1 – Who Is the Spirit?

I. Intro to Workshop
   A. Imagine life if Jesus were physically with us
      1. Sitting among us
      2. Preaching today
      3. You could talk with Him
      4. Ask questions and ask for direction
      5. See how he lived and imitate
      6. Surely easier to do right and be a disciple
      7. Jesus said that one is here who is better for us than him
      8. That is who I'm going to talk about today – the Holy Spirit
   B. Hope to inspire you to get to know the Spirit
      1. Spend years getting to know Jesus & the Father
      2. To know the Spirit, you have to devote personal time
   C. Going to cover a lot
      1. Move fast – may not be able to turn to every scripture – listen
      2. Take notes or have a friend
   D. 4 – Topics this weekend
      1. Who is the Spirit
      2. How the Spirit Transforms You
      3. What is Your Role in Living by the Spirit
      4. How to Listen to the Spirit
   E. Open up your mind to the scriptures.
      1. Preconceived ideas affect our view of the Spirit
         a. Tend to support our theory more than search for the truth.
         b. Pentecostal background – support miraculous and feelings
         c. Conservative background – dismiss miraculous and feelings
      2. Knowledge is often more on background rather than Bible
      3. Keep an open mind

a. Try to avoid the quick response. Defense may miss truth.
b. Don't have to accept, but openly search Bible.

F. How important is the Spirit?

II. Significance

A. John 16:5-7

"*Now I am going to him who sent me. None of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Rather, you are filled with grief because I have said these things. But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*" (John 16:5–7, NIV)

1. Jesus said they would be better off for Jesus to go and the Spirit to come.
2. If given the choice of Jesus or the Spirit, most would choose Jesus.
3. Jesus said it was better for the Spirit to be here.

B. Acts 2:38

"*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" (Acts 2:38, NIV)

1. Spirit was central to Gospel message.
2. (Acts 5:29-32) Peter summarizes the gospel and mentions the Spirit
3. (Acts 9:17-18) Ananias sent to Saul so Saul would receive the Spirit
4. (Acts 19:2) Paul questioned conversion when they didn't know Spirit

C. Gal 3:14

"*Christ redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*" (Galatians 3:14, NIV)

1. Spirit's coming was
    a. the fulfillment of promise to Abraham
    b. purpose of Jesus' death on the cross

D. Spirit is so crucial to our walk with God.
1. Bible makes that very clear.
2. We act like
    a. We can't get to know Him.
    b. The Bible doesn't explain Him.
3. But there is a wealth of knowledge for those who seek to know Him.

E. Who is the Holy Spirit?

III. Personality

A. He is God
1. John 4:24 "God is Spirit"
2. 1 Cor 2:10b-11

"*The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*" (1 Corinthians 2:10–11, NIV)

a. He is the very spirit of God.
b. God is not a physical being like we are.
c. He is Spirit and His spirit is the Holy Spirit
d. Therefore, the Spirit is God
    1) Not part of God
    2) Not a piece of God
    3) He is God
e. We diminish the Spirit we speak of Him as lesser to the Father & Son
f. He is God just as much as Jesus or the Father

B. John 3:8

"*The **wind** blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the **Spirit**.*" (John 3:8, NIV)

1. Pnuema – Breath or very essence of God
2. Bible describes the Spirit as breath, wind
    a. He cannot be captured or contained
    b. Don't know where He's coming from or where He's going to
3. Important – He is without limitations
4. But don't be confused… He is not a thing

C. John 16:13

"*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.*" (John 16:13, NIV)

1. Jesus used 'he' when referring to the Spirit.
2. Many people use 'it' when referring to the Spirit
3. Using 'it' or 'he' reflects our understanding
    a. Use 'it' because we view the Spirit as a thing.
        1) Ghost to do God's will.
        2) Thing void of personality, feeling, emotion.
        3) Closer to an inanimate object or tool than a person.
    b. Bible paints a much different picture.
        1) Spirit is
            a) a personality with depth.
            b) not simply a tool wielded by God
            c) the very essence of God.
        2) Spirit is a "he" because he has personality and character.
4. We need to see the Spirit as a personality.
5. Car analogy

a. Pretend inanimate objects have personalities.
    1) Cars become members of the household.
    2) Talk to them or treat them as though they have feeling.
b. Imagine opposite – treated a person as an object.
    1) Society has = abuse, i.e. slavery.
    2) Treatment of people as object is bad.
        a) Causes mistreatment of people.
        b) Very wrong.
c. Treat Spirit as an object.
    1) Less significant
    2) Ignored rather than acknowledged.
    3) Never consider the Spirit's feelings.
    4) View Him as a power we can learn to use and direct
d. See Spirit as a personality, will change our interaction with the Spirit.

