

The Spiritual Life of Power

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

And I'd like to point out to all of us that most of us started where the world, outside Christ, is at this present time. That is, most of the world lives the life of a practical atheist. Now, that doesn't mean they don't believe in God. Romans 1, you remember, makes it plain what the situation is. And you might like to start there just so that we begin together in his Word. Romans 1 points out plainly that it's not because they doubt God's existence that they live the life of a practical atheist.

Romans 1:19, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse." So whether it's Stalin who spent those years in seminary, or whether it's Mao [Mao Zedong, 1893-1976, Chinese Communist revolutionary and the founding father of the People's Republic of China] telling Kissinger [Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State at that time], you remember, that he thought he was on his way to meet God. Whoever it is, everybody is very clear in their minds that there is a God behind somewhere. That isn't what makes them practical atheists.

What makes them practical atheists is Verse 21, "For although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened." And that's it. Practical atheism is: even though you know there's a God you live as if there is no God. And that's the way the majority of the people that we meet at work, and at school, live. And of course, they are very scared, as you would be, because if you're in this world, and you've done away with the idea that there's a God that takes care of you, you yourself are very concerned; because, who is going to look after you after your mum and dad die?

And they actually do their bit in the process, because they kindly tell you that you have to prepare for that day. And the way to prepare for it is to get a good education, and get a good job; and then with the job you'll get money, and that will get you food, and clothes, and shelter; and then you'll be able to live as they're living. And so both parents and teachers in the world 'outside Christ', tend to encourage all their children to provide for themselves by using the things that are available in the world. And so we all naturally come up that way. And there isn't one of us here that hasn't heard that in some way. Even probably from godly parents we hear that it is necessary to get a job, and to earn money, and in that way to provide food, and clothing, and shelter for yourself.

And of course, that isn't wrong. What is wrong is the impression we increasingly develop inside ourselves, that our security depends utterly on those things. And so the people in the world outside Christ are utterly dependent for their sense of safety, for preserving their life -- because what we're all finally afraid of is death. And what we're trying to avoid is death by malnutrition, or death by exposure. And so we're trying all the time to get all the food, and the shelter, and the clothing that we need to keep ourselves safe from that.

And so the outside world live like that. That's why they get so worried when the stocks go down, or the shares go down [reference to the stock market]. That's why they get so worried when they're

fired or laid off. That's why they get so worried when something goes wrong with the house that is bigger than they can manage with the little savings they have. That's why they get so worried when they can't get the clothes that they need, because they feel it striking at the very heart of their own security.

These are important things for us all to know even if we're not living there. They're important for us to know so that we know how to talk to our dear friends, and so that we speak to them where they are. Of course, what many of us find as we listen to this outline is that some of us are not quite clear of that.

Now the world as it lives like that, of course is concerned about other things, because as you look around this world and you realize, "There's nobody in charge of my life but myself," you can see that there are billions. And of course you're just one of a number. And who notices you?

And there is something inside you that makes you think you ought to be noticed. It's interesting, isn't it? We all kind of have that built into us that we think we should be noticed. We think we are different, don't we? I mean, even you; it doesn't matter how inferior you think you are, all of us feel, "Yeah, I may be inferior but I am different. I have a different kind of inferiority to everybody else." But we do! We all feel we're different. And we all want to be noticed.

And of course, the tragedy in this world is, not too many people are interested in noticing other people. They're all so preoccupied with getting other people to notice them. And so in the world of men and women outside Christ, you get people scrambling to be noticed. And they're always trying to get other people to recognize them, and acknowledge them; look up to them; respect them; praise them. And right from we were little children trying to do something clever to get our mums and dads to notice us, right up to the day when we walk into the White House [USA president's residence] and we get the keys to the executive washroom or whatever; the whole way through we're always trying to get people to notice that we are different and to acknowledge us and to recognize us. And yet it is tragic, as we know, because the Elvis Presley's [Pop singer of the 1950's and 1960's] end up in such dastardly defeatism, even though they've spent a lifetime trying to get people to notice them.

