

# “THE INWARD SPIRITUAL LIFE”

The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia S10A (Ref #31Rdg) 0808 21

It is so important in our daily walk with God to be sure our inward spiritual life is always guided by God through the work of Jesus Christ on Calvary's Cross. One of the greatest hindrances to a Christian life is a dependance on outward observances as a ground of merit in the presence of God.

There are times when Satan would like for us to think that it is something we may do that will commend us to God. If you would ask some denominational Christians what their hope for Heaven would be, they would reply, "I am trying to live a good life, I'm not hurting anyone, I pay my tithes and go to Church as often as I can."

That in itself has no ground of merit. Yes, we should be doing these things, but these are nothing more than outward commands. Satan always tries to get people into bondage to follow the outward life and lose sight of the inward life to follow Christ.

Some denominations have certain dress codes for worship but, it isn't how we dress on the outside to be right with God, because that would not change the heart on the inside. But of course, we do pray for God's Holy Spirit to be with us before each service begins, so we then, out of respect for God's presence, dress accordingly.

Even in the way we dress, we have the privilege of going to God in prayer, and asking for divine wisdom or spiritual enlightenment, so that we would dress properly in the house of God, and would set a right example for everyone, and especially for the younger generation, by appropriate attire when in the presence of the Holy Spirit at Church services.

Every act of our inward spiritual life is to be controlled by the power of God. We need to stop and consider if we are putting more thoughts to our outward thoughts and decisions than to our inward spiritual life.

Transferring from our outward self to a full dependance on the power of God concerning our inward life is what really matters with God. If our decision originates from our outward thoughts and there is no change in our heart, it does not profit us anything.

Perfect health is not the result of living according to the Word of God, but it is the result of Jesus' work on Calvary's Cross. But we are living according to the Word of God when we are living by faith in the Blood that Jesus shed for us, and it is there that we have our health

The New Testament says that the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise them up, and the sins they have committed shall be forgiven them. James 5:15

God furnishes all the merit, which is the Blood of His Son, and He also furnishes all the power through His Holy Spirit. There is nothing to be done on our part, not one thing apart from the power of God.

One good thing done apart from the power of God is more dangerous than an evil thing done apart from His power. If we do an evil thing, we know we are on the wrong track, but if we do a good thing, apart from the power of God, we think we are on the right track. Therefore, anything done apart from the power of God is a very dangerous form of the self-life.

We cannot attempt to live an overcoming life on our own, we need Christ enthroned in our hearts and have His strength and power working within us. We are to live an overcoming life through the Holy Spirit's power alone. Nothing else will work in any way.

Paul brings this out very clearly in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, "*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, (the original word for this is "Divine Love", the love that fills our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Without this Divine Love, we can do nothing.) "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, (or Divine Love) I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, (or Divine Love) it profiteth me nothing."*

All these would only be outward thoughts and desires if it wasn't done with Divine Love, and it would profit nothing. This is a great truth that Paul brought out and reveals how little our outward thoughts and desires really are without Divine Love.

Jesus also spoke about the inward spiritual life in the story of the branch and the vine in John 15:5, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*

When our inward spiritual life is truly connected to following Jesus, then we are a branch to the true Vine. A branch can do nothing when cut off from the vine.

All through Jesus' life, as well as in Paul's writings, great emphasis is mentioned on the inward spiritual life being controlled, inspired, and upheld by the power of God alone.

When Paul saw that the Galatians were slipping back into their old ways and depending on outward thoughts and ways, he told them they were being bewitched. They had received Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and were pardoned and cleansed of sin, and started to live a Christian life, but then turned back to living in their own strength obeying outward commands and laying aside the desire for the inward spiritual life.

Paul told them that keeping outward commands availed nothing and all our efforts should be placed on keeping our inward spiritual life right with God. Satan always likes to get people into bondage to outward commands and thoughts and lose sight of the inward spiritual life.

There are many organizations and religious groups who lay great stress on outward observances and still have that old carnal nature of self-ruling within. They completely lose sight of the importance of the inward spiritual life.

