

Church Conference Talk 3

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[0 : 00] Let's pray, shall we? Heavenly Father, we do pray you'd help us to think clearly, to understand. Pray for those who haven't had a good night's sleep, that they may stay awake now. Pray for each of us as we listen to your word and seek to understand it, that your spirit would give us such understanding, please.

Father, that we might live in obedience to you, that we might share in the great crop of your spirit that we've just read off. And we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Well, thank you for the invitation of being here, but thank you also for the fellowship in the last day or so. It's been lovely in a church which has people so concerned about the details of the Bible and have been asked quite serious questions by several of you, which mean that I'm going home richer from our fellowship with you because I've got questions that I haven't answered.

And I don't know the answer and I'm going to be thinking about them for the next few days. And that is a rare treat for a speaker to go to a conference where he learns from those. He's come as the guru who knows everything to teach.

It's been a great two-ways thing. One of the things that has upset you a little, or upset some of you, is my fairly bold statement that you can't be too cerebral. That has had the desired effect of getting your cerebrals to think.

[1 : 30] And to wonder about this, you see, as to why you can't be. And I think I understand something, that you have a situation here where there are way out kind of charismatic churches, but there are also way out kind of extreme intellectual churches that give rise to your questionings.

And I would say that you can't be too cerebral. That's not possible. Because it doesn't matter how clever you are, God's cleverer. Don't matter what thoughts you've thought, God's thought greater thoughts.

You actually are not in the same loop. You can't be too cerebral. John Stott wrote a wonderful book called *Your Mind Matters*. And it's a marvellous little book. It's only a thin little book, but get it from Amazon or somewhere.

It's an old book, and it just is one of those ones where you just trace us through how often in the New Testament you're told your mind matters, that you're going to be renewed by the mind and so on.

However, I think there are people who think they're cerebral but are actually insufficient. You can certainly be insufficient in your understanding, in your thinking.

[2 : 40] And those who are insufficient in their thinking are slightly different to what you would expect. Certainly different to what they expect. That is, there are people who think that by thinking there's no place for emotions in the Christian life.

Well, their problem is not emotions. Their problem is their thinking. They're not thinking straight. If you're actually understood properly, you would know that emotions are an important part of your being as a person that God has created for you to enjoy and to experience, you see.

It's not that they are too cerebral to have emotions. They're insufficiently cerebral because they haven't understood emotions, which are a very important part of us.

And there are some who are fearful of emotions. You know, they have really got their own psychological hang-ups about being emotional. And again, their problem is a lack of cerebral. Their problem is lack of understanding of the role and place of it. And there are those who think that godliness is determined by information.

[3 : 53] That if I've got all the information, I'm godly. When in fact, if I really have my thinking straight, my godliness will be seen in my behaviour, in my life.

It's not just emotions. It's other things as well flow from thinking rightly. So it's not that I am wrong in saying you can't be too cerebral.

I just think that there's many people who are not cerebral enough and therefore cauterise their emotions and cauterise their godliness, thinking I've got a degree in theology, therefore I'm God's best friend.

And he's got a degree in theology from his theological faculty in Suva.

And when he came, he joined into Bible studies and got converted. And so then he finished his science degree and went back and did a postgraduate degree in theology because he'd already got his degree in theology at Moore College, has gone on to do a PhD and now runs a theological college for islanders in Sydney.

[5 : 13] But yes, you could have the whole degree in theology, still not be converted. That's not lack of... That means he just wasn't taught properly in the first place.

To think that you, by thinking and by passing exams, you are godly. Well, I don't know what that college taught, but it didn't teach the truth, did it? That's nonsense. And so, yeah.

Anyway, we're going to question time a little bit in the second session, so you can pursue it further if you want to. Acts chapter 4 was the illustration I didn't get to last night that I thought we'd skip past quickly.

So turn with me to Acts chapter 4. And this is a little exercise in honesty. Get your pencils and pens ready because I want you to note down something.

It's not to share with other people. It's just for yourself. I'm going to read to you the first paragraph or so of Acts chapter 4. And I want you to pay careful attention to what it said.

[6 : 14] And as they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, came upon them greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming Jesus' resurrection for the dead.

They arrested them, putting them in custody until the next day for it was already evening. Okay. Write down the misreadings I just read.