But the children of this world live that way. And when others don't notice them, or don't compliment them at the right moment, or don't recognize them or praise them, or -- worst of all -- when others criticize them, or appear not to value them, or appear not to notice them, they are struck to the very heart. And loved ones, you should be kindly to little ones like that, because it isn't just not being noticed; it's their very existence that they feel, being threatened, because, of course, we all 'were' made to be noticed by someone. And we were all 'made 'to be looked after by someone. And they're trying to live as if they don't need that. So they're actually living against the very law of nature! Yet, the majority of men and women outside God live like that.

And then of course, they feel desperately the desire for – you remember G. K. Chesterton [1874-1936 English writer and theologian] says, "A strange kind of happiness." He says, "Men and women do not want peace, because peace continually and eternally would be boring to them. They want peace mixed with a little excitement." And he says, "That's what happiness really is. It's a mixture of absolute peace and serenity combined with some exhilaration and excitement." And of course, the world of men and women 'outside Jesus' desperately want that. Of course, it's because they were made for the happiness that is involved in a relationship with the most exciting, the most magnificent, infinite person in the world. And that's why they always feel an emptiness in there that they're always trying to fill with excitement or peace. And so the world of men and women

'outside Jesus' are constantly yearning for that, trying to get happiness eternally; trying to buy a faster motorbike, or a more powerful outboard, or trying to get a better drug that will give them peace and serenity from the things that trouble them.

Now that's, loved ones, the way the world of men and women 'outside Jesus' live. And those are the men and women we call 'unregenerate'. They're not born of God. They live – well, they live looking to one god, and you find that mentioned in 2 Corinthians 4:4. “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers.” And that's exactly who they look to. They look to the god of this world for the things that they need. And so they live of course, in continually strain, because there is actually a spirit that that god possesses. And you find that mentioned in 1 Corinthians 2:12. “Now we have received not the spirit of the world.” Now in fact, they have received the spirit of the world. The man or woman who isn't born of God is dependent on the god of this world for their security, and their significance, and their happiness. And so they are filled with the 'spirit' of the world.

Now don't let's get all spooky about the spirit of the world. All of us know fine well what it is. You get a car that is not just – it's an automobile but I don't think I could say [Pastor is uncertain because of his British background what is the right American term] – but you get an automobile, or a car that is not just a means of transport for you but is your 'pride and joy'. And you lend it to a dear friend, and they make a mess of it: right parking, 'parallel parking', which they've never mastered anyway, which they failed to master with your car. And you know what the 'spirit of the world' is at that moment. It is a mean, miserly, petty, (and yet you feel) utterly justified indignation, that they would treat your car like that. And underneath a terrible worry, isn't there, and a fretfulness that it will never be the same? I mean, 'the first scratch is always the worst', but this is the whole side of the car! And it's never going to be the same! And so there's a discontent with what they've done; there's a dissatisfaction with yourself for getting so mad about it. That's the 'spirit of the world'!

Or you buy some stocks and shares; or you get into an apartment; or you get a nice coat; or you get some good shoes; or you get some nice skis. And then you see a slightly nicer coat, or slightly nicer skis, or a way to insure the stocks and shares, or a way to get more money. And the 'spirit of the world' gets hold of you. And you go after it! And you're grasping! Grasping! Grasping! Really, you shouldn't blame the poor wee souls. We did it ourselves. And you do it, because you're utterly dependent on the god of this world. You are! You have no other way of ensuring your own security, or your own happiness.

So loved ones, it behooves us to love our dear friends and colleagues that are in the same situation as we ourselves were once in. And just stop treating them as you poor rotten sinners. They are poor little souls who are caught by the 'god of this world'. And the 'spirit of this world' consumes them.