When our inward spiritual life is managed and controlled by God's Holy Spirit, our love for things of the world will fall away. Such things as the way we act, the way we speak and the way we dress will come naturally. We will lose that strong desire for the old outward desires of our old carnal nature.

We can never control these things until our inward spiritual life is fully controlled by God's Holy Spirit. It needs to be regulated from within, with the object to keep Christ enthroned in our hearts, by faith, and obey every directive that God has placed in His

Word. Then we will not only have found the ability to obey, but it will come naturally and be a delight to obey.

So, we need to be sure that our inward spiritual life is in-line with God's Will, the way we dress, the way we meet one another, the way we speak, the financial question, and everything else will take its course and come naturally, and will not be influenced by the outward life.

The same as the disciples, when they met the financial question according to God's will. After they received the Holy Spirit, it came naturally for them, they didn't consider it a great risk to obey God in this respect, because they did it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It was the condition of their inward spiritual life that made it a delight to obey God, to lay up their treasure in Heaven and trust Him fully for their daily supplies.

Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 4:8, "*But godliness is profitable unto all things,*" (when inspired by the inward spiritual life) *having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*"

We are to live a life of real faith in God, laying aside all sight and feeling, and take a scriptural stand that we are what those scriptures say we are. We need to keep this ever before us, meditate upon it and ask God to help us to understand it and take Him at His Word. We need to see ourselves as the Scriptures say we are and not as we see our condition nor how we may feel. We are to live a life of faith in God through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

We need to come before God and confess and forsake all sin, unbelief, and rebellion—if there is any. The moment we honestly acknowledge our true condition in God's presence, His Word says; "*He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*" (1 John 1:9)

The very moment we have confessed and forsaken all sin, we can claim and receive our full pardon and cleansing. We must see ourselves as a fully pardoned and cleansed person. Then, to surrender our life to God by presenting this body as a living sacrifice to God, for Him to take charge of our inward spiritual life and make us what we ought to be.

Paul tells us in Romans 12:1-2, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

When we allow God to take full control of our inward spiritual life, we will lose that desire to be conformed to this world and will present ourselves as a living sacrifice unto God. Then we are in a position to take the place that Jesus assigned to us in the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter of John. We are to be a branch of which He is the vine. We are united with Jesus Christ just as a branch is joined to the vine.

The only way that we can be a branch on the True Vine is to not conform to this world and then to count ourselves as dead indeed unto sin and living unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

That is what Paul tells us in Romans 6:11, *“Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Satan may try to get us away from these scriptures and try to get us to walk by sight and feeling and suggest that we are not a branch of the True Vine, Jesus Christ. But if we settle it to believe God, He will prove to us that His Word prevails over Satan.

We are to take this position and hold on to it under all circumstances and conditions. Then, God can make it easy to obey every directive in the New Testament by depending on the power of God for the spiritual strength and wisdom that we need.

Paul tells us how to do this in Colossians 3:17, *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”*

That is the true way to an overcoming Christian life, taking that scriptural stand of reckoning ourselves as dead indeed unto sin; and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Then whatever we do, we do it in full dependance upon God’s power alone to back it up and make it real, without sight or feeling.

If we have Jesus Christ dwelling within, guiding our inward spiritual life in full dependance upon His power and strength, we will have no trouble meeting things and people as His Word directs.

The Blood of Jesus Christ has fully provided this and His Word plainly declares that it is done, that God is on our side and will back up every scripture with His entire power.

God has given us exceeding great and precious promises, and the moment we pray and claim them as they direct, we are to see what they say is done. Then we are to get up and act in full dependance upon the power of God to make it real and to back up every effort that we have made.

The Blood has set us free from all sin, sorrow, sickness and trouble of every kind. God's Word says we are free the moment we have prayed, and the power of God, through the person of His Holy Spirit, is always at our side to guide us and help us to remember all these things and to enable us to act and react as His Word tells us.

That's what Jesus told us in John 14:25-26, *"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

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