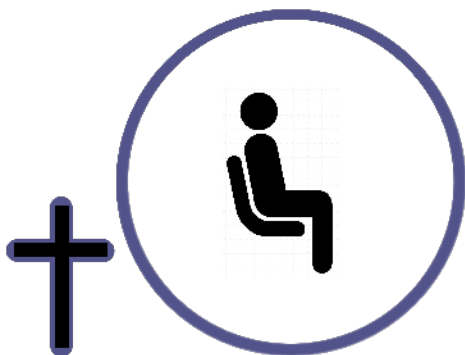
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If He has the power to raise Christ from the dead, and give you new life, is there anything in your life that He does not have the power to accomplish?

So, if we have the Helper, what do you think keeps us from experiencing that abundant life and power?

The Bible talks about three types of people:

Those that have not asked Jesus Christ into their lives – Do not have the Holy Spirit. They direct their own lives and rely on their own limited resources. Often this ends in frustration, hurt, or failure because they are sinful and will make wrong choices.



Christ outside the life and
self is in the control seat.

Those who have Christ in their lives and are being directed by Him – Are able to depend on God's resources by allowing God's Spirit to direct and give them the power to do what is right. When they willingly give up control of their lives to Christ and allow Him to direct them, they experience peace and fulfillment.



Christ's Spirit in control of life
and self following His direction.

Those Christians who are living as “fleshly” people – Are not submitting control of their lives to God. Sometimes Christians ignore God’s Spirit and willfully choose to direct their own lives as they did before Christ came into their lives. Their lives will be similar to those described in **Romans 8:5-8**.



Christ's Spirit in the life,
but self in the control seat.

For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 8:5-8

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As you consider the 3 types of people, who would you say controls your life?

God desires every Christian to be directed by God's Spirit. Read **Ephesians 5:18**. Believers are instructed to be filled with the Holy Spirit in contrast to being drunk with wine. When someone is drunk, alcohol controls his actions and words. In a similar way, when a Christian allows God's Spirit to be in full control of his life, the Holy Spirit working through him will produce godly actions, attitudes, and words.

And do not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18

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As a follower of Christ you have God's Spirit available to you, but you must make a choice of whether you will allow Him to direct your life and by faith believe that He give you the power to follow Him.

To be filled and controlled by God's Spirit is a choice involving:

- 🐦 Being in fellowship with God by confessing any known sin.

Read **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 John 1:9

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- 🐦 In response to God's **command**, sincerely desiring to be directed and given power by the Holy Spirit.

Read **Ephesians 5:18** (on the previous page.)

- 🐦 By faith believing God will fulfill your request and provide all the resources He has **promised**.

Read **1 John 5:14,15**.

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

1 John 5:14,15

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How do you know it is God's will for you to be filled with the Spirit?

How can you be sure He will fill you when you ask Him?

Would you like to ask God to fill you with His Spirit and direct your life?

If you would, you can express your desire to God with the following prayer:

“Dear God, I want a vital relationship with You where I depend on Your Spirit. I admit that I have been in control of my life. I now confess and turn from my sins and surrender the control of my life to You. Thank You for forgiving my sins. By faith I ask You to fill me with Your Spirit so I can be directed by You and given power to live for You. I pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen”

Dependence on God's Spirit for Daily Life

What are some positive changes you have tried to make in your life, but have experienced failure?

The ability to live the Christian life comes when you allow the Spirit to give you power.

Read **Ephesians 3:16**.

According to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being.

Ephesians 3:16

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In **John 15:5** Jesus used the image of a vine and branches that grow from it as a picture of the connection between Jesus (vine) and a Christian (branch). Just as the branch gets its life and nourishment and bears fruit **only** by being connected to the vine, so you get life and nourishment, and bear fruit only through your dependence on Christ's Spirit.

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

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As you depend on His Spirit to direct you, Jesus' character flows through you and you will experience what the Bible calls fruit of the Spirit. Some of this fruit is described in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

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What are some things God wants to produce in your life through His Spirit?

Why do you think God makes His infinite resources available to you?

According to **Galatians 5:16-17**, what challenge is there to living in the Spirit?

But I say walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Galatians 5:16-17

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Sometimes a Christian may realize he has taken control back from God as a result of focusing on fleshly things, choosing to sin, or not following the Holy Spirit's direction. If at any time you realize that you need to give control back to God because you have been directing your own life, you can practice “**spiritual breathing**.”

Exhale – Confess your sin of taking control from God and accept that God has completely forgiven you and wants to live through you. **1 John 1:9**.

Inhale – By faith ask God's Spirit to fill you and take control of your life again according to the command of **Ephesians 5:18** and the promise of **1 John 5:14-15**.

Summary Thoughts And Steps Forward

How will knowing this help you to live a life that is pleasing to God this week?

If this truth is an encouragement to you, with whom could you share it?

This week read a passage each day to learn more about how the Holy Spirit works in your life. Think about how that will help you and thank God for His provision for you.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

1 John 4:13-18

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“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

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"These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

John 14:25-27

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"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. . . When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

John 16:7, 13-15

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For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, . . . Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:14-16,26-27

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On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

John 7:37-39

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