

# Life in God's Strength – How?



*Dear Andrew!*

I had to hold the funeral for a young doctor. I requested her Bible so that I could find some reference points in order to make the address more personal. I found a place, where she had written: “I want life in abundance!” She wanted exactly that which only Jesus can give us:

*“...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10 NKJV*

Jesus wants us to experience this new life now and to continue this new life when He comes again as eternal life in God's kingdom.

The challenge now is how we can have the motivation and strength for a happy and enduring relationship in a life with Jesus.

A fitting comparison: A car without fuel. There are only two possibilities: to push the car or to get fuel. Only when the car has fuel, does it fulfill its purpose.

A Christian life  
without power can be compared  
to a car without fuel.

Hence: How can I live in the power of God? Jesus told His disciples:

*“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you....” Acts 1:8 NKJV*

How does that work? Where can we find more detailed information? There is a singular Bible text, where the Lord Jesus lovingly and strongly encourages us to ask for the Holy Spirit. Here is the text:

Luke 11:9-13: *“So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for [e] bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for*

*an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who **ask** Him!"*

Do you notice something? Jesus used the verb "ask" six times in this passage; then He substitutes the word "ask" two times and reinforces it with the word "seek"—an active verb—and then two more times with the verb "knock"—also an active verb. Doesn't this distinctly show us that we should take action? The last "ask" is in the continuous tense in Greek. This means that we shouldn't just ask *one time*, but rather continuously ask. Not only does Jesus emphasize the urgency of asking, but also expects us to continuously practice it. This shows us that Jesus is convicted that we are missing something crucial. He is clearly calling our attention to the fact that we need the Holy Spirit and we are dependent on Him.

Jesus shows us in a masterly manner—by frequently repeating the verbs and making comparisons—our greatest need: we should continuously ask for the Holy Spirit. This is exceptional. It has to do with God's supreme gift—the gift which brings all the other gifts in its train. This is the crowning gift that Jesus gave His disciples and plain proof of His love.

Every day will be an adventure for us, when we are acquainted with the reality of a life filled with the Holy Spirit and we constantly commit ourselves to His leadership.

**The Bible speaks about three different groups of people in relation to their relationship to God:**

Ask yourself: Which group do I belong to? And—what group do I want to belong to?

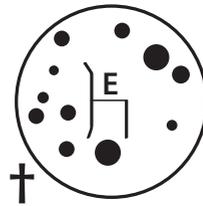
**1. The Natural Person**

This is a person, who hasn't accepted Christ yet.

*"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit." 1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV*

**A life ruled by the ego**

- E** = Ego, limited self on the throne.
- †** = Christ outside of their life.
- = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment.



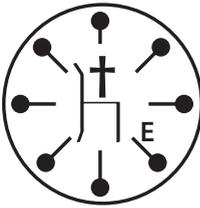
## 2. The Spiritual Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ and is led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

*"But he who is spiritual judges all things...."*  
 1 Corinthians 2:15 NKJV

### A life led by Christ

- † = Christ is on the throne of life
- E = The ego is dethroned
- = Areas of life, which are under the leadership of the unlimited God and growing in harmony with God's plan.



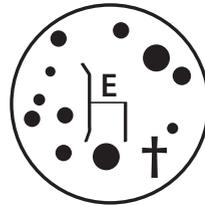
## 3. The Carnal Person

This is a person, who has accepted Christ, but often experiences defeats, because he tries to live a Christian life in his own strength instead of in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*"And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 NKJV"*

### A life controlled by the ego

- E = Ego, limited self on the throne
- † = Christ in their life, but not on the throne
- = Areas of life, which are controlled by the ego and often lead to discord and disappointment.



We want to look at this important matter in four steps. We will look more closely at the situation of the spiritual and carnal people.

