

Spiritual Life #8B

Filled with the Spirit

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Loved ones, I'd just remind you of what we've been talking about these first Sunday evenings. First of all, you remember I tried to introduce the spiritual life and what a spiritual life was. And then we talked about the difference between spirit and soul in the spiritual life. Then you remember, we talked about the fall of mankind where we rebelled against God and determined to live our own way and then we talked about the whole truth of salvation. Then we began to discuss some of the problems that many of us experience after we're converted and one of them of course was sin after conversion and what you do about sin after conversion. Do you remember, one of the things we shared was of course, that sin after conversion comes because you are still a carnal Christian and we talked then about the carnal Christian and what a carnal Christian is.

And then we talked about deliverance from carnality and how to be delivered from carnality. And then last Sunday, you remember, we talked again about the self life and especially the traits of the self life -- because of course that's just another name for carnality, the self, self centeredness, self exaltation. And what I'd like just to talk about again tonight is being filled with the Spirit and what it means to be filled with the Spirit and how you are filled with the Spirit.

I would point out to you that really all those things are connected together. That people have trouble with sin after conversion because they're not filled with the Spirit. And because they're not filled with the Spirit they are carnal Christians and they do need deliverance from carnality and from the self life. And I'm trying to spend time loved ones, particularly on these areas more than we have in past years because I've found that a lot of you loved ones often come to that point. And if we talk about it quickly in an evening you don't come through on it at all and then you try and stumble on with the rest of the teaching over the next three years. And really what we'll be talking about is walking after the Spirit -- and that is something only a person filled with the Spirit can take part in.

And so it's very important that you get it clear that you can be clean, and free, and filled with the Holy Spirit and you can be victorious. And until you are free from sin, really you can't begin to take part in the whole growth in purity and beauty. And I'd just remind those of you who feel the old self struggling inside and fighting that there is an infinite development possible in patience. I think some of us like to bluff a little and say, "Oh, if I got rid of all my sin now what would I do for the rest of my life?" Well, I'd point out that there's a beautiful growth in patience. Just as you get cleverer, and cleverer at expressing anger or sarcasm so you get more and more refined in the way you express love, and patience, and kindness, and gentleness and that is the growth in grace that God talks about.

Notice that he talks about growing in grace, he doesn't talk about growing out of sin, he talks about growing in grace. And the grace of life is the life of the Holy Spirit that Jesus enables us to experience. So I'd point out to you that Nee is right, he has a book called "The Normal Christian Life" and he says the normal Christian life begins after you're filled with the spirit, after you're delivered from carnality. Up to then it's either a non-Christian life or a subnormal Christian life. But a normal Christian life begins after you're filled with the Holy Spirit.

I would just remind you of what I really do think loved ones, even though I know I fight a little boredom with the diagram, I still think it's the simplest diagram to express to you how some of us end up carnal. [The diagram is three concentric circles representing spirit, soul and body that make up the personality.] You remember Paul says to the Corinthians, "I could not address you as spiritual men but as carnal because you behaved like ordinary men. You were filled with strife and envy." And so he divides children of God into two groups: those who are spiritual, who are moved by the Holy Spirit -- and those who are carnal, who are moved by the flesh, or moved by the outward world and society. And I'd just remind you of God's plan for us. I really do think if you are just patient and look at the miserable diagram again and just think through it, I think it is the simplest way to explain how some of us can be born of the Spirit and yet not be filled with the Spirit.

God made us in three parts: spirit; soul; and body. These are the functions, or some of the functions, of our spirit: communion, intuition and conscience. We can commune with God. We can know inside what he wants us to do by our intuition. Our conscience constrains our will in the light of our intuition to direct our mind and emotions according to the Spirit that is flowing through us and our mind and emotions direct our body and that spirit flows out to the world. That was exactly God's plan for us. That the Holy Spirit of his own life would flow through us like that through communion with him and would flow through our whole personalities, our mind would understand, our will would obey our conscience, our mind would understand what our will was telling us to do, would send out the right directions to our body, and our emotions would express the joy of our fellowship with God.

