

A New Life in the Spirit's Power

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 ESV

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The Holy Spirit, Jesus and You

The family resemblance is uncanny. Jesus' earthly relationship with the Holy Spirit is exactly mirrored by our own. The few remaining parts of the image require our trusting obedience to fill in. Will we allow God to finish the portrait?

Two Promises of the Father

Our gracious Father made two outstanding promises in the Old Testament. Promises that we would have a power sent from Him to live in a way none of us can on our own. This is our Promised Land! Yet, many Christians hardly know it's there.



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The Indwelling Presence

Surprise! God's Spirit is now living inside of you! He has always been with you, but now He is in you. It is impossible to live as a true Christian without God's help and we don't have to: The Helper is always as close as your next thought.

The Baptism of Power

Jesus actually told the first disciples "Don't leave home without this!" So important is this spiritual empowerment that even the followers who had been trained by Him in person, prayed to be "baptized with the Holy Spirit." If they needed it, don't we?

Praying in Tongues

Do you have to? No, but you can if you want to and you just may want to. Paul did. In fact, he was glad that he prayed in tongues more than anyone he wrote his letters to. Maybe he knew why something this "scandalous" is so secretly good!

Nine Gifts of Power

Jesus never intended for His church to be powerless. The baptism in the Spirit is His idea. Like the tithe, it's not forced on anyone, but when believers come into obedience, watch out—the "windows of heaven" open wide! And these gifts tumble out...

The Etiquette of Intimacy

Here we seek to lift the veil on aspects of our relationship with the Holy Spirit that are more intimate and subtle and, therefore, harder to describe. That should not surprise us. The closer we get to any mystery, the more mysterious it becomes.



About the Author: [Steve Evans](#)



For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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CHAPTER ONE

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. Part of the "fun" is learning to recognize and acknowledge our incomparable Guest.

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 ESV

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 "new 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



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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 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 in the “full assurance of faith.” 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 through the curtain, that is, through his flesh... 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 there 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 He 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



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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 ESV

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 our Helper points us always to Christ, working to get us to trust Jesus with all He allows and all He asks of us. As we trust Jesus, the Holy Spirit raises us into the peace of Christ, shows us the next right thing to do (so that we can follow the Lord step by step), and then helps us want to do that next right thing. 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. Make me willing to be made willing to surrender everything to You.

CHAPTER TWO

The Holy Spirit, Jesus and You

The family resemblance is uncanny. Jesus' earthly relationship with the Holy Spirit is exactly mirrored by our own, practically in every detail. The few remaining parts of the image require our trusting obedience to fill in. Will we allow God to finish the portrait He desires to paint upon the canvass of our life?

"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master." Matthew 10:24-25 ESV

Jesus, Our Example

The unnamed writer of Hebrews tells us that in order to save us from sin-bondage, death and temptation, Jesus had to be made like us "in every respect." The Eternal Son of God became fully human in order to be both our representative at the cross and our example for how to live the new life He would give us.



This radical descent of God into His creation never fails to astonish, whenever we pause to consider what it must have meant for Jesus to become like us (see [His Incomparable Life](#)). But there is a "flip side" to the Redemption which Jesus' descent accomplished: what it means for us. Through faith-conversion have now been "raised up" into being "like" Him.

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Colossians 3:1-3 ESV

At the very least the above passage should clue us in that many things about us are radically changed from what we might have imagined ourselves to be like—based on our past (earth-bound) experience and understanding of ourselves. Now that Jesus is "in us" and we are "in Him" all bets are off! We can only truly know ourselves and our world from Christ's perspective. Since that perspective is heavenly it is guaranteed to be a) filled with delight and b) incredibly strange.

Get ready to re-adjust your thinking about yourself by seeing what scripture has to say about you, now that you have received Jesus as your indwelling Savior and Redeemer. Some of the



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following seven likenesses have already been accomplished at your conversion. Some will require your willing participation to enter more fully into the mystery and power of new life. Whatever you decide to do, don't hold back. No one loves you better or has greater joy planned for you than Jesus. See what He has done for you and let that be both a recommendation and an invitation to follow Him further into the dynamic union that He desires.

