

Laws of the Spirit 2 – Blockage & Poisoning

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Loved ones, the center of most of our beings probably looks like that. [On graphic draws a circle with the word "life" inside but makes the "I" in "life" large.] Before God's Spirit deals with us there is a great "I" there that governs everything we do. And when God sends his Spirit into our spirits the Holy Spirit begins to renew our spirits and we sense for the first time something beautiful inside us.

And that's really what the new birth is. It is something different coming inside us and we sense something that wasn't there before, wanting to love other people and wanting to do things that we never wanted to do before. And where there was a deadness that was kind of dominated by us being god, and wanting everything our way, suddenly there seems to be something new inside us that is driving us out to other people. But of course, for some time it has to fight this great "I" that still remains there. And that's why we often talk about the need to have that "I" crucified so that it is finally reduced to normal size and then only the Spirit of Jesus moves inside us.

It is interesting that that finds several expressions in the Bible, but one of them is in a verse in Revelation if you'd like to look at it. Revelation 3:20, a verse that we often use in connection with receiving Jesus as our Savior. "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." And it helped me a lot when someone pointed out that the first part of the promise is the new birth, "If any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him." That's usually what happens.

Jesus comes in and eats with the great "I" here. The "I" still governs our life and we welcome Jesus in as a guest. He eats with us and he wants to move some of the furniture around and change the house but we are the hosts and we insist on the furniture remaining as it is. And we accept advice from him and suggestions but still, we are the principals in the whole covenant and we do only what we really want to do. And then of course, the last part of the verse is when we allow him to become the host, "I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." And eventually then he becomes the host and I just eat with him. And Jesus is the chief person in the house and he can do whatever he will.

And that is the free Christian life. And I don't know where you all stand in your own lives, but it is a very free thing when you at last forget yourself. And that is the real life that is planned for us by God. When Jesus' Spirit governs everything we do, then you get true unselfishness. Until that happens you get a kind of imitation of unselfishness. You get people doing unselfish acts. But when Jesus' Spirit takes you over completely there's a freedom, and joy, and unselfishness. And I wonder if you're at that place? And I would encourage you to see that it is possible to come to it. It's possible to come to the place where you're not always wondering how much this is going to cost you not only financially but in reputation and in comfort.

And there comes a time when you fly high above the earth's atmosphere out there in the stratosphere somewhere, and you're able to be governed by this free generous spirit of Jesus that has no thought for itself. Now, it is possible loved ones, to live that kind of life. I agree with you, it's only

possible if there is a dear God to take care of us, because who would be looking after the store if we just leave the store ourselves? And that's normally most of our problems. We say, "If we leave the store," that is if we leave the business of our bank account and getting it built up, and if we leave the business of looking after our marriages, and our homes, and our careers -- "If we leave the store, who's going to look after the store?"

And of course, if there's no God then you're mad to leave the store. But, if there is a dear God who has promised that, "If you seek first my kingdom, all the other things I'll add unto you; I'll look after the store," then it is possible, finally, to burn your bridges behind you and to live for this Jesus. Then it is possible to say, "Lord Jesus, whatever you want to do that's what I want to do. You're me from this moment on. I live; yet not I, but Christ lives within me: and this life that I live, I live not by faith 'in' the son of God, but I live this life by the faith 'of' the son of God," because, it's Jesus taking the initiative.

So that's why people were called "Christ-ians", because they were people who were born along by Christ and therefore they were just "Christ-ian" people. They were people who were possessed by Christ. Now, loved ones, that's a great, and the eventual plan that God has for our lives. So when you have that kind of spirit moving inside you, you find that that Spirit is always trying to do the same thing of course, as it was in Jesus, always trying to get out -- always trying to get out to other people.

Now, it is interesting, that if that Spirit doesn't get out then that Spirit will be grieved. So maybe it's good for you to see that, that it's never a case of the Spirit dwelling there. The Spirit actually doesn't dwell. That's part of what Jesus meant when he said, "The Spirit is like the wind." The wind doesn't dwell in one place. The remarkable thing about the wind is that it's always moving. If the wind isn't moving there is no wind. And it is interesting, if you think for a moment that the word for wind in Hebrew is 'ru'ach'. And that is the word that means spirit -- wind, or spirit, or breath.

