

7 Limits Now - and Heaven Then

MEMORY VERSE: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

NAME: _____

The Christian filled with the Spirit and "walking in the Spirit" (see Galatians 5:16, 25, KJV) will enjoy a wonderful spiritual Victory; that person shall know what it is to see "the righteous requirements of the law ... fully met" (Romans 8:4). Yet there are limits on what God does for the Christian in this life? Do not expect the Spirit-filled and sanctified life to be more than God promised. There are some things saved for heaven.

1. Read Romans 8:2, 18-27.

a. What did the Spirit do for Paul, according to 8:2? _____

b. What is the present condition of the world in which we live as Christians or our experience in the world?

(1) verse 18 _____

(2) verse 20 _____

(3) verse 22 _____

Though the Spirit sets us free from the law of sin and death, we still live in a world of suffering, frustration, and groaning. Yet in that world, the Spirit will do another thing for us. What is it? (8:26) _____

2. How did God use weakness in Paul's life? (2 Corinthians 12:9) _____

3. Though there was an example of full obedience and no sin in Christ's life (1 Peter 2:21-22), He still faced experiences of limitation, difficulty, hurt, and suffering as part of His human existence. The fully sanctified Christian will still face difficulty and suffering too. Please note the limits or hardships faced by Christ in the following verses:

a. Matthew 13:57 _____

b. Matthew 26:38-40 _____

c. Luke 4:1-2 _____

d. Luke 19:45 _____

e. John 11:35 _____

f. What experience have you had that was difficult but still consistent with being Christ like? _____

4. Read Hebrews 4:15.

- a. To what extent was Jesus tempted? _____

- b. What was His response to temptation? _____

- c. What is the difference between temptation? _____

5. What promise does God make to you when you are tempted? (1 Corinthians 10:13)

6. How may a Christian distinguish between right and wrong?

- a. 1 John 2:6 _____

- b. Ephesians 5:10 _____

7. A characteristic like fear can be sinful or human - or our *response* to fear can be sinful or human. Read about these two places where Peter experienced fear, and tell which was sinful and which was human. Why? (Mark 14:66-71 and Acts 4:29-31).

8. What was Paul's spiritual condition (Acts 13:9) _____

What struggle or difficulty did he face in Ephesians 6:12? _____

In 2 Corinthians 11:28? _____

What struggle or burden have you seen Spirit-filled people face? _____

Based on Matthew 5:43-47, in what realm or area of life are they to be "perfect"? ("Perfect" means fully carrying out the purpose for which a thing is designed.) _____

How is this love emphasis expressed in Matthew 22:37-40? _____

What is the best way to drive out fear of judgment? (1 John 4:17-18) _____

Where does love come from? (Galatians 5:22) _____

What does love do? (Romans 13:9-10) _____

10. Once a Christian has been filled with the Spirit and made holy, what does God yet expect of that Christian?

a. Colossians 1:22-23 _____

b. Galatians 5:25 _____

c. Philippians 4:8 _____

d. A Christian possesses the normal human drives of the social, security, and sex. What must one do with such drives?

(1Corinthians 9:27) _____

11. What is the value of suffering, trials, or tribulation to the Christian? (Romans 5:3-5)

12. What is expected of all Christians? (2 Peter 3:18) _____

13. What do we look forward to in heaven? (1 John 3:2) _____

What do we do here and now to prepare for that time? (1 John 3:3) _____

14. What problems will heaven remedy that are not remedied for us here? (Revelation 21:4)

To whom is this promised? (Revelation 21:7) _____

15. A Spirit-filled Christian will still face problems and temptations and battles. One of the Christian books that has had a powerful influence in the world is *The Christian's Secret of a Happy life*, by Hannah Whitall Smith. She discovered this secret in her own life but admitted she still faced *conflict*. However, she discovered what it meant for the battle to be the Lord's, not hers. Hear her testimony.

I was converted in Philadelphia in 1856 in my twenty-sixth year. As time passed on the Lord graciously led me into the knowledge of much truth. But my heart was ill at ease. At the end of eight years of my Christian life I was forced to make the sorrowful admission that I had not even as much power over sin as when I was first converted.

I began to long after holiness. I began to groan under the bondage to sin in which I was still held. But so thoroughly convinced was I that no efforts or resolutions or prayers of my own would be of any avail, and so ignorant was I of any other way that I was almost ready to give up in despair.

In this time of sore need (1863) God drew into my company some whose experience seemed to be very different from mine. They declared that they had discovered a "way of holiness" wherein the redeemed soul might live and walk in abiding peace, and might be made "more than conqueror" through the Lord Jesus Christ.

I asked them their secret and they replied, "It is simply ceasing from all efforts of our own and trusting in the Lord to make us holy." Never shall I forget the astonishment this answer gave me. "What!" I said, "do you really mean that you have ceased from your own efforts altogether in your daily living and that you do nothing but trust the Lord? And does He actually and truly make you conquerors?"

(over)

Memory Verse

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me (2 Corinthians 12:9, NIV).

Like a revelation the glorious possibilities of a life such as this flashed upon me, but the idea was too new and wonderful for me to grasp. I was altogether legal in my thoughts as regarded daily living. I had never dreamed of trusting the Lord for that and I did not know how to do it. I lay awake whole nights to wrestle in prayer that God would grant me the blessing He had granted these other Christians. Then I began anew to search the Scriptures. I found that the salvation He died to procure was declared to be a perfect salvation, and He was able to save to the very uttermost. I found that He offered Himself to me as my life, and that He wanted to come into my heart and take full possession there and subdue all things to Himself. He to me as a perfect and complete and present Saviour and I abandoned my whole self to His care; I cast myself, as it were, headlong into the ocean of His love, to have all these things accomplished in me by His almighty working. I believed the truth that He was my practical sanctification as well as my justification, and my soul found rest at least, such a rest that no words can describe it - rest from all its weary conflicts, rest from all its bitter failures. The secret of holiness was revealed to me, and that secret was Christ. My soul has entered into that interior rest or "keeping of Sabbath" which the apostle Paul, in Hebrews 4:9, declares "remaineth for the people of God." *Not that there are no conflicts; the battle, however, is no longer mine, but Christ's.* All the former period of my Christian course seems comparatively wasted. I was a child of God, it's true, but my growth was stunted, and my stature feeble. When this secret of faith was revealed to me, I began to grow; and the dedication which was impossible to me became the very joy of my heart. Believing, resting, abiding, obeying - these are my part; He does all the rest. What heights and depths of love, what infinite tenderness of care, what wise lovingness of discipline, what grandeur of keeping, what wonders of revealing, *what strength in weakness; what comfort in sorrow, what light in darkness, what easing of burdens* I have found; what a God, and what a Saviour, no words can tell!

J. Sidlow Baxter, *His Deeper Work in Us* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, (1967) 81-82 (Italics is mine.)

16. Analyze your own spiritual life.

a. What problem areas of your life is it unfair to expect God to remove in this life?

b. What area do you need to discipline? _____

c. What area may you expect God to give you victory over? _____

d. What is your next step needed to experience that victory? _____

A Spirit-filled Christian can realistically face life. Though God does not remove all problems, there are some powerful ways God will work through that life. See the next lesson.

Memory Verse

*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.
Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that
the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Corinthians 12:9, KJV).*