



Get Off the Roller-coaster!

Scripture reading Acts 1:8

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Roller-coasters can be a lot of fun. Once we stopped in Sandusky, Ohio, at Cedar Point, the roller-coaster capital of the world! At that time, they had just built their newest roller-coaster, it was called the Magnum XL 250. It was supposed to have the steepest drop of any rollercoaster at that time. My son, Joshua, begged me to take him on that roller-coaster. He was so short and skinny; I did not think he would be allowed. After standing in line for forty-five minutes he was allowed to ride. When they strapped us in, Joshua’s belt was still loose even at its tightest pull. I can remember heading up the steep hill, and as we came over the top, Joshua lifted off the seat about three to five inches. He was screaming with excitement. I was scared to death he was going to fly out of the cart. I knew if anything happened to him, his mother would kill me. We continued to ride up and down, back and forth, and upside down, until it finally came to an end. It was fun and a great memory. It was everything that a carnival ride should be just the opposite of what life should be.

Many Christians live their lives in a roller-coaster relationship with Christ. It is up one moment and down the next. When a special event takes place at church, they are up. When a problem takes place in their life, they are down. How do Christians get off the roller-coaster? The answer is found in today’s text. Jesus told the disciples, *“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses.”* The Christian’s walk should be a steady, step by step walk upwards in which each event or circumstance makes us more and more like Christ. Paul said it this way, *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose”* (Romans 8:28). The secret to constant moving upward and forward in life comes through learning how to access the power of the Holy Spirit. When you learn to surrender to Him and access His power, you, as a believer will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 4 – Lesson 2



Back to Life – Your Personal Resurrection

Scripture reading Ephesians 2:1, 4-5

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

As a kid, I loved it when the carnival came to town. Back then, there were not a lot of activities for children. However, when the carnival came to town, we would walk down the street and over to the lot where the carnival was set up. When I was six years old, my mother, brother, sister, and I walked down a desert path to the carnival lot. On the path was a big purple stone. I was about to step on it when I realized it was not a stone. It was a Desert Tortoise with all its legs and head pulled inside of the shell and somebody had painted its back purple. I picked it up and took it home as a pet. When a Desert Tortoise is scared, you can't tell whether they are dead or alive because it pulls all its legs and head inside the shell and remain perfectly still for protection. My little purple tortoise did that. Hours went by and I did not know if he was dead or alive. We filled his little box with grass, lettuce, and anything else that we thought would entice him to come out of his shell. My very wise father told us to leave him alone for a while and he would come out of his shell. Wah! We came back and he had risen from the dead.

The Bible tells us that before we got saved, we were spiritually dead, separated from God with no spiritual life at all. It should not surprise us when unsaved people say, “When I pray, it feels like my prayers are just bouncing off the ceiling.” Unsaved people are spiritually dead. Their prayers are not effective because they are dead to God. However, when you called on Jesus and asked Him to save you, His Holy Spirit came into your life and brought your dead spirit back to life. The word *quickened* in our text means to make alive. God brought you back from the dead. The moment you got saved you had a personal resurrection. You have eternal life because His Holy Spirit lives in you and has made your dead spirit come to life. You are alive for eternity with Him. Jesus explained it to Nicodemus this way, *“Ye must be born again.”* As a believer, you need to know that because of salvation you are spiritually alive, and because of your spiritual life, you can SHINE.



Learn to Live by Choosing to Die

Scripture reading Romans 12:1-2

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

A television commercial once said, “You only go around once in life, so you better get all the gusto you can.” We are told that we need to grab the brass ring and “Go for the gold.” We are told to pick ourselves up by our own boot straps in order to succeed in life. Yet, the word of God tells us something completely different. God’s Word teaches us that the key to true happiness is surrendering our desires to the will of God the Father. The key to being controlled by the Holy Spirit of God is learning to daily surrender your desires, your will, your fortune, and your future to Jesus Christ. When I surrender to the God Who is in control of all things, I can be confident that whatever takes place will be God’s will. I will not fear what men or demons can do to me. Peter said if we cast all our cares upon Him, He will care for us (1 Peter 5:7).

