



Living in the Spirit

Without question, being saved by God brings us into a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ—our merciful Lord and Savior. You would think that would be enough, but no! There is yet another divine Person for us to get to know—the Holy Spirit who now lives within us. Our new life in Christ is intended to be a life sustained, filled and guided by the Holy Spirit. May you truly enjoy the journey of discovering what living in the Spirit is all about!

The following five chapters are taken from our book, *Knowing the Spirit: Our Mystery Guest*. The full version (16 chapters) is [available at Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B000APR08C) in paperback or as an ebook.

Knowing the Spirit

1. [Hosting a Mystery](#)
2. [Holy Spirit Our Helper](#)
3. [New Life in the Spirit](#)
6. [True Spiritual Health](#)
7. [Walking in the Spirit](#)



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



CHAPTER 1

HOSTING A MYSTERY

The Holy Spirit has been with us all our lives and we may never have known it. Never once have sensed His Presence or felt His touch in any recognizable way. That all ends now! Let this book give you eyes to see and ears to hear. We are on the hunt to discover all we can about this very reclusive Quarry. Fortunately, there are clues scattered all over scripture showing us ways to track Him down, draw near, and join hands with our perpetually present God. Still it must be admitted our interior Guest is quite a Mystery. Simply being God is mystery enough.

**For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him?
So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 1
Corinthians 2:11-12**

The Holy Spirit is God all by Himself, but He is never just by Himself—He is inseparably “at one” with the other two Persons of the Trinity. This compounds the mystery. Everything as God that is true of Them is, therefore, also true of the Holy Spirit.¹ Nevertheless, though the Father is visibly described twice in the scriptures² and Jesus has been seen many times and in many ways, no one is reported to have seen the Spirit. That we will all see the Father and Jesus once we are in heaven is beyond question. Whether or not we will ever see the Spirit is anyone’s guess. This stretches our present Mystery way into the future.

One further difficulty in writing about the Holy Spirit is that He doesn't like to draw attention to Himself, preferring to focus our eyes on Jesus and the Father instead. He who is more powerful than Niagara Falls is also more elusive than a vapor mirage on a hot summer highway. That makes it all the more fun! Let's seek to discover just who this Mystery Person is and how it is that He enables us to live the Christian life with so much joy and supernatural empowerment. Come along, as we lift the curtain to catch revealing glimpses of our secretive Companion.

CHAPTER 2

HOLY SPIRIT OUR HELPER

Jesus said He would not leave us comfortless and He hasn't. He is living in us through the Holy Spirit who is sealed to us a sign of our eternal destiny and as a present source of help and hope for any situation of need we may encounter.³ Because He is holy He shows us what doesn't belong in us (sin). Because He is wholly good he helps us in the most patient, loving ways imaginable as He works to lead us out of our darkness into the full Light of Christ. All the while He draws so little attention to Himself, you would hardly know He is there.



Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. John 16:7

Help on the Inside

Jesus said that He would send the Holy Spirit to be our “Helper.” This has been wildly misunderstood with people thinking that only Christians have the Holy Spirit or that the Holy Spirit only came to help people after the resurrection. God has always and will always be doing things for us by the Holy Spirit. That is nothing new.⁴

The Holy Spirit did all kinds of great things for Jewish believers in the Old Testament. He does great things for everyone who calls on the Lord and always has. Not only that, He has always been the giver and sustainer of life for everyone and every creature in creation, regardless of whether they know Him or not.⁵ None of this has changed through anything that Jesus did for us by His death and resurrection. What did change?