And so there is a great emphasis on the Holy Spirit being always a moving power. And actually, there's no such thing as the Spirit dwelling in you. We talk about the Spirit dwelling in you, but the only way the Spirit dwells in you is that he's always passing through you. And so there's always some Spirit in you because once you get rid of some of his Spirit there's more Spirit that comes in to take his place. So that's how you talk about the Spirit dwelling in you. But it's really just like a windy corner and windy city in Chicago. Really, there's wind on that corner just because the wind is always passing by that corner. And so it's the same with us, the Spirit of Jesus is always moving outward.

Now, if ever that Spirit becomes blocked then the Spirit is grieved. And so one of the things that we talked about in previous years -- and many of us were such immature little souls that we really didn't know what we were talking about -- but it is the blockage of the spirit. And of course, we're talking about the laws of the spirit. And one of the laws of the Spirit is that he's always moving. And if the Spirit is blocked in any way, then he's grieved. And actually you sense that grieving.

The Holy Spirit is so good you see, because he will always witness that grieving and he will witness it right there in your conscience. [He indicates the conscience in the center of our being on a graphic of the personality.] And the Holy Spirit will witness there that he is grieved. So you'll often sense a pang there in your conscience. And the Spirit will witness that he's grieved not only

by sin, but actually by this kind of action that we're talking about -- which is really sin, just it's unconscious sin often. And so we tend to call it the things that are inexpedient.

So loved ones, what we want to share just a little about at the beginning of this evening's study, is the ways in which the spirit can be blocked. And maybe it's good to look at one of the obvious ways in Mark 14:38. And it's that situation in the Garden of Gethsemane. And you remember, Jesus had left the disciples while he went to pray, and he told them to pray there. "Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer him."

Now it's perhaps good for all of us to see that, in that Verse 38, the meaning of 'flesh' there is the body itself, or the soul. So 'the flesh' in the New Testament means not only the selfish will that will not obey, but even when that selfish will is at last placed on the cross, then there is the inexpedient 'soul', or the undisciplined 'soul' -- and of course, often the weak body. And so when you are dealing with the movement of the Holy Spirit, after you've dealt with that massive "I" that is in the center of your being and the Spirit has free flow, then he begins to find that this dear old 'soul' here, [He points to it on the graphic of the personality.] is not actually a submissive servant of the Spirit at all, and that it has many habits, and many practices that are not the habits and practices of the Holy Spirit himself.

And of course, if you don't allow the Holy Spirit to make new ruts, or new channels in your soul -- in the habits of your mind, the habits of your emotions, the habits of your body -- then the Spirit will find himself blocked. That's where many of us get into real difficulty if we have formed patterns of behavior that are very strong in us, even if they're habits of, "Well, I must get to sleep at this hour. Then, I must rise at this hour." And we won't allow the Holy Spirit either to extend those hours or to lessen them, or to bring a flexibility into them.

It's the same with many of us in regard to our whole exercise life. Many of us, after leaving school or graduating, knew very little of exercise, and we just decided, "Well, we are no longer in a team of any kind and so you just don't exercise. Once you get to ordinary work there isn't time for that. Sometimes there's time; sometimes there isn't." And so gradually our bodies become heavier and heavier burdens. And they actually become very unwilling, and indeed, eventually they become utterly recalcitrant servants of the spirit. And so our bodies lie heavily upon us.

And I would just remind you of that verse. You remember it's in 1 Timothy 4:8. And it might be good just to look at it, because many of us use it as a reason for ignoring the body. And yet really, it has implicit in it God's commendation. 1 Timothy 4:8, "For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." But it is very interesting that Paul is saying to Timothy, "Bodily training is of some value." And it seems that many of us grieve the Holy Spirit through incredible weariness, and tiredness that comes upon us just somewhere between usually 2:30 and 4:30 in the afternoon. And so we're listening to someone as they're talking to us sharing their own hearts with us, and we're saying, "Yeah, yeah, yes..." [At that point he inhales with a sleepy, almost a snore, breath.] And that's what happens when actually our bodies are not in good shape.