And so the whole life would be an expression of outgoing spirituality, and liberty, and blessedness that we shared with God. So it would be all an outward movement. We of course, rebelled against that idea. We determined we'd live on our own, "We want to be like you God, but not so we can have fellowship with you or have to depend on you. We want to be like God, we want to be a God, we want to be able to do what we want to do. That's how we want to be like you." And that's not of course the way God wanted us to be like him at all. God wanted us to be like him in the sense that Jesus is, so that we could have continual friendship and relationship with him forever. We rebelled against that whole idea and of course, lost all the benefits of his love.

Any of you who knows somebody that loves you knows it's great the sense of meaning it gives to your life. You at last feel, "I'm important to somebody. I have some significance to somebody." You know, if it's a father or a mother, it gives great security. They come and tuck you up in bed at night and that love gives great sense that if there's anything wrong they'll protect you from it. A great sense of happiness too in just being able to go out with them and talk with them and that's what we got from God. But when we turned against him we missed all those things and so we had to try and get them from the world and that's what it means in Genesis when it says, "When we saw that the tree was good for food," that is, for our security. "That it was a delight to the eyes," something to give us joy and happiness. "That it was to be desired to make one wise," -- something that would give us significance and importance in front of other people. We decided to turn to the world and try to get from it and from people the significance, and security and happiness that we were meant to get from God.

And so the whole personality became perverted. The mind instead of understanding what God was giving to us, it began to manipulate the world, to try to work angles on the world, to get from the world security. And work angles on the stocks and shares, began to work angles on separate deals with people, to try and strain and filter from the world the security that we used to get from God.

The emotions, instead of expressing the joy of our fellowship with God began to concentrate on getting joy. That's what spoiled sexual relationships. Sexual relationships were meant to be a beautiful expression from one person to another without any thought of self, of the love that God was giving them. Suddenly sexual relationships turned sour and the emotions, instead of expressing joy -- because they had no joy to express, being without their Father -- they began to concentrate on getting joy from people.

And the will of course, instead of obeying the conscience was actually dominated by the body. And so the whole personality was perverted. God had to withdraw the Holy Spirit from us because our whole personality was perverted. Then you remember, that's the important step. He was willing to give us again the Holy Spirit if you could find some way of completely rectifying this perverted personality. If he could find some way of crossing that out and rectifying it so that the whole direction was the right way around, then he was prepared to give us the Holy Spirit again. And of course, he found that way in Jesus. He made him to be sin who knew no sin. He put us all into Jesus and our old self, this old self here that worked the wrong way, was crucified with Christ so that we might be delivered of the body of sin and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

And so Jesus died so that God then had found the antidote for that carnality and so he offered us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit was brought back to the world and that spirit that was dead and was dominated by a desire for enjoyment, and security, and significance from the world, that spirit came alive and really that's what happened at the New Birth. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit of God comes right into them and gives them life and renews their relationship with God. And most of us, when we're born of God, what happens is we don't know all the details but we believe that God has done something magnificent in Jesus that enables us to receive his Spirit.

And mostly, that's all we know. Most of us, that's all we know. If I asked you after you became a child of God, what the meaning of the cross is, you would probably say, "Well, it's something God has forgiven me my sins on the cross. I don't quite understand why but it's certainly because of the death of Jesus that I am able to receive the Holy Spirit." And you'll notice that a little child of God doesn't have much notion about what the cross is about except that because of the cross, because of something that happened on the cross, God is willing to give us the Holy Spirit.

Now loved ones, we all know why that is. God is able to give us the Holy Spirit because in a cosmic miracle on the cross he completely destroyed the old perverted reversed personality that simply would have grieved the Holy Spirit to death and because of that he is able to give us the Holy Spirit. The only purpose of giving us the Holy Spirit of course is not that the Holy Spirit would stay there but that it would go out you see. And that's the whole purpose of God giving us the Holy Spirit, so that the whole original plan that he had for us would actually take place. So that in fact, the whole personality would operate the way it was meant to.

And that's why God gives us the Holy Spirit. He doesn't give us the Holy Spirit so that the Holy Spirit can stay inside us. That was never his plan. His whole plan was always that the Holy Spirit of his love and his beauty would flow through us to the world and that's why Jesus died and that's why God gave us the Holy Spirit. And of course, that's where really the problem comes. It isn't long after the Holy Spirit comes into us that God begins to reveal to us, "Now your life, your life operates like this. [From the outside in.] Now, I've given you my Holy Spirit so that your life will begin to operate like this. [From the inside out.] So my Holy Spirit will be able to move out through your life to others."

