

Walking in the Spirit—Continued from page 4

in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:15-24). Paul is making it crystal clear that it is absolutely impossible to live right, do right, think right, and speak right by walking in the flesh.

Then Paul, in Romans 8, emphatically declares that by walking in the Spirit we can and will live a life of righteousness and holiness and sanctification. Paul states, "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" (Romans 8:1-5).

No less than seven times in two chapters Jesus Christ, gives us exceeding and great promises to "him that overcometh" (Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:26, 3:5, 3:12, 3:21). These promises include: access to the tree of life, escape from the second death, power over the nations, access to the Father's throne, etc. Jesus concludes with the promise, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7). Everything entailed in the inheritance of "all things" no man knoweth, and in fact, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Heaven is simply beyond our wildest imaginations and fondest dreams! Again, we must understand that these eternal promises will be given *only* to "him that overcometh." It is those walking in the Spirit who will be able to overcome the world, the flesh, and Satan.

Walking in the Spirit is not a mysterious, bizarre, aloof kind of behavior that draws unnecessary attention to oneself or serves as a distraction to those we are trying to reach. The great apostle Paul who was caught up into the third heaven and saw things in the Spirit that could not be uttered, could also make tents in the heat of the day, and all the while be walking in the Spirit. Walking in the Spirit is a daily walk. It is exhibiting the nature of Jesus and the fruit of the Spirit. It is having a consistent prayer life. It is loving, learning, and living the Word. It is seeking wise and godly counsel. Ultimately, walking in the Spirit is the acknowledgement that I have the Holy Ghost power to resist the devil, to flee temptation, to talk right, to think right, to do right, and to be a witness for Him.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25).

Take The High Road—E. W. Wheeler

As Israel traveled from Egypt to Canaan, they passed the land of Edom as recorded in Numbers 20:14-19. Being descendants of Esau, the Edomites were blood relatives of Israel, but would not permit Israel to pass through the land of Edom. Israel promised to stay on the king's highway; avoiding all the fields and vineyards; promising to pay for any water consumed. Since the king's highway had been developed and maintained for the passage of armies, Israel's request was appropriate.

This implacable animosity between Israel and Edom dated back to the time Jacob received the blessing instead of Esau, so Edom was not cooperative. These pent-up feelings were not mollified when Israel reminded them of their common ancestry, nor did it help when Israel recounted their tyrannical abuse by the Egyptians. Neither common ancestry nor sympathy softened the implacable stubbornness of the Edomites. Even the fact that Israel had the favor of God did not persuade these hopelessly obstinate people. In fact, these blessings may have actually intensified Edom's animosity.

It is quite easy to decide how human relations should be, especially in the religious sphere, but not so easy to cope with the realities that often bring stress on issues of fellowship. Like Israel who was anxious to enjoy the shortest route to their new home, people are often given unnecessary inconveniences by those who share a common spiritual ancestry. We do not always know what the source of animosity is and often cannot understand why they are not moved by the fact that those they disparage actually have God's favor.

Ideally, all people of a similar belief would agree to work together; to enjoy fellowship or at least receive mutual respect. Realistically, this is not always the case. To force fellowship or cooperation is counter-productive. To grumble and squabble is disastrous and sinful.

Romans 12:16, If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

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Take The High Road—Continued from page 1

The apostle Paul gave sound advice. The judicious admonition to earnestly strive for peace should especially apply to those of a common spiritual ancestry. A peaceful attitude is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). A peaceable spirit is associated with holiness which is essential to salvation (Hebrews 12:14). Strife is a factor in opening the door to so much evil, while a peaceable spirit reflects God's nature (James 3:16-18). Civility is a Christian virtue (1 Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:13-16; Philippians 5:3-5).

