

# Walking in the Spirit

by George Verwer

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*To walk in the Spirit, one must daily walk with Jesus, forsake all, repent, memorize and meditate on the Word of God, have an honest prayer life, and discipline the body through exercise.*

**Duration:** 38:06

**Scripture:** Proverbs 6:6, Colossians 3:16

**Topics:** "Walking In The Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, Francis Schaefer addresses the issue of university students being brainwashed by societal pressures. He encourages the audience to consider a year of practical evangelism, learning how to witness and disciplining themselves in the word of God. Schaefer emphasizes the importance of feasting on the word, memorizing and meditating on it, as it enables believers to walk in the spirit. He urges the audience to take seriously the principles written in God's word and to make them the goals and practices of their lives.

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## Transcript

This evening I want to speak to you, in the very limited time we have left, on this thing of walking in the Spirit. Unless you're willing to daily walk in the Spirit, forget about any experience you had last night. Forget it.

It will work. In fact, I have a friend, he's had more crisis experience than any fellow boy I know. He once gave me a list of his crisis experiences.

He had the abiding in Christ experience, reckoning dead experience, risen with Christ experience, sanctification experience, faith crisis experience, power of the blood experience, trusting experience, Keswick experience, dedication experience, seated with Christ in the heavenlies experience, Holy Spirit experience, consecration experience, burning heart, Emmaus Road experience, rest of faith experience, Ian Thomas mystery of God experience, forsaking all experience, look at that Jonathan, group confession experience, true discipleship experience, OM conference experience, and wash down with taste of new wine experience. And after all that he lived for months in total defeat. And last night you may have had an experience with God.

You may have been filled with the Spirit, wonder, but unless tomorrow you're ready to walk in the Spirit, it will not last. Unless tomorrow you're willing to deny self, take up the cross and follow Jesus Christ, as he

commanded, it will not last. We must take the whole counsel of God or not take any of it.

Lonely confuses. We must take not only the blessings, but the responsibilities. We must not only take the crisis, but the process as hard and as cross grain it may be to our particular way of life and our particular fancy.

Again and again Jesus gave those words. If any man come after me, let him deny himself. Tomorrow in the back of that truck, you're going to have to deny yourself.

When you get down in those French villages, you're going to have to deny yourself. And if you're not willing to deny self, and take up the cross, and Jesus said in one place daily, and follow him, the experience will become invalid. God wants to give you young people a daily experience, a daily revival, a daily filling.

And he wants you to walk in the spirit. Here in Galatians chapter 5, we have wonderful words. We have a description of this great conflict that we're in, in verse 17.

For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. And these are contrary, the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. That's the picture of the spiritual man.

You will never come to a place in which the flesh is annihilated, or the old man goes away, and takes a holiday. This warfare described in Galatians 5, 17, is going to be your lot the rest of the life. The sooner you realize it, the better you'll be able to combat it and live.

The flesh lusteth against the spirit. And this is a description of a man who is walking in the spirit. And the answer, of course, to this conflict is just that, walking in the spirit.

Walking in the spirit. I want to just read that from this living letter. I want to read this verse from this wonderful living letters.

Galatians 5. The one I want to read now is verse 16 about walking in the spirit. I advise you to obey only the Holy Spirit's instructions. He will tell you where to go and what to do.

And then you will always be doing the wrong thing your evil nature wants you to do. So you have this battle within you. The spirit lusting against the flesh.

And in some ways, the one who you feed is going to win. There's a verse in the Bible that says, Give no occasion to the flesh. I like that verse.

Give no occasion to the flesh. If you feed your mind and your soul with the things of the world, the world's literature. I'm speaking now of unacceptable literature.

I'm not speaking of reading the Encyclopedia Britannica or studying Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist or something. But if you feed your mind and your soul with worldly things, worldly ideas, you're going to build up the power of the flesh and the flesh is going to win. But if you feed the spirit, the word, prayer, spiritual fellowship, confession, praise, many things we mention in these days, you're going to build up your spiritual power and you're going to be able to walk in the spirit.

