

How to say **NO** to a **STUBBORN** Habit

Lesson 6: The Power of the Holy Spirit

“He became resident with the express purpose of becoming president”

I. How do we experience victory?

- A. The answer lies in the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. He strengthens us with God’s power.
 - b. He satisfies our spiritual thirst (Jn. 7:37-39).
- B. The Spirit is given to every believer (Rom. 8:9, 1 Cor. 6:19).
 - a. There is no need for striving, anxiety, or feelings of unworthiness to receive Him.
 - b. He wants to quench our thirst, but His control of our lives is never automatic.

II. How do we receive the Spirit’s power?

- A. The Holy Spirit is not given to those who have it all together; He is given to enable us to get it together spiritually.
- B. Notice the sequence that Galatians 5:16 describes. If we walk in the Spirit (first), we will not fulfill the desires of the flesh.
 - a. Christians, too often, don’t feel that they are good enough to walk in the Spirit, but refusing to walk in the Spirit is like refusing to take the medicine until you get well and feel worthy of it.
 - b. Medicine is given to the sick to enable healing. Likewise, the Spirit is given to us to enable us to break sin’s power.
 - c. God will not give salvation based upon our works, behavior, or merit, and He will not give the Spirit based on these things either.
 - d. The Spirit’s presence in our lives is not just a window dressing, but He indwells us so that He may control us.
 - e. In order to be a candidate for the Spirit’s help, we do not need to be super-saints, rather we need to be thirsty sinners.

III. Life in the Spirit

- A. There is a direct connection between walking in the Spirit and breaking your sinful habit.
- B. To those who are struggling with addiction of any kind (including that stubborn sin habit), the Bible offers a different master: be controlled by the Spirit (Eph. 5:18).
- C. The Spirit’s control replaces sin’s control, and the Spirit’s power is greater than the power of your sin.
- D. How, then, do we get the Spirit’s help in the battle against our sin habits?
 - a. Begin by confessing your sin and receiving God’s forgiveness (1 John 1:9).

- b. Remember that the Holy Spirit desires to work in you. He does not need to be coaxed into the driver’s seat.
 - i. He became resident with the express purpose of becoming president.
- c. Believe in His power to work in you. Do not expect His power or help if you are full of unbelief.
- d. Remember that the Spirit’s filling is not a sensation. Demanding that He bring waves of love, a sense of peace, or the ability to speak in a strange language is walking by sight instead of faith (asking for a sign in order that we may believe – John 6:29-30).
 - i. God delights that we believe in Him without demanding emotional crutches.
 - ii. Daily receive and live in the Spirit’s power apart from your feelings.

IV. Living by praise

- A. You will be greatly helped in accepting the Spirit’s control if you learn the power of praise (Ps. 50:23, 1 Thes. 5:18).
- B. Avoid these two common errors concerning praise.
 - a. Praise God only for the good things He gives.
 - b. Praise God only when you feel like it.
 - i. “Everything” means all things pleasant or painful.
 - ii. Thankfulness is not an emotion; rather it is an intelligent response of gratitude to God based on His Word. It is your determination to be obedient.
 - iii. Make praise a way of life and a daily habit (Ps. 34:1).

Questions for thought and discussion

1. Why do you think that we often discount (overlook) the ministry of the Spirit in our life in order to gain victory over our sin?
2. Why do you think that the Spirit’s control of our lives is not automatic?
3. What are some reasons that we resist the Spirit and refuse to have His help?
4. Why do we try harder to be “super-saints” without the help of God’s Spirit instead of thirsty sinners with the help of God’s Spirit?
5. How does the analogy of “being under the influence” in Ephesians 5:18 help us understand the Spirit’s place and working in our lives?
6. Why are we comfortable having the Spirit as resident in us but not president of us?
7. Why does our unbelief, or demand for certain feelings/signs limit the Spirit’s working in our lives?
8. Discuss the place and function of praise in our battle with sin.