I used to take the attitude, "Oh no, I'm tired because I'm getting far too much exertion." But actually the opposite is true; we're tired because our bodies are not getting exercise. And the blood flows slowly through them, and the circulation seems to become more, and more sluggish, and

our brain gets less and less blood, and so we generally slow up in our whole thinking processes. And then we go home and have a sizeable meal. And then we sit down to rest because we don't know how we'll manage through the evening and all the television until we get to bed. And of course, it is a hideous life. It is just a life that is serving Satan, because the body, which is a very resilient gift that God has given us, is getting no workout at all. And so the body lies heavily upon us.

And I would just -- without going to the length that we really should go this evening -- I would just ask you, "What shape is your body in and what is the state of your own physical fitness at this present time?" And if it isn't good, I know you're having troubles, because the mind itself depends on a healthy body. And those dear Greeks were right, that the secret was a healthy mind and a healthy body. And if the body is not healthy, of course, the mind itself is sluggish in its working.

And so many of us are not at all facing Satan, you know. And there we are 'casting him out' with great 'castings'. And it's not Satan at all that is the trouble. It's just our bodies lie heavily upon us. And therefore our minds are sluggish. Of course, you know how connected your emotions are to your body. You realize that if I get embarrassed, I blush. So you can see emotions tie right up with the secretion of fluid and the circulation of blood in your body. And if you get nervous then your mouth goes dry. And you can see that as the emotions produce immediate results in the body, so of course, the body is tightly connected with the emotions. And many of us share all kinds of depression that isn't spiritual at all in origin. It's simply physical in origin.

So I would encourage you. I don't know what kind of exercise format you have, but I would point out to you that often you will block the Holy Spirit. That is, often the Holy Spirit will want you to go to a prayer time, and to be active, and vibrant in the prayer time. And you'll get your old head down there. [Again he inhales with a sleepy, snore breath.] And you'll be half sleeping and half praying. And then of course all kinds of problems come in, because the will is not controlling the mind, so Satan throws other thoughts into the mind. Then you're fighting wandering thoughts. Then you feel guilty. Then you start casting away your faith. And then of course you lose everything.

So it is amazing how if the body is not in shape, it affects the ability of the mind and emotions to obey the Spirit. Indeed, the interesting thing is this that, if the body isn't in shape the body dominates the spirit. That's true. If the body is in shape then the Spirit is able to continue to have his way in your life. But if the body is heavy, then it leans in upon the soul and it begins to crush the spirit. And so many of us have all kinds of problems and we say, "Oh, I'm fighting Satan in my prayer times." And it's not Satan we're fighting. I suppose originally it's Satan we're fighting, but it's a body that is not in shape at all.

So I would ask you, do you exercise daily? And you don't need to join the European Health Spa to do that. And you don't need to expend all kinds of money. There are lots of exercises that a person can do in their own bedroom in very little space every day. There are all kinds of breathing exercises that can enhance your whole health and the ability of your body to be a good servant to your spirit. And I would encourage you to do it. And when the good weather comes, you ought -- everybody doesn't have to run, you can walk. And you can go out and spend time in God's world getting the kind of body that he can use, and that his Spirit can use.

So I would ask you to remember that, both ladies and gentlemen. And it seems to me that where Satan catches us is when we get old, or when we get older. I was absolutely convinced that I had given up team sports and that this was not the time to spend time exercising, until I found old Stanley Jones

-- a dear fellow he was -- 87 years old. And he still did his pushups -- where ever he was. It didn't matter where he was traveling, which hotel he was in, and he was continually on the move. He was six months in India and six months touring around the States, and speaking every night. And he was far more alive, and vibrant, than many, many people who were 60 years younger than him. And he kept on with the old exercises right until -- I think he died about 90.

And so God can keep us fit physically, if we commit ourselves to it. And I would encourage you to think of it. And I would encourage you not to get into all kinds of complicated explanations of the great warfare you're engaged in, when the only problem you have is the same as the disciples. The body is just not in shape and so "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

Now loved ones, the same is true of our minds. Our minds can become actually a block and a burden to the Spirit. And this can happen in all kinds of ways. It is important to allow the Holy Spirit to govern your mind. Now, he will do that in the same way exactly as he tells you when your body is becoming a block. He will speak in your conscience. And your mind will be going off on some book. Maybe you're reading fiction, or you're reading some argumentative book on politics. And for a while maybe the Holy Spirit will allow you to do it, and maybe it will allow you to finish it. But, there comes a time when the Spirit will check you on it and will say, "Okay, enough is enough."