6. The Spirit is God and He is a personality

D. Isaiah 63:10

"*Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them.*" (Isaiah 63:10, NIV)

1. Israelites rebelled and grieved the Holy Spirit.
2. You cannot grieve a rock – it has no emotion.
3. You can grieve the Holy Spirit – He is a person.
4. Bible shows how our sin hurts the Spirit
    a. Acts 5 Ananias & Saphira lied to the Spirit
    b. James 4 says the Spirit envies and desires our devotion
5. Objects don't get hurt
6. Spirit is not an object
7. We need to get to know him as a person. Someone we can
    a. Know

b. Interact with
c. Hurt
d. Love

E. Spirit is God & He is someone we must know.

IV. Characteristics

A. Everything you know about God – apply to the Spirit
B. (Hebrews 10:29) “Spirit of grace”
C. (John 14:17) “Spirit of truth”
D. Rom 8:11 Power

“*And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you.*” (Romans 8:11, NIV)

1. Raised Jesus from the Dead
   a. (Rom 15:17-19) miracles through power of Spirit
   b. (Psalm 104:30) “send your spirit, they are created”
   c. (Job 34:14-15) If God removed His Spirit, all would return to dust
2. Can you fathom the incredible power?
3. “His Spirit who lives in you”
   a. Is there anything He cannot do in your life?
   b. Is there anything He cannot change in you?
   c. Is there any situation He cannot take care of?
   d. Obvious answer – NO, but do you believe that?

E. Psalms 139:7-10 Pervasive

“*Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.*” (Psalm 139:7–10, NIV)

1. Spirit is everywhere.
2. Revolutionary idea for me – pervasiveness of the Spirit
    a. Thought Spirit made cameo appearances.
        1) Shows up here and there and does a few things.
        2) Thought Spirit worked this way throughout the Bible.
        3) Dropping in on Godly people and doing great things.
        4) Not always present.
    b. Saw Spirit's influence as limited to Christians
    c. My view greatly limited the scope of what the Spirit would do.
        1) Limited the Spirit in time and location
            a) Not always here
            b) Not always at every location
        2) Somewhat limited my view of influence on Christians.
            a) You have the Spirit & he connects you to God
            b) I have the Spirit & he connects me to God
            c) But limited connection between us.
    d. Seeing the Spirit everywhere opens my mind to
        1) Spirit's influence on all of us at the same time
        2) Spirit's use of me to influence others.
    e. Seeing the Spirit everywhere
        1) Gives me greater hope for people
            a) Spirit working to bring people to God
            b) I don't have to be everywhere & do everything
        2) When I speak, decreases pressure & increases hope
            a) I don't have to say all the right things
            b) Spirit wants us to learn something, he can do it
            c) I often pray for the Spirit to influence the congregation
        3) Gives me confidence in events that transpire
            a) When we are together

b) When we aren't together
c) In God's people around the world
d) Greater sense that God is watching out for all of us

4) Seeing the Spirit as pervasive opens my eyes to so much more.

F. Revelation 22:17 Purpose

"*The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.*" (Revelation 22:17, NIV)

1. Spirit calls people to God.

V. Conclusion

A. The Spirit is significant, central to the gospel message.

B. He is God

1. He is the very Spirit of God equal to the Father & the Son
2. He is person for us to know & respect

C. The Spirit

1. Is full of grace & truth
2. Has amazing power
3. Is pervasive – He is everywhere
4. Has a purpose to draw people close to God

2 – How the Spirit Transforms You

You Are Not Alone

I. Introduction

A. In Acts 8

1. Angel tells Philip to go to the desert road
2. Along comes an Ethiopian eunuch returning home
3. Spirit tells Philip to go near the Ethiopian's chariot
4. Ethiopian invites Philip to sit with him & Philip shares about Jesus

B. Acts 8:36-39

"*As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.*" (Acts 8:36–39, NIV)

1. Philip baptizes the Ethiopian
2. Spirit takes Philip away
3. Ethiopian leaves rejoicing presumably back to Ethiopia
4. Philip
   a. Meets him, studies with him, & baptizes him in one day
   b. Ethiopian heads back to Ethiopia – alone
      1) No church
      2) No mentor
      3) No one to help
   c. How could this be? Surely a mistake
5. Yet, guided by the Holy Spirit – this was God's plan
6. How could God leave the young Christian alone?

a. He was not alone
b. None of us who have given our lives to Jesus are in this alone.

