

Restoring Your Spiritual Prime through Intimacy with God: Pt 2 By Todd Bentley

Oh, for the days when I was in my prime,
when God's intimate Friendship blessed my house.
Job 29:4

Commit these truths to heart:
Matthew 7:7; 1 Corinthians 1:9; John 15:13

Introduction

This is Part Two of a three part series: if you missed part one, please click here. Many equate the Holy Spirit with power, rather than with intimacy. They call upon Him solely for their needs, for the bestowment of supernatural gifts, or an endowment of supernatural power, and not for intimacy, fellowship, partnership, and relationship as well. Some believers possess only surface knowledge of the Holy Spirit. They feel they know Him but do not. They have knowledge of Him, but they do not know Him as a friend would know a friend. They do not know what He is feeling, or when He is hurt or offended. They do not understand His emotions, or know His character beyond what is generally taught. They know of His works, of His functions, of His capabilities, but they do not know who He is— the Person of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture describes the Holy Spirit as having personal characteristics. The Spirit speaks (Acts 8:29; 10:19; 13:12; 21:11); 1 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:7). The Spirit may be spoken to, tested, grieved, insulted, or blasphemed (Acts 5:3, 9; Eph. 4:30; Heb. 10:29; Matt. 12:31). The Spirit sometimes uses the personal pronoun "T" (Acts 10:20; 13:2). The Spirit lives (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 3:16). The Spirit guides, calls, commissions, and intercedes (Rom. 8:14, 26; Acts 13:2; 20:28).

The voice of the Spirit of God is as gentle as a summer breeze — so gentle that unless you are living in Complete Fellowship and Oneness with God, you will never hear it.—Oswald Chambers

Do you desire more of the satisfying life? Jesus said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37, 38). John explains Jesus' words further in verse 39 and tells us that by this [rivers of living water], Jesus meant "the Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the source of our deepest satisfaction. He quenches our thirst. The Spirit lives! God gave us His Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with Him now. (John 16:13-15).

Our Advantage

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." (John 14:26).

How wonderful it would be to walk with the Savior in the flesh as the disciples did. Imagine three and a half years of close friendship with Jesus. They ate, slept, traveled, studied, and ministered with the Man Jesus. Side-by-side with the Redeemer, they witnessed Him feed the five thousand, raise the dead, and with sometimes just a word, heal the sick and cast out demons. Jesus, before He went away said,

"But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless 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; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." (John 16:5-7).

What is an advantage? It is plus and gain, improvement, help, benefit. What was that advantage? It was the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, (paraphrased), "I will send you a Helper and Teacher. He is the Spirit of truth. He proceeds from the Father. He will testify of Me. He will give you more" (John 15:26).

The disciples, as they walked with Jesus did not have the "advantage" that we have. They did not yet have the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. They walked with this Man of flesh, as they walked with their brothers, sisters, or friends. Their hearts were not yet made the spiritual temples God created to enter into. The Holy Spirit had not yet come to fill them. They likely could not feel the glory (with the exception of the Mount of Transfiguration experience), as we do.

It is clear that Jesus says the Holy Spirit is inside of Him, but that He is also in addition to Him. The Holy Spirit is One just like Jesus and will do in Jesus' absence what Jesus would do if He were physically with us. The Holy Ghost is the Greatest Evangelist. He is a helper. He is One who is called alongside. He is Intercessor, Comforter, Helper, Advocate, and Counselor. He is the One who counsels what to do, when to do it, how to do it, whom to pray for, how to pray for, and He provides words of knowledge, and accurate details.

Relationship!

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14).

In the final words of Second Corinthians chapter 13, Paul wants us to know three things: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion [fellowship] of the Spirit (v.14, emphasis mine). Grace, love, communion! What Paul was saying was, "May you have a revelation of the grace of Jesus, the love of God (talking about the Father), and not just revelation of the Holy Spirit, but communion and fellowship with the Holy Spirit." For Paul to say what he said, he had to have known the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. He was talking about something beyond operating in the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The passage did not say the communion of the Father, or of Jesus, but of the Holy Spirit "May the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all." The word "communion" here is referred to in the Greek text as koinonia. Communion in this context means unity, a close association, fellowship, close bond, or a partnership. The underlying message is sharing. Therefore, Paul was saying then, "May you experience and share the intimate bond, the closeness, the unity, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit." Paul infers there is something a whole lot deeper to the Holy Ghost and to the anointing and the gifts of the Spirit. He is saying that we can know koinonia with Him and alongside of Him.