And when we first hear that, we don't like the idea because we like having control of the security we get from the world. We like having control of the amount of significance we get among people. We like having control of our own happiness. And so usually when we first are challenged by the Holy Spirit on becoming a truly outgoing person, we reject and resent the suggestion and that's when we become carnal Christians. The moment the Holy Spirit begins to reveal to us the meaning of Jesus' death on Calvary we begin to say, "The benefit of the Holy Spirit I want, but the condition that I have to fulfill to be filled with the Holy Spirit I don't want anything to do with. God, I want forgiveness of my sins. I'm prepared to believe that something happened on Calvary so that you can forgive me and I want the Holy Spirit, but if what happened on Calvary meant that I've to die to my own control of my own life and I have to allow the Holy Spirit to flow out through me, that I don't want."

And so of course we enter into that kind of life that is described in Galatians, where the Spirit struggles to get out but the flesh fights against it. So the Spirit and the flesh fight against one another to prevent us doing what we want. And what happens then is the carnal Christian sinks back into Romans 7:15, "The good that I would I cannot do and the evil I hate is what I do." And so really he begins to become a man under the law and that's when of course, all the struggles occur because that's when he wants to say, "Oh well, it doesn't matter if I obey God or not. I'm not a man under the law any longer. I'll act as though I'm not under the law. I've been saved by Jesus' death so that I don't have to obey the law."

And of course, all the protesting is because he knows he's a man under the law. He knows he's a man or she's a woman who can't obey the law. They live under the law, they don't live above the law, they don't live in victory, but they live under it so they're always pleading, "Oh well, it doesn't matter if I can't obey the law. I know it says from the first chapter in the Bible to the last chapter that you should obey God. I know we should be pure, I know that, but I can't be. And anyway, Jesus' death isn't to enable the law to be fulfilled in me, it's to enable him to fulfill the law so I don't have to." And all the arguments and protestations then occur that a carnal Christian uses to defend themselves.

Loved ones, don't do it, it's just daft. God made us to be clean and pure. He made us to be saints. He calls us saints again, and again. Jesus died so that we could be completely turned around; so that we could become as pure as he is. So don't settle for anything less than that. If you're in any doubt, I point you to the world. What does the world say about Christians? "Oh, they live too pure lives. They live way above what they preach. They're too beautiful, too free from gossip, too free from envy and anger and fighting these Christians. Oh, they make me feel I'm so bad." The world doesn't say that.

The world pleads and it says, "I wish you practiced what you preached. I wish you'd stop preaching to us all and I wish you'd be what your own Bible says you should be." And I'd point that out to you loved ones. The world wants to see a group of men and women like the men and women of the first century who out-thought their contemporaries and out-lived their contemporaries. The world has no doubt what kind of Christian it wants to see. The only body that defends carnal Christians is the church. The world doesn't want anything to do with carnal Christians because it's no fool that knows carnal Christians are just as bad as out and out sinners. So there's nobody really wants the carnal Christian except the church and the people who want to live carnal lives. Loved ones, don't, don't touch it.

Another phrase that is used to describe deliverance from carnality is the phrase "being filled with

the Spirit.” Part of the reason for this is Peter was completely changed by a certain experience and you might like to look at his own experience there. You remember when he was in the courtyard and the little maid came forward, and it’s John 18:16. Jesus you remember was being arrested and taken in for his initial trial. “While Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the maid who kept the door, and brought Peter in. The maid who kept the door said to Peter, ‘Are not you also one of this man’s disciples?’ He said, ‘I am not.’” And old self was still there and he loved Jesus and he had something of his Spirit in him but self was there.

“Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves; Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.” Then in Verse 25, “Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said to him, ‘Are not you also one of his disciples?’ He denied it and said, ‘I am not.’ One of the servants of the high priest, a kinsman of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, ‘Did I not see you in the garden with him?’ Peter again denied it; and at once the cock crowed.” Now that was Peter, a disciple of Jesus but filled with self, scared of what people would think.

And then of course, you turn to Peter in Acts 2. And he stands up in Acts 2:22, and you can’t imagine that this is the trembling fearful Peter that denied his Lord because of what would happen to him when a little maid questioned him. Acts 2:22, he gets up in front of the very people who crucified Jesus and he says, “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know – this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.” And Peter is a completely different man.