7. God has given us His Spirit.

C. What is the Spirit doing in your life? How is the Spirit transforming you?
D. That transformation begins early in our lives.

II. Calls & Converts

A. Revelation 22:17

"*The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.*" (Revelation 22:17, NIV)

1. Spirit, side by side with the church, is calling out to the thirsty
   a. Come
   b. Take of the free gift of the water of life
2. Spirit calls us before we become Christians
3. (John 15:26-27) Spirit testifies about Jesus and we should too
4. (John 16:7-10) Spirit convicting the world of guilt in regard to sin
5. Even before we become Christians, the Spirit
   a. Is orchestrating our lives to lead us to God
   b. Is tugging on our hearts to call us to God

B. Acts 2:38

"*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" (Acts 2:38, NIV)

1. Repent & be baptized for the forgiveness of sin
2. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit
3. Sometimes we treat the gift as an afterthought

a. But the gift of the Holy Spirit is the end goal
b. Holy Spirit coming to you is why
    1) You must repent & be baptized
    2) You must be forgiven
c. So God, himself, can come and live in you

4. (John 14:23) speaks of the Father & Son making their home with you
5. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) speaks of our body being a temple of the Spirit
6. We repent & get baptized so that the Spirit can come live in us
7. Not just moving in, part of cleanup

C. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

"*Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God?… And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*" (1 Corinthians 6:9–11, NIV)

1. We were sinners, but we were
    a. Washed, sanctified, & justified
    b. in name of Jesus
    c. by Spirit
2. (Titus 3:3-7) washing of rebirth & renewal by the Holy Spirit
3. (Romans 8) By the Spirit put to death sin & raised to a new life
4. Spirit is actively involved in the conversion process.
    a. He cleans us up
    b. He sets us apart
    c. He makes us right with God
5. Spirit begins our transformation at baptism
    a. He purifies our soul
    b. He gives us a clean slate
    c. He makes it so that He can come and live in you

D. The Spirit
    1. Calls out to the lost
    2. Cleanses us when we repent and are baptized
    3. So He, the Spirit, God, can come and live in you
E. As Christians, the Holy Spirit is living in you
F. So what is He doing?

III. Transforms
A. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18

"*The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*" (2 Corinthians 3:17–18, NIV)

1. When anyone turns to the Lord, veil is removed so we can see clearly
2. With unveiled faces we reflect Lord's glory
    a. Like the moon to the sun
    b. We reflect the amazing light emanating from Jesus
    c. Not only that, but we are…
3. Being transformed into his likeness
    a. Being transformed
        1) Being acted upon
            a) Not transforming ourselves
            b) An outside force is working on us
        2) Spirit is working on us
    b. Likeness of Jesus
        1) To be more like Christ
        2) To have his love, humility, boldness, integrity, honesty
        3) We are not like Him
        4) Spirit is making us like Him

4. Comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit
5. Spirit is actively transforming us into Christ
    a. We need to believe this.
        1) We want to know how He's doing it
        2) Then we'll believe He's at work
        3) Thankfully, He's at work whether you understand Him or not
        4) The Spirit is transforming you
    b. You are not alone in trying to change your life.
        1) We put so much pressure on ourselves to be perfect
        2) We should make every effort to be Godly (2 Peter 1)
        3) But we are not alone in our efforts.
    c. In fact, you can't change your life by yourself.
    d. Take comfort that He is working on you.
6. We are not alone. The Spirit is transforming us who are Christians.

B. Galatians 5:22-23

"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*" (Galatians 5:22–23, NIV)

1. Fruit of the Spirit
    a. His fruit
    b. Not our fruit
2. Not a list to achieve.
3. Outcome of God living in you.
    a. If He is in your life, this fruit will occur.
    b. You will see these things more and more.
4. Looking back at my life
    a. I'm far stronger in all of these areas than I was 29 years ago.
    b. Not because I focused on each one

c. Because He is living in me.