Write down my mistakes that you heard me. I didn't warn you to look for them, did I? I just read it, but I made mistakes.

And you say, yes, Philip, we've been listening to you all yesterday. You often make mistakes. Okay. I'll read it again.

This time, you're ready, aren't you? And as they were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees, came upon them greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

[7 : 22] And they arrested them and putting them in custody until the next day for it was already evening. Did you see the mistakes that time? One of them.

Did you see more mistakes that time than last time? See, some of the mistakes were completely unimportant, weren't they? Some of the mistakes were that I left out and.

Instead of saying and, and, and, I just put effectively commas instead of the and because it's a little bit too and. Another mistake was, I turned the, the verb, put, in verse three, into a participle.

Putting them in. There's mistakes. But did you see the big mistake? In. That's right. Proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection.

But you see, we can read that and not notice it the first time, can't we? Because it's just smoothing it out. But the smoothing it out has actually changed the meaning.

[8 : 33] Because he wasn't proclaiming, they weren't proclaiming Jesus' resurrection. They were proclaiming in Jesus, the resurrection has come.

For the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection, but the Sadducees didn't. And so, when the apostles came preaching, and you'll notice it is the Sadducees and the temple people, and the Sadducees' power base was the temple.

So we're not talking about Pharisees. The Pharisees wouldn't have been upset by preaching the resurrection. They would have been upset by saying in Jesus, the resurrection. They wouldn't be upset by the resurrection because they believed in the resurrection.

But the Sadducees, they were upset because they were proclaiming the resurrection in Jesus. But we are so clear about the fact of Jesus' resurrection that we've missed the meaning of Jesus' resurrection.

Namely, that in him rising from the dead, the resurrection has commenced. See the illustration? The way in which our minds are skimming over the Bible and missing the point.

[9 : 51] Why I want you to write it down because if you missed it the first time, there's a lesson today, isn't there? Right? And if you get one new lesson from a preacher, well, have a sleep, knock off for the rest of the morning.

It's okay. You're ahead, aren't you? No. Keep listening. There are other things to be said of great importance. But the key jigsaw piece that people have to grasp is the resurrection.

That's the piece that people miss. And when you miss that, you don't understand the Holy Spirit and the coming of the Holy Spirit and the significance of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Because this is the end of the world. The Spirit has now come. People have different expectations. Yes, we're on to point one now of the talk.

People have different expectations for spirituality. In our age in particular, people want to know what will it feel like? How will it feel? What kind of experience will I have?

[10 : 51] I always laugh at the feelingness of our age. You know, at the Olympics, the journalists who specialise in being incompetent as far as I can see, they, you know, the person just climbs out of having the pool, having swum 1,500 metres and missing out on the silver, on the gold medal by two, you know, tenths of a second.

And the journalist says to him, how do you feel? As if it matters how he feels. I mean, it's a wonder sometimes that the swimmers don't just take the microphone and shove it down the journalist's neck.

How do you think I feel after 1,500 metres and missing out by two? I mean, what a stupid, dumb question it is. How do you feel? But it's the only question that matters to us because the mark of authenticity in our age is our feelings.

That's the mark of authenticity. How you feel is the genuine, true, real you. So people will be expecting by the Holy Spirit that they'll suddenly have joy, happiness, laughter, or an overwhelming sense of the other, the transcendent, or an experience of bodily sensations like laughing or falling down or being slain by the Spirit, or dreams and words of knowledge and guidance that I'll hear the voice of God telling me what to do because of the Spirit or a sense of wonder or a sense of the presence of God.

There's all kinds of things that people expect. What do you expect when the Holy Spirit comes to you? Well, I'm saying what we should expect is what Jesus taught.

[12 : 41] What Jesus taught about why he was sending the Spirit. For the Spirit doesn't just simply come. he comes at the direction of the Father and at the direction of the Son.

And he comes at the direction of the Father because the Son asks the Father to send the Spirit. So this morning in that passage, you see, we see, sorry, yesterday we saw that the Spirit was sent by Jesus as another advocate, counsellor, comforter, helper to replace himself.

And he came as a teacher, reminding them of Jesus' teaching and he came as a witness to Jesus and he came as the prosecutor of the world because of their failure to understand Jesus and he came as a guide into all the truth that is in Jesus.

