

Empowered *to give power or authority to, to enable*

Describe a time you thought you could do something but later found out you were not able. What is the danger of thinking you can do something you can't?

Living the Christian life is what God desires of us but we can't do it in and of ourselves by trying hard. What God expects of us is so impossible that only He can do it. And only by yielding to Him can He do it through us.

Read the following excerpt of a conversation between a student and his discipler.

"If Jesus were here physically and were your discipler this semester instead of me, do you think you would have a better shot at growing spiritually than you do now with me as your discipler and His Spirit living inside you?"

Casey smirked and asked, "What do you mean 'here physically'?"

"I mean here, physically. He could be right by your side as much as you wanted him to be."

"Well, then I'd take that," said Casey. "Why?"

"Because he would be straight with me, you know. He could see into my heart and just tell it like it is. There wouldn't be any question about what I'm supposed to do."

"So this seems like a no-brainer to you?" I asked.

"I guess," responded Casey, confident but suspicious. I turned to Michael, "What about you?"

"Well, I know the right answer is the Holy Spirit but since that is what I have had all along, and that hasn't worked out so well, I would honestly say Jesus just to try something new."

"If you would be better off having Jesus with you instead of in you, why didn't God establish life that way?" "I mean, the disciples wanted Jesus to stay and He told them at least twice that it was better for them if He left."

"Okay, Casey, you said you would like it because Jesus would shoot straight with you. He could look in your heart and tell you that you are full of crap. Then what would you do about it?"

"What do you mean?" Casey asked.

"Think about it this way. If LeBron James was your personal coach in basketball, could you play in the NBA?"

"No."

"Why not? You would have one of the best players in the world teaching you."

"But that doesn't mean I could play like him."

"What if somehow LeBron could live inside you and play through you? Then could you play in the NBA?"

Casey gets an epiphany, "I get it. If I didn't have His Spirit in me, I couldn't do what he tells me I need to do. It wouldn't matter that Jesus was here telling me to do it."

"Okay. We're saying that God has given us everything we need to walk with Him,"

I said, "Everything you need to be courageous, kind, humble, unselfish, etc., is in you. So why isn't our life characterized by those things?"

Michael spoke up, "To use your analogy, I think it's because we don't let God play through us."

"So what keeps us from letting God play in our lives?"

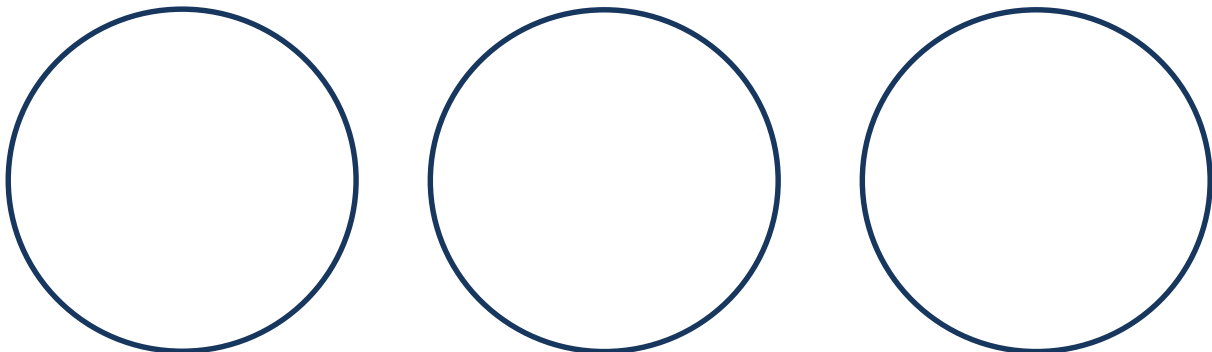
"For me, like even if LeBron lived in me, and even though I am not as good, I might not let him play because I want to be the one playing. It's like I'd rather play badly than let someone else play for me."

I asked them what they wanted out of today. I said, "Do you typically just think about getting through the day with as much happiness and as little pain as possible?" They gave a nod of concession. I asked, "Is it safe to say that if you didn't want much of anything today that you also didn't want God to play in your life?"

I explained that I thought a major dilemma in Christian life is that we often have general desires that do not find their way into our day-to-day life. Then I said, "It seems to me that letting God play in our lives has a lot to do with simply wanting him to."

3 Circles Diagram

To see a video of this go to www.MasterPlanMinistries.net/diagram-video-tutorials



Read **1 Corinthians 2:12-3:3**

What are the three types of people described?

Read **Galatians 5:19-23**

What are characteristics of the self-centered life? Holy Spirit/Christ-centered life?

Faith (trust in God and His promises) is the only way a Christian can live by the Spirit.

We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us if we fail to depend on His Spirit. People who trust their own efforts and strength to live the Christian life will experience failure and frustration. By walking in the Spirit, we increasingly experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us.

What does **Galatians 3:3** and **5:16-17** say about living the Christian's life in our own strength?

Spiritual breathing is a powerful word picture which can help you experience moment-by-moment dependence upon the Spirit. It is how you get to the circle with Christ on the throne.

Exhale: Confess your sin the moment you become aware of it - agree with God concerning it and thank Him for His forgiveness, according to 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 10:1-25. Confession requires repentance - a change in attitude and action.

Inhale: Surrender control of your life to Christ, and rely upon the Holy Spirit to fill you with His presence and power by faith, according to His command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14-15).

Read **Galatians 3:3**

How did you move from the left circle to the center circle?

How do you move from the right circle back to the center circle?

How does someone move from the center circle to the right circle?

When can you move from the right circle to the center circle?

Read **Galatians 5:16-23**

How can you tell what circle you're in?

What if you don't feel like Christ is on the throne of your heart?

Getting Christ on the throne is a very simple concept, confess and surrender. You don't earn Christ on the throne by having a quiet time or doing other Christian things. It's simply a heart condition of saying no to our flesh and yielding to the Lord. It's much like a little kid asking his dad to tie his shoe, "I can't, will you". Confess and Surrender.

How to pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. Sincere prayer is one way of expressing our faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

Dear Father, I need you. I acknowledge that I have sinned against You by directing my own life. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I pray this is the name of Jesus. I now thank you for filling me with the Holy Spirit and directing my life.

Does this prayer express the desire of your heart? If so, you can pray right now and trust God to fill you with His Holy Spirit.

How do each of these pictures convey the spirit-filled life?



How does yielding or surrender relate to the Spirit-filled life?

What would this yielding/surrender look like practically in your life?

How often do believers need to yield to the Holy Spirit? Why?

How can we develop a lifestyle of depending on the Spirit?

What would happen if doing throne checks became a part of your daily life?

What stood out most to you about this week? Who can you share it with this week?