And maybe he'll let you finish it the next day, or two days later, or a week later, or a month later. But the Holy Spirit will check you when your mind is becoming over exercised in the wrong way. Or often some of us -- it seems to me especially in politics -- some of us can get over enthusiastic. And we're determined to think through where Carter [US president at the time of this talk] is right, or where he is wrong. And we're determined to think through this whole Iranian situation. [American Embassy taken over and staff taken hostage by the new Iranian government. President Carter authorized a failed mission to free them.] And often the Holy Spirit will see that the mind is becoming far too engrossed in this, to the point that if the Spirit wants to direct you in your mind to think something, or explain something to someone else, the mind will not be free.

And so the Holy Spirit will check you and say, "That's enough. You've thought enough along those lines." Or, on the other hand, the Holy Spirit will direct you to certain books that maybe you do not normally read. And many of us do not find people like Andrew Murray, or even Watchman Nee, or many of us do not find [Charles] Finney or [Louis] Berkoff [author of "Systematic Theology" text book] -- depending on what our background is -- certain books we don't feel come naturally to us. And the Holy Spirit will direct us to those books in order to begin to balance our mind, because our mind in some way is not fit to be used by him.

I think many of us have not disciplined our minds in conceptual thought. That's true. I think many of us have not balanced, or trained our minds in conceptual thinking. Some of us are far too good at it. Some of us are philosophizing all the time and arguing this argument, and this belief, and this theory against that theory. But some of us have not trained our minds in conceptual thinking, and the Holy Spirit directs us to do that. Yield to him, because the Holy Spirit will all the time be working through your conscience to direct your mind into the kind of exercise that will make your mind a good servant of your spirit.

Now loved ones, it's the same with your emotions, because the emotions are the other part of the soul. And often your emotions can, through over exercise, or through under exercise, end up being absolutely useless to your spirit. And do you remember that Jesus was so good. He could weep with those that weep, and he could rejoice with those that rejoiced. You remember that verse in

scripture -- the shortest one we always learned at Sunday school -- "Jesus wept." And it somehow brings home to you that Jesus could sympathize with Mary and Martha. And he had a spirit that was settled on God but was very sensitive to other loved ones.

Now, many of us of course, find that we have emotions that are very, very uptight. Very hard! Very dry! And they are unable at times, to express freely what Jesus' Spirit wants us to express. Now, it's interesting but even if it's just because you're an old Swede or Norwegian, [known for their lack of emotion] or because, if it were the other case, if you were too wild in your emotions, an old Italian or Spaniard, whatever it is, if your emotions are not really submissive to the Spirit of Jesus, you will sense a kind of blockage. And you'll sense, "Well, I'm not involved in sin here. But, boy! There's some way in which I'm not really expressing the Spirit of Jesus' life to this person."

And so the Holy Spirit, through your conscience again, will often check you in your emotional life. And I don't mind too much crying up here. I feel a bit stupid, a guy crying. But you have to -- if you do it, you do it -- but it seems that you do need to make sure that your emotions are truly governed by the Spirit. So you can cry and cry. Sometimes you can cry for all kinds of corny reasons that nobody else knows about. It's good if you cry, or you weep, with the Holy Spirit guiding you.

Sometimes we can cry for ourselves. Sometimes we can cry because of some sentimentality. So there's a very important level and balance in our emotions that needs to be there for the Holy Spirit to use our emotions. Similarly, some of us think, "Oh, unlimited and unrestricted sympathy with someone who is in trouble is obviously Jesus' will." Well, no! Jesus' sympathy with a person is always controlled by the Holy Spirit. Because there is a weeping, you remember, "That is unto death," and "there is a weeping that is not unto death."

And often in funeral situations you get there, a weeping, and a sorrow that is of Satan. There is no hope in it! There is just despair and depression! And if you go into a home of mourning at the time of a death, and you just open yourself to that kind of sinful emotion, then of course your emotions will be weighted with that and will be blocked, so that the Holy Spirit will not be able to express that grief that has joy in it and hope in it.

