

Teach -In No. 2 The Gospel of Matthew

In teach-in No. 1 we looked at the line that Jesus came from; He was the Son of David who was prophesied about in the book of Samuel.

2 Samuel 7 v 8-13

Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Jesus came from the Royal blood line of King David to fulfill God's promise of a Kingdom to come that would endure forever. We become partakers of this Kingdom as we follow the pattern that Jesus established in chapters 1-4 of Matthew's gospel.

1 Born by the Holy Spirit of God.

Matthew 1 v 20-25

But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us." And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

2 Baptised in water.

Matthew 3 v 13-15

Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan coming to John, to be baptized by him. But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?" But Jesus answering said to him, "Permit it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he permitted Him.

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3 The receiving or baptism of the Holy Spirit, the empowering to live a life in the Spirit.

Matthew 3 v 16-17

After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

4 The importance of the word of God. When Jesus said *It is written* He meant that the Word of God stands for all time.

Matthew 4 v 1-4

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"

We can see in the gospels of Mark, Luke and John that Jesus taught these foundational things so that all His followers could know the way.

John 14 v 5-6

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Now we can look at our expected lifestyle in the Kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' platform to teach His disciples about the attitudes He expects from us, they are quite different ways from those of this world; also they are impossible to achieve unless we have the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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Matthew 5 v 1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

These verses have practical application. The word *blessed* means *inwardly joyful*, not being happy as some translations put it. Making room for the word of God in our lives will bring deep and profound security.

Matthew 5 v 3

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

How can the poor in spirit be blessed? The answer is simply that as we are poor in spirit we can ask for the richness of the life of Jesus. The way into the Kingdom is to let our old spirit die and be born anew of the Spirit of God. Notice that in the scripture the offer of the Kingdom is in the present tense - it is available now!

Matthew 5 v 4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Although this means that mourners may be comforted when they lose their loved ones, Jesus was also indicating that we should mourn over our sins; our wasted years outside of the Kingdom and that we should look to the Lord for fulfilment in our new life. Observe the phrase *they shall be comforted* which is in the future tense as they (we) trust in the Lord first.

Matthew 5 v 5

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Matthew is quoting David's Psalm.

Psalm 37 v 11

Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

Acting hastily, impatiently or proudly will cause us to lose our peace and our abundant prosperity in Jesus. The gentle spirit will evangelise the world.

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Matthew 5 v 6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. We are to yearn and long for holiness, being right with God.

Proverbs 8 v 13

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate.

If we do this we shall have a full, satisfied life that is pleasing to Him.

Isaiah 55 v 1 -3

"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David.

This is an invitation to come and take part freely in what it is that God has for us.

Matthew 5 v 7

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

We shall receive mercy from God for our own wrongdoings if we first show forgiveness to others. We can see in other teachings and instructions that Jesus has given to us that this is the general rule. He said in Matthew 6 v 12 *And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

Proverbs 11 v 17

The merciful man does himself good, but the cruel man does himself harm.

Matthew 5 v 8

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Here Jesus is telling us that we are to agree to God's plan of sanctification, or being made holy, to continue throughout our Christian life. He has his own way of persuasion; He loves us and will not let us slip away from Him.

1 John 3 v 2-3

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Matthew 5 v 9

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

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Romans 14 v 17-18

...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

There are many references to peace in the Bible; Jesus is the Prince of peace, under His government comes the peace of God. He says in John's gospel that He brings His own perfect peace. Peace comes when we obey His word. There is no peace for the wicked, only for those who pursue peace.

1 Corinthians 11 v 17-19

But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.

There are no divisions in the Kingdom; there may be divisions in the unsanctified parts of His prospective church, but not in the truly dedicated church.

Matthew 5 v 10

"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1 Peter 3 v 14

But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled...

There is no doubt that as Jesus was resented, reviled, rejected and finally crucified so shall we also suffer the same attacks; these will come from strangers, friends and family and should not come as a surprise to us.

James 1 v 2-8

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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1 Peter 4 v 12-19

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner? Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.

Matthew 5 v 11-12

"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The Beatitudes are the attitudes of the Kingdom of God. Our explanation of these is now complete. We shall be mistreated by all kinds of people, however, there are rewards for those who overcome.

Matthew 5 v 13-20

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

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Matthew 5 v 13

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

We are described by Jesus as the salt of the earth; in His time salt was used to purify the soil and just as today it benefits food to make it more tasty, as well as being a preservative. Our task is to be as that of salt, we are God's purifying agent in the hands of the Holy Spirit. As we live the abundant life we will display the appetising nature of God's word and also preserve the life and purpose of His Kingdom here on earth. God has no other way of saving this evil world.

Matthew 5 v 14 -16

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

We are to display what we are by the way that we live in our society.