Although the Edomites were ready for war, Israel took the "high road"; they took the longer, more difficult route, opting for the blessings of peace instead of the rancorous and ruinous consequences of war with their relatives. Israel did not lack for sworn enemies, and when they were obedient to God, they were successful in battle. For each minister, there will be plenty of opportunities for a bitter and harrowing fight; many situations will demand a desperate fight, so, as much as possible, avoid fighting with your spiritual ancestry, no matter how far removed that ancestry is. Choose your battles wisely and take the "high road," which can often be longer; which is often inequitable and inconvenient, but still the better, more civil way. Save your battles and only fight against God's enemies so you can have God's favor in the fight. Stand unflinchingly for truth; for righteousness; for your principled convictions, but distinguish between fighting and standing. Sometimes we just need to agree to disagree without being disagreeable. Take the "high road." Someday you will be glad you did.

Mission Statement

Since our first publication in the early eighties, our mission has been to provide "doctrine and instruction in righteousness" to the churches in the Philippines (2 Timothy 3:16). By request, we are expanding our circulation, trusting that God will bless and use it for the benefit of His kingdom.



H. T. Sell contends that, "When Christianity was proclaimed," that there were three parties that arose: "(1) There were the strong advocates of the old order of things, who put forth every effort to preserve it. (2) There were the believers and promoters of the new faith and way, who could see no good in the old. (3) There were those who strove to mix the old with the new."^{*}

Unfortunately, they are not the only ones trying to mix the old with the new. Others, have glorified culture and tradition at the expense of selling God's culture short. For the most part, certain aspects of culture have been a spiritual detriment to those that cannot seem to live without them. They may keep you close to your roots, but they do not get you closer to God.

Christological issues, or the subject of the dual nature of Christ, soon became hotly contested and its theological points confusing to follow. When one side over-emphasized one aspect of His nature, it obviously compromised the other aspect of His nature. The danger is not that some did not believe that Jesus Christ was both God and man. But it became a question of degrees. To what degree or extent was He a man? And to what degree was He God?

It would be very difficult to debate with those who have over-emphasized a certain aspect of His nature, because they have not totally denied the under-emphasized aspect. They just have reduced it. They increased the importance in one area, while diminishing and limiting the other.

What should we emphasize today? Obviously, we want to emphasize those areas of doctrine that are essential to salvation. But what happens when we promote doctrines or ideas that are not essential to salvation? And what is the end result? On points of doctrine, what happens if we major on minor issues? What happens to those that make a non-salvational issue a major issue?

What about those that do not emphasize prayer before service? They believe in prayer, but they do not emphasize it. There is no push to promote it. Consequently, it negatively affects the service. It can truly be said that we get what we preach and promote. But it could also be said that we lose so much by what we ignore and disregard.

On the subject of outward holiness, it has become all too apparent in far too many circles that modesty and standards of dress have been under-emphasized. It's not that it has been totally abandoned; it becomes a question of, to what degree has it been reduced? And to what degree has it been relegated to a less significant and less weighty matter?

There is no doubt that the importance of preaching and enforcing modesty of dress has taken a back seat to other areas of doctrine. Maybe in the desire to win souls and to promote evangelism (which should be emphasized), outward holiness became a neglected item. But this does not have to be the case. We can be strong advocates of holiness and evangelism. It does not have to be one or the other — we can and should promote and emphasize more than one area of importance.

There are so many different ideas and interpretations and considerations. Balance and scriptural understanding is the key to promoting what God wants promoted and emphasized. We have the blueprint. We need God to help us to remain apostolic.

^{*} H. T. Sell — *Studies in Early Church History*, (Fleming H. Revell Company, 1906).

^{**} The persons who taught this doctrine appear to have been converts to Christianity; but, supposing that the Christian religion was intended to perfect the Mosaic, and not to supersede it, they insisted on the necessity of circumcision, because, by that, a man was made debtor to the whole law, to observe all its rites and ceremonies. (*Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*)

Walking in The Spirit—Timothy Lackey

Paul emphatically declares, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit . . . That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit . . . I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh . . . If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit (Romans 8:1,4; Galatians 5:16, 25). There are only two kinds of people: those who walk in the Spirit and those who walk in the flesh.