No fear of men, no fear of what people will do to him. What occurs between those two Peters? Oh, Acts 2:4, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” And really when you’re emptied of self you’re filled with the Holy Spirit and that’s the experience that we need loved ones. I’d try to use as many different illustrations as I can so that the Holy Spirit can speak to you.

I think that you can look at the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit a little in the light of Revelation 3:20 if you’d just turn to it, loved ones. It’s a verse we all know well. We normally think it applies to Jesus but it’s really the Spirit speaking to the church as you remember, in Verse 13, “He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.” Then Revelation 3:20 is what the Holy Spirit is saying, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.” So the experience of being born of God could be likened to the Holy Spirit coming and saying, “I stand at the door and knock. If any man open the door I will come in to him and will sup with him. So I will sup with him, I will be the guest and you will be the host. I will sup with you. And then if you let me, he will sup with me. I will become the host and you will become the guest.”

One way of thinking of it is that your own life is a house. And the Holy Spirit comes to the door at the time of your conversion and points out of course, that you have no relationship with God at all and that God is willing to have a relationship with you if you’ll deal with the actions and the words in your life that are wrong. And normally that’s the first thing God deals with, the actions and words of self that are outward in your life. And most of us deal with those, we confess and we repent and we receive the Spirit of Jesus into our lives. And we receive him in as the guest. And then he begins to go into other parts of our life and these are normally, loved ones, the attitudes.

It's normally the attitudes that show the presence of self and the domination of self in us.

Most of us who are born of God have our outward acts and words in some degree of control but it's inside -- in our attitudes, our motives, our responses, our desires -- that's where we know we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. We can come into a meeting like this and we can on the outside, at least not show visible hate to other people, and sometimes we can manage to show some outward love. But inside in our hearts are the little thoughts, "She looks a little strange wearing that." Or, "Why does he say it that way? That's kind of dumb." Little thoughts, little attitudes that nobody can see, indeed you hardly know they're passing, they're just through your mind in a moment.

But actually, they prevent you expressing perfect respect and perfect love to other people. And you think of course, they don't notice. What they do notice is a lack of outgoing love towards them. They aren't terribly conscious of anger or hatred but they're aware that they're not receiving a transparent love. Now, it's in the attitudes that you know that you're not filled with the Holy Spirit. See, I think a lot of us constantly talk about sin as if sin is me taking a Bible and throwing it at John as hard as I can. But, sin is me wanting to do that whether I actually do it or not. Sin is not loving him as Jesus loves him. Sin is any uncleanness in the attitude at all, any uncleanness in the motive. It's thinking of Laurie singing here, or me speaking, or John playing or singing -- you're up here and you're apparently doing God's work and you're doing it beautifully -- but inside the motive is, "I wonder do they think I'm really good? I wonder if they really appreciate what I am doing?" And the motive is self and not God.

Now that's, loved ones, the kind of inner attitude or inward sin that reveals to you that you're not filled with the Spirit. Now, those are the things that the Holy Spirit begins to get to. So, he comes first of all into the entrance hall and he points out, "You know, you are selfish in regard to people. You're unselfish when it suits you but that's not unselfishness, that's just convenience. You're actually selfish if somebody asks you to go somewhere with them and you don't really want to go there. You're selfish with people. You often say, 'Oh, I'm not very good at meeting people.' But actually you're not very good at putting yourself out for people."

The Holy Spirit begins to deal with that kind of attitude, or he begins to deal with your fear of people and he begins to say, "Why are you afraid of people? Is it because you care what they say, what they think of you? Is your reputation in people's eyes important? Do you mean to say that if somebody didn't want you to do something and Jesus did -- that you'd yield to people rather than Jesus?" The Holy Spirit begins to deal with you on the same level that he dealt with Peter in regards to the little maid in the courtyard. Do you care more about what people think of you than you do about what Jesus thinks of you? Or, are you prepared to die completely to what anybody thinks of you? So the Holy Spirit deals with you on those issues.

He begins to go in to the bedroom, begins to bring before you your laziness. Not just dealing with you on did you manage to get up for work this morning -- but isn't there a laziness in you? Maybe you do manage to get up for work but don't you have an attitude that really wants to lay in bed? And suddenly it begins to dawn on you that it is possible to have an attitude that wants to get up. That it is possible to have Jesus so in you that you don't have a temptation to laziness and the Holy Spirit begins to deal with you in regard to that, begins to point out to you some of the laziness that nobody else sees. And we all know where that is.