And similarly, I think it's true -- I suppose I always think of it as you ladies that do it, but I think many of us men do it, too, and maybe even more so. Maybe you ladies have often far more control through your mind than we men have. But often we will allow our emotions to be absolutely caught up with some dear friend that has had a tragedy in their life, or has come into deep trouble in their marriage, or has come into deep trouble in their business life. And we will allow ourselves to go absolutely head over heels in sympathy and empathy. And before we know it, we'll be absolutely lying on the ground, absolutely dominated by our emotions, and with the Spirit of Jesus completely grieved, so that he isn't able to minister in that situation at all.

Similarly, I think -- you could take all sides of it but it is -- I know this sounds funny -- but it is important even at a [Minnesota] Twins [baseball] game, or at a [Minnesota] Vikings [American football] game to realize that you can open yourself to a kind of emotionalism that brings in something of Satan. And that can unsteady you, so that if God maybe brings you together with some person that needs the life of Jesus, immediately after the game finishes, you're in no state at all, or no shape of balance to express that life to them. So not only extreme depression and despair can unfit your emotions to express the Spirit of Jesus but really unrestricted happiness and

unrestricted exhilaration can do the same thing.

So loved ones, it is important, I think, to see that you can often get yourself into real difficulty in the spirit simply because your soul, or your body, in some way is blocking the Spirit coming out. Now, maybe I should just pause for a minute and ask, does anyone want to ask anything about that? Or, often the Holy Spirit will have to apply it to all of us, because you can't make rules about it. You can't make rules about the length of smile you should have if you're spiritual.

I'd like to share a little loved ones, I know I'm moving a little faster this evening, but there are deep things that I think we should touch on. And I would like to share them. So I'd like to talk just a little then about another way in which Satan affects your spirit. And that is in connection with the poisoning of your spirit. Now of course, you can see, how important this area is because this is the source of all the life of Jesus in you. [On the graphic of the personality he circles the spirit.] So of course, if you can affect this at the very well spring and source of your spiritual life then everything else is useless.

And this is what therefore, we're talking about. Satan at times blocks the spirit through soul and body that are not fitted for expressing the Spirit of Jesus. And at times he – in fact, you can see the actual picture that is used in Ephesians 6:16. It's really very graphic. And you'll recognize it immediately you see it. "Besides all these, taking the shield of faith, with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one." So that's what he does, shoots flaming darts into your spirit.

Now many of us you see, have the feeling, "Oh well no, he can't touch your spirit." But Satan does move in the spiritual world, and he cannot touch your spirit as long as your mind holds to your position in Christ Jesus. And you remember, the position of victory is Ephesians 2:6, "And God has raised us up and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And that position you remember, is described in Ephesians 1 as being, "far above every rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but in that which is to come."

And that is the position of power, and while your mind is fixed on that, and your will is submitted to the Holy Spirit, and while you yield no ground to Satan he cannot get fiery darts into your spirit. But if you yield any ground to him, Satan can shoot fiery darts into your spirit. And he can bring a poisoning into your spirit. And of course, without that there's nothing but Jesus in your spirit. Do you see that? That's the beautiful thing, when you've at last let the old self go to the cross and you live only for Jesus, and that's it, "Lord, whatever you want to do here we are, let's go." Where you have that kind of an attitude, your spirit is absolutely filled with the sweet and fragrant spirit of Jesus.

So the only way in which anything dirty can occur from that spirit and can come out from it to the rest of your life is if Satan fires darts into it and poisons the spirit. Now loved ones, at times he can do that. He can only do it if you fail to hold your position at the right hand of God, or if you fail to submit your will to the Spirit in some area of your life. So if a fiery dart comes into your spirit and you sense, "Boy, there's something unclean or something poisoned coming up from in me. There is something other than the sweet love of Jesus coming up from me. There's something other than his joy, and his peace." Then you ought to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you where you've given ground to Satan. Then you ought to deal with that ground. And then you ought to resist Satan in Jesus' name, because you remember, James 4:7 says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from

you.” Actually, that’s all you need to do. No big wrestling, no big fighting and all that kind of stuff, just resist him in Jesus’ name and he will flee from you. And then, bring your will back under the control of the Holy Spirit.

