

Episode 22. "The Change, Part Two."

Tuesday, September 28, 2021. 16 Minutes Long.

This episode continues John's summary of the amazing transformation in people when they become Christians. John talks in-depth about the power of the Holy Spirit and specifically what the Spirit does for Christians. What is "Spiritual power"? This episode answers that question. Episode 20 is "The Change, Part One."

John Shields (00:00):

John Shields opens the episode by saying:

John (00:13):

Hello, friends, and believe it or not, this is Episode 22 of our "Saving Christianity" podcast, brought to you by the Christian Family Online in America. I'm your host, John Shields, today. And I will be flying solo. And I want to thank you for being out there in Podcast Land, and listening, and being a part of this, and accessing our web page. And as you know, the book *Saving Christianity* is available at Amazon Books, and Barnes and Noble, and Thrift Books, and various places. And then also on our Christian Family Online in America website. And so, all of these things are available. And I hope that you will take full advantage of them. And we just appreciate you being out there. And so today, as I solo-fly here, I want to talk about something that we talk about all the time on this podcast.

John (01:17):

And that is God's Spirit – *the Holy Spirit*. And, not original with me, this is just through some research. And there's just a way that I'm going to unpack this today that's just very succinct and concise. And there's a lot of Scripture that could go with this – does go with this. But for time's sake, I'm not going to address all of those. But nevertheless, I think you'll get the point of what we're talking about, or what I'm talking about today. So thanks for being here.

John (01:53):

So, in Second Peter in the New Testament, in the first chapter, there is one of my favorite few verses. In fact, it's two verses. (Second Peter 1:3-4) And it just sums up really so much about what it means to be a Christ Follower, to be a Christian. And Peter is writing this – one of the disciples – and this is what he tells his audience, then and now:

"He is" ... meaning God ... he says, "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him, who called us by His own glory and goodness." Isn't that incredible? God's divine power, His Holy Spirit, has given us everything we need for life and godliness. Verse 4, "Through

these He has given us His very great and precious promises so that through them" – watch this! – "we may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

John (03:28):

Now, the last time I was flying solo, back in Episode 20 – this is Episode 22 – I titled that episode: "The Change." And so today, I'm going to just keep it simple. This is: "The Change, Part Two." What changes come? What is now available to us? How is that manifested in our life in very real, relevant, practical, ways? And so we're going to talk about that.

John (04:02):

Just moving through a list of things rather quickly, but you'll get the gist of what I'm speaking about today. So what is this *change*? What happens to us? What is this divine power? It says through this – through His power, through our knowledge of Him – He's given us everything we need. His promises that we ... all of that links together ... enabling us to participate in the divine nature and escape the world caused by evil desires. Pretty incredible. What does that look like? Well, here we go. The first thing is the nature of Spiritual Life. (Repeats.) What is that? Well, it's a New Life. It is a *New Life*. The Bible says we are a New Creation when we come to faith in Christ. It's a *True Life*. I love that. You remember, Jesus said in John 14, He said you know, "I am The Way, The Truth, and The Life."

John (05:11):

It's marvelous. It's a New Life. And it's a True Life. And we live our life, not just on our feelings and just bouncing around like a ping-pong ball. But we live in truth. We are connected to the One who *is* truth – who defines truth. And it's a true, true life. And it's an *Eternal Life*. And that's hard for us to grasp. We're so connected to calendars, and watches, and time schedules, and all of those things, and so many years here and there. We *measure* everything. But there is no measurement to Eternal Life. There is world without end. There is no ending to it. In our minds ... in our finite minds ... we simply cannot get a hold of that. We can ... our imagination can take us a few ... into a little bit of an understanding of that. But certainly not completely. But it is an Eternal Life. Isn't that something? That if you know Christ today, right now, your life – and I mean that in the truest, best, most beautiful way I can express it: *It's not going to end.*

John (06:35):

Now, we are obviously going to physically die. But you ... the real you ... is *not* ever going to die. It's eternal. It's incredible. I mean, it's just incredible, when you think about that. And it's an *Abundant Life*. And I'm already ... I'm headed in that direction. It's an Abundant Life. Not in the sense of material things. Don't let material things cheapen what this means. (Chuckles.) It's an Abundant Life. It's a life that's lived out of the context of the relationship with the God of the universe. And it's just ... there's just nothing like it, referencing the Abundant Life. Now that's the nature of the Spiritual Life. Now, let's talk about the origins and nature of Spiritual Life.

John (07:29):

Spiritual Life, of course, is the work of the *Holy Spirit*. So as you would think, Spiritual Life begets Spiritual Life. (Chuckles.) So Spiritual Life is a work of the Holy Spirit, really, from beginning to end. It's all about God's Spirit in us. Spiritual Life unites believers to Jesus. In fact, that's the *only* way we can be united to Him – is through His Holy Spirit. "Salvation" is a supernatural event and lifestyle, and it unites us to Christ through God's Spirit. It's not rules, and regulations, and a religion, and all of these things. They don't bring *life* to us. The *Spirit* brings life to us. It confirms, it makes Spiritual Life, makes us the opportunity to become children of God. The Bible says we are children of God, if in fact we have come into a relationship with Him. Spiritual Life brings people to know God. In fact, that's the *only* way we can do that. The Bible says that *no one* can actually come to Christ unless they have responded to God's Spirit drawing them to Him. What does that mean?