All young people walking in the spirit. Basically, what we're talking about is maintaining the spiritual life. And Jonathan, in what he said tonight, has already covered a lot of the areas, especially things that we

must forsake.

And I want to, just in closing, and I just pray you'll never forget, just leave you with some things for maintaining this spiritual life. Basic, but we must not forget them. Try to understand.

It's very important you understand what we're saying tonight on top of what we talked about last night. Very important. Otherwise people get twisted ideas and they wonder why they made a commitment and now they aren't sort of floating along.

You've got to get down now to daily walking with Jesus. And that will involve daily forsaking all. Jonathan's talked about that.

That's my first point. I'm not going to say any more. And that brings me to my second thing.

And I'm going to do this very quickly. You've got to learn the secret of repentance. You'll never live the Christian life if you don't learn how to repent.

The quicker you learn and the quicker you repent, the happier you are, the faster you go. Why do you, and you know you do, buck the Lord when He's trying to get you to repent? This is something, I don't know, in a miraculous way I've learned. Just two nights ago I was talking to someone back there and I said something that was an exaggeration and it was somewhat unkind about another place.

And I went in my room, Spirit of God touched my heart. It was an exaggeration. It wasn't the exact truth.

It gave a wrong idea. I said, okay, thank you Lord, excuse me, now I've got some things to do. Right back, you go back and apologize and tell that person that you exaggerated.

Oh now, Lord, it's so embarrassing. He thinks I'm spiritual. Imagine me, the international coordinator of OM, doing this thing.

He finds out and he'll tell somebody. This thing will spread and Lord, I'll be through. Well, fortunately it didn't go that far in my thinking, but that's the way the devil likes to get us to think.

Instead, because I know this secret by His grace, all in a matter of minutes I turned around, I walked out, I said, look, what I said was just exaggerated, it's wrong, I shouldn't have said it, forget it and forgive me. Now, I know a lot of things that I repent about. Most people don't, they don't repent because I've asked people.

We're hardened, we don't like to repent. Yeah, in our own hearts, yes, but going back to somebody saying, brother, I'm sorry. Brother, it was me who stepped on your cup last night and broke it.

I'm sorry. Now, there's no sin about breaking a man's cup, but there is sin if you fear him and fear your reputation and so you won't admit it. That's sin.

And the fear we have of one another, the fear of being exposed, the fear of the mask falling off keeps us from repentance and that cripples us, quenches the spirit and kills the walk in the spirit. Keep a short account with the Lord. Repent of anything He touches your heart.

I've met very few people who repent too much. They certainly will be a unique little group up in heaven. I'm going to look for them when I get there.

There's the group in that corner that repented too much. Reminds me of the other little group that you probably won't find many of. Over there, there's the group that showed too much love.

Boy, they will be a minority group. Young people, if you want to maintain the fullness of the spirit in your life, learn to repent of anything the Lord touches you. Don't dwell on it.

I never dwell on it. I forget it immediately. I'm not introspective.

I don't believe in it. But I believe in dealing with sin smack hard on. And that's one of the biggest things that has kept me going.

Not the perfect life. Not being in some kind of spiritual ecstasy all day long. But short accounts.

Oh, you've got to see that, young person. You've got to see that. Because if you don't, you will not walk in the spirit.

You will not. Next thing you've got to do, you've got to make this book your bread and butter, your breakfast, lunch, and supper, your midnight snack, your afternoon tea, your elevensies, dear English friends. I tell you, I love that country, England.

I love it. So many reasons. Someday I'll give you my message.

One hundred reasons why I'm thrilled with the British Isles. And I have such a love for that country that I just want to see so many leave. So it's only when they leave that they appreciate England.

That's right. Some of you don't appreciate your own country. And you leave, and then you come back.

After five years in O.M., you'll be a better Englishman. That's right. And I'm very patriotic to many different countries.