But in all these things we see that he is the Spirit of truth coming to do Jesus' mission in the next phase of Jesus' mission once he is resurrected from the dead and ascended to heaven.

This teaching of Jesus should then set my expectations of what the Spirit is coming into the world to do. Expectations that I would say are matched in the rest of the New Testament as we read through the book of Acts and the letters that follow.

[14 : 13] For example, in the book of Acts, we see the Spirit leading the apostles into the world mission and into regeneration of people.

As they preach the gospel towards people, people are born again into the living hope. The living hope of the Lord Jesus Christ which comes through the Holy Spirit to them.

And you can see it in a couple of references for example in 1 Thessalonians and 1 Peter. 1 Thessalonians 1, we read verse 4, for now we know brothers and sisters loved by the God that he has chosen you because, how does he know they're chosen?

Because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. A different word to the word convict in John 16.

That is, when he preached the gospel, just words, just speaking, people were converted. That's how he knows they are the elect because the Holy Spirit is the one that gives that conversion.

[15 : 24] It's the Holy Spirit that convicts you of the truth of the gospel. So later in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 13, chapter 2 verse 13 we read and we also thank God continually because when you receive the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word but as it actually is.

The word of God which is indeed at work in you who believe. Human words are human words but the word of God created the universe.

And the word of God is the Spirit's word for the Spirit inspires the word of God and puts it in the mouths of people so that when they hear the words of people they actually hear as it really is the word of God.

And because it's the word of God it is at work inside you. It is at work within you. It's 1 Thessalonians 2 verse 13. Or a passage of 1 Peter 1 which we're going to look at later on in the morning.

where it speaks of the salvation that is to come that the Spirit of Christ told the prophets in the Old Testament and now you hear the gospel.

[16 : 38] And so it says it was revealed to the prophets of old that they weren't serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told to you by those who have preached the gospel to you.

by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. It's a kind of funny phrase when we read it after morning tea you'll see there's this funny phrase you don't need by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

You know those who have now have been told to you by those who preach the gospel to you. Full stop that would make sense. But suddenly it's not just those who preach the gospel to you it's those who preach to the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit that has been sent to you.

That effective gospel ministry is that which is blessed by the Holy Spirit to bring people to salvation. It was the coming of the Spirit to the Samaritans it was the coming of the Spirit to Cornelius if you remember in Acts 10 and so on that persuaded the apostles to preach the gospel not just to the Jews but also to the ends of the world.

the Spirit is the evangelist he is the missionary who works through his people to reach the ends of the world with the message of Jesus.

[18 : 00] But yet most people when they think of the work of Spirit or what it would be like to be spiritual turn to 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. So whenever you're having a discussion about the work of the Holy Spirit someone will take you to 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 not realising that this is the unspiritual church.

The very church they want to look at is actually the unspiritual not the spiritual church. So let's turn to 1 Corinthians for a moment we'll get to Galatians fear not turn to 1 Corinthians look at chapter 3 1 Corinthians after Romans before 2 Corinthians here we go 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 1 1 Corinthians 1 Corinthians but I brothers could not address you as spiritual people but as people of the flesh as infants in Christ I tell you I fed you with milk not solid food for you were not ready for it even now you're not ready for it for you are still of the flesh for while there's jealousy and strife among you aren't you not of the flesh behaving only in a human way for when one says I follow Paul and other Apollos are you not merely human see this is not the spiritual church this is the unspiritual church he can't talk to them as spiritual people because the way they're living is so contrary to the spirit and as you go through 1 Corinthians and ponder this wonderful letter you'll see that this church is full of divisions this church is full of sexual immorality one man is sleeping with his father's wife others are sleeping with prostitutes others are denying normal marital relationships between husband and wife they're taking law cases against each other within the church and the long discussion about what to do with food offered to idols for some eating in the idol temples and some won't eat any meat because it's all been contaminated by the idols they don't understand that food is food they don't understand idolatry this is a really chaotic church the most mixed up messy unspiritual church in the new testament is corinth and so you're now going to go to one corinth to find out about spirituality i think this is a small problem however because they're so mixed up about it paul does address the issue in chapters 12 13 14 now i am glad for the maturity that you as a congregation have shown me in your thinking and questioning in the last 24 hours or so because i'm now going to say something that i don't like saying because it will it can undermine your confidence in your bible and i don't ever want to undermine anybody's confidence in their bible but part of the problem that we have in looking at this issue is mistranslations and it's not the mistranslations of the ESV it's the mistranslations of most of the translations chapter 12 verse 1