Matt 5 v 17-20

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus came to fulfill the Law, that is to say both the heart's desire of His Father and equally to fulfill the words of the Prophets of old. Every Old Testament Prophet foretold of the King and the Kingdom that was to come. We are living in exciting times as we see His purposes emerging from the pages of scripture. We are forewarned that all of God's plans will be accomplished, not just a few, but all of them. Our righteousness (that is, way that we live) has to surpass that of the religious leaders of today. We must be willing to enter into the whole Gospel, not just part of it that appeals to us!

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Matthew 5 v 21 -48

"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell. "It was said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil. "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

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Teach -In No. 2 The Gospel of Matthew

Matthew 5 v 21-22

"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

Committing murder may be an emotion that some of us have felt like doing at some stage of their lives. No doubt there has been a restraint and no-one has died by our hands, but here Jesus says that even in our critical and sometimes angry words, we have committed spiritual suicide! Being angry and saying nasty things to each other brings its own reward. Calling anyone a fool could qualify me for a life of hell, saved from eternal hell, yet living a Spiritless life on earth. We must keep taking the *gospills* daily; repenting and receiving our heavenly happiness whilst still here on earth.

Matthew 5 v 23-24

Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Jesus speaks in verses 14-16 of walking in the light, being lovingly honest with each other. Speaking the truth does not mean that we destroy someone with the truth, we are encouraged to speak the truth with love, take the matter first to God, He is love. What you see may only be a symptom of something else in a person and you may make a wrong judgement. Always be first to say sorry and be the last to take offence. We cannot worship God in Spirit and in truth if we have something against someone, including our nearest and dearest.

Matthew 5 v 25-26

Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.

The above verses speak of making friends with your opponents at law. An opponent at law is someone who steps on your standards, ideals and rights, Jesus went to the cross for our rights without complaining, we are encouraged to do the same.

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Matthew 5 v 27-28

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Concerning adultery, we are not even to look at another in a lustful way. Coveting in our hearts is as wrong as the act itself. Oh dear! We have probably done this often. The Word says that we are to take every thought captive.

2 Corinthians 10 v 3-7

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete. You are looking at things as they are outwardly. If anyone is confident in himself that he is Christ's, let him consider this again within himself, that just as he is Christ's, so also are we.

Matthew 5 v 29-30

If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.

When we fall, we should confess it to the Lord and know that He is quick to forgive us as we are genuinely sorry, but we do have to deal with it severely.

Matthew 5 v 31-32

"It was said, 'Whoever sends his wife away, let him give her a certificate of divorce'; but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Verses 31 to 32 of deals with divorce which we shall address in a later teach in at Matthew 19.

Matthew 5 v 33-37

"Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.

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Jesus wants us to be as good as our word, it should be unnecessary for a Christian to have to be reminded about commitments or promises that they make; we should be making our agreements *as unto the Lord*. In this way it is God who we will disappoint when we fail. Say what you mean and mean what you say - and stick to it. It is permissible to say *no* sometimes; we just need to be sure that our response is not an act of disobedience.

Matthew 5 v 38-42

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.

Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

Jesus practiced the things that He taught; He says that we are not to resist the person who is malicious. The examples in these scriptures are totally contrary to our normal natural responses, yet Jesus did just what He preached. You may not take these retorts literally, but even when simpler demands are put upon us, we often find ourselves reacting in opposition to what Jesus is saying.

Matthew 26 v 47-56

While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he who was betraying Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; seize Him." Immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him. And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?" At that time Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets." Then all the disciples left Him and fled.

Here we find Jesus in a similar situation to that in Matthew 5 v 38-42; Judas betrays Jesus, pretending to be His friend, even showing Him outward affection. Jesus knew that he was deceiving Him, yet he greeted him as *friend*. Whenever demands are made of us, we are called to respond as Jesus did, which can only be done as we walk in the Spirit.

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Matthew 5 v 43-48

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

The message regarding our relationships touches sensitive areas; it is easier to love friends and likeable people than to love the unfriendly or the unlovely. Jesus indicates here that instead of disliking and disregarding the unlovely, we should love them and if they really give us a hard time, then we are to pray for them. The question is, who are my enemies? The following scripture gives us a clue.

Matthew 10 v 34-46

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be the members of his household.

Tolerance levels are often tested the most at home, in the family. Expressions like *you fool* and probably worse in the families' unpleasant moments together with our behavior towards each other can be less than righteous.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Jesus sets a standard that includes all these attitudes of love, I am constantly challenged by them, they are achievable objectives for those who are filled with the Holy Spirit, not every now and again, but every day. My car will run for about 350 miles on a full tank of fuel, but if I run out I will either have to push it or walk to the nearest petrol station, both are hard work! We cannot live out of yesterday's provisions. We have to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit.

Finally, we are to be perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect which is an attainable plan of God's for each of us but it may be a long-term objective. We are already perfect in Christ Jesus but we shall have to work out our salvation, with the help of the Holy Spirit of course.

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Philippians 2 v 12-13

So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

We are not called to work *for* our salvation, but to work it out. God expects us to allow Him to work in us!

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