Now, when God's word speaks to a person in that situation -- it's strange, but they are so dead, and they are so uncomprehending of God and of his plan for them, that the only way God can get them to listen at all is by speaking to some to the attitudes and the actions that are developing inside them. And it isn't hard to look at those. It's not long -- if you depend on your little bank account for your security, it's not long before you begin to think first of yourself and second of the other people. And it's not long before you get a 'hoarding' attitude to that money. It's not long before you want more money. It's not long before you begin to be miserly, and you're no longer generous to people. It's not long before you begin to get a kind of coveting attitude, “Well, I'd

like more," or, "I'd like what they've got." So they develop in you all kinds of attitudes that are wrong and aren't God's will for you.

Or, you have a house, and it's your only means -- it's your hope for retirement. It's your hope for comfort here. You have a nice house, a nice apartment. It's stupid, it can be a kennel that you have, a bedroom, just one bedroom but you have it, and it's your pride and joy. And it's your place of security. And it's something that belongs to you. And then somebody comes in; messes it up; and you get anxious and worried. And you get anxious and worried lest anybody else touch it. And it's not long before your heart is filled with worry, and anxiety, and coveting, and envying.

Now, the only way God can get through to you or me when we're in that state is to speak straight to us his word and say, "Thou shalt not covet." Or to say to us, "Do not be anxious about anything." Or, to say to us, "Thou shalt not steal." In other words, God's word speaks to the outward actions that at least we can recognize. The other subtle things about the 'god of this world' and the 'spirit of this world', that we don't recognize. But when he speaks to us and says, "Stop swearing. I am a God who hates those who take my name in vain and if you take my name in vain I will destroy you eternally in hell." That's the only kind of thing that stops most of us in our tracks. And those are usually the first words, loved ones, that come to us when we're unregenerate -- what the world pleases to call natural men and women, though it's not natural men and women. It's really inhuman men and women.

But when we're in that state, the only thing that speaks to us is God's Word about sins. Because you see, sins are the outward actions and words that result in a person's life who thinks that he is his own god, or that he's totally dependent on the world for his security. And so God's word speaks directly to those things.

So you know, too, when you heard first, or began to be concerned about God: it was when his word started to speak to you about certain things that you were doing. So you were committing adultery, or committing fornication, or you were being unclean in your thought life, or you were being selfish, or you were being angry, or you were swearing, or you were telling lies, or you were coveting. And God's word spoke to your heart and said, "Thou shalt not do those things, and if you do those things you will die eternally. And you can never be in my kingdom." That's what strikes us and sparks us into some awareness and conviction. And normally, the first step that we take towards God is, we begin to take seriously what he's saying to us about our sins. And we confess, "Yes Lord, those are sins. We confess them to you. And we repent of them. And we will do everything to turn from them and have done with them. And we ask you to take away the spirit of the world from our hearts, and to send the Spirit of your Son into us."

Now that's when a person becomes born of God. When they deal with their sins; they confess and repent; and they receive the Spirit of Jesus into their own hearts. Then they're born of God. They are regenerate.

Now, here's the interesting thing. Most of us have found that when we took that first step, we had actually done nothing at all about the real problem. That's amazing, but most of us here who have taken that first step, after a few months, at the most a couple of years, we suddenly realized we had not dealt at all with what was the basic problem in our lives. And the Spirit of Jesus kindly and lovingly began to show us that.

And here's the way he began to show us it. We kept up an outward appearance of abstaining from sin.

We stopped stealing; we stopped swearing; we stopped coveting; we stopped fornicating. But in our hearts we still wanted to do all those things. And for many of us that was the first hint that Jesus' Spirit gave us that we had not actually even begun to deal with the basic problem. Because, the basic problem, you remember, of a person who is not born of God, is that they depend utterly on the world for all that they need, instead of on God. And the tragedy is that many of us who are born of God, don't deal with that issue at all. We simply deal with the issue of the individual sins, or the individual symptoms of our independence that God points out to us in his word. And then we receive the Spirit of Jesus into us. But, we do not actually deal with the 'heart' of the 'unregenerate life', which is a personality and a life that is dependent on society and the world, on circumstances and things, instead of on God himself.