In 2 Corinthians 3:6, Paul contrasts the infinite difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant teaching us that the Old Covenant was written on tables of stone, and it kills in that it hammers home the knowledge of sin and sin’s punishment. However the New Covenant, written by the Spirit on the fleshly tables of our hearts, imparts “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Romans 14:17). Paul then lets us know in Galatians 3:24, that the primary purpose of the Old Covenant was to bring Israel to Jesus Christ that they might be justified and empowered by Him.

Paul asks the question in Romans 7:7, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law.” Paul says in Romans 3:28, “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.” Paul drives home the point that justification comes only by faith in Jesus Christ apart from the deeds of the law. In Romans 3:31 Paul, anticipating the Judaizers’ objection to what he is teaching, asks the rhetorical question, “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.” Paul is not saying that all 613 commandments of the Mosaic law are still to be observed. Certainly the dietary, ceremonial, and civil aspects of the law are no longer in force. What Paul is saying is that “the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4). The whole purpose for which Christ came was to do what the law could never do, and that is to give us power over sin and to enable us to meet the righteous demands of the law.

God promised the day would come when He would make a New Covenant with Israel, putting His Spirit and thus His law in their hearts, enabling them to walk in His statutes and do them (Jeremiah 31:31-34; 32:38,40; Ezekiel 36:26-27). The single most important reason the New Covenant is infinitely superior to the Old Covenant is that the New Covenant not only reveals God’s expectations, but also empowers mankind to fulfill those expectations. While the Old Covenant demanded a righteousness that it could not give, the New Covenant demands the same righteousness and also enables us to meet those righteous demands. We must understand that this empowerment and enablement come through receiving the Holy Ghost and continually walking in the Spirit.

Paul gives the dissertation of the disillusioned man who wants to do right but can’t . . . because he is walking in the flesh: “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight

James O’ Kelley (1735-1826)—Thomas Weisser

James O’ Kelley originally aligned himself with the Methodists. He ministered primarily in Virginia and the Carolinas. In 1792 he left the Methodists and became one of the primary organizers of what became known as the Christian Church. His preaching ability and exemplary life caused people to flock to wherever he ministered. The views he developed on the Godhead caused many who embraced Trinitarianism to turn against him.

At the time of O’Kelley’s departure a preacher informed Jesse Lee (Methodist Clergyman 1758-1818); “That Mr. O’ Kelley denied the doctrine of the Trinity and preached against it, by saying that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were characters and not persons; and that these characters all belonged to Jesus Christ. That Jesus Christ was the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost” (p.102).

After O’ Kelley’s departure from the Methodists he was instrumental in the organization of what became known as the Christian Church. Their rallying cry was; one head of the Church, Christ; and one rule of faith, the Bible. They gained many followers throughout the USA in the late 1700’s, early 1800’s.

O’ Kelley was a personal friend of Thomas Jefferson. On two occasions Mr. Jefferson prevailed upon O’ Kelley to preach in the House of Representatives in Washington D.C. After the second message Thomas Jefferson remarked that, in his opinion, James O’ Kelley was one of the greatest preachers living (p.171).

A Hymn Book published in 1816 by James O’ Kelley has these words in Hymn 91 (p.219) which is entitled, God in Christ.

**“The great Supreme can be but one,
And Christ in God is he!
The Father dwelling in the Son,
Through all eternity!**

**Jesus the Lord is truly God,
The Spirit is the same
For each impressed the earthly clod,
When from His hand we came.”**

Some including Francis Asbury, accused O’ Kelley of Unitarianism. O’ Kelley’s biographer W.E. MacClenny says; “Whatever else he was, if to be an Unitarian is to deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ, then James O’ Kelley was as far removed as possible from being one” (p.216). If anything, he was guilty of an over-emphasis on the Divinity of Jesus Christ.