We cover our laziness up and the Holy Spirit begins to say, "Do you see that you cosset your body? In fact, you love yourself. You protect yourself every time you possibly can. And do you see that

is not what Jesus did for you? Jesus laid himself out on the cross. Convenience is a silly word to use; it was far beyond inconvenience for him to lay himself out on the cross. It meant death for him and he had no thought of what would be easy or comfortable for himself at that time.” And the Holy Spirit begins to deal with you in your laziness; that it is really a feeling you have that you have a right to do things when you want to and that’s when the Holy Spirit begins to first reveal to you what he’s getting at.

He’s getting at your domination of your own life -- that you’re running your own life. You’re running it on the whole for God but you’re still running it. You’re the one that decides what to do. And in fact, what the Holy Spirit is saying is, “You’re still the host in this house. I really haven’t the freedom to rearrange the furniture here. It’s you that has this furniture arranged and you’re asking me to come in and liven it up a little. But do you see that I want to take over your life completely, I want to control it utterly.” And so he begins to deal with the self indulgence in your life. The little things that aren’t very sinful but they’re just – the attitude, even the attitude loves ones, “I deserve an ice cream today. I do. I deserve a rest today. I’ve had a hard, hard day. I deserve a break today.”

The whole attitude that says, “I ought to, I ought to. Poor old me, this body can only take so much and I have given it more than twice as much today.” And it’s a complete rejection of the belief that Jesus is able to enable you to do all things. That your body fired up and strengthened by him can do more than any human being could think they could possibly do. The Holy Spirit begins to get at your self indulgence which is based always on your own ability to do things. He begins to deal with your self pity.

Loved ones, I think honestly --ith due respect to you loved ones who are tied up with self condemnation -- sometimes I wonder, is it not just sick self pity? And really, we children of God who are called to follow the Nazarene and to be indifferent to ourselves, I think sometimes we’re the most pitiful crowd you could see. We are able to sink into a self pity about the terrible trials we’re having, and the terrible things we have to bear, that it is pitiful compared to what some of those happy warriors expressed who know nothing of God. And self pity you know, is just the heart of sin. It is the heart of sin.

And we all think or see self pity as crying over yourself and you say, “Well, I haven’t used up too many Kleenex over myself. I don’t cry much over myself.” But self pity doesn’t need to be crying over yourself, self pity is just, “Oh this is terrible what I have to put up with.” That’s self pity. And I think a lot of us are just caught in that miserable, miserable self pity and we’re always thinking of what’s happening to us. Loved ones, honestly I think the safest thing is not to be thinking of yourself at all and if you’re ever thinking of yourself you’re probably thinking of yourself in a self pitying way.

It’s probably safe just to keep clear of yourself. You won’t lose anything by leaving God to look after yourself. He’s done a good job so far and he’ll probably do a better job than you’ve done up to the moment. And self pity is so often any thought of self. How am I doing, how are people dealing with me? Or worry. I think a lot of us say, “Oh yeah, well I have this thing with worry, you know. I have a terrible problem with worry. On the whole I’m very victorious but I have a problem with worry and anxiety. Oh I just inherited it from my father, he was a worrier and I’m a worrier too. I am kind of proud of it you know.” And we fail utterly to see, look it’s downright sin.

Jesus gave us a command, "Be anxious for nothing but by prayer and supplication let your request be made known unto God. Have no thought for the morrow, the morrow will take care of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Jesus laid it on as straight and as clear as "thou shall not commit adultery". And it's sin to worry. Why? Because worry is refusing to trust God your dear Father, it's refusing to trust him. It's a desire to control the thing because most of you would say you see, "Oh well, I mean I worry for a reason. I worry because I'm not sure if the thing is going to turn out alright." Do you think that's the real problem? I don't think so.