### 1. God wants us to have a fulfilled and fruitful life.

*"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10 NKJV*

*"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." John 15:5 NKJV*

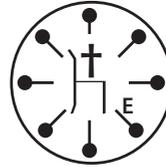
*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV*

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be [witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8 NKJV*

### The Spiritual Person

Some traits that are characteristic of a life with God:

- Christ is the focal point
- Authority through the Holy Spirit
- An effective prayer life
- Understanding of God's word
- Trust in God
- Obedience to God
- Lead other people to Christ



Love | Joy | Peace | Longsuffering  
Kindness | Goodness | Faithfulness

The effects of these traits in our life depend on our maturity in Christ, on the degree of our connection with Him and also if we completely trust Him with all areas of our life.

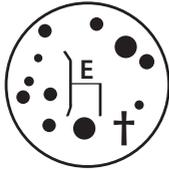
Someone, who is just starting to understand the work of the Holy Spirit, shouldn't become discouraged when they don't bear as much fruit as a mature Christian, who has long been acquainted with this truth.

**Why do most Christians not experience this fulfilled life?**

## 2. Carnal people can't experience a fulfilled and fruitful Christian life.

Some or all of the following traits characterize carnal Christians, who do not completely trust God.

- Ignorance about His spiritual possessions
- Unbelief
- Disobedience
- Insufficient love for God and others
- Insufficient prayer life
- Insufficient interest in the Bible



*Impure thoughts | Jealousy | Guilt  
Unnecessary worries | Discouragement  
Critical attitude | Despair  
Aimlessness | Legality (the idea that they  
have to earn something from God)*

(Someone, who thinks they are a real Christian, but consistently sins, should examine themselves according to 1 John 2:3, 3:6, 3:9 and Ephesians 5:5 to see if they really are a Christian.)

**The third point shows us the sole solution to this problem...**

## 3. Jesus has promised us a fulfilled and fruitful life. It is the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit, as well as the guidance and authority that the Holy Spirit gives us.

A life filled with the Spirit is a life in which Christ has the leadership. Christ lives His life in us and works in us and through us by the continuous power of the Holy Spirit. (John 15)

**A.** According to John 3:1-8, a person becomes a Christian through the working of the Holy Spirit. At the moment of our spiritual birth, we receive a new life through Christ.

It tells us in John 14:17 that the Holy Spirit stays by and in us.

We should bear in mind:

We received our natural life at birth, which should be preserved. From the outside, it is preserved by air, water, food, etc. It is exactly the same in the spiritual world as in the natural world. We receive our spiritual life—the Bible calls it being born again (John 3:3), when we completely surrender to Christ and attest to this through the biblical baptism in due time. (Acts 2:38; John 1:12; John 14:16-17). So that this spiritual life can survive, it needs a life with the Holy Spirit, prayer, God's word, etc.

**B.** The Holy Spirit is the source of a fulfilled life. (John 7:37-39)

- C. The Holy Spirit came to exalt Christ. (John 16:1-15) When someone is filled with the Holy Spirit, then they are a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.
- D. Christ promised us the power of the Holy Spirit in His last words before He ascended into heaven, so that we will be empowered to be His disciples and witnesses (Acts 1:1-9).

### **How can a person be filled with the Holy Spirit?**

#### **4. We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith.**

#### **Then we can experience the overflowing and fruitful life, which Christ promised us.**

We cannot earn God's abundance—it is a gift. We receive it through faith—by trusting God.

You can experience being filled with the Holy Spirit now, when you:

- A. Have a genuine desire to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).
- B. Pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit, in other words, trusting that Jesus Christ will answer your prayer.

*Jesus said: "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit...." John 7:38-39 NKJV*

*"...that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:14 NKJV*

God has made it easy for us to trust Him by giving us concrete promises. He says in 1 John 5:14 NKJV: ***"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."***

Those, who pray according to God's will—the next verse says: *"And if we know (at the moment) that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him."* 1 John 5:15 NKJV

Another translation (NIV) says: *"And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him."*

This means that prayers according to God's will are answered immediately, when we bring them before God, even though we often don't feel anything. Feelings can appear later.

**Example:** Someone prays to be freed from tobacco. His prayer is answered by faith at the moment he utters his request. A few hours later, he notices that he no longer craves tobacco. (Further details in the letter to Andrew on "Victory over Tobacco and Alcohol". Praying with promises is also explained in detail.)

