

Intimacy with the Holy Spirit

By Todd Bentley

How would you describe your Christian life? Are you satisfied with it, or do you hunger for more in your relationship with God? Chances are, if you've experienced the person of the Holy Spirit, you'll want more, because no matter how much the Holy Spirit saturates us with His presence, each encounter only scrapes the surface of what we can encounter in the glory of God. His heart yearns to commune with you, though, and cries out, "Don't go away- don't be satisfied without my presence!" Paul writes, "The [intimate fellowship] of the Holy Spirit be with you" (2 Cor. 13:14b): "Holy Spirit with us" is the key to an increasingly satisfying Spirit-filled life, a life hungry and desperate for encounters with and intimate knowledge of Him.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Three Persons, One God

"And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water; and the blood; and these three agree as one" (1 John 5:8).

The three that bear record in heaven are not three Gods, but three in One, and each are an expression of God: God the Father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit. To know God is to know there are three persons in the Godhead. To know God is to understand that God is three personalities, and that in order to grasp His fullness, we have intimacy and communion with each one. Though they are the same in unity and purpose, and do everything in oneness, they are still three persons. As Christians we seek to know God the Father, and God the Son, but in seeking the Holy Spirit, we tend to seek only the power and infilling He offers and provides, and not the relationship.

As we get to know the Father, we learn through the Son that He is not a God in heaven with a gavel hammering down judgment. Instead, we learn to know Him as Abba Daddy Father. We can also come to know the character and person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is no less significant than the Father or Jesus; He is equal to them, and we must know the fullness of the Holy Spirit as fully as we know the Father and Jesus. I know and love all my children the same, yet each have different and separate personalities that I have to take the time to get to know. They each have distinct characteristics and ways of expressing themselves. SO it's true in the Godhead-three persons, each different, but all equal in power. One does nothing without the other.

"The "Us" Team

All three persons of the Godhead were involved in our creation. Genesis 1:26 reveals that "God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness'" (emphasis mine). Who's us? Again, it's on God, but three Persons. It's "Us." In Genesis 11:7, the "Us," the three-in-One, are referenced again: "Come let Us go down and there confuse their language" (emphasis mine).

It's teamwork. They were a team from the very beginning, and they are a team in our salvation. The Father demanded payment for sin, and Jesus said, "I'll pay for it," and the Holy Ghost said, "Not without me." In effect, the Father said, "I miss the fellowship that I had with Adam and Eve, I miss being able to go down and walk in the cool of the day with them. I miss the intimacy and the glory that we shared. Do you know what? How I'm angry and my holy wrath demands justice on sin because the wages of sin is death. I need something to take the payment and the atonement for these people who I so desire to commune with. I have to have justice even at the same time I desire fellowship. But if I were to go to fellowship with them now, my fire would consume them."

Then all of a sudden, Jesus stands and says, "Father, I will go to the earth. I will suffer, die, and become the atonement for all those so that they can be restored into the likeness and the image of US, and have the intimacy with You that You miss."

But the Holy Spirit interjects and says, "Uh-uh, uh-uh uh, You're not going to Jesus, unless I go too."

So the "Us" team have a conference and make the decision together to restore fellowship and bring us back to the place where we could taste of their glory. The same person of the Godhead, who worked alongside the Father and Jesus in creating you, invites you to know Him beyond knowing His supernatural power.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

Many equate the Holy Spirit with power, rather than relationship. 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.

Others possess only surface knowledge of the Holy Spirit. They fell they know Him, but they do not know Him as a friend would know a friend. They do not know what He's feeling, or when He's 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; 11:12; 21:11; 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 "I" (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).

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 Scriptures 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.

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Getting to Know Him

"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 the 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). What Paul was saying was, "May you have a revelation of the grace of Jesus, the love of God (talking about the Father), and communion and fellowship with the Holy Spirit, not just revelation of the Holy Spirit." For Paul to say what he said, Paul 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 didn't 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 koinia. Communion in this context means unity, a close association, fellowship, close bond, or a partnership. The underlying message is sharing. So 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's saying that we can know koinia with Him and alongside Him.

I have a koinia relationship with the Holy Spirit. I dialogue with Him constantly. There is a bond that is so close I can't 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's like a close buddy and accompanies me everywhere. I keep in step with Him (Gal. 5:25). I don't have to wait for Him to come upon me or manifest in some way; I just know He's there.

Several years ago, when I read Benny Hinn's book, Good Morning Holy Spirit, I was already filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues, and moving in the gifts of the Spirit, but I began to understand that there was something that I did not have, and that was intimacy with the Lord. I didn't know the Holy Spirit beyond the giftings or teachings I'd received. I knew His work and His presence, but I didn't know His character. I spent six months delving into every scripture verse I could find about Him 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.

After work, I'd lock myself in my room for hours and hours a day. I'd lift my hands and cry out to Him, "Holy Spirit come, I want to know You. I'm not satisfied with only your power. I want to know you more than just operating in the gifts." Wham, I'd be under the power vibrating as though somebody had plugged me into an electrical circuit. I'd weep, vibrate, and shake, and the charged atmosphere afterward lingered. I couldn't 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'd open the door to my room, it was as though the Holy Spirit was sitting there like a kid a Christmas, waiting for me to get home from work so we could spend time together in His presence.

Knowing who He is requires spending time with Him and getting to know Him on an intimate level. It's not at all unlike living with a person, such as a wife, husband, or sibling. There are times when all my wife has to do is give me a certain look, and I can tell her thoughts. We are so close we often know what the other is saying without words. Our union is a partnership and a fellowship. We make decisions together, confide in each other, encourage or champion each other, pray and contend together, and eat, sleep, talk, and play together. That's my relationship with the Holy Spirit, too. He doesn't 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'll say, "We're going to Africa, Holy Spirit, isn't that awesome? I can't 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 is koinia time.

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

A "With You" Presence

"You now 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 koinia. 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. The presence followed me down the hall, into the elevator and out of the building. Sometimes as I drive, I'll sense someone has joined me, and discover he is sitting sidesaddle with me, and I'll suddenly become overwhelmed with joy. Paul Yonggi Cho is a pastor in South Korea of the world's largest church of almost a million people. He claims that he does not do anything without the Holy Spirit. In fact, this is his greatest revelation.

It's amazing how everything in the Bible revolves around the person of the Holy Ghost. Creation didn't 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 didn't do anything without Him. The Spirit caused His conception (Matt 1:18), descended on him at His Baptism (Matt 3:16), led Him into the desert (Luke 4:1), and anointed and ave 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). Then that same Holy Spirit raised Him 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 don't 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're excited to know Him intimately.

Obedience and Yieldedness

John 14:15 says, "If you love Me, keep my commandments." Why? The answer is in the very next verse, 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 before He does, He says to keep His commandments, because the key to more of the Holy Spirit manifesting in you life is obedience. In order for this other Helper to help, you are going to have to keep God's commandments.

The more yielded, empty, 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 don't have a smaller Holy Ghost that He did. My children's Holy Ghost isn't a junior Holy Ghost. What tare junior are 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 tat it's to our advantage that the Holy Spirit comes.

REGISTER BELOW FOR THE ANOINTING SCHOOL

Friends it has been in my heart for years to do this brand new school of the spirit. A intensive school on the Anointing. I've learned many things over the years about the power of God and how to flow in the anointing. In this intensive 4 day school I want to impart it to you. Teaching will include how to steward and minister the anointing, fresh oil, Holy spirit, different anointings, kingly oil, healing and the anointing, how to flow in the Holy Ghost and more. There will be lots of personal ministry and impartation times. Expect refreshing and the joy of the Lord.

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