now concerning spiritual gifts the ESV has a little number two there which if you've got eyes younger than mine you'll see it all spiritual persons that's because the word gifts is not there in the greek there's just an adjective spiritual and you have to fill in the noun i'm sorry oh no you went to queensland education department in new south wales i would now give a little lesson on the difference between a noun and an adjective but you i'm sure are better educated up here and will know the difference you see but just to say now concerning spiritual i want you spiritual what you know spiritual and so the translations put a word in if you think the passage is about gifts you put in gifts if you think the passage is about persons you put in persons i like the word if you're going to put a word in things because things doesn't tell you anything does it and a thing is it's it's a danish word actually there's not many danish words in english and jensen is a danish family so when there's a chance to put something danish in i always like it thing it's classic danish it means nothing you know it just is now concerning spiritual x concerning spiritual thing that's that's what it is you see and then you let the chapter tell you what it's about right and it might be about gifts it might be about persons it might be about something altogether different won't it but you're not determined and herein is a problem go back to chapter 1 verse 7 and i think the second edition of the esv has sorted this problem out but in chapter 1 verse 7 the edition i've got it says so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our lord jesus christ has anybody in an esv that's different to that yes i think the later edition they've sorted the problem out you see spiritual gift there again and you say oh a gift is not there philip no no gift is there this time spiritual is not and in fact throughout the translations you keep getting this phrase spiritual gifts but it never is there in the greek the only one occasion is romans chapter 111 and it's talking about the gospel it's not talking about spiritual gifts so here is a whole doctrine books and books written about spiritual gifts but the actual phrase is not there ever in the bible that's a worry isn't it and it's unfair on you just reading your english bibles then not to be misled of course you'll be misled by them at this point which is why you need good bible teachers who are trained properly in reading their greek and hebrew so that they will not be led astray but will be able to help you in understanding accurately what the bible is said so send more people to more college oh you've sent three well done send some more especially of the same standard but don't tell them i said that now back to chapter 12 it's not about spiritual gifts necessarily well then what is it about well the key to spiritual is being laid out for you in verses one to three whereas most people skip past it because they want to get to the gift subject now concerning spiritual things brothers i don't want you to be uninformed you know that when you were pagans you were led astray you were carried off you were kidnapped to mute i prefer the word dumb because it's got two meanings hasn't it it means you don't speak and you don't think all right which is but true of idols carried off to dumb idols however you were led think about it here are highly intelligent sensible normal human beings who are worshipping statues how do you get someone who's clever to be that stupid right well you were carried off in that time you see that's what happens with the evil spirits of this world therefore i want you to understand no one speaking in the spirit of god is going to do anything like that no one speaking in the spirit of god ever says jesus is accursed and no one can say jesus is lord except in the holy spirit now of course anyone can say jesus is lord you can get your parrot to say jesus is lord can't you you can train any you know you can train a parrot to do it it's not just saying the words jesus is lord it's having jesus as your lord you can't have jesus as your lord except by the spirit of god regenerating you and changing you and transforming your whole life right it's a the great fundamental work of the spirit is to take you to the lordship of jesus that's the big work if you skip the first paragraph you miss what the three chapters are about completely most people don't know when discussing the spirit skip the first paragraph but that's what the real work is and then they skip verse four because verse four says something else they don't really want now there are a variety of gifts but the same spirit there are varieties of service but the same lord and there are varieties of activities but it but it is the same god who empowers them all in every one you see the work he's talking about is the work of the trinity father son and spirit in our ministries in our gifts in it's the same but the one word that people skip past is same you don't need that word in english now there are varieties of gifts but the spirit there are varieties of service but the lord there's varieties of activities but there are god who empowers each one but there's this little word same same same that is there he doesn't speak of gifts of the spirit but there are gifts and the spirit is at work but the important thing is though there are many different gifts there's only one spirit that doesn't seem a radical idea to you so you've been too christianized to understand the bible you

know there's only one holy spirit so you just take that bit for granted and you don't realize this is where it's being argued for here is a church that believes in lots of spirits who's spooked off by all kinds of spirits and all kinds of angels in fact one of the gifts you'll notice down later it says in verse 10 is about distinguishing between spirits so you and

