



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

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Walking in the Spirit

John Mullen, PCF Pastor

There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and there is only one God and Father, who is over us all and in us all and 'living through us all' (Ephesians 4:5-6). (Emphasis added).

"No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love has been brought to full expression through us" (1 John 4:12). (Emphasis added).

It is nothing short of revelation the day we embrace the truth that our sins are forgiven. Forgiven sinners are free from the penalty of eternal death. But greater is the revelation that we are no longer sinners, but by death have been adopted into the family of God and are new creations. Even greater is the revelation that Christ is now living in us and that we are joined to Him by one Spirit! However, the most amazing revelation of all is the truth that Christ now lives THROUGH us!

Many refer to this phenomenon as "walking in the Spirit." What an incredible thought... God lives through us. Most of us know so much about the corollary, "walking in the flesh" (that comes easy), but so little about "walking in the Spirit."

I don't know about you, but the "when" question is on the top of my list. When do I get to walk in the Spirit? I am already sick and tired of the flesh stuff. Bring on the Spirit!

In my quest for answers I have stumbled onto three practical ways to "bring on the Spirit." In the following paragraphs I will touch on all three. Surely there are many more, but these three seem like a good start.

*The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as he raised Christ from the dead, he will give life to your mortal body by this same Spirit living within you. So, dear brothers and sisters, you have **no obligation whatsoever to do what your sinful nature urges you to do.** (Rom 8:11-12). (Emphasis added).*

This passage from Romans might get you thinking. It did me. In fact when I read this passage and was confronted with the inconsistency in my life, it occurred to me that to start with... "I AM



GOING TO HAVE TO CHANGE MY THINKING." I thought the sinful nature was powerful. I thought it was a part of me. I thought desire for change did not equal change. Little did I know that thinking was such a key for walking in the Spirit. Then I came across Romans 8:5.

Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.

There is a direct relationship between those who are stuck in the flesh and those who are thinking about sinful things (I guess we could say unbelief qualifies as sin... maybe the biggest sin!). A revelation of that could give a guy a whole new sensitivity to what he allows himself to think about (depending of course on how desperate you are to walk in the Spirit). Philippians 4:8 gives some great suggestions of what to focus our thinking on. I could summarize by saying think upon things that please the Spirit.

Then I was thinking... what does not please the flesh? The opposite of selfishness is love. The opposite of unbelief (doubt) is faith. The opposite of pride is humility. What single activity would demonstrate love, faith and humility? I came up with **service**.

For you have been called to live in freedom—not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love (Gal 5:13). (Emphasis added).

Richard Foster wrote: "More than any other single way, the grace of **humility** is worked into our lives through the discipline of service... Nothing *disciplines* the inordinate desires of the flesh like **service**, and nothing *transforms* the desires of the flesh like **servicing in hiddenness**."

I realized there really are three kinds of service: 1) **Self Service** (no service to anyone but yourself); 2) **Self-righteous Service** (human effort, big, external rewards, needs results, dependent on feelings, demands, puts others in debt); and 3) **True Service** (response to divine urging, motivated by other's needs, service to all, hidden, indiscriminate, free from personal "need," builds community).

The distinction between Self-righteous service and True service can at times be blurry.

It helped me to think about the differences between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant.

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What's Inside?

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Family Profile

Linda Aboagye

THE EVENT THAT CHANGED MY LIFE.

The year 2006 brought so much joy into my life. In fact my life has never been the same since that year. It really changed my life.

What changed my life was the day that I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Savior. I was "in the world" and did not know anything about God. I was doing all sorts of things, going to clubs with my friends and also doing things that were not worthwhile. My parents were Christians but I never cared about their faith. They always advised me to stop the worldly living because it would not lead me anywhere.

One day my friends and I went to a party and at the party something happened. My friends ran away and I was left there alone. I turned to look to my left and to my right to see if anybody could help me. I had to run home. When I got to the house

everybody was asleep and it was around 12:30 PM. I knocked at the door and my father came and opened it. He nearly beat me but my mother interfered and told him to advise me instead. I went into my room and while lying on my bed I saw myself walking along the road talking to myself saying, "They say you exist and you call yourself God." "Why don't you come down and save me?" Suddenly a light fell on me and I could not move and I heard a voice saying, "I Am that is my name." I



woke up suddenly only to realize it was a dream. I sat on my bed thinking about the words He said. Then I heard a knock at my door... it was my mother. I told her everything that happened and she explained what it meant. She asked me to follow them to church on Sunday and I agreed to it.

On Sunday I went to church with my parents and unfortunately (or fortunately!) the pastor was preaching about salvation. When he had finished preaching he called those who wanted to give their lives to Christ. I went forward and raised my hand to accept Jesus into my life. My parents were surprised. When we got home I went into my room and asked for the forgiveness of my sins. I believe God forgave me.

