

Walking by the spirit in the Body of Christ, Part 3

Turn to Luke 11

Lets review a few verses about the new spiritual self that is created in union with Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:10

10 For we (*each one of us, right now*) are **his** workmanship (*not our own*), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Salvation, the new birth, results in the creation of a new nature in each one of us, a spiritual nature. It is sometimes referred to as the “gift of holy spirit”. The new spiritual self is created IN Christ Jesus, which means this new nature is completely united with Christ Jesus.

God went to work in us, so that we could work, we could function. It is the new spiritual creation, the new spiritual self, that is able to do the good works which God prepared for us before the ages began. These are NOT religious works; religion or legalism does not enable anyone to walk by the spirit to do the works that God has prepared for us.

Ephesians 4:22

22 to put off your old self (*the old self of the flesh, your old identity*), which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt (*dead and decayed*) through deceitful desires,
23 and to be renewed (*brand new, nothing old remaining*) in the spirit of your minds,
24 and to put on the new self (*the new spiritual self, your new identity*), created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

This is you, this is your new identity. This is who God sees when He looks at you. You are created after God's likeness in TRUE righteousness and TRUE holiness. Yes there is false, counterfeit, righteousness and false, counterfeit, holiness.

Turn to Colossians 3

1 Corinthians 2:16 says that “...we have the mind of Christ”.

Colossians 3:9

9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self (*of the flesh, your former identity*) with its practices

10 and have put on the new self (*with its practices; this is the new spiritual self, your new identity, the real you*), which is being renewed (*brand new, nothing of the old remaining*) in knowledge after the image of its creator. (*This is spiritual knowledge*)

11 Here (*in the new spiritual self*) there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Galatians 2:19

19 For through the law I (*the old self*) died to the law, so that I (*the new spiritual self*) might live to God.

20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I (*the old self*) who live, but **Christ who lives in me (the new spiritual self)**. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

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Galatians 5:17

17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

Galatians 5:24

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. (*we conclude that the old self of the flesh is dead*).

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

The old self of the flesh is dead – it was crucified with Christ. This includes all the deeds committed by the flesh in the past and the passions and desires of the flesh. We do not allow these things to dominate or rule in the life we now live. The life we now live we live by the faith of Jesus Christ who bought us with a price. It is the newly created spiritual self that gives life to our physical bodies so that we can function and serve within the body of Christ.

Each one of us is familiar with our physical bodies and how they operate. We are familiar with our 5 senses and how to process the information that comes to us from the physical world by way of our 5 senses. God teaches us about the functioning of our newly created spiritual nature, our new spiritual selves, in terms of what we already know. He relates the functioning of our new self in terms of our old self of the flesh.

In this teaching we will examine some scriptural accounts that will help us become acquainted with the functioning of our new spiritual selves.

In Luke 11, Jesus is teaching his disciples about prayer. The prayer that he used as an example contains requests made for God to go into operation on the behalf of the one praying. Jesus goes on to teach exactly what to pray for. Remember that at this time, the salvation that we enjoy was not yet available.

Luke 11:9

9 And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent;

12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

The flesh is evil and corrupt in nature, and yet even unsaved men and women can give good things to their children. God is much more able and willing to give the holy spirit AND its functioning to those who asked for it. We do not have to ask God for the holy spirit; it is included as part of salvation. The point is that God will not and does not withhold or obstruct the functioning of your new spiritual self. There is nothing bad or evil in this gift of holy spirit or in its functioning; it is completely and exceedingly good. Just as you grew and learned to function in your physical body, you can grow and learn to walk by the spirit.

Turn to Acts 9.

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In Galatians 5:17 we learned that our new spiritual self has desires which are contrary to the desires of the flesh. Just as our former self of the flesh has desires, our new self has desires. Know that there is nothing here in either the physical or the spiritual category that can cause you to lose control of your free will. A human being only loses self control when under the influence of devil spirits.

When you walk by the spirit, you always have complete self control and freedom of will. Just as your physical body is always functioning and ready to move, so it is with your new spiritual self – there is no waiting for any additional anointing or feeling.

Acts 9:10

10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

Ananias was a disciple in the body of Christ; he was a believer. Nothing in the scriptures indicate that he had any recognized position of leadership of any kind. Ananias was minding his own business, conducting his life as he always did. Ananias is not in any kind of a trance, he is not out of control or in an altered mental state.