John (08:56):

It means that *He* always is the initiator. He is the one who initiates. We don't just wake up one day and go, "Oh, gosh, I think I'll turn my life over to God." Any one that has ever done that, it is because we are simply responding to God making the first step. Spiritual Life brings about faith. Right? Faith comes as a result of God's Spirit within us. Now here's another title: "Keeping in Step with the Spirit." What does that mean? Well, it means that there's a new way of life is now made possible. Now, you will *look* the same. Right? Your personality, those things. But this new way of life is made possible, as a result.

John (09:58):

The bondage to the Written Law has ended. In other words, this self-effort to live up to this standard that God has set, which was futile. No way we could do that. It was bondage to us. But the Bible says: Where the Spirit of God is, the Spirit of the Lord, there is *freedom*. Obedience to God is made possible. And that's why, when we're looking from the outside in, we look at Christianity, we look at God's Word, and we say, "Well, that's impossible." You're exactly right. It *is* apart from His Holy Spirit. It's totally impossible. But when God's Spirit comes into our life, obedience is actualized. It can actually happen. We can live in obedience to what God asked of us. And we won't do that begrudgingly. We will do that because we want to do it. Deepening unity is encouraged. You know, God is all about *unity*. Division (laughs) – I don't know that it has ever accomplished anything good. But God is a God of unity, strength, and encouragement, received from the Holy Spirit.

John (11:19):

Keeping in step with Him gives us strength and encouragement along the way. It gives us Gifts – for those living in the Spirit. Gifts are given for building up the "church," we call it, which means the *people*. Visions are given. Miracles are worked. We've been talking about that. Ministry is enhanced. All of these things are coming in, and through, God's Spirit in us, and those living in the Spirit. We receive revelation and guidance from God. God has revealed to us as our Father. God's purposes are revealed to us. God's guidance is given to us as believers. Help is given to us to pray. The Holy Spirit constantly is forgiving us and cleansing us, and mak-

ing us more like Christ. Christ lives *in* us through His Spirit. He transforms our minds. And He transforms us from the inside out.

John (12:34):

And the Fruit of the Spirit is in our life. God's Spirit *produces* in us: love, and joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, gentleness, and self-control. It's an amazing thing. It's not natural. *It's supernatural.* And that's just a little outline of the things of what it means to be a Christ Follower. When we come to faith in Christ, and He *indwells* us with His Spirit. And then we grow in that, and we constantly are praying: "Fill me, Holy Spirit. Fill me, Holy Spirit." These things are activated into our life – into our *behavior*. Into our *decisions*. Into our *relationships*. Into our *finances*. Into our *family* life. Into our *workplace*. It's in us. And then it flows out of us into every aspect of our life. That's what is supposed to happen. And so, I just want to encourage you to think about that. What that means for *your* life. Owen and I have spent (chuckles) years and years and years talking about this, and praying about this, and writing about this, and recording about this.

John (14:10):

And anywhere we can ... someone will listen ... we want to talk about this. And because we know that that is the essence of living our life for God's glory comes by, first of all, experiencing His Spirit in our life and all that means. And this is just a sampling, just an outline I just ran through. So I hope that *you* are experiencing this on some level in your life. And that you are daily – not just occasionally – but really, in a sense, all the time praying: "Fill me, Holy Spirit." I know that's something that I do. I'm just:

"Lord, fill me. Fill me, Holy Spirit. Fill me, Holy Spirit. Help me in this. Help me in that. I need Your direction, Your guidance, Your help. I need Your Fruit in my life. I need Your revelation to me. I need Your strength to overcome temptation. I need this, I need that, and I need that to come from *You*. I don't have it within myself to accomplish all of this."

John (15:19):

And so ... "The Change." I hope that you have experienced *The Change*. And that you are learning, and growing. And I have a really, really, good feeling that you *are*. Or you would not be listening to this podcast. Or you would not have read, or currently reading, *Saving Christianity*, by Owen. We just appreciate you being a part of this podcast, and taking the time listening to it. www.goSCpod.com. You can go there and find all of the things that we talk about here on this podcast together. Him (Owen) as an individual, me as an individual. Whatever the case, you'll be able to find it there. You'll be able to listen, read the transcript, *et cetera*. So thank you for taking the time to join today. And just know that we appreciate it so much. We're glad you are part of the "Saving Christianity" podcast.

John (16:24):

And this is John ... and I'm signing off by saying: May the God of our fathers bless you, may He keep you, may He guide you, and protect you, until we meet again.

John (16:37):

John ends the episode.