Learning to live truly is choosing to die. Are you willing to die to your dreams, desires, ambitions, and goals? Are you willing to tell God that you trust Him with whatever you are going to do today? This is dying to self and surrendering to His Holy Spirit’s control. When you do this, you will learn to truly live and you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 4 – Lesson 4



Filling the Tank

Scripture reading Ephesians 5:18 & Colossians 3:16

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

At the moment you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, the Holy Spirit came to live inside of you. He gave you eternal life. But there is a big difference between having the Holy Spirit of God live inside of you and having the Holy Spirit of God control you. The car I drive is a Buick Lucerne. I have always enjoyed driving Buicks. My dad drove Buicks and the first car that I drove was a 1961 Buick LeSabre. My car has many different features. One of them is a little device on the mirror called OnStar. It is equivalent to a built-in GPS. It is designed so that no one that owns a GM vehicle will ever be lost without direction. The use of OnStar is optional. You can pay the monthly fee to use the service or you can reject the service and depend upon your own abilities to guide yourself.

Much like OnStar, God has direction for you. You have to surrender to His direction daily. Direction is given to you through His Word. That is why our passage tells us that we should, *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.”* You must let the Word of God work in your life. That means you need to read it, understand it, and mediate on it so that when a decision comes in your life, the Holy Spirit of God can give you direction through its principles. This is allowing the Holy Spirit to fill you. When you allow Him to fill you and control you, you will SHINE.

SHINE Devotional

Week 4 – Lesson 5

Learn to Walk



Scripture reading Galatians 5:16

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

I asked my wife several years ago what she thought the greatest thing about heaven would be. We agreed that Jesus is the greatest thing about heaven, but besides to Him one of the greatest things in heaven for her would be the absence of sin. There would be no more self-will, no more struggling with the flesh. Paul said, *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing”* (Romans 7:18). The believer has a constant battle with his flesh. However, we see in our text that God says if you learn to *“walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”* Learning to walk is not an easy thing.

You were young when you learned to walk. You probably don't remember the occasion. It probably went something like this: You learned to crawl, but the floor irritated your hands and knees. Eventually you went to a coffee table or the side of a chair and pulled yourself up. Your parents were probably amazed as they saw you standing there holding on to the coffee table or chair. They may have held your hand as you walked alongside them. Then one day, with the coaxing of your parents, you walked on your own. Sometimes you fall down even now, but walking is worth it.

Walking is never without difficulties. The point is walking is a learned behavior, and so is walking in the Spirit. It will take you time. It is not an overnight thing. It is a day by day surrender of yourself to the Spirit of God. It is a walk of faith. When the Spirit directs you to do something, you have to be determined to obey. Sometimes the Spirit will lead you to do something that is contrary to what you think is reasonable. That is why you must always check His personal direction with the direction of the Word of God. When you walk in the Spirit, you will have power over the lust of the flesh. You will walk with confidence, and you will SHINE for Him.

SHINE Devotional

Week 4 – Lesson 6



Producing the Fruit of the Spirit

Scripture reading Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

When I was very young in the Lord, I wanted to know what the evidence was of being filled with the Holy Spirit. I was told by some sincere friends that the evidence, according to the Book of Acts, was speaking in tongues. I prayed for many months that God would allow me to speak in tongues because I wanted to be controlled and filled by the Holy Spirit of God. As I came to a deeper understanding of the Word of God, I realized that my friends were sincere but wrong.

Our text today tells us exactly what the evidence or fruit of being filled with the Spirit is. From this passage and from Acts 1:8, we find that the fruit of the Spirit is witnessing. If I am filled with the Spirit of God, I will witness. Jesus said, “You will receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you and you will be witnesses.” This also means that our lives will bear witness that we are children of God.

Our passage shows us if we are filled with the Spirit, we will produce His love, joy, and peace. When the world is going crazy, we will also have the following fruits in our lives. *Longsuffering* means we will endure trials without complaints. To be *gentle* means we treat other people kindly. *Goodness* means we do that which is right and not that which is wrong. *Faith* means we believe God no matter the circumstances. *Meekness* means to trust in God even when we can try to work it out ourselves. *Temperance* means self-control. If you are a Spirit filled believer, this fruit will be manifest in your life. People will see there is a difference between the way you respond and the way the rest of the world responds in any given situation. The fruit of God’s Spirit will bear witness that you are His child and will enable you to tell other people about the love of Jesus Christ. You, as a believer, will SHINE.