And so most of us, of course, find ourselves apparently born of God, but with a 'garbage heap' inside our hearts. And so we find that we come to a service like this and while we are able to control our thoughts, we're thinking the right thing. But when we go off guard, all kinds of dirt is surging up from underneath. And so we don't any longer jump into bed with people, but we find that there is dirt there and uncleanness. We don't any longer criticize people outwardly, because you don't do that when you're dealing with the friends of Jesus. But when we go home at night we find ourselves thinking, "Oh, that stupid ...Why? Boy, she is stupid! Why did she say that?" It becomes such a habit of mind to us, that criticism because the normal life inside our hearts. And of course, it makes it hard when you meet the person the next day, because you feel a kind of furtiveness. You know they didn't see into your mind. But if they did, they would never speak to you again. So you feel a furtiveness. And you feel a kind of repression in your friendships, and your relationships. And so you go on like that for a while until you begin to find that the more you recognize those things inside, and the more you walk in them, the stronger they become. And -- unlike the psychologists who say, "Oh, be angry and get rid of it," -- you find that the angrier you are, the angrier you get. And the more you express these things, and the more you tolerate them for a second second, the greater a part of your heart they seem to take over.

Now, loved ones, that's the situation with many of us who are carnal Christians. We have dealt with our outward sins that God convicted us of. And we have received the Spirit of Jesus into us. But the spirit of the world has not really been expelled.

If I could bring this home to your own dear heart, that's why you would worry, you see. That's why you would worry or be anxious. That's why you would worry or be anxious. And I don't know, I suppose all of us can say, "Oh, one moment of worry you can excuse." Yeah, but most of us who worry, worry continually, are anxious continually. Well you see why we're worried and anxious, because we haven't really changed over completely to God. We haven't. We're still dependent on the stock market, or the state of the shares, or the state of the economy. We're still dependent on whether this person likes us and keeps employing us.

In other words, we're still really worshipping the god of this world. And that's why we have trouble -- we exercise faith for a while and then worry pops up. We have peace for a while, and then we find ourselves getting anxious again. That's why we can be pure for a while, and then we burst out into all kinds of uncleanness. That's why we can be loving for a while, and then burst out in bad temper and criticism. That's why we can be very generous at times, and then burst out in selfishness. We have those 'carnal fits', they're called; just fits when we lose our temper, or we get sulky, or we get bummed out, or we get down and nobody can speak to the 'ogre' when that happens. And it's because the 'ogre' is still actually hiding there inside, and the 'spirit of this world' still is in us.

Now loved ones, it's all very simply explained, the truth is that we didn't realize, really, the details of why Jesus died. We just heard the gospel, "Because of Jesus' death your God is ready to forgive you for your sins if you turn from them and receive Jesus." We did it. We didn't ask any questions. We don't understand why he died, don't understand what he did, "Don't understand Lord, why you're ready to forgive us because of it. We believe you." We didn't know any more than that.

But the truth is that our whole personalities become enslaved to the life that we live. You actually do become enslaved to the 'spirit of this world'. There is set up a chain or a set of fetters that binds you to the world. There is, loved ones! When you have a 'carnal fit', it's not just because you have a bad temper. When you have a visit into the 'garbage of uncleanness'; when you have one of those spells when you criticize, and criticize and 'turn the sword' in the person's heart; when you do that it's because actually you're not totally in control. And to that extent you're right. And yet, the truth is, nobody can control you unless you let them.

But the truth is, 'the spirit of this world' is exerting in you its power. And its power comes from only one place, the 'pit' where Satan reigns. And the fact is that you're enslaved to that. And your personality is enslaved to it. And what God did in Jesus was what we so often said, "He conducted a cosmic flood where he took your personality and put it into his dear Son and destroyed it! Once and for all wiped it out! And then raised it up new!"

