

KEENER THOUGHTS

December, 2011

SHORT BIBLE PHRASES OF GREAT IMPORTANCE # 13 IN SERIES

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. (Rom. 8:1-8)

It seems to me that the biblical phrase which precisely equals the title of this article appears only four times in Scripture. However, the places in the Scriptures where the same exhortation, admonition, or promises which are relevant to this phrase, speak to us dozens, if not hundreds of times. Nothing carries greater promise for the believer, than the state and conduct of, "Walking in The Spirit." It is one of the simplest, yet one of the most mysterious, actions, or manners of life, any person can be involved in. For every wonderful promise we find in the Old Testament, concerning the blessings that come from walking in the Law of The Lord, there is, in the New Testament, a much greater blessing that comes from "Walking in the Spirit." Indeed, it is relevant to a better covenant. (Heb. 8:6) Please be assured though that walking in the Spirit is not just a religious activity, or an endeavor to pursue a certain

manner of life, it is the manner and source of life that is wrought in the believer by the miraculous activity of God, referred to by our Lord as being one who is "Born again." (Joh. 3:3-6) *"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and **that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**"*

Before you try to deal with the meaning of being "Born of the Spirit is spirit" remember that **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh,"** (Joh. 3:6-a) and that both you I were thus born. Therefore, while this life endures, flesh is at least in one sense, what we are. Paul reminds us of this in (Rom. 7:18) *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."* He also tells us in 1Co. 2:14 *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* If we have, even a working knowledge of our Bibles, we can see that we are in the flesh, and at the same time, if we are in Christ, we have His Spirit, that is the Spirit of God, The Holy Spirit in us, thus we are most certainly in the Spirit. Rom 8:9 Shocks us to an humble sobriety with these words. *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* If we did not daily experience this conflict, this wonderful truth might seem to us to be an impossible contradiction, but I think not. I am sure Paul is saying, *"Ye are not in the flesh **only**, as is the unregenerate, but also in the Spirit, if the Spirit of God dwell in you."* This state of being, is what I experience in my own life continually. My flesh is not eradicated by any means. It is still very much alive, and must be daily mortified. At the same time the Spirit of God compulsively dwells in me, as surely as does the breath of life. In this state I feel constantly that, *"... the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye (I) cannot do the things that ye (I) would."*

Whatever else that says, it says that because of the presence of God's Spirit in me, I cannot fulfill the lusts of the flesh to the extent that temptation beacons. And at the same time, because of the weakness of the flesh, I cannot fulfill the will of God to the extent that the Spirit leads me. *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."* (Rom. 7:24-25)

In this truth there is declaration of both an involuntary and a voluntary lifestyle. In the above paragraphs, I have described the involuntary aspects of the Christian's lifestyle. That is the constraint from the fleshly and the compulsion toward the spiritual, described in Gal. 5:17, *"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* However, we should not forget that we are admonished thus, *"... Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."* This is admonition to a positive and proper activity, which walk is to prevent fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. Remember that those good things which should be in our lives, are listed in Gal. 5: 22-23. That fruit is, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: The fruit of the Spirit, is a list of attributes that will not usually flow out of, or operate within, the life of a careless Christian. We are given the responsibility to **Walk in the Spirit.**

Let me rise up each day, thanking God that I am in the Spirit, and that He is in me. Lord help me to crucify the flesh, and to pursue holiness in the fear of God. *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."* (2 Cor. 7:1)

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