

JesusOnline Equip

Ministry Resources Hub

Living by the Spirit

A free resource from JesusOnline Ministries.

Read or share online: app.jesonline.com/post/22010-106-living-by-the-spirit

JesusOnline Equip · Ministry Resources Hub · equip.jesonline.com

Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

Living by the Spirit

The moment you surrender your life to Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes in ... even if you don't feel anything. He is there, waiting for you to yield to His power. The Holy Spirit gives us the ability and power to live life the way God wants us to.

However, many believers have mistaken the Holy Spirit's power for an emotional feeling or euphoria. Sadly, when the emotions and feelings depart ... or even fail to materialize in some grand way, they think they have lost the Holy Spirit's power. They don't believe God's promise of Hebrews 13:5: "Never will I leave you; never will I abandon you."

Q. Can you think of a time when you experienced the emotion of the Holy Spirit?

Q. What was the result?

Q. Why is it a bad idea to depend on our feelings or emotions?

The power the Holy Spirit brings to you is much more than emotions or feelings ... although they may be part of how you experience Him. It is through the Holy Spirit that we receive the ability and power to live life the way God wants us to. When you become a Christian, Jesus does not give you a list of rules to follow. Rather, He empowers you by the Holy Spirit to live an intimate life with Him. Every moment of your life, the Holy Spirit is waiting to guide you into a life of significance for God. He will empower you to abide in Christ, love others, overcome trials and temptation and sin, and live for Him. Every moment of your life, the Holy Spirit is waiting to guide you into a life of significance for God.

The Holy Spirit's empowers you to:

- abide in Christ
- love others
- overcome trials and sin
- live for Jesus

But ... He always allows you free choice. How you act and behave is motivated by what you think. Many people fill their lives by chasing after money, sex, or toys and possessions, thinking it will bring them happiness. And, as a result, they waste their

lives. Other people leave God out of their lives because they believe life will be boring. They believe God is against fun ... and that He doesn't care about their dreams. They don't want to trust Him with their future.

What will you choose?

The Bible tells us that God loves us so much that He desires and plans the very best for our future. In Psalm 37:4 we read, "Then you will take delight in the Lord, and he will answer your prayers."

If you accept God's Word as truth, you will give all your plans and dreams to God. Then, as He transforms your heart, your purified desires will become compatible with God's desires for you.

Q. How do you feel about letting the Holy Spirit have complete control of your life?

Romans 8:32 says, "Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things?"

Q. What kinds of things do you think God desires to graciously give you?

God desires and plans the very best for your future.

Joni's Story

Joni Eareckson was an attractive, athletic teenager who had everything going her way in life—until she dove head first into a shallow lake and broke her neck. Joni had trusted Christ for salvation in Young Life, but at the time of her accident, she was living for self-fulfillment. Suddenly her world fell apart. She would never walk or be able to use her hands again! Joni's faith was shaken. Joni says, "In those first few months after my injury, the promises of God seemed anything but true ... How could I be expected to believe in God when everything inside and outside of me screamed just the opposite?" Joni struggled greatly until a friend from Young Life named Steve Estes encouraged her to trust God. Through time, and as she listened to God's Word, Joni began to believe God's promises. She overcame her despair ... by faith ... and today runs an international ministry, Joni and Friends, which shares Christ's love with disabled people all over the world. "Today as I look back, I am convinced that the whole ordeal of my paralysis was inspired by God's love. I wasn't the brunt of some cruel divine joke. God had reasons behind my suffering, and learning some of them has made all the difference in the world." —Joni, *A Step Further*

The Bible tells us that it *is* possible to live a life of incredible influence. What might that look like? Hebrews chapter 11 gives us examples of men and women who trusted God in spite of great adversity and opposition. Living a life of faith pleases God and results in a life of power and victory over our circumstances. Living a life of faith comes from the Holy Spirit's power.

In the Old Testament of the Bible, when God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He performed many miracles, including drying up the Red Sea so they could escape the armies of Pharaoh. The people of Israel saw God's mighty hand at work, but soon forgot and began to doubt his promise to provide for their basic needs. As God transforms your heart, your purified desires will become compatible with God's desires for you. Living a life of faith pleases God. It results in a life of power and victory over our circumstances.

God told the people through Moses that He had a place of rest for them to dwell in, called the Promised Land, "a land flowing with milk and honey." But all they did was complain and doubt God's promise. (This story is found in the Bible in Exodus chapters 3 through 20.)

The Israelites sent twelve spies to scout out the land and discovered it to be a paradise "flowing with milk and honey." But there were also giants there. When the spies came back and reported their findings, only Joshua and Caleb were willing to trust God and face the giants. The other ten scouts were afraid and convinced the doubting Israelites they were unable to overcome the giants. For the next 40 years, they wandered in the wilderness because of their unwillingness to trust God. (Read chapters 13 and 14 in the book of Numbers.)

Q. What are the giants in your life?

Read Hebrews chapter 11 in the New Testament of the Bible and write down your thoughts about these men and women who had faith and what you can learn from them.

Q. How can the Holy Spirit encourage you today to face those giants?

Application

Q. Is there something in your life keeping that is keeping you from trusting God?

Take a moment to confess your fear and your lack of trust in God. Ask God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and empower you to face your giants!