In other words, you cannot be 'attached' to God unless you're 'detached' completely from the world. You cannot be completely filled with God's Spirit unless you're completely emptied of the 'spirit of the world'. You cannot completely worship God and depend upon him, unless you completely cease to depend on the god of this world. That's it. It's the complete 'either or'.

And when Jesus died on Calvary; and he refused any help even from the vinegar; and he refused to depend on any help that disciples or anybody else could bring; and he said, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit," to God; when he did that, he took your personality and mine that are enslaved to this 'world of circumstance and things', and he 'bent' it over to his Father. And that he can make real in you but only when you're willing.

In other words, the problem with most of us is that we've only read half of a verse here in 2 Corinthians. Some of you remember it. We've read only half of a verse, and that's why we're really kind of 'half saved'. Or we're 'still born' children who actually still live as if the world is our mother. It's 2 Corinthians 5:14, "For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced," and this is the first part you see, "That one has died for all," and that bit we know, when we are born of God. The second bit is not popular, and we don't know it, "Therefore all have died." And that is the bit that those of us who are 'carnal Christians' do not know.

Now, when that word comes to you, as it has come tonight, your old 'carnal attitude' stands up inside you and says, "I do not want that!" And that's exactly what many of the people who follow Jesus did. When he started to talk to them about how he must be crucified on the cross and die, it says in the Bible, "Many from that day ceased to follow him." So there is in us a 'carnal attitude' that doesn't mind a little help from God as long as we can choose to use the world as we want. But the 'carnal attitude' rises up against the message of 'death'.

And yet loved ones, that's the only way to come into full sonship with God, to come to the place where you accept all that Christ has done for you. And the fact is, the reason God was willing, in

the first place, to forgive you and to receive you to himself as his child, is because he knew he had an 'antidote' for what was your problem: for a personality that is enslaved to the world. He knew he had that antidote, and that he had 'destroyed you in his Son', and raised you up, and recreated you 'new'. And while you keep moving towards that, you'll find his Spirit growing inside you. But the moment you start rejecting that, you'll find the Spirit of God growing weak inside you; and you'll find your life becoming more and more defeated, and more and more impossible to put up with, because you'll be making a 'profession outwardly', that doesn't match your 'inward life'. The people at home will see you as you really are; the people at church and at work will see just the bits of you, you want to be seen; until the 'hypocrisy' becomes unbearable, and you wonder if this thing is going to drive you right over the edge of sanity.

Loved ones, sooner or later, every one of us who have taken the first step with God in the 'new birth', have to take the second step of being cleansed by the Holy Spirit through our acceptance of our crucifixion with Christ. And that's what it means -- you remember it's at the end of Galatians. There's a verse Paul uses that has a double meaning in regard to this issue. Galatians 6:14, "But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me." It has, "...been crucified to me, and I to the world."

So, it's been 'crucified to me' as far as the attention it could give me; as far as the acknowledgement and the recognition that it could give me. As far as 'noticing me', the world has been crucified; I regard the world now, as 'crucified'. That's all of you, however dear you are, I regard you as 'crucified to me'. As far as what I think of myself, or as far as what I am, or as far as my importance, or my significance is concerned, as far as my value, I have to regard you as 'crucified to me'. Anything that the world can give me, then it's 'crucified as far as that'.

"...And I to the world." And I'm crucified to the world! As far as the world is concerned I'm nothing; I'm unimportant; I'm not even alive here. I don't even exist. Therefore, I don't look to the world to 'recognize me', or to 'acknowledge me', or to 'praise me', or to 'defend me', or to 'preserve me'. As far as it is concerned, I am crucified to the world. I no longer live, but Christ lives in this body and mind.