I don't think you're worried about whether it will turn out alright. For instance, if it turned out the way God wanted it to, would you be happy? You'd probably say, "No, no I want it to turn out the way I want it to turn out." And that's why we worry. We worry not in case the thing will turn out alright, but whether it will turn out alright the way we want it to. And being clear of worry involves handing all that over to God. "Lord, let the job turn out as you want it to whether it means my promotion or my demotion." The Holy Spirit moves into the office and begins to deal with the attitudes that we express deep down. The little pride, you know -- when we can talk about how brilliant we are to the secretary. And a little envy about the guy who gets promoted before we do and nobody else sees it but we go home with a little sadness of heart.

And you notice these things don't usually show too much on the outside except that they don't show in perfect rejoicing. The other boy is promoted and instead of going forward with full joy and complete happiness there's nothing. It's, "Oh well, I'm glad you got the job." And really old Hubert Humphrey in a way puts us to shame, because when you think of some of the things he went through and some of the defeats that he had. And there's one story that everybody tells in congress, that he comes up smiling all the time treating people as persons all the time whether they betrayed him or not, he kept loving people with an open heart. And envy prevents you doing that.

It means that you just say what will pass you in front of your colleagues; dishonesty in the business. And the Holy Spirit begins to deal with you on dishonesty. You say one thing and you don't really mean that, but it gets you out of a difficult situation. And the Holy Spirit begins to show you, you are dishonest in ways that nobody knows about it but you know about them. And he begins to show you you're dishonest because you're still God, you want to control this whole thing. "You want people to think of you the way you want them to think. Are you willing to die to what people think of you? Are you willing to give the control of your own life over to Me so that I will bring about whatever I want in your life?" And that's really the heart of dishonesty.

Dishonesty is the old Jacob manipulating his way into the kind of success he wants. The Holy Spirit begins to deal with you on the love of praise. It's so embarrassing, isn't it? It's embarrassing, you don't like to talk about it. We are children, we are big babies, really. But isn't it such a shame that so many of us are not beyond that stage. We're dying for a little bit of praise. And really it is because we're not satisfied with the praise that comes from God only. The Holy Spirit begins to deal with us on that.

Then he begins to go into the lounge and deal with those attitudes that we have: jealousy of other people, exaggeration, not speaking exactly honestly as it really is. A lack of love for people and a love of ease for ourselves. And the Holy Spirit begins to show us, "You have these things and they're really all connected with the protection of self. You don't want to be crucified, you don't want to endure the terror and the discomfort of being crucified with Christ. Therefore, you don't want to rise with him."

Oh brothers and sisters, if you would see that. You can only rise with Jesus if you die with him. There is no resurrection without a crucifixion. But we so often oppose everything that involves a crucifixion. Hanging on a cross with nails in the hands, and a love of ease cannot coexist with that, with the feet nailed to the cross; that's anything but ease. And God wants us to die to any ease for the rest of our lives and then he'll be able to live through us as fully as he was able to live in his own body.

Now the Holy Spirit then moves into the family room and there he shows us all the anger, and the drawing attention to ourselves in conversation, the impatience we have with people because they're not doing things when we want them to. That's it, isn't it? We all like to think, "No, no it's because they won't do things at the perfect time." No, we're the men and the women who establish the perfect time and we get impatient when they don't measure up to our perfect time. It's so different when at last you say, "Holy Spirit you alone know the perfect time. I'm content with that. Whether they come and do the thing at my time or not, what does it matter. You are God Lord, it's you that knows. I hand it over to you."

The Holy Spirit begins to show us our impatience and our touchiness -- which is just self consciousness -- and our criticism of other people -- which is just building ourselves up at the expense of tearing others down. And then the Holy Spirit comes into the chapel and points out the deadness of our spirits and the dryness and the lack of power in our prayer lives. And deals with all these attitudes and bit-by-bit as the Holy Spirit goes around these rooms we respond. And often we do, many of us have done this, we've taken it one-by-one and we've cleaned the stuff out of this room, cleaned the stuff out of this room, out of this room, until the Holy Spirit has got through every room in the house and he has every room cleaned.

And we still wonder why we don't seem to be victorious. Why we don't seem to have the overflowing of spirit of Jesus' love in us. And then the Holy Spirit takes us to the closet at the back and there we've moved all the stuff out of these rooms into this closet at the back. And it's interesting how we do it. This closet loved ones, has a sign on the door: "Self's Rights and Ways". And what most of us do is we try to negotiate individually on these vices with the Holy Spirit. But we always retain the right to bring these vices back into our life. That's what we put in the closet.