But I believe with all my heart, we've got to devour this book. I admire certain people. Some of them may be some of them are so steadfast in the faith, so strong in the Lord.

And many times when I've talked to them, I found their secret, intense meditation on the Word of God. How many of you have memorized more than 200 verses of Scripture? Raise your hand. You don't want to boast.

Just raise your hand anyway. Just so I can see. Be honest.

A few, four, five. Muslims in Egypt memorized the whole Quran to get in the Al-Azhar University. We've got five people that have memorized 200 verses.

I pray this summer, every spare moment, you'll memorize the Word of God. I had hundreds of verses in my mind and heart before I was two or three years old in Christ. It was my strength.

I said in university, in physics class, the teacher used to get carried away talking about his grandmother, and I'd be writing all my Scripture references in my physics book. I almost failed the course, but I learned to honor Scripture. I don't recommend that.

But, oh, how much time is going to be wasted in the back of those trucks? How much time standing in the queues? Tomorrow morning, you may not get out of here tomorrow morning. No, you think all this, this is

mythological, this stuff they give you about six and seven o'clock. I hope it isn't.

I tell you, when Graham Scott gets going, things do move a bit. What if you do sit here all day tomorrow? Just think of all the Scripture you can memorize. Oh, this is so important, and I'll show you why.

And the complete proof of it from Scripture, Colossians 3, 16, 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. That's the exact same description you find in Ephesians where it says, Be filled with the Spirit. You ever notice that? Exact same description of what happens.

But, what does it say there? Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. You see that? The most important way to maintain the fullness of the Spirit is letting the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. In fact, this Scripture seems to show them as being synonymous.

Fill your heart with the Word. Memorize. Meditate.

Discuss it. Oh, may the Word of God and Jesus be the topic of our conversation. We waste so much time in nonsense talk.

Over the table. Now there's time for loose talk. And it's good to talk about current events and things that are happening.

I don't believe we're to walk around all day being serious. You couldn't do that and quote Scripture anyway because some Scriptures really make you laugh. They really do.

I mean, when I first go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise. I went out once and watched the ants. I tell you, it was the funniest thing.

Have you ever watched the ants? And many other verses are just fantastic. Especially these verses in which Jesus Christ explains and answers certain questions. And so, we've got to feed on the Word.

We've got to feast. Memorize and meditate. That will enable us probably more than anything else to walk in the Spirit.

I'll tell you right now, I'm so frustrated because I know I've got to end. So much I want to tell you. I believe this meditating and memorizing the Word will help you in your emotional problem more than almost anything else.

A number of you have expressed that you have emotional problems, tensions, fears. And you've come up to me, you've asked, and I can't give you the time. For every one hour I spend in the pulpit, I spend six in counseling and in private conversation with people.

But I can't do it all here. But the thing that I see that will help you, it's not a cure-all for everybody, but the biggest thing I can say in this area of emotional difficulty, meditation on the Word of God. That's right.

Do you have fears? Take 100 verses that talk about fear and memorize them. Then write me if your fear isn't gone. That's right.

And I believe that the Word of God in your heart and in your subconscious, where most of our problems are, will cleanse and will fortify and will renew. The Bible speaks of the renewing of the mind. Speaks of

being clean through the Word spoken unto us.

And young person, if you're not willing to get serious about this book, forget this conference. It will never stick. If the only thing I do in this conference is get you into this book, I will have done more than I could ever do in all my preaching.

Memorize, meditate, feast on the Word of God. Let the Word of Jesus Christ dwell in you richly. Will you do that? Will you do that? Walking in the Spirit.

The next thing, very quickly, you must determine to have an honest, real prayer life. Prayer, young people, is not firstly asking God for things, especially when we're young in the Lord. It's praise.

It's confession. It's pouring yourself out to God. Do you have emotions that bottle up in you? Psychiatrists say that all of us have hostility.

Some of them say we're all potential murderers. I know that I am. Before I knew Jesus Christ, I hated people with such a hate that I wanted to kill.

