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...Praise Him with the timbrel and dance. (Psalm 105:4)

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## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley

Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!”  
Joyful, all ye nations rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With th’angelic host proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Christ, by highest Heav’n adored;  
Christ the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time, behold Him come,  
Offspring of a virgin’s womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail th’incarnate Deity,  
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus our Emmanuel.

Hail the heav’nly Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Ris’n with healing in His wings.  
Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die.  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.

Come, Desire of nations, come,  
Fix in us Thy humble home;  
Rise, the woman’s conqu’ring Seed,  
Bruise in us the serpent’s head.  
Now display Thy saving power,  
Ruined nature now restore;  
Now in mystic union join  
Thine to ours, and ours to Thine.

Adam’s likeness, Lord, efface,  
Stamp Thine image in its place:  
Second Adam from above,  
Reinstate us in Thy love.  
Let us Thee, though lost, regain,  
Thee, the Life, the inner man:  
O, to all Thyself impart,  
Formed in each believing heart.

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

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Feature Article:

## The Threefold Nature of Man. Part 2

*For the word of God is living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Heb 4:12

*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin. Romans 7:24-25*

Last week we looked at the threefold nature of man - body, soul, and spirit. What does this mean to the child of God who has been spiritually regenerated and indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

The Apostle expresses the love he has within his heart for truth and the things of God. Yet, because of that love, he must also express the exasperation he feels at the remaining corruption that permeates his flesh. The flesh is not yet redeemed. *We who have the Spirit groan within ourselves, waiting to know the redemption of our bodies” (Rom 8:23).* For now, *the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh (Gal 5:17).* When I would purpose in myself to do good, evil is ever present (7:21). In fact the more zealously we try to conform ourselves to the external standards of God (the Law), we either become more condemned, or more deceived. There is no middle ground with “religious” flesh.

Paul admonishes us, therefore, to *walk in the spirit (Gal 5:16), and have no confidence in the flesh (Phil 3:3).* Walk in the Spirit - this is entirely *New Covenant* language. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them (Ezek 36:26-27).* While the *complete fullness* of this awaits the redemption of the flesh, it is a present reality by the *earnest of the Spirit (2 Cor 1:22, et al).* The believer’s spirit is in union with Christ. *Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal 5:16).* As we yield our members as instruments of righteousness under the Spirit (Rom 6:13), the flesh is greatly subdued. The flesh will not

gain the upper hand over your soul. By this we will *abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul (1 Peter 2:11)*.

So while, this side of the resurrection, we will have plenty of reason to cry out, "*O wretched man that I am*", yet, because of the reality of the indwelling, we have an ever abiding Christ to shepherd us through this present wilderness, and to set our eyes upon the glorious horizon. But *we must abide* in Him (*John 15:4-5*). We must constantly *choose* to walk (conduct our lives) in the Spirit. Subjecting our souls to the dominion of the Spirit, we will not be entangled in *the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches (Matt 13:22)* which make us unfruitful.

Now, indwelling grace *will* set boundaries for our souls, bringing us to repentance, and restoring us to the pathway of the Spirit when we have carelessly wondered too far into the realm of the flesh, the world, and the devil. But a life of *boundary-bouncing* is a hard life for the child of God; and it certainly doesn't bring God much glory. By setting our hearts to walk in the Spirit, we will avoid many boundary bruises. If, on the other hand, we are without such chastening (periodic course corrections), then we are illegitimate children (*Heb 12:6-8*).

How, then, do we maintain our walk in the Spirit? I believe the following will minimize our rough encounters with the boundaries:

1. Our first and most important focus must be to ***maintain vibrant, intimate communion with our Lord***. From this all else flows, for without Him we can do nothing (*John 15:5*). *...Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (Jude 1:16)*.

2. By the Spirit we must be ***utilizing the written Word of God to discern and illuminate the indwelling Word of Christ***. We neglect our Bibles to our own peril. The reality of the *word written on our hearts by the Spirit (2 Cor 3:3)* does not negate our need for the scriptures, but conjoins us to the blessings of its truths and treasures.. By it we are enabled to divide between *body soul and spirit (Heb 4:12)*. Without it we have greater difficulty discerning whether the thoughts, intents, and feelings of our hearts are (a) *from the flesh* - Is this the Lord or that spicy Stromboli I just ate, or from my worldly desires?; (b) *from my soul* - Is this from the Lord, or from the vain imaginations of my own heart, or the

mere constructs of my human intellect? or (c) is it indeed *the voice of the Spirit*? As I have said elsewhere, the Spirit-empowered Word is like the assayer of our hearts: is that really gold in there, or just fools gold?

3. ***Keep a servant's heart, utilizing our spiritual gifts*** by which the Holy Spirit works in and through us (*1 Cor 12:7*). The most experiential encounter with God often comes as we are serving others with our gifts.

4. ***Maintain an active fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ***. Do not neglect the church (*Heb 10:25*). The power of the Spirit is released in *community* by the interaction of every member. (*Eph 4:16*).

The spiritual discipline that keeps us engaged in the above activities will enable us to be more consistently walking in the Spirit and subduing the flesh. Try it - you'll like it.

*I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess 5:23*



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