We put in the closet self's rights to its own way. And we always feel in our hearts, "Yeah, but whenever we need jealousy again we'll pull it back in. Whenever we need envy again we'll pull it back in. Whenever we want, we'll pull anger in. Oh okay, I'll let you have your way Holy Spirit now but we won't die to our right ever to be angry. We won't die to our right ever to be envious, die to our right ever to be self indulgent." And loved ones, that's what the Holy Spirit is after.

All these attitudes, and motives, and desires are themselves only symptoms of self that is in that closet and it's self uncrucified, self not willing to hang on the cross with its Savior so that it can rise with him. Brothers and sisters, I have to repeat just briefly what I shared last Sunday: the death of Jesus is the key. The death of Jesus is the key. And evangelicalism for years has exalted the death of Jesus as a penal substitution so that we could carry on living so often the kinds of lives that we wanted to and yet not be condemned for it.

Loved ones, the death of Jesus is the key, it is the center. But it is the death of Jesus experienced by us through faith by the power of the Holy Spirit. The death of Jesus is the key. When you hang on that dear cross with your Savior, when you cleave to that dear one who gave his

life for you and you say, "Lord, I'm willing for all that your Holy Spirit shows me is involved for me in being crucified with you," then the Holy Spirit fills you with Jesus and these things are cleaned out of your life.

Now, I have to push you on that because I think a number of you say, "But it doesn't rise. It doesn't rise." And if you say to me, "Oh yeah, you mean it rises and you have power to suppress it." I don't mean that. When God says through Paul, "God gave the Holy Spirit to these gentiles as he did to us and cleansed their hearts by faith" that's what he means. He cleans your heart so that those things are not there so that your heart is open and so that people can see only Jesus and you experience only Jesus. And that continues throughout your life in so far as you are willing to accept your place on the cross day-by-day; to have belief in that and to submit to the dear Holy Spirit every time he gives you more light about what being on that cross means. But the Holy Spirit cleanses your heart.

And loved ones, I have to push you on it again. I would not be here on this stage saying these things if the Holy Spirit was not able to do it in my life and in your life. Old Hubert Humphrey said to Mondale, "Life is not to be endured, it's to be enjoyed." I say to you, the Christian life is not to be endured, it's to be enjoyed. The Christian life is a beautiful spontaneous expression of Jesus. It is not a defeated burden kind of experience of carrying a cross on your back. It is not. It is being born by the cross and then being lifted into heaven with Jesus through the power of his Spirit.

So brothers and sisters, I have to say to you that if you're going to come here for the next 60 or 70 years, for the next 60 or 70 years I'm going to keep telling you this because it's true. This is what Christianity is and this is what God has for you. So I'd just ask you, be hard on yourself. Stop all this silly self pitying stuff. Stop saying, "Oh, how hard God is." And get to what John shared at the beginning. Let's regard the law as our dear friend who can free us from all the things that spoil our lives. And it frees us by being our school master and continuing to say, "No, no, there's freedom, there's freedom for you." And I am going to continue to shake my finger at you until you get to the cross where that freedom is. And that's what the dear law does.

And he drives us to the point where we see that the purity that God requires of us is beyond what we can produce ourselves and it has to be produced by self being destroyed and a new creation being put in its place. And that's what happens when you accept your death with Jesus.

Even brief questions? Loved ones, it's late I know. Any brief questions.

How did you define temptation through that final point?

I could give the old illustration which is so easy and that is gasoline. And temptation is the fiery darts of the wicked one, you know, coming right into the can of gasoline -- and it just blows. The temptation comes and you go right out to meet it. You see the provocation to envy and you have envy filled in your heart and it blasts out to meet it. And then after, after the Holy Spirit fills you, everything changes. It's like the gasoline can is now filled with water. The fiery dart goes in and just extinguishes. I know it's kind of a funny little illustration but that's what it's really like.

The temptation is still there but it does not have the power. And the Holy Spirit gives you even prior notice of the temptation. And loved ones, I'm not arguing on the business of, do you ever sin and that kind of thing -- but I do say this, that if you sin you sin involuntarily. It is an

unintentional sin. It is, in other words, due not to rebellion -- but it is deception. If you sin, it is by deception. And as soon as you're aware of it there's no desire to continue in it. That's it.