I don't think we need a gift of distinguishing between spirits because we know there's one spirit the holy spirit but there are demons and there are angels there are all kinds of spirits out there and the distinguishing between spirits is an important thing to do and so he's writing to a church of people who believe in the spiritual world of spirits get out of your secularized western mind excuse me saying this to get out of your Christian mind think back to the situation that you have here of a church that's involved in spirits and what do they think well the big point he wants to make is there's only one holy spirit that's the big point and the one holy spirit gives all kinds of different gifts so there's not one spirit for this and another spirit for that and another spirit for this that the one spirit who does the whole read on with me verse 6 verse 7 to each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good notice please manifestation is singular it's not plural it's not manifestations what is the manifestation of the spirit that everything that is given is for the one purpose for the common good that's what the spirit is giving whatever he gives for the common good from one spirit comes a diversity of things that is aimed for the one common good that's the point he's making and he makes it vigorously

[30 : 41] I'm going to read it with a little bit I'm going to put emphasis on the wrong syllable on the wrong syllable I'm going to just over read it so that you'll hear possibly something that you may not have noticed in this very famous passage before it's there I'm not making it up but I'm just emphasizing it because we glide over it like we do in Acts chapter 4 we just glide over the wording pick it up with me in verse 7 to each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good for to one is given through the spirit the utterance of wisdom and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same spirit to another faith by the same spirit to another gifts of healing by the one spirit to another the working of miracles to another prophecy to another ability to distinguish between spirits to another various kinds of tongues to another the interpretation of tongues all these are empowered by one and the same spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills for just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body though many are one body so it is with

Christ for in one spirit we were all baptized into one body Jews Greeks slaves free and all were made to drink of one spirit you hear I've overread it haven't you but have you thought that you've ever noticed that before that the constant repetition down the passage is the one and the same the one and the same there's only one one and the same one and the same let me be slightly rude to our Roman Catholic friends for a moment or two right they have all these saints don't they and all these different saints have different interests one's the saint for lost causes one's the saint for healing and others the saint for travelers and others saint for this and so you know I'm traveling so I'll pray to Saint Christopher mind you I'm going to get lost because my satin doesn't work so I'll pray to Saint Jude the saints of lost causes and on the way

I'll pray because all these different saints have different portfolios in God's government no that's nonsense the one Holy Spirit gives to all I never need to pray to the saints because there's one mediator between God and man the man Jesus Christ and so I don't need all these other mediators I don't pray through these different various saints well you see they had different spirits this spirit was interested in this this spirit interested in that that spirit he saying no it's one yes yes we are diverse but the diversity all comes from one because there's one body and it all comes from the one and the same Holy Spirit one God one Lord one spirit that's what we're talking about it's the unity which is really the passage interestingly as you look at 1 Corinthians 12 to 13 14 verse 13 is the last reference to the

Holy Spirit he's not mentioned in the rest of chapter 12 he doesn't occur anywhere in chapter 13 and the one reference that you'll find to him in chapter 14 I believe is wrong so if you think these chapters are about the Holy Spirit it's interesting Paul didn't because it was only the first half of the chapter in which he actually refers to the Spirit so we've got it out of kilter indeed think about it for a moment if you go to Romans chapter 12 the gifts are given by God the Father if you go to Ephesians 4 the gifts are given by the Lord Jesus Christ and if you come to that little passage we just read then the gifts are coming from the Holy Spirit that is it's not the distinctive work of the Spirit God does everything but the

Father didn't die on the cross and the Spirit didn't die on the cross it was the Lord Jesus who died it was the Son who died on the cross the distinctive work of the Son is His death and resurrection what is the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit it's not the giving of the gifts because the Father does that the Son does that and the Spirit does that that's why verse 6 you've got to verse 4 you see it's a Trinity activity it's not a distinctive Holy Spirit activity he's talking about the Spirit because this is a church that believes in spirits there's zealots for spirits actually is what said of them and so he's addressing their failure to understand spirituality properly but now at this point you see there is a whole movement called Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement that is built on spiritual gifts which is not what the New

