

Knowing the Spirit

Supernatural Power for Life and Ministry

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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. Nevertheless, though the Father is visibly described twice in the scriptures 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.



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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. 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.

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. 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. This (along with Christ's sacrifice) makes the "new and living way" possible. 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.

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. 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. 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.



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. 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. 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. This is the mighty river of the new life which Jesus said would flow out of the heart of all who believe in Him. 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.” 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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.

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