From that day on my life has never been the same. My behavior has changed and things that were not going on well started going on well for me. In fact my life was becoming

joyful and people that knew me to be a bad girl saw the difference. My heart was rejoicing and I now know that there is a God that cares for us no matter how bad our sins look. He is there for each of us.

The year 2006 really brought joy in my life and my life completely changed when I met Jesus. He said to me, "You're the apple of my eye and I love you so much... I'll never leave you or forsake you." And this is true because He has promised us in His word that if we'll obey His words and fear Him, then He will always be with us and we can abide in Him. Indeed God truly exists, and when things get messy in our lives and we cry out to God, He hears us and will come to our aid.

Brethren, if God changed my life then He can change yours too. I was nobody but he picked me up from the pit, washed me and made me whole again. We serve a living God! Trust in Him and He will cause you to become what you truly want to be. Amen.

Linda Aboagye



Thanks for sharing

PCF Finances

April 2007

51,581.91	Total Income
2,212.21	Internet & Communications
5000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
8500.00	Church Rent
620.00	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
28,350.00	Salaries/Employ Tax
0.00	Evangelism & Teaching
0.00	Church Giving
588.60	Fees & Advertising
323.00	Miscellaneous
32,093.81	Total Expenses
5,988.10	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns

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The former is too often on our terms. The later is all about surrender. The flesh hates to surrender but it is the fast track to walking in the Spirit and brings us closer to our Lord.

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you (James 4:7-8). And further, you will submit to one another out of reverence for Christ (Eph 5:21). (Emphasis added).

My third suggestion to help us walk in the Spirit is simply to **engage in godly relationships**. If we want to "walk with Christ," we will have to learn to walk with His people. If we want to "walk in the Spirit," we will have to learn to walk in healthy relationships. The church can be as unhealthy as the world. It can be as "dysfunctional" as families (it is a family!). Wounded and hurting people are often drawn to the church. Immature and ungodly people are all welcomed into the church because we all have to start somewhere. The church is not a club for the healthy and mature. It is rather an incubator for those who want to follow Christ into the process of maturity and godlessness.

My back is covered with cuts, as if a farmer had plowed long furrows. But the LORD is good; he has cut the cords used by the ungodly to bind me (Ps 129:1-4)

So when I say engage in godly relationships I am not saying relate with perfect people. I am saying, however, that ungodly people can entangle us as much as ungodly behavior. Hurting people tend to hurt and offend others, and offense is the *snare* or *trap* of the devil. All three groups, dysfunctional systems, ungodly people and hurt/wounded people have the CAPACITY to get us "into the flesh" before we realized what happened. We would be wise to consider our relationships carefully as we endeavor to walk in the Spirit.

My theory is if we set our minds on things that please the Spirit, engage ourselves as servants, and walk in godly relationships we will be well on the road to walking in the Spirit. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "If there is no element of asceticism in our lives, if we give free reign to the desires of the flesh... we shall find it hard to train for the service of Christ."

Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives (Gal 5:24-25).

John Mullen

Upcoming Birthdays

The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays this month.

Babak Falsafi	June 5
Stephen Sexton	June 5
Lukáš Port	June 7
Laurie Luby	June 7
Sergei Razlivkin	June 9
Sara Gawlikova	June 10
Gary Niederheitmann	June 10
Eugene Martin	June 10
Oliver Šedivý	June 11
Sandy Duryea	June 11
Peter Lovett	June 12
Nathan Parry	June 14
Jacque Gutsulyak	June 15
Anne Marie Bailey	June 15
Sergei Razlivkin	June 16
Eva Hazuková	June 16
Bethany Robbins	June 18
Charlie Reinhardt	June 18
Rebeka Koukliková	June 18
Sarah Blenkarn	June 18
Joseph Mehaffy	June 19
Rickey Fanning	June 19
Monika Šebestová	June 27
Michaela Misa Haig	June 28
Andy Faust	June 29



SUMMER BAPTISM

We are planning a baptism for the near future. If you feel you might be interested in identifying with Christ through the sacrament of baptism, please contact John or Dawn.

Col 2:11-12 *In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.*



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

On May 25th John Mullen turned 44! Many friends and family gathered together in the beautiful surroundings of Úvaly to wish John happy returns of the day.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- **Church Finances** - Please pray for provision to cover our expenses and wisdom in spending and giving.
- **More labourers in the harvest /PCF** - Please pray for more leaders at PCF.
- **Úvaly outreach** - Please pray for the English Club and English Camp which will be August 13-17. We are seeking volunteers. If interested please contact Kelsie Mullen.
- **Parole** - Please pray for Richard Emereoha's successful parole request.
- **Playground in Úvaly** - Please pray for successful building of the playground and for all to go well for the team coming over from Texas.
- **Healthy Pregnancies** - Please pray for the health of 2 sisters in our community.
- **Sistie** - Please pray for Kelsie's mom who has had successful surgery for brain tumors. She has now started a 5th series of chemotherapy for tumors elsewhere in her body.