But what we might talk about a little, is some of the poisons that he can bring into your spirit. And really, they’re just examples loved ones. So I’ll just mention some of them that others have found happen inside them. Ephesians 4:15, is sometimes the way – often Satan uses scripture and tries to justify certain poisons by scripture and this is one of the famous ones. “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.” And often we find our spirits becoming stiff and unyielding, or we find them becoming selfish, and we find that we are abandoning our love and our tender feeling for our neighbors. And often Satan uses that verse, “Well you know, we have to speak the truth in love. I mean, you have to love them but, boy! they need some of the truth from time-to-time.”

And that’s good if you’re speaking the truth freely directed by Jesus’ Spirit. But it’s very interesting how Satan can often rationalize and persuade us, “Well, you know you have your faith but you have to have your faith, discipline, and all kinds of other things. And we have to see them as they really are. And we have to size up the thing as it is, and speak right to the point.” And often we can allow Satan’s harshness to come into our spirits. And we lose that tenderhearted feeling for our friends, or for our loved ones. And we find our spirits becoming rather selfish, and rather stiff and unyielding. And we will often say, “Well, you know we’re just standing our ground. We have to stand our ground. You can’t move with every wind that blows.”

But actually there comes into us a kind of unyielding attitude and instead of being flexible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we become stiff and unyielding. And we plead of course, that it’s in order to hold our own ground. But often it’s because we’ve yielded some other ground to Satan, often in some obvious disobedience. And so we’ve allowed a fiery dart from the wicked one to come in and actually make our spirits stiff and unyielding. And then of course, he uses scripture to kind of reinforce that and back us up in being that way.

Now loved ones, the Holy Spirit usually doesn’t leave you without some guidance, usually through your conscience. He gives you little pangs of conscience. You’ll maybe say something to someone and you’ll realize, “Oh, there was a hardness in that.” Or, someone will ask you to do something and, “Oh no, no, I haven’t time. I mean, I have my life laid out.” And the Holy Spirit will question you, “Would Jesus be as stiff, and scheduled, and inflexible as that?” And so usually, the Holy Spirit is so good, usually he will cause you to question if your spirit is in some way being poisoned.

And when that happens, I’d say again to you, what you need to do is thank the Holy Spirit and then go to him, and go into deep counseling with him. And ask him, “Holy Spirit, where did I yield ground?” And be open to the fact that you might have yielded ground in some other area of your life completely, because Satan often wants to put us off track by actually taking advantage of some ground we’ve yielded over here, but manifesting his poisoning in some area over here. So the first thing is to ask the Holy Spirit to show you.

And then when he shows you loved ones, then resist Satan right there. Often you will have to do it audibly: “In Jesus’ name, I resist you in Jesus’ name. I know you have been destroyed and have no power over me.” And then find out where your will has to be yielded and submitted to the Holy Spirit to take back that ground. And then you simply walk in praise of God, because that’s the only

safe place where there is the movement of the Holy Spirit through you, in loving God and praising. That's of course, another reason why, you see, it's important for your soul and body to be flexible, because if they cannot express freely what the spirit wants, then you won't have health inside you.

So it's important, immediately you've determined where the poison came from, then it's important that you begin to praise God, and to love again, and to live in an outgoing way. Many of us when, either our spirits are blocked, or when they're poisoned, we withdraw into ourselves. We think, "Ah, I'm coming into a deeper place with Christ and with the Holy Spirit. I'm discovering something new of myself." And we find we're a little shier with other people, and we're drawing back from other people. And often, Satan bluffs us and says, "Ah, you're discovering something deeper in yourself." Now often, that simply is deception. And we're not in fact discovering something deeper; we're just withdrawing back into self.

Now, that's different from the times when Jesus does begin to deepen us, and asks us to go deeper with him, and maybe to be quiet for a while, and to seek him. But that has a healthiness about it. But this other drawing back has an unhealthiness and a kind of introspective quality about it that immediately ceases to let us be used by Jesus' Spirit to bless other people. And often our friends and our colleagues who were formerly blessed by our witness actually miss us. And that's how you know that in some way it's an unhealthy thing, when the Spirit of Jesus is no longer moving through you.