To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Colossians 1:27

The altogether new thing that God is doing for us is that the Holy Spirit now lives inside all who give their lives to Christ through faith-conversion and the new birth.⁶ This (along with Christ’s sacrifice) makes the “new and living way” possible.⁷ The Holy Spirit lives inside of us as our Helper, helping us to live in a way that was never before possible outside of childhood—the way of surrender and trust.⁸

Before we became Christians, the Holy Spirit our Helper was always doing things for us, even if we didn’t know it, but now that we are Christians, He is helping us from the inside to live through Him.⁹ Faith conversion helps us in two tremendous ways. We can call on the Lord with confidence that God by His Spirit will do for us more than we can ask or think.¹⁰ We can also call on the Lord for His help in surrendering so that God can live *through* us in ways He never could before.¹¹

A New Way of Life

Naturally, God will go on doing things for us. He always has. The missing element—the part the sending of the Holy Spirit is intended to correct—is that now we can truly live for God by trusting Jesus and obeying Jesus with the Holy Spirit *helping us on the inside*. By indwelling us the Holy Spirit is able to help us live as we were always meant to live with real joy, peace, freedom and faithfulness.

By all means, keep on thinking of God as “out there” and “up there,” but add to that “in here.” Think of Him as willing to work for you, but think also of Him as wanting to live through you. If you are in Christ through faith, then the Holy Spirit is in you, working, working, working to help you learn how to live in and with and through His inner Life.



Your new personality, for instance, looks just like His. Deep down you have been joined to the Holy Spirit and have been given a new heart just like that of Jesus.¹² This means, that although the old heart of the old nature will still be throwing up all kinds of negative emotions, false beliefs and wrong desires for you to contend with, you have a choice that was never available to you before. Now that you know who Jesus is, you can choose (by your new heart) to cling to Him and call on Him for help to break free of the old ways.¹³ This new and living way works best when we trust Jesus enough to obey Him step by step. That may seem like a tall order, but the Holy Spirit will work inside you to help you with this. That's His new assignment.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Hebrews 10:19-22 ESV

In any moment in which you choose to surrender your life and your choices to Jesus, the Holy Spirit's personality will emerge inside you. Not perfectly perhaps, but very wonderfully, filling you to the degree that you yield yourself to God. What then begins to flow is peace, love, joy, and all sorts of good things.¹⁴ This is the mighty river of the new life which Jesus said would flow out of the heart of all who believe in Him.¹⁵ But there is a catch. Just believing in who Jesus is will not be enough to get you into the river of peace most days. You have to believe in Him enough to trust Him with what He allows and follow Him in what He asks.

The great way it feels and the God ordained things that keep happening are powerful incentives to keep surrendering to Jesus and flowing in the "river of peace."¹⁶ Jesus said that believing in Him (at this level of trust) is "the work" you and I are required and expected to do by our God.¹⁷ That is why He has put His Spirit inside of us—to help us with the work of staying surrendered and submitted to Him no matter what is going on around us.

The Inner Witness

The Holy Spirit helps us by being an Inner Witness. He is always reminding us that Jesus is alive and that He is our Savior and Lord.¹⁸ Even the most backslidden Christians still have this inner witness quietly at work on the inside reminding them of the direction they need to turn. Once He sees we are willing to turn, the Holy Spirit will help us pray, reminding us to cling to and call on Jesus. This is absolutely essential!

Until we start calling on Jesus in a situation of trouble or temptation, we are actually calling on ourselves. Self will never be a sufficient savior. Leaning on yourself always leads to stress, anxiety, depression and fresh disasters. The new life is leaning hard on Jesus, clinging to Him and calling on Him. This activity on the inside does more than anything else to change us from being self-centered creations of our own self-will, to Christ-centered new creations filled with His Spirit.

The Holy Spirit helps as a "Remembrancer," reminding us what we have already been taught.¹⁹ The enemy ever seeks to steal out of our hearts the Word that God sows. Holy Spirit works to keep God's truths in our remembrance. (Hint: You can make His work easier by

memorizing key scriptures.) Holy Spirit also helps us by being our “Revealer of Truth,” leading us out of our darkness into Christ’s Light.

