

Starting Spiritually-Oriented Conversations

The effectiveness of these questions will depend on your own comfort level, and the kind of relationship you have with your conversation partner. They are meant to prompt your thinking, and to make you creative and bolder as you introduce spiritual issues into your conversations. Use the ones that best fit you and your relationship.

What's your religious background?

What are the positives and negatives of your past religious experience?

How involved are you now compared to the past? What changed?

What's your impression of people you know to be Christians?

What's your impression of well-known Christian leaders today?

Are there some that you think Jesus would be proud of, and are there some you think he would be embarrassed by?

If you could ask God any question and he HAD to answer it, what would you ask?

When you hear the word "God," what comes to your mind?

When you hear the word "Jesus," what comes to your mind?

If God asked you what one thing you would want Him to change in this world, what would it be?

I heard this song the other day that just grabbed me – would you like to hear it?

Do you ever wonder what happens to us after we die?

What do you know about Easter? Would you be interested in hearing how it all started?

How would you describe your spiritual life right now, more like noon or like midnight?

What are you doing these days to maintain or improve your spiritual health?

Was there a time in your life when you felt really close to God?

When was that?

What do you think brought it about?

And where are you now in comparison to that?

Assuming that God exists, how do you think He would feel about you?

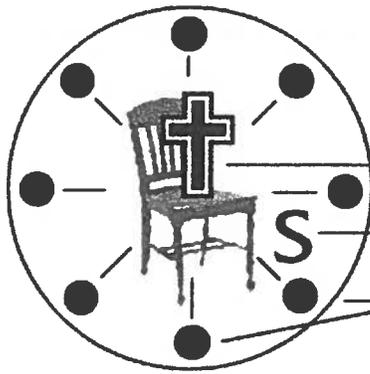
Would you be interested in finding out?

If you'd ever like to know the difference between religion & Christianity, let me know, I'd love to talk about it with you.

Suppose you die today and stand in front of God and He asked you, "Why should I let you into heaven?" What would you say?

Has anyone ever taken the time to explain to you how it is possible to have a relationship with God? May I?

Have you ever wondered why the anniversary of Christ's death is called "Good Friday?"



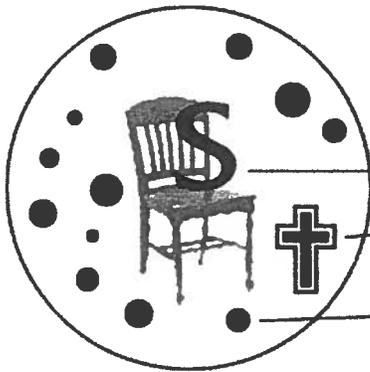
THE CHRIST-DIRECTED LIFE

CHRIST is on the throne

Self is yielding to Christ

Interests are directed by Christ, resulting in harmony with God's plan

3. **Carnal Man** (One who has received Christ, but who lives in defeat because he is trying to live the Christian life in his own strength)
 "And I brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to carnal men, as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still carnal. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshy, and are you not walking like mere men?" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).



THE SELF-DIRECTED LIFE

Self is on the throne

Christ dethroned and not allowed to direct the life

Interests are directed by self, often resulting in discord and frustration

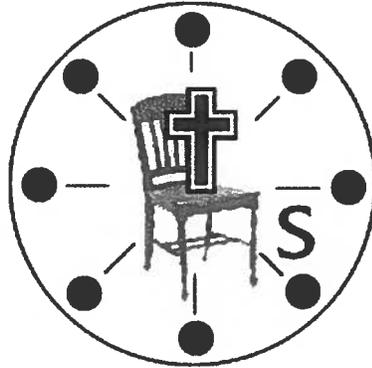
1. God Has Provided For Us an Abundant and Fruitful Christian Life

- Jesus said, "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly" (John 10:10).
- "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).
- "But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Galatians 5:22, 23).