It may be good for us to see again, that the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit filled person is -- and I have to use the word, I know it's a no-no, but it's a good English word and they're destroying it -- is a gay person. He is a person who is happy and joyous, and delighted, and spontaneous, and exhilarating. And he is an outgoing person, and a person that is engrossed and involved in other people. That is the Spirit filled person. The spirit filled person is not 'blinkers on' and 'eyes to the ground' praising the Lord in private. No, the Spirit of Jesus is always going out. So it's good to see that loved ones.

Now, what happens of course, Satan is always trying to poison that spirit. Another way in which he poisons it, he justifies by John 16:8. And it's a famous verse that we all know so well. But we often feel the Holy Spirit is not up to this, and we ought to help him a little. "And when he comes," that is the Holy Spirit, "He will convince the world," or convict the world you remember, "Concerning sin and righteousness and judgment." And often Satan entices us to harbor unforgiving and bitter feelings in our spirits -- to harbor a kind of 'fault finding' and hostile spirit in here. [He indicates the spirit on the graphic of the personality.]

Now, that can happen over all kinds of things. I mean, we can have disagreements with our loved ones at home. We can have disagreements with somebody in business. And Satan works up in you -- because it's all filling the office, or filling the school in which you are -- works up in you a kind of fault finding spirit towards this person. And you don't realize that, though the dart came from Satan and not from yourself, once you embrace and acquiesce in that dart, then that dart begins to become a work of the flesh in you. And so you find yourself with a spirit that is hostile or fault finding, a spirit that is kind of criticizing the other person.

And then of course, Satan says, "Well, well, when the Spirit comes he will convince the world of sin. Maybe he's doing it through you." And you begin to think, "Oh yeah, yeah, it's important for me to see that person as he really is. And it's important for me to tell him what's wrong with him." And of course we find ourselves usurping the position of the Holy Spirit, because of course,

the Holy Spirit will convict others through us. But he will convict others through the "Christ likeness" of our lives. They will be amazed at the love that continues to come from us despite their attitude to us. And then the Holy Spirit will use that to convict them of their own ugliness. But that's the way it works, but it doesn't work through us pointing the finger.

So if you find that there's coming out from you, a spirit that finds fault with other people, or a spirit that criticizes other people, or if you find your spirit inside filled with bitterness, and filled with an antagonism and hostility towards others, loved ones realize immediately that Satan has shot one of his fiery darts into your spirits. And you need immediately to go to the Holy Spirit and say, "Holy Spirit, I have even a fair idea where this dart came in, but I don't really know where I yielded ground to Satan, so will you show me?"

And it is interesting, unless the Holy Spirit is your boss, of course you won't take that attitude to him. You'll go to it with the psychological books -- which are okay. But you'll go to it with your own psychology and your introspection and you'll start trying to find the ground. Well, only the Holy Spirit can give you the ground, because the fact about yielding ground to Satan is it's yielded in deception. And you yielded it because you didn't know, and so only the Holy Spirit can show you what that ground was. So it's vital to go then to the Holy Spirit and ask him, "Where did I yield ground to Satan?" And when he shows you, then you resist Satan in Jesus' name, and then submit your will to the Holy Spirit.

And then the important thing is -- it doesn't matter how you do it, and it doesn't matter if you go and kiss that guy, or kiss that girl -- but somehow you immediately get the spirit flowing the right way again. And whether you write a letter to them and express your regard for them, or your friendship, or you apologize for the feeling you've had towards them, but you get the spirit going in the right direction immediately. Because, that's the way the spirit will heal you and cleanse you.

So loved ones, it is you can see, important to deal with these poisonings that come into your spirit. And it is important to see, too, that the only place of victory is in your position at God's right hand. And it might be good, you know, for me to write maybe those two verses down because it's Ephesians 2:6. That's the position of victory. And I suppose you could say Romans 6:11 is the condition that results from that, which is a condition of submitting your will to the Holy Spirit. And that is the place of victory in life, and is the only position where your spirit can continually remain healthy and clean for Jesus to use.