C. I don't have to understand how the Spirit is working.

D. But believe He's working.

E. If you are a Christian, the Spirit is living in you and transforming you.

IV. How does He transform us?

A. Internally

1. Makes God Known

a. 1 Corinthians 2:10b-11

"*The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*" (1 Corinthians 2:10–11, NIV)

1) Spirit is searching the depths of God
2) The very Spirit of God
3) No one can know God better than God's own Spirit

b. 1 Corinthians 2:12

"*What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.*" (1 Corinthians 2:12, NIV)

1) We have received the Holy Spirit
2) We may understand what God has given us
3) He's helping us comprehend and understand God.

c. 1 Corinthians 2:13-16

"*This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the*

Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, "Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Corinthians 2:13–16, NIV)

1) Paul was teaching words taught by the Spirit
    a) Spiritual truths
    b) In spiritual words
2) Man without the Spirit doesn't understand
    a) Studied the Bible with someone
        (1) Something you see clearly in the scripture
        (2) They just don't get it
    b) Not because you are so brilliant
    c) Because the Spirit is helping you understand God

d. More you understand God, the more you can be like Him
e. Spirit is transforming you by making God known to you.
f. "We have the mind of Christ"

2. Ezekiel 36:25-27

"*I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.*" (Ezekiel 36:25–27, NIV)

a. In prophesying about the coming of His Spirit, God says:
    1) Cleanse us
    2) Give us a new heart & new spirit
b. Put His Spirit in us and move us to follow His decrees
c. God gave us His Spirit to move us to obey
    1) Spirit is speaking to us

2) Compelling us to obey God
3) Spirit is constantly
    a) Prompting us to do good and turn from sin
    b) Tempting us
    c) We have to learn to listen, but more on that later

d. Doesn't take over
    1) (Acts 7:51) speaks of resisting the Holy Spirit
    2) He moves us to obey
    3) He does not force us to obey
e. Throughout scriptures, Spirit compelled people to do great things
f. Only a few times did the Spirit takeover
g. Spirit transforms you by compelling you to obey God.

3. Spirit transforms internally by making God known & compelling to obey

B. External
1. Spirit also transforms us using outside influences in our life.
2. People
    a. Many examples of this throughout the scriptures.
    b. Spirit speaks through Zechariah to King Joash (2 Chron 24:20)
3. Events/circumstances
    a. Manasseh get dragged off by a hook in his nose (2 Chron 33)
4. Spirit uses people and circumstances to transform our lives.

C. Spirit transforms us by making God known, moving us to obey and using external influences like people & events to make us more like Christ.

V. Conclusion
A. Back to our story about the Ethiopian
1. How could God send the baby Christian off on his own?
2. He was not alone.
3. He had the Holy Spirit to transform him into the likeness of Christ.

B. The Holy Spirit is working to transform each one of us.
1. Non-Christians

a. He is calling you to come to God
b. If you will, He will purify you and come to live in you

2. Christians
   a. Spirit is transforming you into the likeness of Christ
   b. He is
      1) Making God known to you
      2) Moving you to obey
      3) Using people and external events to train you
   c. You are not alone in your struggle to be like Jesus
3. The Holy Spirit is transforming you.

C. If the Spirit of God is transforming me, then what is my responsibility?
   1. Can I just sit back and wait on Him?
   2. If you love God, how can you?
   3. No, we need to take comfort in the Spirit transforming us.
   4. Then we need to do everything we can to keep in step with the Spirit.

3 – Living by the Spirit

I. Introduction
   A. Talked about
      1. Spirit is God
      2. Spirit is actively transforming us to be like Christ
   B. What is our role in regards to our walk with the Spirit
   C. Mark Romans 8 & Galatians 5 – we'll be jumping back and forth
II. Spirit vs. the Flesh – What is your focus?
   A. Romans 8:1-4

"*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*" (Romans 8:1–4, NIV)

1. Reiterates the grace of God – no condemnation for those **in Jesus**
2. Through Jesus
   a. Set free from the law
   b. Set free from sin and death
3. Law failed
   a. Did not bring us close to God
   b. Too sinful to obey the law fully
4. Jesus was offered
   a. We could meet the requirements of the law
   b. It's as though you lived in perfect obedience
5. Who does this apply to?

a. Those that live by the Spirit
b. Not those that live according to the flesh

B. Romans 8:5-8

"*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.*" (Romans 8:5–8, NIV)

1. Those that live according to the flesh
   a. Flesh = unspiritual desires
   b. Minds set on what the flesh desires
   c. Minds are death
   d. Hostile to God
   e. Does not submit to God's laws, can't
   f. Can not please God
2. Those that live according to the Spirit
   a. Minds set on what the Spirit desires
   b. Mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace
3. What is your mind set on?
   a. Are you pursuing what the flesh desires?
      1) Impurity
      2) Protecting your rights
      3) Material things
      4) Getting even with someone
   b. Are you setting your mind on what the Spirit desires?
      1) Seeking God's guidance.
      2) Listening to the Bible for direction.