I have koinonia relationship with the Holy Spirit. I dialogue with Him constantly. We have a bond so close, I cannot even describe it. We share, talk, ask questions of each other, and communicate openly, I ask Him questions and He gives me answers, and vice-versa. There is freedom in our fellowship. He is like a close buddy and confidante and accompanies me everywhere. I keep in step with Him (Galatians 5:25). I do not have to wait for Him to come upon me, or manifest in some way, I just know He is there.

After I read Benny Him's book, Good Morning Holy Spirit, many years ago, I was already filled with the Holy Spirit speaking in tongues, and moving in the gifts of His Spirit, but I began to understand that there was something that I did not have and that was intimacy with the Lord. I did not know the Holy Spirit beyond the gifts or teachings I had received. I knew His work, and His presence, but I did not know His character. I spent six months delving into every Scripture verse I could find and studied Him in depth. It created a hunger in me to know Him as close as a brother knows a brother, as a husband knows a wife, and I pursued Him with every ounce of strength I possessed.

Time in His Presence

After work, I would lock myself in my room for hours and hours a day. There I would lift my hands and cry out to Him, "Holy Spirit come—please, I want to know You as an intimate satisfied only by Your power. I want to know You more than operate in the gifts." Wham, I would be under the power vibrating as though somebody had plugged me into an electrical circuit. I would weep, vibrate, and shake, and the charged atmosphere afterward lingered. I could not wait to get home after work every day because the Holy Spirit would be there waiting for me. I was so excited about this relationship, new intimacy, and closeness. Relationship with the Holy Spirit was beyond anything I had encountered, beyond the anointing and the moving in the gifts. As soon as I would open the door to my room, it was as though the Holy Spirit was sitting there like a kid at Christmas waiting for me to get home from work so we could spend time together in His presence.

"Walk prudently when you go to the house of God, and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they do evil!"—Ecclesiastes 5:1.

Knowing who He is requires spending time in His presence and getting to know Him on an intimate level. It is not at all unlike living with a person, such as a wife, husband, or sibling. It is a partnership and a fellowship; we confide, make decisions, encourage, and champion each other! We eat, sleep, talk and have fun together; such is my relationship with the Holy Spirit, my precious Friend. He does not have to tell me when He's grieved, or touched, I feel and sense it. I encourage Him and champion Him, "I love You, and honor You, Holy Spirit, I love the way Your Presence feels, I love to hear Your voice, I love to wake up in the morning and feel You flow through my body like electricity, I love that! We make plans, and I will say, "We're going to Africa, Holy Spirit, isn't that awesome! I cannot wait to present the Gospel with You, it's You and I, Holy Ghost, and we're going to bring signs and wonders to the people!" I often include the Holy Spirit in my Bible time. I just say, "Holy Spirit, look at this verse, look what Jesus did, and You were right there! The blind man's eyes opened, wow." This was koinonia time.

Yes, God is with us always, but the manifest presence of God is Whom we seek in intimacy. Fellowship and partnership with the Holy Spirit is heaven touching earth in the natural plane of our lives.

A "With You" Presence

"You know Him. For He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:17b)

The Holy Spirit is with us and in us. This "with us" presence is the communion, the koinonia. We already know that the Holy Spirit is within us, but do we really understand that He is with us? One day, I opened the door of my apartment to leave, and I felt His presence with me. His presence followed me down the hall and into the elevator, and out of the building. Sometimes as I drive, I will sense someone has joined me, and discover He is sitting sidesaddle with me and I will suddenly become overwhelmed with joy.

Paul Yonggi Cho is the pastor of the world's largest church of almost a million people, in South Korea. He claims that he does not do anything without the Holy Spirit. In fact, this is his greatest revelation.

