

POWER: The Battle Between Spirit and Flesh

Dr. Gloria Walters

God the Holy Spirit: Third person of the Trinity

He gives us new life - Romans 8:10

He teaches us and reminds us of God's word - John 14:23-26

He convicts us of sin - John 16:7-8

He intercedes for us. - Romans 8:26-27

He helps us truly understand the mysteries of God and His word - 1 Cor 2:10-12

He guides us in all truth - John 16:13-15 (see also John 15:26)

He is given to all who believe in Christ - Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Cor 1:21-22

Obstacles to the POWER of the Holy Spirit in our lives:

1) Our Flesh is a Problem

Our sin nature is at war with the Holy Spirit within us.

Romans 7:18-23 18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. 19 I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. 20 But if I do what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. 21 I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. 22 I love God's law with all my heart. 23 But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me.

Romans 8:7-8 7 For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. 8 That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

Galatians 5:17-21 17 The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. 18 But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. 19 When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, 21 envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Good news: Our sinful nature may not want to cooperate, but if we choose to walk in the Spirit, it has to obey.

Gal 5: 22-25 22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. 25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.

Rom 8:9-13 9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) 10 And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. 12 Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. 13 For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live.

We are NOT controlled by our flesh because the finished work of Christ Jesus on the cross has freed us!

2) **We Don't Believe We Are Free (FRFR!)**

Romans 8:1-2 1 So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. 2 And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

John 8:31-36 31 Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. 32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." 33 "But we are descendants of Abraham," they said. "We have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean, 'You will be set free'?" 34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. 35 A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son is part of the family forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free."

3) **We're Fighting on the Wrong Battlefield**

Romans 8: 5-6 5 Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. 6 So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.

...BUT HOW?: Practical Steps to Help Us Walk in the Spirit

Think About What You Think About

"The battle begins not with the temptation to do something but with the the temptation to dwell on anything that conflicts with what is true." Charles Stanley

Colossians 3:2 Think about [set your mind on] the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

Philippians 4:8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise

"What we focus on, we drift toward." Charles Stanley

The Holy Spirit has a Weapon!

Ephesians 6:17

Put on salvation as your helmet, *and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*