Jesus says in Mark 11:24 (NKJV): *"Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you (actually) receive them, and you will have them."*

- C. God has given us a promise in Luke 11:9-13 for receiving the Holy Spirit. We already took a look at it at the beginning of the letter (chapter), hence only verse 13 (NKJV): *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

### How to pray by faith to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

A prayer using promises strengthens our trust in it being granted and at the same time, it is an opportunity to express our faith. Following is a suggested prayer:

"Father in heaven, I come in the name of Jesus to you. I cannot follow you in my own power. You know my failed attempts. I sincerely ask You to give me the strength to live according to Your will. You commanded me: "Be filled with the Spirit!" (Ephesians 5:18 NKJV) I am willing to be filled. I ask you to please make this reality now, because You have promised that You want to give us the Holy Spirit more than earthly fathers want to give their children good things (Luke 11:13). I want to thank You that you have already filled me, because You have promised that when I pray according to Your will, then I can know that I already have what I asked for. (1 John 5:14-15) Please lead me and use me today according to Your will. Amen."

Suggested Prayer

Does this prayer correspond with your desires? If yes, then make this your prayer now. I recommend that you pray this prayer aloud and trust that God has filled you now with His Holy Spirit.

## Assurance that you are filled with the Holy Spirit

Have you asked God to fill you with His Holy Spirit? On the basis of what authority can you know if you have been filled with the Holy Spirit? (Because God and His word are trustworthy: Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:22-23.)

Feelings are not crucial. God's promises in His word are vital—not our feelings. A Christian lives by faith, meaning by trusting the reliability of God and His word.

The following illustration should show the relationship between facts (God and His word), faith (our trust in God and His word) and feelings (result of faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



The train can travel with or without wagons. It would be futile for the wagons to pull the locomotive. Likewise, Christians are not dependent on their moods and emotions, rather they put their trust (our faith) in the reliability of God and the promises in His word.

## How to live in the Holy Spirit

A Christian can only have a life filled with the Holy Spirit by faith (trust in God and His promises). In so doing, we should pay attention to what 2 Corinthians 4:16 says:

*“...yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.” (NKJV)*

That is why it is advisable that we dedicate our lives to God every morning and by faith ask Him—preferably with a promise—to be renewed with the Holy Spirit. When you live day by day with trust in Christ, then the following will happen:

- A. Your life will yield more and more fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22); your character will become increasingly similar to Christ's. (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 3:18)
- B. Your prayer life and reading God's word will become more meaningful.
- C. You will experience His strength to resist temptations and sin.

*“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able...” 1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV*

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13 NKJV*

*“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” Ephesians 6:10 NKJV*

*“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV*

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit [the Holy Spirit] of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” Romans 8:1-2 NKJV*

*“We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.” 1 John 5:18 NKJV*

**D.** You will experience God's support when you witness. (Acts 1:8)

## Spiritual Breathing

You can by faith continually experience God's love and forgiveness. When it becomes clear to you that God doesn't approve of something (an attitude or deed) in your life, although you live with Him and earnestly want to follow Him, then confess your sin, for example, a wrong, irreconcilability, etc. Then thank Him that He has forgiven your sins because Christ died on the cross. Accept His love and forgiveness by faith and continue to live in fellowship with Him.

When you reoccupy the throne of your life by sinning—an act of disobedience—then practice spiritual breathing.

Spiritual breathing (exhaling the impurities and inhaling the pure) is a faith exercise, through which you can continually experience God's love and forgiveness.

### 1. EXHALING

Confess your sins by name, agree with God in regards to the judgment of your sin and thank Him for His forgiveness. (1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:125). Confession includes repentance—a change of attitude or deed.

### 2. INHALING

Surrender again the reign of your life to Christ and ask again by faith for the Holy Spirit. Believe that He will continue to lead you as He promised in Luke 11:13 and 1 John 5:14-15.

**When these explanations have been of help, then please pass on a copy or read it to someone.**

May you have great joy in your new life in God's power.

Best wishes and blessings,

*Helmut and my friend Kurt*

(Helmut Haubeil and Kurt Hasel)