And loved ones, that's a real place, you can see, of very full and deep consecration that a person has to come to in order to have the heart cleansed by the Holy Spirit, and in order to come into the fullness of what God has done for us in Jesus. It means you really accepting that as far as what I can get from the world in the way of provisions, security, that world is crucified. That's what it means, you see. It means you say, "Well, I appreciate my job, I appreciate my bosses, my employers, but Lord, as far as my own security is concerned, that world is as if it doesn't exist. You alone are my security. You alone are the one who will provide me with money when I need it. Maybe you'll provide it through this job, if not through this job through another. But Lord, I accept that as far as the world giving me security, it's crucified, as far as I'm concerned. That's it dead. Lord Jesus, when I died with you that was the world removed from me as far as the heaven is above the earth. So far have you removed not only my sins, but removed this world that has supplied me with what I've needed."

"As far as my happiness is concerned Lord, I regard the world as crucified to me, no longer looking for a little smile from this person, or a little wink from this person, or a little bit of excitement from that person; no longer looking to this boat, or this motorbike, or this vacation, or even this spring day. It's interesting, not even looking to those for my little bit of excitement, or my little piece of serenity. But Lord Jesus, when I entered into your dear heart, and we both

died together in the darkness of Calvary, and went into the tomb, if you're satisfied that your God that has made the birds and the swallows is enough for you, then Lord, he's enough for me. And whether the swallows are there, or whether they disappear, whether the friends are there or whether they disappear, whether the husband or wife is ever there or disappear, Lord Jesus, I'd rather be alone with you in this tomb, with all the power of your Father available to me than all the temporary gifts that he has provided in this world."

So loved ones, it is a definite place, you see. Of course, what all of us have found that have come into that place, is incredible liberty; a great deliverance from the power of sin; a great deliverance from envy, and anger, and worry, and coveting, and jealousy; a great deliverance from uncleanness and selfishness, because the spirit of the world is at last expelled by the Holy Spirit of God filling us with himself.

And that experience -- we call it all kinds of things. Some of us call it being filled with the Spirit as opposed to being born with the Spirit. Some of us call it being baptized with the Spirit. Some of us call it being immersed in the Spirit. Some of us call it dying to self. Some of us call it being crucified with Christ. Some of us call it sanctification. Some of us call it full surrender or full consecration. It doesn't matter. It is a place where what is basically our problem is dealt with through our willingness to draw close to our Savior, and experience with him all that he has experienced for us.

Now loved ones, if you don't go on into that, I think your days are numbered as far as being a 'living' child of God is concerned, you see. You carry on with the profession, and you carry on with your church membership, but as far as being the person described -- oh you remember, I think it's John 7:38. "He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.' Now this he said about the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Now, anyone that has not been filled with the Spirit finds that that experience is not true at all, you see. Verse 38, "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water." No, a person who is alone and not filled with the Spirit doesn't find that at all; they find deadness inside, kind of emptiness. In fact, they look forward to prayer times and for times of fellowship to get filled. But they don't find, "out of their heart flowing rivers of living water." But when you take your place with Jesus, and allow the world to be crucified, as far as you're concerned, and you crucified to it, then there begins to flow from you -- as you look to God alone for your needs, there begins to flow from you an inner, joy, and delight, and peace that is supernatural.

And that is the heart of being a Christian. And it's the heart of being a child of God. But I do think that many of us don't reach that point, because we stay 'still born' children. We remain at that early place where we confessed our sins, which is why, of course, that's all we ever do. That's all we ever do for the rest of our lives. We eternally confess our sins. That's all we're doing. We're always confessing our sins and repenting.

Now that doesn't mean that in the life in the Spirit you don't move into new light; you do. But it's new light and you say, "Lord, thank you for that new light." And you move on into it joyfully. But if you haven't come to that place where you've really died to everything with Christ, then every conviction of the Holy Spirit is another battle, another fight. And so it's an eternal fight over a sin that you won't give up, or a sin that you've just managed to give up for a few weeks and you've fallen into it again; and then you're confessing it again. Well, that's no life! It's not

the life of the child of a king! And of course it isn't, because you aren't completely a child of the king. You're partly a child of the god of this world, because you're still looking to it.