Acts 9:10

10 Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.”

Did Ananias have to do anything special to hear the Lord speaking to him? Not at all. Just as you don't have to do anything special to hear physically with your ears, you do not have to do anything special to hear spiritually. The capability to hear spiritually is always active. Whether one listens or not is another matter.

It is interesting that this verbal exchange is called a vision. This record does not indicate if Ananias saw anything spiritually.

Ananias responds to his name being called by the Lord. First, Ananias does not get all excited or scared. He just says “Here I am, Lord”. Ananias recognized who was speaking to him. In John 10, Jesus indicates that the believers can recognize the voice of the genuine shepherd and distinguish it from the voice of any counterfeit.

How does a baby human being learn to recognize the voice of its father and mother? By growing and listening. So it is with our new spiritual selves. As we spiritually grow and spiritually listen, we learn to recognize the spiritual voice of the Lord.

Now that the Lord has the attention of Ananias, he continues speaking.

Acts 9:11

11 And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying,

12 and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.”

This is simply remarkable. Not only does the Lord give instructions on where to go and who to look for, but he reveals to Ananias the visual revelation, the vision that was given to Saul. In this vision, Saul sees Ananias come in and minister healing to Saul, because Saul is BLIND. If Saul is BLIND, how can he possibly see Ananias come in and minister healing? How can he see anything at all? He is BLIND! The answer is that this information is a vision that Saul is seeing spiritually! His new spiritual self is NOT blind, but can see any spiritual information given to it any time.

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Although his physical eyes are not functioning, his spiritual self continues to function without difficulty.

By the time Acts 9:10 takes place, Saul has become born again and has the new spiritual self, created in Christ Jesus.

Acts 9:13

13 But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem.

14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.”

Ananias has self control and freedom of will. He has some concerns about this assignment from the Lord and lets the Lord know.

In this account, the Lord gives more information to Ananias to handle his concerns.

Acts 9:15

15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.

16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

Now Ananias has enough information and chooses to obey of his own free will. He could have chosen to turn down the assignment. As soon as Ananias begins to obey the instructions he received by revelation from the Lord, he begins to operate spiritual believing. He did not consult with anyone else – he was not instructed to consult with anyone. He did not ask for permission from anyone else; the only permission he needed was the permission from the Lord.

Acts 9:17

17 So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled (*completely filled, to manifest*) with the Holy Spirit.”

18 And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized;

19 and taking food, he was strengthened. For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus.

By spiritual believing, Ananias imparted a gift of healing to Saul and he worked a miracle which caused the healing to take place immediately.

The operation of holy spirit, the new spiritual self happens in terms of what we are already familiar with. We know about our 5 physical senses, and we can receive spiritual information in a similar manner, by way of our new spiritual self.

Now, don't get distracted by the mechanics of how you receive spiritual information. The important thing is that you receive what needs to be communicated to you spiritually. You may not be aware of how you received revelation, only that you have received it. Then you just move on it.

Turn to Acts 10

Let's check a record of the functioning of the new spiritual self in the apostle Peter. I'm only going to

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deal with a specific part of this record, not the entire story. If you want to read the entire story later, it starts in Acts 9:32 and concludes in Acts 11:18.

Acts 10:9

9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city (*Joppa*), Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.

10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance

Peter was living his life, minding his own business. It was an hour of prayer, so he went to the flat roof of the house and was praying perfectly. This is what he was doing while lunch was being prepared; and he was definitely hungry!

The ESV says that Peter "...fell into a trance...".

The Darby Bible of 1890 says "...an ecstasy came upon him..."

These translations do not agree with the other record we have just considered.

Normally I don't check the Greek words in the scripture, but this time I did. The Greek word translated as "trance" is the word "ekstasis". Yes, here in the West, we have transliterated the Greek word "ekstasis" into the English word ecstasy. This influences people to think that there must be some very intense, good feelings that accompany the energizing of holy spirit. However this is a great error that some propound.

One of the definitions I found for this word states:

take out of regular position (standing) and bring into a state of ecstasy (rapture) – like a person "carried out" in trance-like amazement. This state of mind reaches far beyond the powers of ordinary perception.

In order to validate this definition, you can check the other places in the Bible where this word is used. It is used in two other places. I will give you the references, and read the two verses. Later you can check the context of these verses.

