

What Does It Mean to 'Flow in the Spirit?'

What a thrill it is to "flow in the Spirit." You feel that what you are doing is worthwhile; you feel authenticated, you feel loved; you know you are a part of something very important—the kingdom of God.

It happens to me when I am preparing a sermon, witnessing to an unsaved person, helping my wife clean the house, doing the shopping, or anything else in life that is either necessary or a blessing to people. You feel this when visiting a sick person or resisting temptation; when you walk to work or do work in the office. It is a 24-hour-a-day possibility.

What does it mean to "flow in the Spirit?" It is moving along with Him, keeping in step with Him, and missing nothing He may want to do through us. The joy of flowing in the Spirit is equal to anything God may ever do for us and in us.

This is what Peter and John were doing when they were walking toward the temple one afternoon but were unexpectedly stopped, only to see the healing of a forty-year old man who had never walked. (See Acts 3:1-10) There are two questions that emerge:

- Why were these disciples led at *this* particular time to administer healing to this man?
- How did they *know* this man would suddenly be healed?

As to the first question, have you ever wondered why Jesus Himself did not heal this man? After all, Jesus walked in and out of the temple—right past this beggar—countless times over the previous three years. Why didn't Jesus heal him?

For all I know, Jesus wanted to heal the man long before the man received his healing at the hands of Peter and John. We don't know whether this is true, though we only know that

Jesus went past him without healing him. Why not?

Believe it or not, Jesus was not His “own man,” He said so: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does” (John 5:19). Jesus took orders from the Father. Everything Jesus said was mirroring or repeating what the Father granted to be said or done. Jesus may well have wanted to heal the man at the Gate Beautiful. Perhaps the Father said to Him, “I’m saving him for Peter and John.” What we do know is that the man was not healed until this point.

God is sovereign, and a missing note in teaching and preaching today is this very aspect about God. The sovereignty of God refers mainly to His will and power. God has a will of His own—independent of His creation—and that will needs to be affirmed and honored for whatever He does or does not do (See Ex. 33:19). In other words, God the Father was behind the decision not to heal this man during Jesus’ days on earth, but equally behind the reason Peter and John were the chosen instruments to grant healing at this particular time.

And yet there is to be seen an equally important teaching regarding the Holy Spirit: He too does only what the Father tells Him to do. Jesus and the Holy Spirit in this sense are identical because both the Son and the Spirit carry out the Father’s wishes and nothing more. All that Jesus ever did, and all that the Holy Spirit ever does, is sovereignly orchestrated by the Father in heaven. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit “will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears” (John 16:13). This goes to show that the Holy Spirit, like Jesus, does not act independently but does only what He hears from the Father. The Holy Spirit was sovereignly at work, carrying out the Father’s will, when Peter and John came upon this man at the temple gate. That is the only explanation for the healing at that moment in time and not before.

But now to the second question: how did Peter and John *know* that this man's time had come and that the Spirit was willing to perform this wonderful miracle? Answer: they had the joy of flowing in the Spirit. It was not Peter and John's idea to stop and address the lame man; it was the Spirit's idea. This man's time of healing had come. They were privileged to be part of the Father's plan at such a time as this.

Peter and John were enjoying sweet fellowship with the Spirit and with each other. They were keeping in step with the Spirit, and so they did not miss what God was prepared to do. It gave them real joy to be involved in this miracle.

Flowing in the Spirit means to honor God's "no" as well as His "yes." Paul and his companions were "kept by the Holy Spirit" ("forbidden," KJV) from preaching the word in the province of Asia (Acts 16:6). To flow in the Spirit is to have such an intimate relationship with Him that you recognize what He wants you to do.

Paul and his companions walked in the Spirit because they also knew His ways. God lamented of ancient Israel, "They have not known my ways" (Heb. 3:10).

☒ God wants intimacy with us, and there is no greater joy than to keep in step with the Spirit. To flow in the Spirit is to learn God's ways, style, gentleness, indignation, impulses, manner of doing things, and His way with people. In other words, flowing in the Spirit is doing what pleases the Spirit and what He prompts you to do. {eoa}

*Adapted from Pure Joy by **R. T. Kendall**, copyright 2015, published by Charisma House. This book will show you how to receive and keep the pure joy only the Holy Spirit can bring. Balancing both basic principles in the Word with their practical applications, R.T. Kendall unlocks the key to maintaining an open, unhindered, joyful relationship with the Holy Spirit and continually flow in Him. To order your copy*

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Prayer Power for the Week of April 17, 2016

This week ask the Lord to teach you how to flow in His Spirit by doing what pleases Him and what He prompts you to do. Seek the intimacy that puts you in step with Him. Stay tuned to His voice and continue to pray for opportunities to reveal His love and be used by Him in supernatural ways. Ask the Lord for more laborers for His end-time harvest. Pray for those victimized by terrorism and those suffering for righteousness sake. Remember Israel and our allies as you pray for our own nation and its leaders. Pray for God's will in the upcoming elections (John 16:13; Heb. 3:10; Matt. 6:9-13; Matt 9:35-38).