And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. John 16:8-11

Because we all have such a hard time recognizing what may be wrong about things we habitually believe and do, Holy Spirit is our inner guide to what’s true, convicting us of sin (showing us what’s wrong), and convincing us of righteousness (what is good and right from God’s point of view). He also helps us by reminding us of judgment. Just as the enemy will be judged and have to face the full consequences of all the wrong he has done, so our own wrong doing will bring down consequences on us unless we separate from them in time.²⁰ That gives us plenty of motivation!

In all these ways and more, the Holy Spirit points us to Christ, working to help us trust Jesus with what He allows and with all that He asks. As we release our cares, the Holy Spirit raises us into the peace of Christ, shows us the next right thing to do, and then helps us do it. All of this, of course, depends on our willingness.²¹ But the Holy Spirit will even help us with that—if we want Him to. Learn this prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to work in your heart, especially at those times when you sense that you don’t want to surrender to God: “Lord, help me want to want what You want, desire what You desire, and hate what You hate.” Give Holy Spirit permission to go to work! His help will make your job of following Jesus step by step so much easier to accomplish.

CHAPTER 3

NEW LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

There are two sides to salvation: Jesus’ death for you and the Spirit’s life in you. Just as Jesus died for you the death you deserved, so the Holy Spirit has come to live in and through you the life you could not attain. As you look to Jesus in love and trust, the Holy Spirit (without any effort on your part) raises you into the new way of life. Walking in the Spirit is a great beginning; supernatural empowerment lies just ahead.

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38



Two Tremendous Promises

During the Old Testament period the Holy Spirit was definitely present and powerful, but He was never permanently present within the Israelite believers, nor was His power equally available to them all. A few individuals, for instance, were chosen and anointed by the Spirit of God for specific reasons. Prophets, priest, kings, leaders like the judge Samson, craftsmen, and others experienced the Holy Spirit coming upon them at certain times or were anointed for certain tasks.

God promised that this would change dramatically in the future. The day would surely come when the Lord God would make a way for His Spirit to be placed both *within* and also be poured out *upon* his believing people.

1) Inward Life. The promise of an indwelling presence was given through Ezekiel. The Lord declared that one day He would give us a “new heart” and put a “new spirit” *within* us. In hindsight we can see better what this meant than would have been possible for Ezekiel’s contemporaries. Through faith-conversion we now understand that God gives us a new heart—one that knows Him and loves Him—and places His Spirit within us when we are born again. This is called regeneration and it is accomplished as the Holy Spirit is joined to our spirit, raising us from spiritual death to new life in Christ. So much of this hidden work is shrouded in mysteries that we may never fully understand or agree upon. Nevertheless, it is clear even in this prophetic passage from Ezekiel that God intends to cleanse us from sin and restore us to faithful living by empowering us from within.

“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you.” Ezekiel 36:25-26

2) Supernatural Power. The promise of an empowering presence was given through Joel. The Lord declared that one day He would “pour out” the Holy Spirit *upon* us. In the words of Joel this outpouring would be upon “all flesh”—not just a select few. Everyone in the faith community from youth to elderly, both men and women, would be suitable candidates for receiving this divine empowerment. Dreams, visions and prophecy are specifically identified as among the supernatural gifts that would be given, but more is implied. The prophets of ancient Israel were renowned, not just for their visionary encounters with God and their words from the Lord, but also for healing and miracles of all kinds. These too will be “poured out” when the Holy Spirit comes upon God’s people to empower them for supernatural works of ministry.

In the Upper Room on the evening of the Resurrection as Jesus breathed upon His disciples, they received the Holy Spirit. Clearly, at this moment in time they were the first fully born again believers in the resurrected Lord.²² This fulfilled the Father’s promise given through Ezekiel.