It is amazing how everything in the Bible revolves around the Person of the Holy Ghost. Creation did not even happen without Him. God sent forth His Spirit and created. The Holy Spirit was involved in creating and sustaining all life (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4; 34:14). He was involved throughout Jesus' life, too. Jesus did not do anything without Him. The Spirit caused His conception (Matt. 1:2), descended on Him at His Baptism (Matt. 3:16), led Him into the desert (Luke 4:1), and anointed and gave Him power to preach the Gospel (Luke 4:18). Jesus drove out demons by the Spirit (Matt. 12:28), and even died on the Cross with Him (Heb. 9:14). That same Holy Spirit raised him raised from the dead (Rom 8:11). Not one thing in Jesus' life took place without the Holy Spirit. Not one miracle. Not His birth, not His ministry, not His death. The Holy Spirit was with Him always. Jesus was completely dependant on Him. Jesus was a Man as totally dependant upon God as we are. He was tempted in every way as we are. The only thing different that Jesus had that we do not is total dependence, obedience, brokenness, and yieldedness to the Holy Ghost. That same Spirit that raised Jesus Christ from the dead lives in and with us and we are invited to know Him intimately. How sweet is that?

O Cherish Him!

John 14:15 says, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." Why? The answer is in the very next verse, and it is because: "I am about to send you another helper" (paraphrased, v. 16). Listen, Jesus is about to pray for the Holy Ghost to come, but the first thing He says before the Holy Ghost comes is to keep His commandments, because the key to more of the Holy Spirit manifesting in your life is obedience. In order for this other Helper to help, we have to keep God's commandments.

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying 'This is the way, walk in it.'"—Isaiah 30:21

The more yielded, emptied, broken, and obedient we can become, the more the power of the Holy Spirit can flow in our lives. His power is the same for all of us. My Holy Ghost is not different from Jesus'. I do not have a smaller Holy Ghost than He did. My children's Holy Ghost is not a junior Holy Ghost. What are junior are our levels of dependence, obedience, and yieldedness. Our shortcomings in those areas are a form of godliness that denies the power. The Holy Spirit cannot penetrate our lives in power if we deny it.

The Holy Spirit is twenty-four-hour-a-day God consciousness. He brings back what was lost in the Garden with Adam because of sin. He does what Jesus would have done in His place. But the Holy Spirit multiplies it, that's why Jesus said that it is to our advantage that the Holy Spirit comes.

The Holy Spirit has feelings and emotions. There are things that grieve Him, wound Him, and hurt Him. Likewise, there are things that cause Him to laugh and bring Him great pleasure. The Holy Spirit is the sensitive communicator of the emotion of God. He is sensitive, emotional (in a wonderful way), expressive, passionate, responsive, open, and quick to respond. He loves to be "romanced," loves intimacy, and loves to be loved and told that He is loved often. Even though He knows we love Him, He yearns to hear it over and over again.

The Holy Spirit knows that you know that He is there, and He knows that you are there, but He still wants you to acknowledge Him, think of Him, honor Him, cherish Him, woo Him, and be attentive to Him. Not only when you need Him for something, but simply because you want to be in His company, with Him, near Him. He deserves special treatment—your intimate, undivided attention. He desires koinonia with you and asks, "How much do you love Me?"

Grieving and Blaspheming the Holy Spirit
Most married men I know are protective of their wives. If someone says or does something wrong toward their wives; that protectiveness kicks in faster than you can say "Methuselah." God the Father and Jesus are protective of the Holy Spirit in much the same way, because the Holy Spirit is the one who gets hurt, wounded, or grieved; they watch out for Him all of the time.
"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"—Matthew 6:21.

The "With You" Presence
The Bible says in Ephesians 4:30, not to grieve the Holy Spirit. It means, do not wound Him, do not hurt Him, and do not cause Him pain. Only someone with feelings can be wounded or hurt and experience pain. One way not to grieve Him is to realize who or what He is not. The Holy Spirit is not an "it." He is not a power, and He is not an anointing. He is not "the gift" of the Holy Spirit, He is not revival, He is not the shaking, and He is not the falling over. He is a person whom you can hurt, wound, and grieve. He is the "with you" presence.
Isaiah 43:10 tells us "They [children of Israel] rebelled and grieved [winded] His Holy Spirit, so He turned Himself against them as an enemy and He fought against them." God as an enemy is a serious ramification, and we are not to take this lightly. The word vexed means tormented. The Israelites grieved Him, caused Him hurt, pain, wounded and tormented Him.