The first usage is in Mark 16:8. Three women went to the tomb of Jesus early in the morning. Jesus was not there, but they had a conversation with an angel.

Mark 16:8

8 And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment (*ekstasis*) had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

The second usage is in Luke 5:26

A man who was paralyzed had just been miraculously healed.

26 And amazement seized them all, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, "We have seen extraordinary things today."

It is apparent from these two usages that the amazement is due to the observation of unexpected events and information which is completely outside of ones experience and knowledge. The things observed are temporarily incomprehensible. This is what was happening to the apostle Peter.

Anyone involved in spiritualism knows that one who falls into a trance is not in control of themselves, but has had their consciousness taken over by a devil spirit. Most of the time they do not remember what they see or speak in such a state. This is NOT what happened to the apostle Peter, the women at

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the tomb or those present at the healing of the paralyzed man.

So, don't let anyone deceive you into thinking that when you are walking by the spirit, you are supposed to experience the wonderful feelings of an ecstasy, or that the spirit is supposed to take you over, or that you are supposed to fall into a trance. None of these things are true, they are all error, they are all doctrines of devils.

Back in Acts 10:10, it would be more accurate to say that "...he (*Peter*) became amazed...". He was observing something that was so unexpected and so far removed from his experience and knowledge that he became utterly amazed. The next verse indicates what he was so amazed about.

Acts 10:11

11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.

12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. (*These are all unclean animals. Under the law, the Jews were forbidden to eat these animals*).

13 And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

This is revelation which is both seen and heard, spiritually. Peter is given a command to kill and eat any of the animals presented to him. He is hungry, so "...go ahead and have a yummy barbeque, Peter!".

Acts 10:14

14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

Did Peter obey his assignment? NO he did not! He turned it down! He spoke back to the voice! See, he was in complete control of himself; his freedom of will is completely intact and functional.

What happened? Did the revelation stop? Did a bolt of lightning come down and fry the apostle Peter? Well, lets keep reading and find out.

Acts 10:15

15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common."

16 This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

This was repeated three times; Peter turned down the assignment THREE TIMES! Yet, the Lord kept working with Peter. Two times was enough to establish the truth "What God has made clean, do not call common.". Three times completely established the truth.

Acts 10:17

17 Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the **vision** that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate

Now we know that this was a vision being communicated to Peter's spiritual self. No one else, had they been there would have seen what Peter was seeing spiritually.

Peter did not understand the vision, but was perplexed about what he had seen and heard. He was pondering its meaning. While this was going on, some people who were looking for Peter showed up.

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Acts 10:18

18 and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there.

19 And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Behold, three men are looking for you.

20 Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them.”

Peter had turned down the previous assignment THREE times, yet he is given another assignment. Now, could Peter have known by his physical senses that there were three males who were looking for him? Yes, he could have – all he had to do was to look and listen with his five senses. However he needed to know that these three men had been sent by the Lord, and Peter was to go with them. Note that he is not told where they are going. Let's continue reading and see if he accepts this assignment.

Acts 10:21

21 And Peter went down to the men and said, “I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?”

22 And they said, “Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say.”

23 So he invited them in to be his guests.

The next day he rose and went away with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.

At the point that Peter invites the men into the house to be his guests, we know that Peter has understood the revelation of the vision. If he had not been given the vision, he never would have invited these men into the house, as we will see. Now we know that Peter has accepted this assignment to accompany the men.

Acts 10:24

24 And on the following day they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

25 When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am a man.”

Acts 10:27

27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered.

28 And he said to them, “You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, **but God has shown me** (*by revelation, by the new spiritual self*) **that I should not call any person common or unclean.**

29 So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me.”

Peter does not yet know why Cornelius has sent for him. However he does know that God sent them.

Acts 10:30

30 And Cornelius said, “Four days ago, about this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing

31 and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.

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Acts 10:32

32 Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea.’

33 So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.”

34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,
35 but in every nation anyone who fears (*respects*) him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

Now Peter *really* understands the depth of what was shown to him in the vision. He has fulfilled the assignment given to him by revelation.

Now Cornelius makes a request, “...to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord...”. Peter could turn him down as being an ineligible, polluted, god forsaken, Gentile dog. Since he now deeply understands the vision, he knows that the Gentiles **are** eligible for salvation too. So, Peter opened his mouth and began to preach Christ to these Gentiles. He had no idea what would happen, but he moved with confidence.