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness from anyone, it is withheld.” John 20:22-23



In the Upper Room on the morning of Pentecost (50 days later) many of these same disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. This fulfilled the Father's promise of empowerment given through Joel, which is also the "promise of the Father" Jesus referred to when He told them to pray and wait for "power from on high."²³

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:1-4

Two Ways to Receive the Gift

What this tells us is that there are two quite different ways in which the Holy Spirit can be given to those who believe. These gifts equip us in different ways for different purposes.

1) Every Christian receives the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within them through faith-conversion when they repent and turn to Jesus as their Savior. This is the source of our new life in Christ. We are forgiven for our past and we have Jesus living in us through the Holy Spirit. We all receive an equipping for dwelling in Jesus by faith and growing spiritual fruit as we learn to trust and obey Him.

2) Any Christian who desires it can also receive the gift of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. This baptism of the Spirit is the source of our empowerment for the supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit. This readies us for Jesus to do His deeds of power through us by His Holy Spirit. Being "baptized with power" from on high is available to everyone who believes in the Risen Lord and is willing to seek this further blessing of empowerment.

CHAPTER 6

TRUE SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Spiritual healing goes deepest of all, deeper than healing of body or soul. And it is here—at this level of engagement—that the Holy Spirit brings incredible transformation. Even though the reality of our spirit lies beyond the ability of our five senses to experience, it nevertheless holds the answer to all that affects our lives. Every breakdown in heart, mind or body traces back to this deepest of all roots. God begins our spiritual healing through the gift of faith in Christ and the indwelling Spirit. However, there is one thing that necessarily depends upon us, before God can bring our spiritual life into genuine health.

Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit. Psalms 51:12 NASB

The Deep Sickness

What is our deadliest sin-sickness? It is the turning of our innermost life from God to Self. In this we followed "our father" the devil who infamously declared his independence (and therefore rebellion) from God with a series of defiant "I wills": "I will ascend... I will sit on the throne... I will sit on the mount..."²⁴

This deep sickness at the core of our being was inevitable, once sin broke our connection to God. No longer able to behold the Lord with sighted eyes, we lost the ability to carry His true Image within our hearts. Our hearts and minds have been veiled by the god of this world ever since.²⁵ Into this spiritual vacuum we inevitably began beholding ourselves! We became self-focused and self-centered.

The gospel has come to liberate us from our separation from God and restore the true Image of our God in the Face of Jesus Christ.²⁶ By beholding Jesus we can grow ("are transformed") from glory to glory.²⁷ We are set free to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for Him who died for us.

And he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. 2 Corinthians 5:15

Until we are born again, we have no other option but to live with Self at the center. Now that Jesus has been revealed, we are given a daily choice: Will we seek and serve Him, or follow our own will into a life apart? The first healing of our spiritual disease, therefore, comes through the revelation of who Jesus is as our Lord and Savior. However, until Jesus becomes the Lord we freely choose to trust and follow each and every day, the healing of our spirit has not gone nearly far enough.

David prayed to be sustained by a "willing spirit"—to fully be recovered from the sin that led him away from God and His ways.²⁸ That is true spiritual health. Like any other form of health it cannot be faked: Genuine surrender to and submission to the Lord Jesus will always produce His peace. Rebellion to His leadership or straying from His Person always robs us of peace. Having tasted the bitter fruit of going his own way, David yearned to stay yielded to and united to the Lord.

As we gain spiritual health our questions inevitably change from self-centered, self-directed, self-promoting and self-defending to Jesus-seeking: If we still ask "What do I want to do?" it is only to remind ourselves, "I know, I want to do what Jesus would want me to do!" As we allow Jesus to be our Lord, He is able to cleanse us of the spiritual and emotional garbage we carry inside. Then, as our inner life becomes cleansed and healed, we live in ever greater measures of freedom, peace and joy. This in turn becomes a wellspring of health to our bodies. That is truly being healed from the inside out.