[36 : 08] Testament teaches that's a real worry indeed the point of the three chapters when you read all three the really big point is love that's the real big point it's a pattern of Paul's arguments you'll see it in chapter 7 you'll see it in chapters 8 to 10 what Paul does is he sets up the presenting problem and then he seems to change subject and talk about something gospel and then he comes back into the big issue that was presenting beforehand and he answers it the second time in the light of the little section so in 1 Corinthians 7 it's all about marriage and sex and being single and all that kind of thing but in the middle of it verses 17 following there's a little paragraph about being content it's got nothing to do seemingly with sexual relations or marital relations it's you know if you're a slave be content you're a free man of

Christ if you're a free man be content you're a slave of Christ I mean slavery and marriage are not actually related irrespective of what the feminists say it's not that way you've just suddenly got this little passage on contentment if you dropped it out you and I most likely wouldn't notice it but actually it's the contentment which answers the presenting problem of the first half of the chapter as he moves into the conclusion in the second half of the chapter that's how Paul argues so he sets up the problem in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 and then suddenly we have a chapter on love what's love got to do with it that's a phrase you could turn a song into something like that what's love got to do with it and then back we come to speaking in tongues and prophecy and all that kind of thing oh he's back on his life you could drop chapter 13 out and most people wouldn't notice the difference in fact I want to be rude to you and I'm sorry if this is your case but chapter 13 is not really about marriage but it's so detachable from its argument that people read it at wedding services I'm sorry if you read it at your wedding service I hope you are loving just like the Bible says you should be but it's not really about marital love you know you should read passages like chapter 6 about not going to prostitutes that's about marriage people don't like that at the weddings you know we go to love you know love is love we've got to say nonsense haven't we but love is what the three chapters are about because what one Corinthians the Corinthians haven't understood is love matters and tongues don't and in fact the judgment of your ministries your gifts is to be made by the criterion of love to speak in tongues without love to prophesy without love to work miracles without love is to be just a waste of time and space love is what makes any ministry worth doing you see it's a you've got to understand love once you've got the principle of love in place then you can analyze speaking in tongues and prophecy and then you'll realize speaking in tongues is self-centered because you're speaking to

God and nobody else you're getting something out of it nobody else is that's not very loving whereas prophecy is always loving because you're speaking to other people that's like prophecy is much more important than tongues because prophecy is other people-centered loving whereas speaking in tongues is self-centered and therefore of no benefit unless somebody translates it and if that's the case well that's kind of just like prophecy isn't it and so you see the argument all hangs on love that's what the chapters are about and yet well having said that let's come to Galatians 5 I knew we'd get there eventually and what I want to say here is the fruit of the spirit is infinitely more important than the gifts because it's the fruit of the spirit that makes the gifts worthwhile it starts off about freedom in verse 1 it's for freedom

Christ has set us free stand firm then do not let yourself be burdened again by the yoke of slavery for down in verse 5 verse 5 for through the spirit by faith we ourselves eagerly await for the hope of righteousness you see it's through the spirit that our work is being done verse 6 you see circumcision that doesn't count to anything uncircumcision doesn't count to anything what matters is faith working through love circumcision symbolizes keeping the law well the law condemns you it's the gospel that frees you so whether you're circumcised or whether you're not circumcised doesn't matter it's an irrelevance faith and love they're the things that really matter and they're the things of

the Holy Spirit verse 13 my brothers and sisters when he addresses us there you were called to freedom only don't use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh that is the old self but through love serve one another for the whole law is fulfilled in one word you shall love your neighbor as yourself you see we've now changed we lived in the flesh by flesh he doesn't mean the stuff that's hanging on your bones he means in this world right you lived by the sinful world but now you've been born again into the spiritual in Christ so he says in verse 16 so I say walk by the spirit and you'll sorry but so I say walk by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh for the desires of the flesh are against the spirit and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh for these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things that you want to do that is there's now two ways to live you can live by the flesh naturally living trying to curb it by rules and regulations of the law or you can live spiritually forgiven by the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus [42 : 57] Christ and now led by the Holy Spirit to do those things which are obedience to the law but the two ways battle against each other we're not under the law but we we're not yet perfected either and so sin in the life of the Christian is normal and the battle that's within you is normal and if the battle is over then either you're dead or you've given up Christ as long as you're battling praise God press on battling is spiritual health right when you stop battling it's because you've just given up and you're just living by the flesh or you're dead because the battle will be over then that'll be good news won't it right so keep battling we're in conflict and then he spells out the acts of the flesh in verses 19 to 21 and the main thing I want to say to you here is you'll notice that a lot of them are what we'd call spiritual things you know jealousy envy rivalry you know we think sins of the flesh will be gluttony and sexual immorality well they are but the flesh is more than that the flesh is envy rivalry jealousy party spirit and things like that divisiveness that's and so it's it's this world sinfulness is what we're talking about in the flesh but then he gives us the fruit of the spirit no it's not plural it's fruit it's the crop that the spirit produces it's not saying well look the spirit's working patience in me not love

