

**Sunday, May 14, 2026 -THE POWER THE LAW
COULD NEVER GIVE-Pastor John Henry Raskin**

1. The Law Reveals — The Spirit Transforms

- The Law was holy and good, but it could not save or change us
- It exposed our sin and pointed us to Christ
- God promised something greater:
 - A new heart
 - His Spirit within us

2. You Are the Temple of the Holy Spirit

"Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit... you are not your own." (1 Cor. 6:19–20)

- Every believer is indwelt by the Spirit
- This is not optional—it is what it means to be born again
- God no longer dwells in a building—He dwells in His people

3. What the Spirit Does in Us

- Fulfills what the Law demanded from the inside out
- Produces Godly character—not by effort, but by life

The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23)

- **Love (the foundation)**
- Joy – love rejoicing
- Peace – love resting
- **Patience – love enduring**
- **Kindness – love acting**
- **Goodness – love choosing right**
- **Faithfulness – love keeping its word**
- **Gentleness – love handling with care**
- **Self-control – love resisting harm**

The Law demanded these things—but the Spirit produces them.

4. Walking in the Spirit

"Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:16)

"What the law could not do... God did... that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us... according to the Spirit." (Romans 8:3)

Daily Dependence

- **Step-by-step, everyday living with God**

Continual Filling

- **"Keep on being filled" with the Spirit**
- **Through:**
 - Prayer
 - Scripture
 - Worship
 - Repentance
 - Fellowship

A Renewed Mind

- Set your mind on spiritual things
- God's Word shapes your heart and desires

Active Obedience

- **"By the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body"**
- **Say no to sin, repent quickly, rely on His strength**

Staying in Step

- Be attentive to His leading each day

5. The Big Picture

- The Law shows the need
- The Cross provides the solution
- The Spirit supplies the power

God is now writing His law on our hearts, not tablets of stone

6. When You Struggle

- Don't try harder—draw closer
- Return to:
 - The Spirit
 - The Word
 - Confession and grace

"He who has begun a good work in you will complete it." (Phil. 1)

The Christian life is not about striving to meet God's standard, it is about God's Spirit transforming you from within into the person He calls you to be.

WRITTEN ON THE HEART – PART THREE

THE POWER THAT THE LAW COULD NEVER GIVE

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today, we conclude our series Written on the Heart.

We have covered a lot of ground over the past two weeks.

In Part 1, we saw that while the Law of Moses was a holy gift from God to His beloved creation mankind,

its purpose was never to save us and it had no power to change us.

Its purpose was to reveal our sin , to show us our need for a Savior, and to point us to Jesus Christ.

In Part 2, we saw that God, primarily through the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Joel made an extraordinary promise: that He would one day do something radically new.

He would not give His people better rules. He would give them a new heart. He would write His law on that heart.

And He would put His own Spirit within them, causing them to walk in His ways.

Today, in Part 3, we will bring everything together.

We will look at the Holy Spirit who now dwells within every born-again believer, and we will ask the questions that will put this series into practical perspective:

How does the Spirit accomplish what the Law never could?

And what does this Spirit-filled life actually look like?

Let's start with a statement that should absolutely stagger us.

Paul writes to the Corinthian church... a deeply flawed, struggling, sometimes sinful group of Christians, and says this:

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Paul says that your body is a temple. A holy temple that contains God's Holy Spirit.

The same Spirit who hovered over the waters at creation.

The same Spirit who filled the tabernacle in the wilderness.

The same Spirit who raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

That Spirit of God is living inside of you, right now, if you are a born-again believer.

In the Old Testament, the Presence of God dwelt in a specific place: ...first in the tabernacle which the Israelites carried with them on their journeys through the desert, and then in the temple at Jerusalem, both the one built by Solomon that was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., and later in the one that was rebuilt by the returning Jews 70 years later and expanded by Herod the Great and that still stood in the time of Jesus.

In the Temple at Jerusalem, a thick curtain 60 feet tall separated the Holy of Holies, where God's Presence actually resided, from the rest of the temple.

Common people could not so much as enter the Temple unless they were ritually cleansed, let alone approach His Presence.

Only the High Priest, once a year, on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, could enter the most holy place and even then only after elaborate preparations and the offering of a blood sacrifice.

But the moment that Jesus died on the cross, Matthew's Gospel records that the curtain that separated the Holy of Holies was torn in two... from top to bottom.