3) Considering what God wants for the people around you
4) Looking to others needs more than your own

c. What do you pursue or think about more?

C. Galatians 5:16-18

"*So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*" (Galatians 5:16–18, NIV)

1. Sin and the Spirit are in direct conflict.
   a. They want opposite things.
   b. You can't serve both.
2. No one is perfect in either.
   a. Sinful man will do good things.
   b. Righteous man will do sinful things.
   c. But which nature controls your life?
   d. Which nature drives your decisions?
   e. Which nature better describes your life?

D. Galatians 5:19-23

"*The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:19–23, NIV)

1. Acts of the flesh are obvious.
    a. We know what sin is.
    b. It's obvious to everyone.
    c. This list is not all inclusive but you get the picture.
        1) Immorality and impurity
        2) Bad relationships – discord, factions, envy, hatred
        3) Lack of control – fits of rage, drunkenness
        4) Other gods – idolatry, materialism, selfish ambition
    d. If you live like this, you will not be in God's kingdom.
2. Fruit of the Spirit is obvious too
    a. These characteristics will show in one's life.
    b. As mentioned
        1) Not list to achieve
        2) Outcome of Spirit living in you

E. Back to the question – Who are you living for – flesh or the Spirit?
    1. Still don't know.
    2. Which of these lists better describes your life?
        a. Sin is obvious.
        b. Spirit's fruit is obvious.
        c. Which describes you?
    3. Any one person, righteous or sinful, will show traits of the other side.
    4. What do you live for? What do other people see?

III. Keep in Step with the Spirit – What can you do?

A. Galatians 5:24-25

"*Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*" (Galatians 5:24–25, NIV)

1. We Christians have crucified the flesh.

   a. At the waters of baptism, we said no more to sin.
   b. Through the death of Jesus, we ended that life.
2. Now we must live by the Spirit.
3. Keep in step with the Spirit.
   a. He is going to change our lives.
   b. We must strive to keep up.
   c. God calls us to make every effort.
   d. Even though He is the One who will change us.

B. Romans 8:12-14

"*Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.*" (Romans 8:12–14, NIV)

1. Through Jesus we have put to death the flesh.
2. Now we have an obligation – live by the Spirit.

C. What does it mean to "live by the Spirit", "keep in step with the Spirit", and be "led by the Spirit"?

D. Romans 8:5

"*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*" (Romans 8:5, NIV)

1. Set your mind on the Spirit not the Flesh
   a. You are what you eat
   b. What do you feed your mind?
2. Set your mind on Flesh and you will live for flesh
   a. Early Christian years – watched popular movies & TV

1) Movie with nudity
    a) I can handle it
    b) I look away
    c) Fast forward
2) Don't struggle with in moment
3) When I struggled, those images came to mind

b. Cut out movies or TV with nudity or focus on sex
    1) Missed some popular movies
    2) Stopped watching "Friends"
c. I struggled less with impurity
d. Stopped feed the flesh
e. Same with materialism – less ads, window shopping – less desire

3. Set your mind on the Spirit
    a. What happens when we:
        1) Study bible daily
        2) Pray continually
        3) Worship in song (what do you listen to during commute)
        4) Fellowship with believers
    b. Feed the Spirit
    c. "Think Spirit, get Spirit" (Steve Kinnard)
4. Set your mind on the Spirit

E. Galatians 6:7-8 "sow to please the Spirit"

"*Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*" (Galatians 6:7–8, NIV)

1. Sowing = planting seeds
    a. Imagine your choices are planting seeds
    b. Choose to curse your wife – planting a seed

c. Choose to call & encourage a friend – planting a seed
d. Who is happy with what your planting? Flesh or the Spirit