I don't have to have that because you know I'm a patient Christian you know with the gifts you can say well I'm a musician I'm an accountant I look after the church finances I read the bible we don't all have to do the same thing but with the fruit of the spirit we've got to do the whole lot everyone it's just one fruit it's the outcome of the spirit love joy peace patience I've learned it in two different translations and I'm now confused okay love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness self-control against such things there's no law so the law moves you the spirit moves you to obey what the law always wanted and you can go through each one of them if you go to philipjensen.com there's a whole sermon series taking them one at a time as to what the bible means by love what it means by joy what it means by peace what it means by each one taken apart it was one of the great joys of preaching the series

I love that series of sermons because it taught me so much and challenged me so much as to how I live but it's not what I've got to do it's what the spirit is doing in me this is the work of the spirit in me he will make me more loving and more joyful and more at peace but peace you see you've got to take the bible peace that's why I say go and look at it there are other things you can read but philipjensen.com is an easy way to get there peace in Australian language means not warfare peace in the bible means harmony two different things you see I can be at not war with my neighbour by having a very big fence he stays his side I stay my side but I'm in harmony with my neighbour when we pull the fence down and just have a common backyard together that's the piece that the bible is talking about it's just we're one with each other we just enjoy each other's company we have the shared life you see it's a much more positive thing that you might just get from thinking like the flesh and patience is endurance it's forbearance you see and kindness and goodness the other interesting one to note just going through quickly is self-control the Toronto blessing or many of the charismatic things is it's of the spirit because

I lose control you know we have the slaying of the spirit you come out I lay hands on you down you go hopefully there's someone behind you to catch you right and you lose your self-control but actually if you have the spirit he will give you self-control it's the exact opposite of losing control and the Toronto blessing was all we're all giggling and laughing and so much uncontrollable laughter spreads because the spirit has come well it's not the spirit of Jesus because the spirit of Jesus gives you self-control you don't lose control you gain control by the spirit of Jesus you see it's it's very sad to hear what's taking place in the name of the Lord Jesus and the name of the Holy Spirit here's the sign of reality of the spiritual life in one sense it's much more important than miracles

although it's the great miracle of all that I could be someone who is loving but true spirituality is highly moral other person centred it's the very character of God himself see for some people true spirituality is having this experience for others it's being a person who has all the information in their heads to pass degrees but true spirituality is change living in accordance with the law of God and the ways of God it's to change you as a person to be loving joyful peaceful to be a person of patience and the kind of person you want your spouse to be the kind of person you want your flatmate to be the kind of person that God wants you to be and I may say your spouse and flatmate would like it too and it comes from the fulfillment of Ezekiel 36 then I won't go on with that what the passage calls us to do then is keep in step with the spirit walk by the spirit if you live by the spirit if the spirit's given you new life verse 25 well then you walk with the spirit that is the spirit is producing this in me what I must do is not fight against the spirit producing that in me what I must do is say thank you heavenly father for sending your spirit to make me this

I'm going to try and do this which the spirit is at work in me to do so you walk in step with the spirit working love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness and self control in our lives see here's why Jesus sent the holy spirit as the mission of the whole world to regenerate individuals and after regenerating individuals transform the way they live in godliness what the spirit's coming to do for us and all the other stuff and jumbo that people are going on with it's not what the spirit of christ came to do it's not what Jesus said he came to do it's not what the book of acts records him doing and it's not what the apostles explain he does and frankly it's not worth having to turn me into a loving gentle self controlled peaceful man

[50 : 35] I tell you that's a miracle that's the kind of miracle that's far more important to have than lengthening my leg anybody can pull a leg we're going to sing can be a good thanks