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And I think I should stop there. There are other things I should share but the time is going. Are there any questions loved ones? You can see the importance of sin. If there's sin in your life, of course, you won't want to do any of this. I mean, you'll be the child of the devil, and you'll be his servant, and so you'll be expressing sin. But I'm assuming that we've received Jesus' Spirit into us and that good Spirit is wanting to express himself through us.

There are a thousand verses here which maybe I can share some other evening, which of course, show you how active the Christian life is. So always – you don't lie under these things; you don't lie under them. You don't experience them for one hour and let them dwell in you. The only way of victory is resist them and fight against them.

Question from Audience: (inaudible)

Response from Pastor O'Neill:

It would be in this way that the Spirit of Jesus is just always going out. And anything that directs in upon yourself -- you just know it is Satan's approach. So I'm sure you're right that an attitude that becomes overwhelmed with criticizing yourself is part of the spirit of Satan. Whereas, it seems to me, the Holy Spirit's conviction says, "You are not tithing. You are being dishonest in your business in this area. You have a wrong attitude towards your brother or your sister." The Holy Spirit points out a definite thing. You either accept that conviction and repent of the sin and have done with it, and go to Jesus, or of course, you continue in it, in which case you begin eventually to lose all voice of the Holy Spirit.

So you are right, that when the Holy Spirit convicts, he convicts particular sin. And it's something you can deal with, and repent of, and go on your way. But the self critical stuff is something that just beats you over the head. It's a kind of masochism that the self enjoys, really.

But what would be good for us all to grasp is, that the normal state of our spirits is Jesus. That's it. The normal state of our spirits is that dear Savior. And if it will make it clearer to some of you who have difficulty understanding the Spirit of Jesus, it's the Spirit of Hawaii with the breakers rolling in upon the shore. That's it, clean and fresh, and glittering, and shining, and bright. It's the Spirit of seagulls and swallows, soaring in the heavens. It's the Spirit of little animals chasing each other on a spring morning. It's that Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus is not hard to find because it's plain in everything he's made. It's a joyous, clean, outgoing Spirit that expresses peace and joy all around. It's a Spirit that is not preoccupied with itself and is not sad and depressed.

So it's not hard to tell the Spirit of Jesus. The Spirit of Jesus is a joyous happy Spirit that is always going out to lift others into that same place. So really it is -- oh it is -- it's a continual vacation to really be governed by Jesus' Spirit. That's why you grow younger every day, that's why -- oh yeah, that "the power that raised Jesus from the dead gives life unto our mortal bodies" so that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." "They shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." And "their youth will be renewed like the eagles."

So it is, it's a life that is more alive, and more rejoicing at the end of a hard day than it was at the beginning. Of course, you ask, "Why?" Well, because through the whole day this healthy Spirit of Jesus has been blasting through you, and making you healthier all the time, as he went through. So it is, it's a beautiful life, really.

Let us pray. Dear Lord, we thank you for your own clear example. Every time we look at you Savior, the Lord of earth passing by. Every time we look at you, we see joy, and life, and uplift and peace, and kindness, and tenderheartedness. Lord, we see a love that is always eager to believe the best, that is always believing the best, that is not looking at what is dark and sinful but at

what is light and what is beautiful. Lord, we thank you for that.

Thank you that we need never doubt whether it's your spirit or Satan's spirit, whether it's your Spirit or our own selves. The difference is the difference between night and day, the difference between life and death. And oh we thank you for that. Thank you that the new birth, that being filled with the Holy Spirit, are so plain and so obvious that even the wayfaring man can perceive it. And oh we thank you for that Lord.

We pray for our dear friends, pray for our colleagues that we'll meet at work this week. We pray for our loved ones that live with us. We would look to you, Lord Jesus, and praise you and glorify you each day. We would spend not a moment in the midst of self, not a moment in the midst of our own despair. Lord, we would live in you by faith in your fullness, so that our loved ones and our dear colleagues will be lifted up by us each time they meet us. So we look forward to this week.

And we thank you Lord, for communion next Sunday. Thank you for a time of sharing your life with each other and then receiving new orders from you for the coming month. And Lord, we thank you for your own goodness, and your own good truth, and for the dear saints of old that have preserved it in their lives and in their writings.

And now the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with each one of us now and throughout this coming week. Amen.

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