- "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Spiritual Man - Some spiritual traits which result from trusting God:

Christ-centered
Empowered by
the Holy Spirit
Introduces others
to Christ
Effective prayer life
Understands God's
Word
Trusts God
Obeys God



Love
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness
Faithfulness
Goodness

The degree to which these traits are manifested in the life depends upon the extent to which the Christian trusts the Lord with every detail of his life, and upon his maturity in Christ. One who is only beginning to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be discouraged if he is not as fruitful as more mature Christians who have known and experienced this truth for a longer period.

Why is it that most Christians are not experiencing the abundant life?

2. Carnal Christians Cannot Experience the Abundant and Fruitful Christian Life

The carnal man trusts in his own efforts to live the Christian life:

1. He is either uninformed about, or has forgotten, God's love, forgiveness, and power (Romans 5:8-10; Hebrews 10:1-25; 1 John 1; 1 John 2:1-3; 2 Peter 1:9; Acts 1:8).
2. He has an up-and-down spiritual experience.
3. He cannot understand himself - he wants to do what is right, but cannot.
4. He fails to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.

(1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Romans 7:15-24; 8:7; Galatians 5:16-18)

The Carnal Man - Some or all of the following traits may characterize the Christian who does not fully trust God:

Ignorance of his
spiritual heritage
Unbelief
Disobedience
Loss of love for
God and for others
Poor prayer life
No desire for Bible
study



Legalistic attitude
Impure thoughts
Jealousy
Guilt
Worry
Discouragement
Critical spirit
Frustration
Aimlessness

(The individual who professes to be a Christian but who continues to practice sin should realize that he may not be a Christian at all, according to 1 John 2:3; 3:6, 9; Ephesians 5:5). Click here to find out for sure if you are a Christian.

The third truth gives us the only solution to this problem...

3. Jesus Promised the Abundant and Fruitful Life as the Result of Being Filled (Directed and Empowered) by the Holy Spirit

The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through us in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 15).

- One becomes a Christian through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, according to John 3:1-8. From the moment of spiritual birth, the Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at all times (John 1:12; Colossians 2:9, 10; John 14:16, 17). **Though all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all Christians are filled (directed and empowered) by the Holy Spirit.**
- The Holy Spirit is the source of the overflowing life (John 7:37-39).
- The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16:1-15). When one is filled with the Holy Spirit, he is a true disciple of Christ.
- In His last command before His ascension, Christ promised the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:1-9).

How, then, can one be filled with the Holy Spirit?

4. We are Filled by the Holy Spirit by Faith; Then We Can Experience the Abundant and Fruitful Life Which Christ Promised to Each Christian.

You can appropriate the filling of the Holy Spirit **right now** if you:

- Sincerely desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 5:6; John 7:37-39).
- Confess your sins. By **faith** thank God that He **has** forgiven all of your sins - past, present and future - because Christ died for you (Colossians 2:13-15; 1 John 1; 2:1-3; Hebrews 10:1-17).
- Present every area of your life to God (Romans 12:1, 2).
- By **faith** claim the fullness of the Holy Spirit, according to:
 1. **His Command** - Be filled with the Spirit. "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit" (**Ephesians 5:18**).
 2. **His Promise** - He will always answer when we pray according to His will. "And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked of Him" (**1 John 5:14, 15**).

Faith can be expressed through prayer...

How to Pray in Faith to be Filled with the Holy Spirit

We are filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. However, true prayer is one way of expressing your faith. The following is a suggested prayer:

"Dear Father, I need You. I acknowledge that I have been directing my own life and that, as a result, I have sinned against You. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ's death on the cross for me. I now invite

Christ to again take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as You commanded me to be filled, and as You promised in Your Word that You would do if I asked in faith. I now thank You for directing my life and for filling me with the Holy Spirit."

Did you pray this prayer?

YES

I still have questions

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Passion Of Christ Who Is Jesus

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