2. Are you sowing to please the flesh?
3. Live for the flesh.
    a. Live for a nature that is hostile to God.
    b. You are telling God –
        1) I don't want to be with you.
        2) Leave me alone.
    c. From that nature you reap destruction
        1) Not just by God's punishment
        2) Sin is self destructive
        3) You are choosing a life that hurts you
    d. Examples
        1) You isolate yourself, refuse to be vulnerable
            a) Wonder why you feel so alone
            b) Why no real friends
        2) You complain, argue, and critique others
            a) Wonder why no one calls you
            b) Wonder why you feel like an outsider
        3) You pursue money and materialism
            a) Wonder why you never have enough
            b) Wonder why life is so stressful
        4) You watch movies & TV with sex
            a) Wonder why you struggle with purity
        5) You refuse self control
            a) Wonder why you can't finish school
            b) Wonder why money is tight
        6) You pursue pleasure and comfort
            a) Wonder why you always need a vacation
            b) Wonder why me time is never sufficient

e. We have to stop sowing to please the flesh.

4. Sow to please the Spirit
   a. What would excite the Holy Spirit?
      1) Fellowship with God
         a) Good, deep, soul feeding bible study
         b) Good meaningful prayer with God
         c) Don't you think that excites the Holy Spirit?
      2) Fellowship with other believers
         a) Spiritual time with others
         b) Discussions about God and Jesus
         c) Confessing sin and getting it out in the open
         d) Bonding time with other Christians
         e) Don't you think that excites the Holy Spirit?
      3) Meaningful worship and praise of God
         a) How does Spirit feel when we sing to God?
         b) Really meaning what we sing.
      4) Meditating on God
         a) Thinking about His majesty
         b) Considering His characteristics
         c) Praising His attributes
      5) Serving others
         a) Helping the poor
         b) Helping a friend overcome sin
         c) Telling someone the good news of Jesus
   b. Does any of that sound pleasing to the Holy Spirit?
5. Are you sowing to please the Holy Spirit?

F. To "walk with", "live by", or be "led by", you have to stay close, listen, and obey.
   1. John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5, NIV)

a. If a man remains in me, he will bear much fruit.
b. Our efforts should be on getting close to God
c. Close to Jesus, close to the Spirit
d. He will bring about this fruit in our lives.

2. Draw close to God
   a. Set your mind on Him
   b. Think about Him
   c. Listen and Speak to him
   d. Get to know Him and understand him.
   e. Draw close to God
3. Listen to the Spirit – more on that in next section

G. Spirit is going to produce fruit in our lives.
H. We must make every effort to try to keep up with Him.

IV. Conclusion
   A. Romans 8:15-17

"*The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*" (Romans 8:15–17, NIV)

1. We are the children of God.
2. We need to draw close to Him and listen to our Father.
3. We have an obligation to live by His Spirit.

B. Christ saved us & now we must live by the Spirit.

1. Do you live to please the flesh?
2. Do you live to please the Holy Spirit?

C. Live to please the Spirit.
   1. Sow in your heart what pleases the Holy Spirit.
   2. Listen to the Spirit and follow His guidance.

D. And we will be called “children of God.”

4 – Listening to the Spirit

I. Introduction
   A. We've established
      1. The Holy Spirit is God
      2. He is transforming our lives
      3. We must live by the Spirit
   B. Isaiah 30:21

"*Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."*" (Isaiah 30:21, NIV)

      1. After pronouncing Israel's judgment, God says
         a. He longs to be gracious
         b. Calls them to repent
      2. If you do
         a. Wherever you turn you will hear a voice
         b. "This is the way; walk in it."
      3. God promised guidance
         a. All of us desire guidance from God
         b. God is loving Father and desires to give guidance
            1) Not just in what's wrong and what's right
            2) But even in what's better or best in our lives
         c. One will say, "no God doesn't care about the little details"
            1) Mt 10:29-30

"*Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*" (Matthew 10:30, NIV)

            2) God cares about the details
      4. God wants to give us guidance and He does so through the Holy Spirit

C. Does the Spirit still speak?

II. Spirit Speaks

A. Examples in Acts

1. (Acts 8:29) Spirit sends Philip to reach out to Ethiopian
2. (Acts 8:39-40) Spirit sent Philip west to preach the Word
3. (Acts 10:19-23) Spirit instructed Peter to go with Cornelius
4. (Acts 13:1-4) Spirit directed the leaders to send Paul & Barnabas to Galatia
5. (Acts 15:5-11, 22-29) Jewish/Gentile with “seemed good to the Holy Spirit”
6. (Acts 16:6-7) Spirit denies Paul’s entrance into Asia so he went elsewhere

B. What do we see in these events?

1. Spirit guided them
    a. In simple decisions (Ethiopian)
    b. In major decisions (Peter with Gentiles & Paul sent out)
2. Spirit guided in different ways
    a. Through a voice
    b. Through nudging or conscience
    c. Through leaders
    d. Through discussion
    e. Through external forces
3. Spirit’s guidance in Acts primarily for advance of the gospel.