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. Proverbs 4:22

A Spiritual Health Check List

Willingness is the coin of the realm when it comes to experiencing new life in the Spirit, genuine spiritual health and growth, as well as receiving guidance from the Lord. Have you ever seen someone trying to get a resistant dog on a leash to walk obediently in the direction the master wants to go—and at the pace the master desires to set? Some dogs are rebellious; some are easily distracted by cats or other dogs. Such dogs may not be taken out beyond necessity. Then there are other dogs who don't even need a leash, who go everywhere in tandem with their masters. That is our goal—to become so captivated by Jesus in our hearts that we no longer need the sometimes unpleasant discipline of being constrained by Him through our circumstances.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you shall go. I will counsel you with my eye on you. Don't be like the horse, or like the mule, which have no understanding, who are controlled by bit and bridle, or else they will not come near to you. Psalm 32:8-9 WEB

If you would love to be readily and frequently guided, then the issue of living with a surrendered heart and a willing spirit is paramount. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he fully yielded himself to God and became willing for anything.²⁹ So, let's review what a surrendered heart is saying to the Lord. Then keep checking your heart to make sure your surrender and willingness stay intact. Let the acronym SAAW remind you to look to Him.

S: Send whatever You desire to send.

Am I trusting the Lord with His free will?

A: Allow whatever You have to allow.

Am I trusting the Lord with His way of working with everyone else's free will, including my own? Including the enemy's?

A: Ask of me whatever You desire or require.

Am I fully willing to let the Lord take the lead?

W: Withhold me from and withhold from me whatever is necessary to fulfill Your plans.

Am I willing to wait upon the Lord to do things His way and in His time?

Beware: Even a twinge of unwillingness to surrender is a step towards the Great Rebellion. If you see it in you, you have met the enemy! Carry that thought captive to Christ.³⁰ True spiritual healing is a surrendered heart.

Don't think that the Enemy will let your desire to live surrendered to Jesus go unchallenged. Once free, you will have to learn the ways of spiritual warfare in order to stay free. We'll take a



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



look at that in Chapter 9, but first let's walk through how to live a surrendered life—what the Bible calls “walking in the Spirit.”

A Prayer of Surrender

Father, according to Your love and wisdom, send whatever You desire to send of Your grace and blessings, allow whatever You have to allow of free will and its consequences, ask of me whatever You desire or require of inward and outward obedience, withhold me from and withhold from me whatever is necessary to fulfill Your plans. Help me to fully trust that You are working in and through all things for my good and Your glory. Make me willing to be made willing to surrender everything to You that I may spend the better part of my days flowing in Your river of peace. May it carry me often into Your Presence and always into Your purposes.

CHAPTER 7

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

The point of coming to Jesus to receive the life of grace is not to get free and then walk away. We are set free so that we can live in greater union with Jesus through His Spirit. The new creation life works best by 100% grace (God's part), 100% surrender (our part) and by 100% guidance (a cooperative adventure). We have all been guided by the Holy Spirit in many ways all of our lives—often in ways we were unable to recognize at the time. It enhances our daily walk with Jesus when we learn to recognize and cooperate with these un-self-conscious means of being guided by Him.

In order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Romans 8:4

God's Ways of Guiding Us

Our quest is to become so free that we can follow Jesus in everything! The truly healed and restored life is one that is continually given over to the Lord, seeking to walk with Him as He leads the way. For that we will need to learn what it means to be “walking in the Spirit” that He supplies.³¹

Let us begin by acknowledging that as great as His Word is—He even set it above His Name—God speaks to us in many more ways than scripture alone.³² We are guided by His example (a visible word, however scripture displays Him), His voice (a spoken word, however we may receive it), and His Spirit (a living word, however He may inspire us).

It is easy to see from this that there is a progression of increasing intimacy from following the written Word of scripture to imitating Jesus' example to listening for His voice to yielding the

whole flow of our daily life to His Spirit. Jesus gave us—His Bride on earth—more than a book when He pledged Himself to us as our Husband. He gave Himself to us!³³

Our new life in Christ comes through the forgiveness of our sins and through the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit.³⁴ Just as Jesus died our death for us, so now He desires to live His life in us and through us. This happens beautifully whenever we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit and walk in the steps He shows us. Whenever we are released to trust and obey, Jesus comes to life in us.