I played war games from the age of 5 to about 12, and I loved to kill. And lately, this has come up more and more in psychology. We all have hostility.

And you'll see this come out in different ways. You know what happens with most evangelicals? They know hostility is wrong. It's not good to get angry.

You're not supposed to do this, especially conservative and introvert temperaments. You know what we do with it? Repress it. Repress it.

And someday, poof, it pops. People are cracking up all over the place. Repressed hostility, repressed emotion, is at least 50 major sicknesses you can develop just through repressed hostility, repressed anxiety, repressed bitterness.

Oh, I tell you, I wish I had more time for this. You've got to pull the cork out. You've got to open up.

And I believe, firstly, the Scripture teaches not opening up with one another, that's part of it, but firstly, opening up with God. Look at the psalmist David. How did he pray? The Psalms are just one outpouring of the emotions of David.

It's fantastic. It includes hatred, doesn't it? It includes desire to get even. It's just all poured out before God.

If you and I would pour ourselves out before God, let all of our hostility out, tell Jesus all about it, your emotions, your fears, your anxieties, your frustrations, pour it all out. I want to tell you it will revolutionize you and it will help you to walk in the Spirit because if you don't take it out on the Lord and cast it on the Lord, you'll probably take it out on some other team member. That's right.

Honesty in prayer. Oh, I think it's one of the greatest things. Do you know I pray as I preach? I'm such a tank of emotions that if I see one person falling asleep in the meeting, I get a complex.

I want to tell you I am definitely a potential mental case. There's no question about it. I'm so sensitive about certain things and people's problems.

I go running around. The other day we had a toilet paper crisis over here in the boys' bathroom. This threw me into a state of anxiety.

Ha, ha, ha. Not because of myself. But because there were fellows outside the toilet who were, you know, they were expressing this, this, this, this won't do.

So I ran out. The first person I got, I think it was Frank Deason, said, man, get some toilet paper. Where's the toilet paper? And I'm, I'm so sensitive this way that I get involved in all these things.

I would just do, I mean, you, you crack up in this work because the toilet paper crisis is nothing. When you get to India, it's two years of toilet paper crisis. And if there's anyone still asleep, you're unusual.

But you know what I do? Even as I'm speaking, in between saying something to you, I'm praying in my heart. Lord, it's all yours. I'm not going to let it condemn me.

I'm not worrying about it. It's yours and I need it. And I just keep throwing it on the Lord.

I believe, one of the greatest verses in the Bible, pray without ceasing. And I just keep throwing my emotions onto the Lord. See, a doctor told me that I had a high combustion engine.

That means I burn a lot of energy, my mind works fast, my body burns up, high metabolism, a lot of emotion. And so if I don't cast my burdens on the Lord in prayer, and then I turn to praise and worship, I'll never make it. And I just say to those of you who have emotional battles and are emotional as I am, the secret is prayer, worship, praise, casting your burden on the Lord.

Go out in the woods. I go out in the woods and I really use a loud voice. I've only used moderate voice here.

I just go out and I just sing and praise the Lord. Sometimes I do a handstand and I have so much energy. If I don't get rid of it, someone is liable to get hurt in the daytime.

Prayer is the secret. Walking in the Spirit. Casting your burden upon the Lord.

Some of you men that have battles in the area of purity and impurity, women the same, until you learn this kind of prayer, this kind of spiritual exercise, this kind of throwing your emotion upon God, throwing your hostility, throwing your lust upon God, letting Him bury it, until you learn that you never will live in victory. That together with disciplining the body, which means exercise. You know, it grieves me to see the stomachs of so many evangelicals hanging out over their belts.

I'm not desirous of seeing people like me. It's the other extreme. But I think men and women should try to keep themselves in some kind of physical condition.

Because in some parts of the world it is a bad testimony. That's right. You go out witnessing in India to starving people and you're round and firm.