C. Well, John, the Spirit’s actions unique to apostles

1. No, consistent throughout Biblical history
2. I would agree that
    a. Miracles, instantaneous defiance of natural law, limited
    b. Most of God’s people never saw a miracle
3. Not true of God providing guidance to His people
4. God provided guidance to His people throughout the Bible

D. At some level, we believe God guides – the question is “how directly?”

E. The Holy Spirit spoke throughout the Bible in various ways

F. The Spirit still speaks today.

III. How Does the Spirit Speak

A. 2 Peter 1:20-21 Word

"*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*" (2 Peter 1:20–21, NIV)

1. Prophecy of scripture, the Bible, came by the Spirit
2. Spirit speaks to us through the written Word of God
    a. Most direct & clear form of communication
    b. We can
        1) Read it over and over
        2) Study the Word
        3) Pour our lives into understanding it
3. All other forms of communication must be weighed against the Word
    a. Spirit speaks in other ways
    b. God does not lie (Titus 1:2)
    c. He will not go against the written Word
4. Spirit speaks through the Bible

B. 2 Chronicles 20:14-15 People

"*Then the Spirit of the Lord came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph, as he stood in the assembly. He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.*" (2 Chronicles 20:14–15, NIV)

1. Spirit spoke through Jahaziel to encourage Jehoshaphat to go to war.
2. Spirit spoke through people throughout the Bible.

3. He spoke through people to:
    a. Correct & rebuke
    b. Encourage
    c. Give direction
4. Spirit speaks through people today
    a. How meaningful would someone's words be if from God?
        1) Someone encourages you – sent by the Spirit
        2) Someone corrects you – could be from the Spirit
        3) Someone offers advice – Spirit is offering me guidance
    b. Change how you listen if even a possibility it is from God
5. Two questions:
    a. How do we know if someone is speaking from the Spirit?
        1) Test those speaking to us (1 John 4:1)
            a) Best test – are they teaching the written word of God?
            b) One may say, "The Spirit is speaking to me"
                (1) False prophets claim to speak God's words.
                (2) No one by Spirit will disagree with Word.
                (3) Galatians – Even if an angel preaches…
                (4) Deut 13 – Even if they perform miracles, don't stray
            c) We can know the truth
        2) Know the written letter of the Spirit.
        3) Mt 7 Jesus says to judge by one's fruit
        4) We do need to test the speaker.
    b. Are you willing to listen?
        1) Spirit spoke through all sorts of people – even a donkey
            a) Jahaziel was likely a song leader, not a military advisor
            b) Yet they went to war on his encouragement
        2) Zechariah 7:12

"*They… would not listen… to the words… sent by his Spirit... So the Lord Almighty was very angry.*" (Zechariah 7:12, NIV)

a) If you refuse to listen when God sends one to you
b) God will be angry
c) Plenty of people were upset with Jesus

3) Don't miss the message because you didn't like the delivery

6. Spirit speaks through people
   a. Be sure their message agrees with the Bible
   b. Make sure you listen

C. Inclinations of the heart
   1. Acts 8:29

"*The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it.*" (Acts 8:29, NIV)

a. Spirit told Philip to go to the chariot
   1) It's written as though Philip heard a voice
   2) Could easily see this being a gut feeling
   3) Philip told the story, "The Spirit told me to go near the chariot."
b. This is common in scripture.
c. We are comfortable with this in evangelism
   1) Spirit told me to share my faith with this person
   2) We feel compelled

2. If we open our minds, we would realize Spirit speaks much more often.
3. Word of caution
   a. We FEEL good about something and claim that's the Spirit.
      1) If it disagrees with the Word of God, it is not the Spirit.
      2) Spirit will never disagree with the Bible.
   b. Blessed to have God's Word for clarity.
4. Ephesians 3:14-19

"*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*" (Ephesians 3:14–19, NIV)

a. Paul prays that Spirit would strengthen in inner being.
b. Spirit would help them know the love of Christ.
c. Spirit will work within us
    1) To reveal things to us
    2) To move us to obey
    3) To provide guidance on which way to go

