

## TRANSFORMATION FROM THE INSIDE OUT

### SCRIPTURE ASSISTANCE

#### John 3:8

The biblical words translated as Spirit are “ruach” in Hebrew and “pneuma” in Greek. These words don’t mean spirit as in a ghost as the King James translates it. The words both mean either breath or wind. This passage in particular describes the Holy Spirit as a powerful and uncontrollable wind. This is a great way to think about Him.

There are lots of things we know about the Spirit from the Bible. He is the third person of the Trinity (God is triune—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). So, when we speak of the Spirit, we don’t say the Spirit is impersonal or call Him an “it.” He is a person, part of the Trinity and fully divine.

However, while we know a lot about the Spirit, there’s a lot we don’t know, and we can get into trouble if we say we know exactly how the Spirit works all the time. Our job isn’t to explain how the Spirit will work or what He will do or not do. Instead, our job is to sense where the Spirit is moving and join Him there. And when we do, He’ll take us on a journey of incredible transformation.

#### Galatians 5:16-25

Real transformation is not about the law or avoiding a list of don’ts. When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts. He brings peace with God into our lives, but He also brings war to our lives as the Spirit opposes the desires of the flesh. Neither side declares a truce until we go home to be with Jesus.

The Christian isn’t someone who doesn’t have any bad desires; the Christian is someone who is at war with those bad desires by the power of the Spirit. And the Spirit will do something much deeper than external religious conformity. He wants to transform our hearts from the inside out.

The sin nature is the part of us that isn’t redeemed by the Spirit. Paul describes this as the flesh and gives a list of some of the sins that come from the flesh although the list isn’t meant to be comprehensive. Some sins drive us off a sexual cliff, and others are religious in nature where we worship anything above God, including good things like career and accomplishment. Some of the sins are about being self-centered in our relationships with other people.

The Spirit is there to counteract our sinful nature. He will help make us into new people by changing our desires. When we yield to the Spirit rather than the flesh, we desire more and more of what God wants for us, and we becoming increasingly like Jesus. This isn’t just changing behavior. It’s deeper than that. We are being transformed at the level of desire and character. Paul describes these new desires and changes as the fruit of the Spirit. These are character traits, not just behaviors. If we want to know how God is at work in our life, we look for the fruit of the Spirit because that’s what He produces.