In his opposition to Arians who say Jesus was a lesser god, O’ Kelley says that Christ was; “Not a demigod; but the all-wise God, our Savior... Jesus is both Lord and God in one exalted person: who at length will show who is the blessed one only Potentate, the King of Kings, and the Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; to Him be honor, and power everlasting. Amen. I Tim. 6:15,16” (p.220). Again he says; “If Jesus be divided from the Father, so are the believers in Christ. The only way that fallen man could ever be in union with God, was effected by the divinity and humanity becoming one. If God and Christ be not the same, how can believers who are grafted in the Vine, partake of the root and fatness?” (p.221).

O’ Kelley is another in a long list of Oneness believers who propagated their beliefs between the time of the early church and the twentieth century church.

What Does God Want Emphasized?—D. S. Garza

This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. (Titus 3:8 KJV)

This is a true saying. I want you to give special emphasis to these matters, so that those who believe in God may be concerned with giving their time to doing good deeds, which are good and useful for everyone. (Titus 3:8 GNB)

Even though the biblical record of the early church is clear, the post-apostolic world has found it very difficult to remain truly apostolic. History proves it didn't take very long for religious sects to spring up and to venture away from the Scriptures and into the realm of false doctrine and quackery.

Faulty interpretation may not be the only area of blame. It could be that the religious thinkers of these new movements quickly took to promoting ideas that they thought were more significant. In other words, in the realm of ideas, the degree to which someone either over or under-emphasizes a belief, becomes a pivotal point. In which case, the wrong degree of emphasis leads away from the apostolic blueprint. Thus producing, on one extreme, a new movement, and to a lesser degree a new school of thought. In either case, the results can be disastrous.

For example, there were those that in the quest to avoid worldly comforts, thought that the austerity of asceticism and the monastic way of life was the key to avoiding these temptations. Many forsook the conveniences of life to live like hermits in distant lands. But it became a noble goal that ended in failure. When an idea is over-emphasized, other ideas that should be considered are compromised.

We must be careful to what extent we promote an idea or doctrine. It may seem good to do so now, but at what cost? And what will it cost the next generation? We need to think about the future and what outcomes are produced by the things we promote. For instance, Ebionism, "was a mixture of Christianity and Judaism. It's advocates held that the law of Moses was equal to the doctrine of Christ . . . and [they] kept the seventh day of the week."*

Some Jewish Christians had a difficult time letting go of no longer needed practices derived from a rich biblical-historical era, and accepting that a way of life had suddenly gone by (see Acts 15:1**, 5; 21:20). Gone were the feasts, the ceremonies, and the "carnal ordinances" of an old system (see Heb. 9:10). The writer of Hebrews says, ". . . [H]e hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away" (Heb. 8:13). These Jewish Christians "asserted that their faith was Judaism with a new prophet; that the law of Moses and Mosiac practices were binding on Christians . . . That Gentile believers must first become proselytes to Judaism before they could become Christians; and lastly that circumcision was the only gateway to baptism." It was these "Jewish Christians, — who still clung to the Mosiac Law — [who] were constantly making trouble . . . not only amongst the Christian Jews who had fully come out from the dominion of the Law of Moses and expressed their faith in Christ, but also among the Christian gentiles who had come out of the heathen religions."*

Would You Like To Be Called A Heretic?—William Chalfant

The Jewish historian Hegeppus wrote that the Christian church was untroubled by major heresy until the time of Trajan (AD 98-117).¹ It was about this time that the foundation of the Trinity doctrine, the Logos teaching, was introduced by Philosopher-Christians. After the Nicean "wedding" between the Catholic Church and the Roman Empire in AD 325, Theodosius the Great (AD 347-395) wished to show his zeal against "heresy" from the Catholic doctrine in AD 381:

To heretics let no place for their mysteries, no opportunity for exercising their rather obstinate mind's madness be allowed. Let all persons also know that it is not valid, if anything by this kind of men has been obtained by any means of any special rescript, whatever elicited through fraud. Let crowds be kept at a distance from all heretic's illicit congregations . . . let even from our very hearing be abolished the Photinian pest's contamination, the Arian sacrilege's poison, the Eunomian perfidy's crime, and the sects' wicked marvels, unspeakable on account of their author's monstrous names.²

Churches of those who differed from the faith of the Catholic Church were confiscated (especially during the year AD 381 when Theodosius issued his decrees) on a wide scale. Inquisitors were established by an imperial mandate in AD 382. Informers and denunciators were welcomed. No secret or hidden assemblies were to be tolerated in town or country. Any who did not assemble in Catholic churches on Easter were considered heretics. Heretics were not allowed to make legal wills. Those suspected of heresy were placed on travel restrictions and were forced to return home.

Optatis of Milevis (d. AD 387) in northern Africa was the first bishop to openly champion the Roman state's affliction of capital punishment on heretics and schismatics. He used a very liberal interpretation of 1 Corinthians 5:5.³ Heretics were barred from all localities, cities' walls, the society of honorable persons, and from the fellowship of "holy persons." They were not permitted to ordain ministers, nor to convene congregations in public or private churches. Heretics were to be shunned. There was no appeal possible to the Emperor Theodosius. No discussions were permitted with heretics. Spies were assigned to "ferret" them out, and to bring them to the authorities.

The "profaners" of baptism (those who repeated baptism, deviating from the "normal" formula) were to be banished and never forgiven. The successors to Theodosius, Arcadius and Honorius, confirmed all of his laws against heretics in AD 395.⁴ The Emperor Justinian (AD 482-565) continued the persecution:

But inasmuch as heretics, who respect neither God nor the penalties threatened by my severe laws, eagerly execute the work of the devil, and, by seducing the simple away from the true church, furtively hold misgatherings and misbaptisms, I deemed it pious to persuade them through this edict that they abandon their heretical insanity and cease to destroy the souls of others through their deception, and rather that they scurry to the Holy Church of God where correct doctrine is expounded and all heresies, together with their protagonists, are accursed. For we want all to know that, in the future, if any persons are caught either convening or attending such misgatherings, we shall no longer tolerate it, but we will award the houses where any such misdeed is perpetuated to the Holy Church, and command that the legal punishment be imposed on the persons involved.⁵

Justinian, in effect, gave the Catholic priests the right to plunder their neighbors. It was the Catholic priest who certified one's "orthodoxy." Re-baptism received the death penalty for both baptizer and the baptized. Books were burned. Anyone who copied by hand a heretic's book had their hand cut off. It was not considered murder to kill a heretic. Many heretics were forced to fake Catholicism in order to survive.

The famous Catholic "fathers" were, for the most part, implicit in this: John Chrysostom disapproved of the death penalty for heretics, but he approved "the prohibition of their assemblies and the confiscation of their churches." Jerome approved of the death penalty for them. Augustine approved of penal measures "to compel them to come in."

Would you like to be called a "heretic"? But the great apostle Paul publicly told his judges: "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers" (Acts 24:14). This gospel has never been without cost. It will cost you something today to follow the apostolic truth.

Footnotes:

1. *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity, II*, Francis Legge (London: Cambridge University Press, 1915) p.2 fn1
2. *A Collection of Legal Documents to 535 AD*, P.R. Coleman-Norton, I (London: SPCK, 1966), No. 173, p.364. Of the "heretics" listed, there were the followers of Photinus, a fourth century bishop who baptized in the Name of Jesus and held to a Dynamic Monarchian viewpoint. The followers of Sabellius were also anathematized.
3. Coleman-Norton, *op.cit.* p.401
4. *Ibid.*, p.457
5. "How Justinian I Sought To Handle The Problem of Religious Dissent," William S. Thurman, pp.15-40, *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, XIII, No. 1, Spring, 1968, Hellenic College, Holy Cross School of Theology, Brookline, MA