D. The Spirit speaks through
    1. Written Word of God
    2. People
    3. Inclinations of the heart

IV. How to Listen

A. Be Open to the Spirit's Direction
    1. Psalm 143:8-10

"*Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. Rescue me from my enemies, Lord, for I hide myself in you. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.*" (Psalm 143:8–10, NIV)

a. v 8-10 David asks for God's guidance.
b. Ps 143 Exemplifies a great attitude to seek God's guidance

   c. David wanted God's direction
2. To hear the Spirit's guidance, you must be truly open to God's answer.
3. Spirit doesn't always lead you where you want to go.
   a. Mt 4 Spirit led Jesus to be tempted
   b. Acts 20:22-24 Spirit led Paul to imprisonment in Jerusalem
   c. James 1 says trials produce perseverance & maturity
4. Do you really want the Spirit's answer?
   a. Jeremiah 42 – sought God's direction, then rejected it
5. Imitate Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
   a. We can go to God with our desire
   b. But we must be truly open to the Spirit's direction
6. To listen to the Spirit, you must be truly open to His direction.

B. Evaluate the Scriptures
   1. Psalm 119:97-104

"*Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands are always with me and make me wiser than my enemies. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes. I have more understanding than the elders, for I obey your precepts. I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.*" (Psalm 119:97–104, NIV)

2. Scriptures can make us wise.
3. What does the Bible say about your situation?
   a. May not give a clear right or wrong
   b. Principles of God's word can help you
      1) Look at things spiritually
      2) Make sure your priorities are right
      3) Help you discern the Spirit's voice

4. To listen to the Spirit, you must search the scriptures for guidance.

C. Evaluate the circumstances

1. Acts 16:6

"*Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.*" (Acts 16:6, NIV)

a. Paul was kept from speaking in Asia by the Holy Spirit
b. Doesn't spell out how the Spirit prevented Paul
c. First inclination is circumstances didn't allow Paul to go
d. They viewed this as from the Spirit

2. Are the doors opened or closed?
   a. We should evaluate the circumstances
   b. What is wise
      1) For my walk with God
      2) For my family
      3) For the church
      4) Financially
   c. Be careful
      1) Just because a door is open, doesn't mean God opened it.
      2) I got a great job offer, this must be from God
         a) But you can't attend church on Sunday
      3) I got a great deal on this house, it must be from God
         a) But the house is an hour from the rest of the church
         b) God must want me to start a church there
         c) If God wants you to start a church, he doesn't start with a material offer.
      4) Just because an opportunity opens doesn't mean it's from God
      5) Circumstances must be evaluated among these other things.

3. Get the advice of others to help you evaluate
    a. Prov 11:14

"*For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers.*" (Proverbs 11:14, NIV)

    b. If it's from the Spirit, why would you be afraid to get advice?
    c. Can't God direct them too?
    d. I've been spared many times from doing what
        1) I thought was from God
        2) But after good advice, I realized it was just my pride

D. Impressions
    1. Romans 2:14-15

"*Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.*" (Romans 2:14–15, NIV)

    a. Our conscience can be our guide
    b. Even the ungodly can be guided by conscience
    c. How much more if conscience is in tune with the Spirit?
    d. What is your gut telling you?
    2. Philippians 4:6-7

"*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:6–7, NIV)

a. I've moved several times for God.
b. Every time I've
    1) asked God for guidance,
    2) considered His word, &
    3) evaluated the circumstances
c. But the clinching factor was
    1) What was God telling me in my gut
    2) My decision came with a peace that surpasses understanding

3. Now be careful when following your gut
    a. (Jer 17:9), heart is deceitful
    b. If everything else is saying go left, but the hearts says go right
    c. Better think long & hard before going right

E. To listen to the Spirit
    1. Be truly open to the Spirit's direction
    2. Consider God's Written Word
    3. Evaluate the circumstances with help from others
    4. Seek advice
    5. Consider what is the Spirit telling you in your heart

V. Conclusion
    A. The Spirit gives us guidance today
    B. The Spirit speaks through
        1. The Word
        2. People
        3. Inclinations
    C. We need to train ourselves to listen by
        1. Being truly open to God's word
        2. Consider what the Bible says
        3. Evaluate the circumstances
        4. Seek advice

5. Listen to the Spirit's impressions within

D. The Spirit still speaks.
   1. Are you listening?

E. Conclusion
   1. The Holy Spirit is God
   2. He is transforming our lives
   3. We must live by the Spirit
   4. Listen to the Spirit