

## Diagnosis: SPIRITUAL CONSTIPATION

The importance of flow in life is undeniable. Flow is to move consistently and steadily and is required for life. Energy flows. Water flows. Air flows. Nutrients flow. Wastes flow. In a living organism flow is a necessity of life. If something gets in the way of flow, flow stops and that is called constipation. If the flow stops for long enough stagnation ensues. Stagnation is bad. Stagnation stinks of decay and rot.

The concept of evolution encapsulates a broader example of flow. A component of flow is change, because whatever is flowing is not stagnant and therefore inherently has the aspect of change associated with it. The change may be imperceptible to the naked human eye in a snapshot of time, but change is occurring even when we do not perceive it. Evolution is change over time, which is flow. Relationship is another concept that incorporates flow. Relationship is based on a mutual or reciprocal interest and to be in relationship there must be more than one entity. The two or more entities interact. Interaction the evidence of flow. When evolution and relationship merge together an additional form of flow is born: revolution. Revolution is a complex form a flow because it is the movement or change of a system led by people who are in relationship with one another.

Presbyterianism was born of reformation and revolution, but have we become constipated? Have man-made traditions and rules stagnated the revolution or very flow from which we were born? Has the traditional Presbyterian Church fallen victim to the very thing it was fighting against at its inception? Have we become more concerned about what we do and have done in the past than what others need us to do and for our future?

The Bible warns us against this happening. Isaiah prophesies about this happening. In the first century church there is evidence that it was occurring; man's need for control, order, and appearances becomes more important than the flow of the Holy Spirit. Do your traditions overpower the Word of God?

References: The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity,  
The Book of Order 2017 - 2019  
Isaiah 64: 4  
Mark 7: 6 - 9

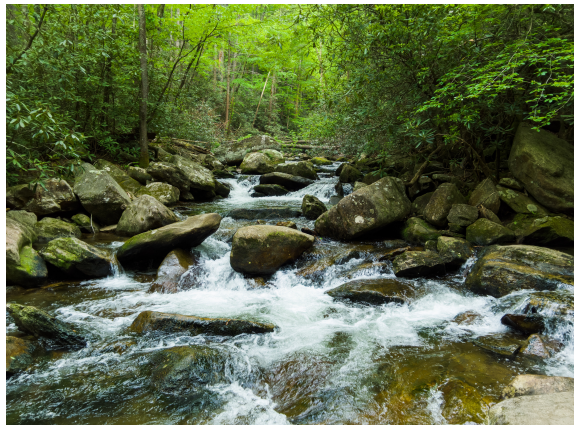


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Spiritual constipation is a real condition and I believe many people in the church, leaders, teachers, and attendees are suffering from it because we have allowed human traditions and rules to become more important than the flow of the Holy Spirit and our relationship with God. In the name of God we have become highly effective at holding tight to our traditions and blocking the flow. Much like the Pharisees when Jesus was alive, the perpetrators could not see their spiritual constipation because they were caught up in it. Their intentions were good, but their implementation was flawed. Could similar spiritual constipation be happening in our lives and churches today?

The first step to treating spiritual constipation is to recognize it. It is an embarrassing realization and tough to talk about it. No one wants to be a patient of spiritual constipation. But if we do not start to talk about it, how can we treat it? How can we begin to remove the blockage(s)? Ask God to reveal to you if or how you or your church is suffering from spiritual constipation.

Spiritual constipation treatment requires the removal of the blockage and that can happen one small piece at a time. To reinstate the flow there will need to be action and change. Do not fear the flow, fear the constipation, for it is the constipation that will kill you. Flow is life, embrace it and let us see what the Holy Spirit does in our revolutionary Presbyterian denomination.



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