I have been crucified with Christ [in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ (the Messiah) lives in me; and the life I now live in the body I live by faith in (by adherence to and reliance on and complete trust in) the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Galatians 2:20 AMP

Walking in the Spirit has two distinct dimensions: conscious and unconscious. Though this may be a strange way of phrasing it, the truth is that we have been sleep walking with the Lord all of our lives. That is, He has been guiding us at countless times all along, but we may not have been consciously aware of the many specific ways by which He was leading us.

Our first task, therefore, is to identify and understand these hidden ways of un-self-conscious guidance. The Holy Spirit is like the perfect waiter who doesn't intrude upon our privacy by making His ways of serving us obvious. It is up to us to learn how to acknowledge Him so that He can more intimately and overtly direct our paths.

Lean on, trust in, and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths. Proverbs 3:5-6 AMP

Dimension One: Unselfconscious Guidance

Walking in the Spirit is like breathing which is hardly surprising since He is called the “breath of the Almighty” and He is the breath of life imparted to us both in creation and through the new birth.³⁵ This Spirit-empowered walk, therefore, is easy and natural—literally child's play.

In fact it was the Spirit, the great Teacher and Giver of life, who secretly taught us how to eat, to speak, to walk, even to play. Every good thing about us including childhood is His gift to us, or will we have some work of our own apart from God to boast about? Not according to scripture, which says that we are saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves, not of our works, “lest anyone should boast.”³⁶

Let us acknowledge then that this Spirit-empowered walk has been going on since birth as His gift to us. God said that even the infancy of Israel, the forty years of their wilderness journey, was a time when He “carried Israel” as a child: He led them through it all and then explained it to them later, so that they could understand and acknowledge what He had done.³⁷



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



And in the wilderness, where you have seen how the Lord your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you went until you came to this place.
Deuteronomy 1:31

Take a moment right now to look back over your life and see if you can recognize the Lord's past presence with you. Don't be "sheepish" about admitting the truth that the Holy Spirit has been speaking to you and showing you things all along. The truth is that if you haven't been listening to the Lord *at all*, you would undoubtedly be in an insane asylum, a prison, or a grave by now. To help jog your memory look over this check list of phrases. Not really understanding or appreciating the Holy Spirit's ways with us has created a vacuum which the public imagination filled with a kind of unwitting code language for describing the Spirit's operations. See if you can see the ways these phrases just might describe our Mystery Guest at work.

- ___A little bird whispered in my ear.
- ___I have a gut feeling this will work.
- ___It's just a hunch, but have you tried...
- ___Something just doesn't seem right about this.
- ___I've got a bad feeling about this.
- ___The thought just dropped in out of the blue!
- ___That same thought just occurred to me too!
- ___All of a sudden I remembered...
- ___This idea just stays on my mind...
- ___It's a feeling I just can't shake off.
- ___That gave me chills and goose bumps!
- ___What an incredible coincidence!

A Childlike Grace

To this day the greatest exemplars of what walking in the Spirit is like are little children. They do it wholly by unselfconscious guidance.³⁸ Their sparkling qualities are His gift of grace to them and through them to us. Children are simply more open and trusting than we are, which makes them such splendid receivers of grace that they are masters at living in the Kingdom, showing us the way to go.³⁹

But Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." Luke 18:16-17



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



The Holy Spirit has been with us all along. He is always teaching us and leading us into life. He is the Giver and Sustainer of life.⁴⁰ Jesus told His disciples before the events of Easter and Pentecost that they already knew the Holy Spirit He would be sending, because the Spirit had been dwelling *with* them and would soon be *in* them.⁴¹

This same divine Person has been unceasingly with you in your journey, helping you, guiding you, teaching you and comforting you, even before you became a Christian, even from before birth.⁴²

Now the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:4-5

A Yielded Life

St. Augustine put it this way: "Love God and do as you please."⁴³ He means of course that once we love God by surrendering to Him everything about our lives and loved ones and are willing to do His will above our own, then He begins to draw us by desires that please Him as well as ourselves.