Ha! Looks a bit funny, doesn't it? And I've had Indians, I want to tell you, one time an Indian was blasting away and saying, giving us the gospel, it's worthless. You have so much. And I looked at that Indian, I said, look.

And I pointed to his stomach. And I did something, it's not so unusual, I just pulled my shirt up, I said, you look at this. He was much fatter than I was.

He shut up and he really listened. He really listened. You know, I'm a lot more comfortable out in India than the fat fellow walking around with his big stomach sticking out.

Some people are that way and they can't help it, but some can very well help it. A little exercise, a little running, a little less eating, a little more work. Work is a dirty word in the 20th century.

That's right. And we're flabby, we're loose. And I think it's a sad thing in the sight of God.

And I, this goes right to my next point, I believe unless you're willing to deal blows to the body, get serious about exercise, about taking care of the temple, I don't believe you'll walk in the spirit. Because we're physical and spiritual, and we've got to, we've got to deal blows to our body. My heart just aches for some of you who have no exercise program.

It is not normal to live without exercise. Some people get it automatically in their work, fine. But if you aren't getting it automatically in your work, I would say sooner or later, if you have no exercise program, you are in trouble, and I don't care how spiritual you are, and I don't care how many verses you memorize.

The total man is God's program. And if you can't discipline yourself in little things, how are you going to handle the big tests that are coming? And time and time again, I've seen in young men who fall into sin and lust, the key behind, no programmed disciplined life. No exercise.

You see, also, listen, this is very important. When you exercise, when you work hard, you work off a lot of emotion. This is very important.

Many, many men have said, this isn't some little jig that's come out of my brain. Many men have said this. When you work hard, and you exercise, a lot of your emotions, a lot of potential lust, potential irritability, potential frustration goes off.

This is why it has been proven that people with more leisure and less work are more exposed to mental breakdown. Hard working farmers, hard working villagers, you'll hardly ever find a nervous breakdown among them. It's city people sitting around, all their emotions pent up.

Leisure. Loose living. And these people, their minds and their bodies eventually can't take this abnormal way of living.

It's an abnormal way of living. That's why I like this book selling. A lot of people I watch get involved in personal work.

As they're one year in personal evangelism, they don't do any hard work, always counseling and talking to people. It's good work, but watch their stomachs go out. Sitting around all day talking to people, it's not God's way.

And if you're involved in that work, you must have an exercise plan. Take your converts on a run, do something. Because I think it's sickening that 75% of the people who pastor our churches are fat.

And bishops, huh, incredible. Out in India, all these big fat bishops driving big huge cars, living like kings, coming into churches, people are barefoot, starving. They can barely get up into the pulpit.

Oh, I tell you, this is the thing that grieved Lenin. This is the thing that grieved Lenin about the phony church in Russia. He used this as one of the greatest wedges against the Tsar.

He said the priests are fat, the priests are full, and the people starve to death. Let's have a revolution. And if I had been there, which side do you think I would have been on? Of course, I would have been on Lenin's side, and so would many of you.

Lenin wouldn't take sugar in his tea during times of need in the Soviet Union. Committed, disciplined, dedicated, fanatic for the cause of hell. Where are such men for the cause of Jesus Christ? That's what I want to know.

Where are they? Discipline their bodies. Discipline their minds. Oh, I yearn for such men.

And if you're not willing for that, forget last night's experience. It'll soon be a bad dream. Forget all your spiritual clichés.

It'll soon be an epitaph on your spiritual tomb. We've got to get down to buffeting and disciplining the body. The Word teaches it again and again and again.

Only one thing more I say, and that's simply this. If you want to walk in the Spirit, of course, there are many other things. We just don't have time.

But if you want to walk in the Spirit, witness in the Spirit, keep witnessing, keep sharing, keep giving. That's why I often challenge people, come a year on O.M. I'm not afraid to say that. That's not pressure, young people.

That's just an invitation. Think of all the pressure your parents are giving you in other directions, huh? Think of all the pressure your college will give you. Do this, do this, take this course.