So loved ones, there is a vast difference between the person who is born of God and the person who is filled with the Spirit; between the person who is justified before God because of the blood of Jesus shed for him, and the person who is sanctified by being filled with the Holy Spirit. There is a vast difference between the two of them. There's standing before God is equal because of Jesus, but their experience in their own hearts is entirely differently. The one is outwardly a Christian and inwardly a devil. The other is inwardly a saint and outwardly victorious.

If you say, "How long can you go on in that stage?" I don't know, but it's hard to go on for long, confessing and repenting the same sins eternally. So it is vital loved ones, to come into that. And that's being born of the Spirit, and being filled with the Spirit.

And I'll just touch lastly on the step that we deal with in these evening services. After you have come into the place where you have victory inside in your heart, and you're ready to do, "Lord whatever. I'm willing to do Lord, whatever. I'm willing to be nothing for you. I'm willing to be anything; willing to be all things, willing to be nothing; willing to have nothing. Willing to be looked over, or willing to be respected, whatever you want Lord. I'm willing to be a failure; willing to be successful."

When you have come into that, and the Holy Spirit fills you with himself, then you begin to find that you have a personality that has been, of course, operating the other way for years. It has all kinds of habits that you've inherited from your dear mum and dad; that you've developed in the course of your own environment in which you've lived; all kinds of ways of speaking that are harsh. Some of us have lazy ways that we've never recognized as lazy ways before. Some of us have introspective ways that we've never recognized until now.

But this free Spirit of Jesus that is flowing through us, and of course, like a bright light, it shows up all the darkness. And we suddenly begin to feel almost the way Jesus must have felt at the Mount of Transfiguration, when his heavenly body broke through the outward body and illuminated, and lit it up. And that's the way you begin to feel. You feel the Holy Spirit cannot be contained. That's why some of us find tongues is so essential to express that joy and that delight. But the beauty is not just in tongues.

But the Holy Spirit begins to show us your personality; it's a grinding, old, monstrous machine. It's 'old wineskins', and they can't bear this new wine. And we find that. We find that the Spirit of Jesus wants to zoom out to a person in the office, and express joy to them, and delight. But our personality for years has been a somber personality, and so we can't do it. Or, somebody else is weeping. And the Holy Spirit of Jesus "weeps with those who weep", and wants to go out and weep, but our father brought us up to be stoic, and never to shed a tear.

And so the personality has to be completely remolded and changed. And many of us at that stage even stop and hold back. And if we ever do, loved ones, you can't 'hold' at any of the great three steps in the life with God. You have to go right on. If you ever hold back you grieve the Holy Spirit. So even if you're filled with the Holy Spirit, if you're still unwilling to let your personality be changed, and molded, and completely renewed; and your mind renewed; and your emotions freed; if you're not willing to go on, you'll find that you'll fall. Yes, the whole way back! And that's it. I can testify, you'll fall the whole way back. You'll fall back into self. You'll fall back

into sin. You'll fall the whole way back. The Holy Spirit must be followed, or he will be grieved. God must be obeyed, or you will drive him from your life.

So loved ones, we'll talk about those things from time-to-time during the year. What I would ask you as we go into a prayer time now, would you ask the Father to show you where you are? And I would encourage you who are carnal Christians, to see you're getting the worse of both worlds! You are! You're getting the worse of both worlds! You're getting the worry, and anxiety, that dependence on the world gives you, and you're having to put up with these miserable commandments that aren't natural to you at all. And of course, the truth is, when you come through into being crucified with Christ to the world and the world crucified to you, the commandments are no longer commandments; they're laws that describe the way your personality operates. That's it! They describe you

And that's the way of course, God intended it to be read, "One who loves me with all his heart will have no other Gods before me. One who is filled with my Spirit will not steal, will not covet, will not commit adultery." That's the description of one who has accepted their place in Christ, and been supernaturally transformed from a 'world dependent' person to a 'God dependent' person.

So loved ones, as we go to prayer, you might want to just be quiet. Or you might want to pray out in confession. Or you might want to pray for others. Or you might want to sing. And let's just spend a little while in prayer. Let us pray.