This was God declaring: "By the ultimate sacrifice of My Son, the barrier to My Presence is removed."

Now, every person who puts their faith in Christ is the dwelling place of God by His Spirit.

This indwelling of His Spirit is not something that some Christians have and others don't. It is not an optional upgrade.

It is what it means to be born again.

Jesus explained this to the Pharisee Nicodemus:

John 3:6 (NKJV)

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

To be born again is to be born of the Spirit.

The moment a person genuinely repents of their sin and trusts in Jesus Christ as Lord, they are now "in Christ".

The Holy Spirit awakens their spirit and gives them a new nature, essentially a new birth.

A new heart.

They become spiritually alive in a way that they were not before. They become what the Apostle Paul calls a "new creation".

Paul states plainly that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the possession of all people who are "born again" in Christ.

Romans 8:9 (NKJV)

But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Every true believer has the Spirit. The Spirit's Presence is the mark of belonging to Christ.

So, if the Spirit is now living inside us, what is He doing there?

Remember Romans 8:3–4 from Part 1?

Let's revisit it now with fresh eyes:

Romans 8:3–4 (NKJV)

"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

This is one of the most important verses in the New Testament.

The righteous requirement of the Law, meaning everything the Law demanded of the people He created, is fulfilled in us, when we believe in Jesus.

Not fulfilled by us in our own strength.

But in us, by the Holy Spirit, as we walk with Him.

That phrase 'the righteous requirement of the law' is singular and generic in the Greek. The word in Greek is "Dichaioma".

It refers to the overall, total demand of the Law. All of it.

Holiness, love, justice, faithfulness.

Everything the Law ever demanded of God's people, the Spirit is at work producing within us.

But how does the Spirit accomplish this?

Paul gives us a beautiful picture in Galatians 5. You are likely very familiar with it.

He describes it as fruit.

Not works, not achievements, not things we manufacture by effort, but fruit. Something that grows naturally when the conditions are right.

Galatians 5:22-23 (NKJV)

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."

Notice two things.

First: Paul says the fruit of the Spirit is love.

I want us now to look at everything else in that list as an expression of love in different situations.

Joy is love rejoicing.

Peace is love resting.

Longsuffering (patience) is love enduring.

Kindness is love acting.

Goodness is love choosing what is right.

Faithfulness is love keeping its word.

Gentleness is love handling others with care.

Self-control is love resisting any temptation to do something that would harm yourself or others.

Second: Paul says 'against such there is no law.'

Here Paul is completing the circle.

The Law demanded all of these things.

How do you love your neighbor?

Be kind. Be faithful. Keep your promises.

The whole Law, Jesus said, hangs on love. But while the Law could not produce love, the Spirit can... and He does.

A fruit tree does not strain to produce apples.

It does not sit up at night worrying about whether it will manage to grow fruit in the morning.

It doesn't produce fruit because that is its job, it produces fruit because of what it is... because it is connected to its roots, drawing water and nutrients, healthy and alive.

The believer who is connected to the Spirit, walking with the Spirit, abiding in Christ, produces the fruit of the Spirit in the same natural, organic way. Not by straining. By abiding.

Paul contrasts two ways of living in Romans 8. The 'mind of the flesh' and the 'mind of the Spirit':

Romans 8:5-6 (NKJV)

"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, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Life and peace. That is what the Spirit brings.

Not just external compliance with God's commands, but an internal transformation that produces genuine, heartfelt, joyful obedience.

The person trying to obey God through willpower and law-keeping experiences the Law as a burden, a crushing weight of expectation they can never quite meet.

The person walking in the Spirit experiences God's commands as a description of who they are becoming.

Then the Spirit's supernatural work makes the keeping of those commands increasingly natural.

Jesus said this in the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 5:17 (NKJV)

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

And now, through His Spirit in us, Christ continues that fulfillment. God always desired people who would love Him with all their heart and would love their neighbors as themselves.

The intention of the Law was to produce a community of justice, mercy, faithfulness, and love... if such were possible.

But as we have seen, the Law only pointed out the deep flaws in people who were given the freedom to choose and who chose poorly, leading us to see the need to choose well.

To choose God.

To choose Jesus.

The Law always pointed to a life that reflected the character of God Himself.