Only fully yielded Christians can live the way Augustine recommends. However, even before we knew Him, God was already drawing us into doing many things that pleased us as well as Him. Examples of this are eating, sleeping, befriending, parenting, working, loving and laughing.⁴⁴ No one needs conscious guidance from the Lord to do good things which come to us with such natural grace attached.

[Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight. Philippians 2:13 AMP

Trusting is, therefore, essential to these everyday ways of Spirit-empowered guidance, since any interference by negative emotions disturbs the childlike manner of our walk. Proverbs calls us to acknowledge Him and trust Him, that He may "direct our paths."⁴⁵ Guidance happens naturally for trusting hearts as Hannah Whitall Smith explains in *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*.⁴⁶

Above everything else trust Him... God cannot guide those souls who never trust Him enough to believe that He is doing it.

The River of Peace

The river of peace is worth all the battles. There is a vision in Ezekiel of water flowing from the Temple that begins as a shallow stream and eventually becomes a river which no one can cross.⁴⁷ This gives us a picture of our life of faith flowing from the place of consecration and



www.healingstreamsusa.org
www.forerunners4him.org



surrender, signified by the Temple and its Altar—the place where lives are offered in devotion to the Lord.

There is peace as we trust and obey, but at first it is all too easy to step out of the flow of His Spirit's gentle guidance. With practice we can learn to live in the peace Jesus supplies—a peace for our hearts (as we trust Him) and a peace for our "feet" (as we follow Him). The Holy Spirit is a river of life to all who learn to live in Him and walk by Him.

For thus says the Lord: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river. Isaiah 66:12

With practice, determined effort, childlike faith and tons of grace this flow of peace and divine purpose, which once was so hard to find (only ankle deep), will become a mighty river that lifts and carries you into great adventures in the Lord.

So what are you waiting for? Go ahead—jump in with both feet!

A Prayer for Discernment

Father, forgive me wherever I have thought or said that I have not heard Your voice or experienced Your guidance. I utterly renounce that false belief. The truth is that I am someone who knows how to be guided by You and who has been given ears to hear and eyes to see what You are speaking to me or showing me. I am learning how to listen for Your voice of wisdom through Your Word, through my inner life, and through other people. I am learning to recognize Your Hand—prompting, checking and guiding me. Thank You that You have been speaking to me and guiding me all of my life. Help me to recognize and acknowledge You in all of these ways, so that my eyes can open wider to give You credit and to more readily perceive Your ways of leading me.

¹ Because He is the Spirit of the Father and sent by both Father and Son, it is entirely appropriate to use the male pronoun when speaking of Him. Jesus did. As one example see John 14:26-27: *But the Helper, the Holy Spirit... he will teach you all things.*

² Daniel 7:9: *As I looked... the Ancient of days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool;* Revelation 4:2-3: *A throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian...*

³ Ephesians 1:13-14: *Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit...*

⁴ From the very beginning, God has been "doing" what He does by the powerful working of the Holy Spirit: Genesis 1:1-2: *In the beginning... the Spirit of God...*

⁵ Psalms 104:30: *You send forth Your Spirit and give them breath...*

⁶ Holy Spirit our Helper will be with us eternally: John 14:16-17: *Another Helper, to be with you forever...*

⁷ As you can see by this verse the "new and living way" is through faith in what Jesus has done for us, but that we are meant to strive for "the full assurance of faith"—a life characterized by the peace-confidence that comes through total surrender: Hebrews 10:22: *By the new and living way... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*

⁸ Matthew 18:3 AMP: *Repent (change, turn about) and become like little children [trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving]...*



⁹ Here is just one example of how the Spirit works through us: Matthew 10:19-20: *For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.*

¹⁰ Ephesians 3:20-21: *Far more abundantly than all that we ask or think...*

¹¹ Galatians 2:20: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me...*

¹² Ezekiel 36:26: *And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit...*

¹³ God makes an unconditional promise that all who call on Him will be saved (think helped, rescued, delivered) in one situation after another: Romans 10:13.