To understand the importance of the Holy Spirit to the Father, imagine the Holy Spirit as the emotions of the Godhead. He is the one Who expresses feeling. He is the mushy gushy. You cannot feel the love of God without Him, nor can you feel His presence without the Holy Ghost. You cannot even say that Jesus is Lord without Him. He is the one who enables us to feel God's presence and hear His voice, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says" (Rev. 2:7). Everything comes through the Spirit. The Spirit is the communicator of the voice of God and the emotion of God. That is why God and Jesus are so protective. There is something so precious, dear, and wonderful about Him. They do not want Him wounded and grieved. The word grieve means to cause pain, torment, and wounding. Do not do that to the Holy Ghost. Do not wound Him. Bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking grieves Him (Eph. 4: 31). Kindness toward one another, tender-heartedness, forgiving one another even as God in Christ forgave you (v. 32) pleases Him immensely.

Protecting the Holy Spirit
The Father and Jesus are so protective of the Holy Ghost, that the Bible tells us that the one unpardonable sin is to blaspheme against Him (Mark 3:28, 29). It is the one and only sin without forgiveness. It is not blasphemy against the Father, or the Son, but against the Holy Ghost. What sets Him apart? Why Him? Why so protective over His emotions?
The Holy Spirit is a revealer. He is the revealer. He reveals to you the love of God.
"Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3b).

The Spirit comes and manifests to you the love that Jesus has for you. He manifests to you the love and the forgiveness that is in the Father because Jesus satisfied the holy wrath that was in the Father demanding that sins be paid for. That is why the Holy Spirit is so precious that God tells us not to grieve Him. That is why the Father is so protective of the Holy Ghost. And, that is why Jesus said that every blasphemy against the Father, every blasphemy against the Son shall be forgiven, but not against the Holy Ghost.

It is sad, but some of us use the Holy Spirit. We just want the Holy Ghost and His anointing because of what those things can do for us or our ministries, the miracles, the giftings, and the prophecies that are going to open doors and opportunities for us. We are using the Holy Spirit. Stop! This grieves Him. We need to become His resting place.

Gentle as a Dove
"Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark; for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself. So he waited yet another seven days; and again he sent out the dove from the ark. And the dove came to him toward evening, and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf; so Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth" (Gen. 8:8-11, NAS).

Think of the love of the dove. They are gentle, and peaceful in the natural, and then, whom they fly away when something disturbs or startles them. If we want the Holy Spirit to rest in us with the olive leaf, then we have to stop sinning, stop grieving, and stop hurting the Holy Spirit. Every time we sin, whom, the Holy Spirit lifts. He does not depart from us, but the manifest presence does. The "with you" presence flies away, figuratively speaking. If we want the Holy Spirit to rest, we have to avoid quick movements, those quick movements that fulfill our flesh. Do you want to be a resting place for the Holy Spirit? Do you want the Holy Spirit, the dove of God to rest on you with that olive leaf in His mouth? Fall in love with Jesus and have an encounter with the Holy Spirit, because if you truly know the Holy Spirit, you will become quickly convicted and aware of those things that startle, wound, or hurt Him.

Wooing the Holy Spirit
Ignoring the Holy Spirit, grieves Him. Let us say I come over to your house and you lead me to the couch and say that you love me and that we are friends. I sit there all day long, and you know I am there, but you run around and do all the things that you need to do in your house, with barely a glance my way. You do not acknowledge I am there, even though you know in your business that I am. How would you feel if I invited you over to my house and did the same thing? This is on the tongue of the Church with the Holy Spirit. He says, "Come Holy Spirit, come into my church and sit in that pew right there. When I need the anointing, a prophetic word, power or blessing, I'll call on you, but until then, just sit."

The Holy Spirit loves romance and loves to hear that you love Him. It is not enough to acknowledge that He is inside of you, but that He is with you. He wants that eye-to-eye and heart-to-heart close contact. He wants the intimacy. He knows that you love Him but wants to hear it. "Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness."—Psalm 115:1
He wants to hear you say, "Holy Spirit, I love You. Come on over, sit with me!"

Note from the Ministry Team: This is Part Two of a multi-part teaching, and we invite you to visit our website often, or sign up to receive the remainder of this teaching by email. As always, know that we are praying for you, and particularly as you identify those things in your life that keep you from spending quality time with the Precious Holy Spirit! We love you, and we cherish you! Available in our resource center, Todd's "Marinating...Picking in God's Presence" soaking CD, which is sure to take you into the glory and presence of God!

"God who has called you into fellowship with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord is faithful." —1 Corinthians 1:9

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" —John 15:13.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" —Matthew 7:7.

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