The Holy Spirit is the power that produces that life in us from the inside out.

So, what should be our response?

Paul gives us a command in Galatians 5:16 that is both simple and profound:

Galatians 5:16 (NKJV)

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

The Greek word that Paul uses for 'Walk' in this scripture is "peripateo".

"Peripateo" describes ordinary, everyday movement. It literally means "walking around".

Not a dramatic experience, not an exotic spiritual discipline. Just living your everyday life.

So here, walking in the Spirit means walking... one step at a time, day by day, in the direction the Spirit is leading.

So, what does it mean, practically, to walk in the Spirit?

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) - And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit."

This command by the Apostle Paul is not so much about drinking as it is about how and with what we are to be filled and fulfilled in our lives.

The command to 'be filled with the Spirit' is in the present tense.

It literally means 'keep on being filled.'

Like a drunk will keep on filling himself with wine, living for the next drink, we are to be consumed with and consuming the Holy Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit is a continuous, ongoing, daily reality, not a once-for-all experience.

We are filled with the Spirit as we open ourselves to His work through prayer, through the Word, through worship, through repentance of ongoing sin, and through regular fellowship with God's people.

Romans 8:5 - 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, the things of the Spirit.

The battle begins in your mind.

What do you feed your mind?

What do you meditate on?

What takes up the majority of your mental and emotional energy?

The Spirit fills you through the Word of God.

Psalms 119:11

Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You!

Reading the Scriptures, meditating on them, memorizing them... this is how the Spirit renews the mind and transforms the desires of the heart.

Romans 8:13 (NKJV)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Here is an important balance. Walking in the Spirit is not passive.

Paul says: 'by the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body.'

The Spirit is the power of God in us to do this. But it requires our active participation.

We make choices. We say no to the flesh.

We cut off temptation before it takes root. We repent quickly when we fail. And we do all of this 'by the Spirit', leaning on His strength, not our own.

It is also crucial that we keep in step with the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25 (NKJV)

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

The word for 'walk' here is a different Greek word from verse 16. It is "stoicheo".

"Stoicheo" means to walk in line, to follow in step, like soldiers marching in formation.

The idea is to be intentionally attentive to where the Spirit is leading you, with a willingness to go there.

It is a life of prayerful attentiveness.

'Lord, where are You leading me today?

"Lord, what are You showing me?

"Lord, what are You asking of me right now?'

These are the questions of a disciple who is walking in step with the Spirit.

Let me draw all three weeks of this series together into one picture for you.

God gave His people the Law. The Law was holy, just, and good... a perfect expression of God's own character. 'Be holy, for I am holy', He said.

But the Law was written on stone, outside the people, not inside them. And the human heart, corrupted by sin, could not keep it.

The Law did what it was designed to do: it revealed the sin, it showed the need, it pointed forward to Christ.

Like a schoolmaster, it delivered its students to the Teacher.

Jesus came and fulfilled the Law as the perfect Israelite, every demand, every requirement, every sacrifice.

He lived the righteous life that the Law required.

He paid the penalty for every violation.

And then He established the New Covenant, the covenant the prophets had prophesied... and poured out His Spirit on all who would believe.

Now the Spirit lives inside every born-again believer.

And here is the beauty of it: the same holiness that was once written on stone... outside of us, accusing us, showing us how far we fell short...

...is now being written on our hearts by the Spirit of God so that we can produce beautiful fruit.

The righteous requirement of the Law is now being fulfilled in us.

Not because we are trying harder. But because God is doing from the inside what the Law could never do from the outside.

The circle is complete. The plan was always this. The Law was never the destination — it was only the road that led to it.

If you are struggling today... if you feel like you are failing to live a Godly life, if you feel like the demands of God are crushing you — please hear this:

The solution is not to try harder, and it is certainly not to become more legalistic, judging others to make yourself feel better.

The solution is to go deeper into the Spirit.

To come back to the Word.

To confess your sins and receive fresh grace.

To ask God to fill you again.

The Spirit has not given up on you. He is still at work. He will complete what He started.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)

Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

He who has begun a good work in you will complete it.

The Law started the story by showing us our need for a Savior, our need for a relationship with God.

The cross purchased the solution.

The Spirit is the power to live it out.

And one day — when we see Jesus face to face — the Law will truly be perfectly, completely, gloriously written on every believer's heart.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

Let's pray...