Up-coming Picnic Bar-B-Q



The Mullens will be hosting a potluck BBQ in June. Come play ping pong, ride bikes, relax in the country and enjoy the fellowship. Bring whatever you want to cook on the grill. Soft drinks will be provided.

Saturday, June 16, 2007 at 14:00

Worship Him



We can ask ourselves an honest question. **Do we expect to meet God when we come together to worship corporately?**

Richard Foster writes in *Celebration of Discipline*: “A striking feature of worship in the Bible is that people gathered in what we could only call a ‘holy expectancy.’ They believed they would actually hear the *Kol Yahweh*, the voice of God. When Moses went into the Tabernacle, he knew he was entering the presence of God. The same was true of the early Church. It was not surprising to them that the building in which they met shook with the power of God. It had happened before (Acts 2:2, 4:31). When some dropped dead and others were raised from the dead by the word of the Lord, the people knew that God was in their midst (Acts 5:1-11, 9:36-43, 20:7-10). As those early believers gathered they were keenly aware that the veil had been ripped in two, and, like Moses and Aaron, they were entering the Holy of Holies. No intermediaries were needed. They were coming into the awful, glorious, gracious presence of the living God. They gathered with anticipation, knowing that Christ was present among them and would teach them and touch them with his living power. How do we cultivate this holy expectancy?”

There are some practical things we can do to move towards cultivating a holy expectancy as draw near to God (He has already drawn near to us!).

1) Learn to practice the presence of God daily.

It is easy to say, but not so easy to schedule daily time to actively worship, pray, read and meditate on the Word of God. These precious times become our food as Jesus gives us our daily bread, Himself.

2) Have many different worship experiences.

Let's not expect that our only worship experience will be at Sunday services. Worship God freely while alone in your room, in your home group, as you bike or take a walk in the countryside, attend a city-wide worship event or a summer worship retreat (check out <http://www.angelmountain.net/?event=029&info=1>). There are

many ways to express your love and devotion to Jesus. Don't let yourself get stuck in a dry routine.

3) Prepare ahead for your worship experience.

We have had the experience many times of feeling apathetic, discouraged, angry or even sick on the way to a church or worship event. Then suddenly after we arrive and start worshipping, we are fine. It can be a battle just to get to a place of worship and it begins in our minds. This prevents any kind of expectancy of what God will do in our midst. This puts the focus on us and our feelings, and not on discerning what God is about to do in our midst. Preparing to meet together to worship is very important as we pray and listen to God. Refuse to give into negative thoughts and emotions before worship begins!

4) Come as a participant rather than a spectator or a soloist.

One of THE biggest challenges we face as leaders is how to inspire people to move past being a passive spectator and into being an active worshipper who takes personal and corporate responsibility before God. God desires a mature worshipper who will actively cry out to Him in worship and prayer.

5) Look to God and not leaders to make the worship experience.

Have you ever been in church and the worship leader started singing a song, and you thought “Oh no. Not this song. I hate this song!”? Then the annoying feeling inside you distracts you, and you are not even thinking about God, much less worshipping Him. We have to remind ourselves that the songs don't matter. We're not singing to US! We are singing to HIM. So the question is, how can our praise and worship be pleasing to Him? It has nothing to do with style, talent or prefer-

ences. It has everything to do with love and a pure, humble heart.

6) Transform distractions to praise!

If little children are running around, bless them and praise God for their lives. Many times we forget that God is trying to speak to us in what we perceive as a distraction. Maybe someone close to you has body odor. Bring them before the Lord and ask God to give you His heart for him/her! Be willing to accept everything that happens during the worship time without fussing and fuming on the inside. Closing your eyes can be very helpful in focusing on God. Many times if your eyes are closed, God may give you a picture, an impression, or a new song as your focus on Him intensifies. This can very exciting!

7) Be prepared to sacrifice to worship.

Honestly, at times we do not FEEL like worshipping. This is when we offer the sacrifice of praise. Afterwards joy and desire will follow. Many people won't do what they don't FEEL like doing, saying “I would only be acting and pretending, like a hypocrite, if my heart wasn't into it.” This can actually be an excuse which prevents us from moving deeper into the things of God. Even in secular endeavors, we willingly go to our jobs even if we don't feel like it, or work towards goals of success at great sacrifice. But when it comes to church or spiritual matters we hesitate to push through, pressing toward the goal Paul mentions in Phil 3:14, “*I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.*”

Our prayer is that we will ask God to do greater and greater things in and through us as we worship. **In asking, we are also expecting!** James 1:6-8 says “*But when you ask him, be sure that you really expect him to answer, for a doubtful mind is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. People like that should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. They can't make up their minds.*”

[Editor's note: This is the third and final article about worship that has been adapted from a sermon covering this theme.]

NEW PCF Bank Info:
Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF,
eBanka
Account No. 181730394/2400
Variable symbol: 10261
Contact Evzen Pekarek for assistance at PekarekEvzen@seznam.cz

Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is June 20, 2007