

Sabbath School Today **With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

The Gospel in Galatians **Lesson 12: Living by the Spirit**

If you're going to climb Mount Everest you need a guide. If this movement is to stand victorious on Mount Zion it needs the latter rain of the Holy Spirit (Rev. 14:1). To follow the Lamb wherever He goes without guile on their lips and stand without fault, the 144,000 will have overcome even as He overcame in tempted "sinful flesh" (Rev. 14:4, 5; 3:21; Rom. 8:3). These are individuals who reflect the *agape*-love of Jesus. Although they are not equal to the Pattern, yet as a body they perfectly identify with the Crucified One.

Sinless living in sinful flesh is a precious "good news" morsel of truth identified by the 1888 message. It would be bad news indeed, if in the Great Controversy Satan has invented something that the gospel of Jesus Christ cannot overcome. If the power of the gospel cannot overcome sin in our flesh, then Jesus will be eternally ashamed and defeated before the universe. Therefore, Jesus needs a "last generation" who demonstrate "the power of God unto salvation" *from* sin and not *in* sin (Rom. 1:16).

God's everlasting covenant promise to Abraham is "the blessing." This involves "the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:14).

You are invited to go on a "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). "What our human nature ["flesh," KJV] wants is opposed to what the [Holy] Spirit wants, and what the [Holy] Spirit wants is opposed to what our human nature ["flesh"] wants. These two are enemies, and this means that you cannot do what you want to do" (Gal. 5:17, *Good News Bible*). What are the things you cannot do? Are they bad things or good things?

There are many Christians who teach that you cannot do the good things you want to do because of this constant "enmity" of the flesh against the Holy Spirit. So they feel doomed to endless defeat, and sincerely believe the Bible agrees with them. "My craving is so great I can't help giving in! The 'flesh' is master of my life!" They have Galatians 5:17 backwards.

Who is stronger, "the flesh" or the Spirit? If "the flesh" is stronger, that's really bad news; but if the Spirit is stronger, that's good news. If the great power of the Holy Spirit and all of heaven is in that Spirit, and He's striving against your sinful flesh, and still you cannot do the good things you'd like to do, can you think of any news that would be worse than that?

The 1888 message idea is: you go for a walk with the Holy Spirit and let Him hold you by the hand which He has promised to do. You let Him, even though the battle is raging

in your heart, and your sinful flesh is constantly tempting you to do or say evil things. You can't do or say evil things because the Holy Spirit is stronger than the flesh.

This does not mean that you have no part in the battle. Your part is to choose to say "No!" to the temptation (Titus 2:11). [1] God has given us the power of choice; the Holy Spirit is forbidden to control you without your consent! When you make the choice, then you invite the Holy Spirit to demonstrate that He is stronger than your sinful flesh. And God is free to work!

When the mighty Holy Spirit guides your life, you are "under grace"-motivation which is the opposite of being "under the law"-motivation (Gal. 5:18; Rom. 6:14). With either motivation you are under an obligation. The old covenant "under the law"-motivation is a constant tension and conflict with the law. It is faith motivated by the fear of punishment and the hope of reward. It is a motivation that appears to comply with the law outwardly, but on the inside there is rebellion.

God did us a favor when He gave us the Apostle Paul who was both a brilliant man and an honest humble man, which is a rare combination. Paul describes what our "flesh" is like in Galatians 5:19-21. God sent "His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Jesus came right into the cesspool of our life. He was tempted in all points like we are, yet without sin (Heb. 4:15).

Faith, which is "under grace"-motivation, "sees" what Paul is talking about when he uplifts and honors the sacrifice of Christ (Gal. 4:1). Having fully identified Himself with you, you are invited to fully identify with Christ (Gal. 2:20).

To "walk in the Spirit" is to bear "the fruit of the Spirit [which] is love [*agape*]" (Gal. 5:22). *Agape* is totally alien to "the flesh" and is an import from our Husband High Priest in the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary. This means we have not one-percent of inherent righteousness. Righteousness is ours by faith through Holy Spirit.

Agape, which is the "fulfilling of the law," comes by faith directed to its source in our day of atonement (Rom. 13:10). That source is our healing Psychiatrist whose office is set up in the holiest of all.

The second advent movement was rooted in a restoration of the love of God. It is the climax of a sequence of divinely led reformatory movements to restore the gospel of Jesus Christ and prepare a Bride for translation and the coming of her Groom.

Christ opened to view the source of her love by following their High Priest in through the open door of the Most Holy of the heavenly sanctuary (see Rev. 3:7). "Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, 'My Father, give us Thy Spirit.' Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace." [2] The 1844 Advent people were a Spirit-led, *agape* motivated, charismatic movement. It was to restore the meaning of *agape* in

the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus through its life, teaching and evangelism (see Rev. 14:12).

The fruit of the Spirit is given by Jesus in His capacity as our Priest in the Most Holy. The true second Pentecostal movement of the latter rain is those who by faith follow Him there. The movement will finish with a great manifestation of signs and wonders than on the day of Pentecost. [3]

Jesus reveals a unique understanding of justification by faith from the holiest. The 1888 message was indeed “special,” a further development of justification by faith parallel to and consistent with the unique Adventist idea of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. It was “the beginning” of the message of Revelation 18 and thus initial “showers from heaven of the latter rain.” [4]

Since the true Spirit of God only comes from our High Priest in the Most Holy and thus far we have not impressed upon other Christians the importance of the sanctuary truth, it motivates us to study the 1888 message so that we can share it with them in a convincing manner.

—Paul E. Penno

Endnotes:

[1] Titus 2:11, 12 in the *New International Version* is very clear: “The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.”

[2] Ellen G. White, *Early Writings*, p. 55.

[3] “Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. By thousands of voices, all over the earth, the warning will be given. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers” (Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 612).

[4] *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 1478.

Notes:

Pastor Paul Penno’s video of this lesson is on the Internet at:

<https://youtu.be/z2Av0fc8Qs8>

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