¹⁴ It takes putting “the flesh” to death (fear, anger, worry, wrong desire, etc.), by choosing to trust Jesus and do what He says. Then the fruit of the Spirit supernaturally appears: Galatians 5:22-24: *The fruit of the Spirit... have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

¹⁵ John 7:37-39: *Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water...*

¹⁶ Isaiah 66:12: *Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river...*

¹⁷ John 6:28-29: *This is the work of God, that you believe in him...*

¹⁸ John 15:26: *The Helper... will bear witness about me.*

¹⁹ John 14:26 *The Holy Spirit... bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*

²⁰ We need that especially, because thinking there won't be negative consequences is what makes doing the wrong thing seems so appealing.

²¹ After the disaster of his sin with Bathsheba, King David saw the need for the Holy Spirit's help in sustaining him with a spirit willing to do what God desired: Psalms 51:12 WEB: *Restore to me the joy of your salvation. Uphold me with a willing spirit.*

²² The “gold standard” for evidence of having received saving faith is given by Paul in Romans and these disciples would have easily passed on both counts: Romans 10:9-10: *If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart...*

²³ In his on-the-scene explanation of the events of Pentecost Peter specifically identified the promise of the Father in Joel as being the one which Jesus had called them to seek: Acts 2:14-17: *This is what was uttered through the prophet Joel...*

²⁴ It was no less an authority than Jesus who declares that Satan is “our father” whenever we walk in his ways: John 8:44: *You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires; Beware of self will—it is the core sin of pride that took Lucifer down: Isaiah 14:12-15: How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star [Lucifer], son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high...' But you are brought down to Sheol...*

²⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:3-6: *The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.*

²⁶ 2 Corinthians 4:6: *For God... has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

²⁷ 2 Corinthians 3:16-18: *With unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.*

²⁸ Psalms 51:12 NASB: *Sustain me with a willing spirit.*

²⁹ See Isaiah 6:1-8 for the prophet's experience during a throne room visit.

³⁰ 2 Corinthians 10:4-5: *For the weapons of our warfare... have divine power to destroy strongholds. We... take every thought captive to obey Christ.*

³¹ Galatians 5:25: *If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.*

³² Psalm 138:2 AMP: *You have magnified Your word above all Your name!*

³³ Ephesians 5:25: *As Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...*

³⁴ Ephesians 1:13: *Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit...*



-
- ³⁵ John 20:22: *He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*
- ³⁶ Ephesians 2:8: *For by grace you have been saved through faith...*
- ³⁷ Isaiah 46:3-4: *Who have been borne by me from before your birth...*
- ³⁸ Matthew 18:2-4: *Like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven...*
- ³⁹ Isaiah 11:6: *A little child shall lead them.* See also Mark 10:15; Luke 18:17.
- ⁴⁰ Isaiah 42:5: *Who gives breath... and spirit to those who walk in it.*
- ⁴¹ John 14:16-18: *He dwells with you and will be in you.*
- ⁴² John 1:4, 9: *In him was life, and the life was the light of men...*
- ⁴³ Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD), Seventh Homily on 1st John.
- ⁴⁴ Galatians 2:20: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.*
- ⁴⁵ Proverbs 3:5-6 KJV: *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*
- ⁴⁶ Hannah Whitall Smith, *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1986), p. 81.
- ⁴⁷ Ezekiel 47:1-5 WEB: *Waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through.*