If you don't do this, you'll be nobody. If you don't get this degree, you'll never get a job. Tremendous pressure.

Francis Schaeffer said, the average university student in our day is brainwashed. Brainwashed. We've got to get this degree.

We've got to do this. We've got to be this. We've got to go here.

And so to give a simple invitation to consider a year of practical evangelism, of learning how to witness, of disciplining the body, of feasting on the Word of God, of majoring in prayer or praise, I don't think that's pressure. I think it's just giving you a fair chance to consider all the possibilities for what God may want to do. I praise the Lord for everyone who goes home from this crusade.

And I pray you'll shake your town and your college for Jesus Christ. But some of you know very well you need more than a summer of this kind of training. You've been playing around too long.

Your life has got far too sloppy, far too undisciplined. You're miles behind in the spiritual race. And I believe you need a year in a special clinic.

And in some ways that's what OM is. A year of learning what it is to walk in the Spirit. A movement not for the committed.

Don't be deceived. Not for the dedicated. Don't be deceived.

This is a movement for spiritual cripples. This is a movement for sinners. This is a movement for those who will admit they're weak and don't know how to walk but want to learn to walk and learn to witness and learn to fight and learn to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

And it's to those people we open up the doors of our year program. Pray about it. It may be part of God's answer for you to walk in the Spirit and to learn what it is to walk in the Spirit.

You'll not learn overnight. You'll not learn in the summer. There'll be many falls.

But praise God, as we've talked about many times, He will pick you up. Repent. Confess.

He will pick you up. And if you sin again, remember, as far as God's concerned, it's the first time you've ever done it. So repent and get up again and walk in the Spirit.

Daily fullness. Daily rest of faith. Daily walk.

That's God's provision for you. Take these principles. They're simple, young people.

They're not complex. And make them the goals and the practices of your life. And as you fail, He'll pick you up like the Nepali soldier who's learning how to swim.

And He'll throw you back again. And you shall learn. May God give you the grace.

Many of you, I'll never have the chance. I shouldn't say this because it makes me emotional, but I may never have the chance to speak again. And I pray, don't take lightly what you've heard in this conference.

Whatever you do, your life hinges on what you do with these principles that are written across the pages of God's Holy Word. Don't take it lightly. Get desperate and determined.

You'll walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. That's God's provision. Take it daily.

It does work. Let's pray. Now, this may be a bit unusual, but I believe there were some who wanted to stand last night and ask God to fill them with His Holy Spirit.

And they didn't. They couldn't. The devil had them confused.

They couldn't move. And I just feel constrained. I don't care what time it is, but I feel there may be one, there may be two, there may be a few more who wanted to stand last night and you didn't.

But if you had the chance, you would beg me to give the invitation tonight, and so I'm going to give it. If you want to take the step tonight that perhaps you should have taken last night and believe that God will fill you and enable you to walk in the Spirit, I want you to stand right now. Praise God.

God was very patient. He waited for you all day. Just very briefly, I'm not going to take much time.

Commitment that others made last night, you heard the message. Now you've had further explanation. To the Germans, I explained more in detail this afternoon.

You want to say, Lord Jesus, fill me tonight. Take me across Jordan tonight into the Promised Land and teach me what it is to walk in the Spirit. Anyone else? Very quickly.

Maybe you're one of those like me. You don't like invitations. It's okay.

God uses them. Many were very, very thankful for the invitation last night. Maybe a visitor just came in tonight.

You're not sure what it's all about, but something is tugging, pulling in your heart. You stand and say, Lord, I believe. Change my life.

Make me a disciple, soldier. Fill me with your Holy Spirit. Praise me to Him.

Father, in the name of your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, pray for those that tonight are standing before you, hungry after you, wanting to be filled with your Spirit, and we ask together as a company of your people, fill them. Change them. Teach them to walk in the Spirit, putting into practice these basic revolutionary principles.

Give them the grace as they cast themselves at your feet. For we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

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