Acts 10:36

36 As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),

37 you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed (*this was a water baptism*):

38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

39 And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,

40 but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear,

41 not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

42 **And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.** (*these are the words that Peter was commanded to speak, which Cornelius asked to hear*)

43 To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

44 While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.

45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.

46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling (*praising, magnifying*) God (*this is one of those good works which God prepared for us to do*).

Look at the accuracy of the revelation in verse 45 which states “...And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter...”. This verse indicates that everyone in the room was a believer, so it had to identify the believers who came with Peter as distinguished from the believers who had just been born again.

Peter did not understand the vision that he had seen spiritually. As he continued to serve, walking by

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the spirit, he came to understand what had been communicated to him. Peter needed to have that vision. Preaching to those Gentiles was just as amazing, astounding, and incomprehensible as the vision had been. The thought to preach to the Gentiles had never, ever crossed Peter's mind.

It took great courage and boldness for Peter to follow the revelation to accompany the Gentiles to Caesarea, because it was illegal for him to have anything to do with the Gentiles, much less eat with them or enter their house, regardless of the reason. How would this reflect on the reputation of the other believers and apostles? How could he run off to Caesarea without checking with the other apostles in Jerusalem? How could he involve the other believers, endangering their reputations and lives without consulting with the other leaders in the Church?

Turn to Luke 6

Yet, that is what Peter did. There were plenty of reasons to be afraid and doubtful. However, Peter knew who he was, he was well acquainted with his new spiritual identity. He knew who he worked for, the head of the body of Christ and no one else.

Luke 6:6

6 On another Sabbath, he entered the synagogue and was teaching, and a man was there whose right hand was withered.

7 And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him, to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, so that they might find a reason to accuse him.

8 But **he knew their thoughts**, and he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come and stand here." And he rose and stood there.

Does it say that Jesus "read their minds"? No, it doesn't. This is not mind reading, it is revelation. The information was revealed, unveiled spiritually to Jesus. The scripture does not indicate that he heard or saw the information, but he "knew", he had a clear mental perception of their thought. As we will see next, he also had the instructions, the wisdom to handle the critics and their thinking.

Luke 6:9

9 And Jesus said to them, "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?"

10 And after looking around at them all he said to him, "Stretch out your hand." And he did so, and his hand was restored.

11 But they were filled with fury and discussed with one another what they might do to Jesus.

Turn to Mark 5

The religious leaders were perfectly content and accustomed to allow people to remain in chronic need. They were not about to let anyone function with the power of God regardless of how much good it did. The rulers of the darkness of this world do NOT want to have the power of God in operation anywhere, at any time. Anyone who walks by the spirit does so according to how they are directed spiritually by the head of the body of Christ, not some so-called religious leader in some religious organization. You may be surprised when you find out who becomes really mad when you walk by the spirit.

In Mark 5 is a record of a woman who had a chronic hemorrhaging, who approached Jesus for healing. She did it secretly because a person would become "unclean" if anyone touched a woman in her

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condition.

Mark 5:27

27 She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment.

28 For she said, "If I touch even his garments, I will be made well."

29 And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and **she felt in her body** that she was healed of her disease.

30 And Jesus, perceiving (*knew spiritually, by revelation*) in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, "Who touched my garments?"

How do you know if someone touches you? You know by your sense of touch. Spiritually, Jesus knew someone had touched his garments and had been healed.

Mark 5:31

31 And his disciples said to him, "You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, 'Who touched me?'"

32 And he looked around to see who had done it.

This is how specific the revelation is; he KNEW the difference between the physical sense of touch and being touched spiritually. It is interesting that although Jesus knew that someone touched him spiritually, he did not know who did it.

Mark 5:33

33 But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth.

34 And he said to her, "Daughter (*she is a believer*), your **faith** (*believing; faith was not available yet*) has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease."

Some questions – what kind of believing results in the energizing of the power of God? Is it the five senses believing which is common to all mankind? Or is it spiritual believing which goes into operation as you move on revelation? What kind of believing do you think this woman was operating?

We have examined the scriptures to learn some of the ways in which revelation is experienced by different believers. These are examples for your instruction. As we grow spiritually, each one of us can learn to function as effectively as the believers we just read about. We have Christ within each one of us, just as Peter, Ananias and Paul did. The new spiritual self works just as effectively in you as it did in them.