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## INTENTIONAL SPIRITUALITY ?

It's confusing how much confusion exists today over the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian. What do you think - is the Holy Spirit 'optional' or 'essential' to the Christian life?

You don't have to wonder, because the Bible makes it abundantly clear. First, the Holy Spirit IS God - the third person of the one triune God. There is only one God, who is composed of three co-equal persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a person, who shares all the attributes of God - eternal, sovereign, holy, loving, unchanging, all-knowing, all-powerful, etc. The Holy Spirit is integrally involved in all God does.

The world was spoken into existence by the breath of God's mouth. And you, as a human being created in the image of God, have the breath of life from God, who caused you to be conceived and born. And if you are a Christian person, then you are also 're-born' as God the Holy Spirit makes you spiritually alive .

The Holy Spirit does much more than we can cover in just one column, so let's just focus on some truths related to Galatians 5:25, "***If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.***" Would you say a new battery brings an old remote-control car to life? That's similar to the work of the Holy Spirit. Believers in Christ receive His supernatural power. The Holy Spirit gives you spiritual life in Christ, and you also live your life by His spiritual power. You live out His life in you, through you.

How do you "live" by the Spirit? When you become a Christian, believing in Jesus, the Bible says you are re-born as a child of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit. All three persons of the Godhead participate in this new life in Christ. The Father orchestrates the sending of the Son, who paid the penalty for your sin. And He coordinates the activity of the Holy Spirit, who regenerates each person who believes in Jesus. The Holy Spirit gives you new life in Christ, and indwells you - and empowers you to live for Christ.

How do you "walk" by the Spirit? Just like an infant is born and then grows up to maturity, so it is with spiritual life. Once you're re-born in Christ, it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that you then grow up into Christ. You do this as you learn to live according to God's truth - living out the new life of Christ within you. This whole life-long process can be expressed as "*The Spirit of God works the Word of God so the people of God become like the Son of God.*" In Christ, your walk on earth gets you ready to run in heaven.

Galatians 5:24 explains it further, "***those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.***" Because of the Holy Spirit, you now have His spiritual supernatural power to say "no" to sin. You see, when you are born again, you believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and the Holy Spirit brings you into spiritual union with Christ. You are in Christ and Christ is in you. And you receive all the realities of His crucifixion and resurrection. Just as Christ died to sin, so you in Him have also died to sin. Just as Jesus rose to new life, so you in Him receive His new spiritual life.

If you are spiritually alive in Christ then you also have a new spiritual heart and mind and will. "This new 'you' continues to live in your old 'flesh' - which is how the Bible refers to your old ways of thinking and doing things, the passions and desires in verse 24. The Bible says that in Christ you are now dead to those old things, and alive to God. As you grow up in Christ, learning to live out all that God says in His Word of truth, the Bible, you no longer listen to and obey the falsehoods of the world, the flesh, and the devil. That was your old default. Now you trust and obey God's truth - keeping in step with the Holy Spirit.

How? INTENTIONALLY. Tap into the Holy Spirit's power. He empowers you to read and understand the Bible, talk and listen to God in prayer, fellowship with other believers, and share the good news about Jesus in words and deeds. Your life will express what Galatians 5:22 calls the "***fruit of the Spirit***" - ***love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.*** And it's all part of God's divine design for His church - the people called to believe in Christ and live for Him.

So get intentional about your spiritual life. Keep in step with the Holy Spirit - and your thoughts and speech and actions will all express your growing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Intentionally - *by the Holy Spirit's power!*