"I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me." John 17:23
ESV

Our Likeness to Jesus in the Holy Spirit

1) Born of the Spirit (see [New Life Through Spiritual Birth](#))

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy— the Son of God. Luke 1:34-36 ESV

Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit. The miracle of His birth sets the pattern for our re-birth: Jesus of Nazareth is truly the flesh and blood child of Mary; He is also from conception the Eternal Son of our heavenly Father. It was the Holy Spirit who accomplished this. Now it is our turn, if we are willing to turn back to God. Just as Jesus was born from above by the sinless Spirit of God, so, too, we creatures of flesh and blood are born from above by the same Holy Spirit.

Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" John 3:5-7 ESV

2) Filled with the Holy Spirit (see [The Indwelling Presence](#))

For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. John 3:34-35 ESV

Just as Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit without measure, so, too, are we. It is immensely comforting to know (by faith) that God gives His Spirit to us "without measure." Otherwise it could easily seem that we only got a very tiny portion, since what we usually sense of the Lord's presence with us may seem fairly slight. There is a huge difference, however, between the Holy Spirit's actual presence and His manifest presence. Holy Spirit is always in us in fullness, though we may not sense any manifestation of His presence. Part of our high calling is to press in to this unchanging reality through faith so that (experientially) we can be filled with the fullness that lies within.

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that

surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
Ephesians 3:17-19 ESV

3) Baptized with the Holy Spirit (see [The Baptism of Power](#))

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. Matthew 3:16 ESV

Immediately after being baptized with water, Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit. Jesus didn't need faith-conversion or water baptism to be cleansed of sin as we do, but He submitted to it as an act of obedience. Our faith-conversion and water baptism "catch us up" with Him for the new birth and the indwelling Spirit provide us with a sinless nature united with God just as Jesus enjoyed from birth. The one piece that still needs to fall into place is the baptism in the Spirit. Jesus received it immediately; most of us don't. According to Jesus' own words, we are to pray and seek this further experience of empowerment.

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:4-5 ESV

4) Led by the Holy Spirit (see [Walking in the Spirit](#))

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
Matthew 4:1 ESV

Immediately after being baptized, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. There was nothing accidental about this: Jesus was following a clear leading of the Spirit. Since Jesus explained elsewhere that He always did what He saw the Father doing, being led by the Spirit was something Jesus had been practicing consciously all His life. Naturally, we have some catching up to do here. Sometimes the leading of the Holy Spirit will be without our conscious knowing; at other times it will seem to depend entirely upon our willing participation. Nevertheless, whether it is conscious or un-conscious we are now being led by the same Holy Spirit who led Jesus.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Romans 8:14 ESV

5) Sealed by the Holy Spirit

"Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal." John 6:27 ESV

The Father set His seal upon Jesus. In the ancient world the seal was an authoritative sign, representing ownership or origin. Documents were sealed as a declaration of the sender's identity and as a guarantee that what they conveyed was an authentic expression of his will. We, too, have received a seal set upon us by the Father as a guarantee that everything He has promised will come to pass for those who desire to enter into this New Covenant. Just as



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ancient seals also proclaimed ownership of goods, we have been sealed as a sign of our belonging to Jesus, body, soul and spirit.

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:13-14 ESV

6) Empowered by the Holy Spirit

And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. Luke 4:14-15 ESV

Jesus lived and ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit. This was the secret of His effectiveness at teaching, healing and casting out demons. God wants the same empowerment for us. A great deal of that power comes through the indwelling Spirit who enables us to recognize truth, witness about Christ, grow in the fruit of the Spirit and stand firm against temptation. What further power could we need? Power for the supernatural works that Jesus did! This kind of empowerment comes through the baptism of the Spirit. Significantly, it is this empowerment which Jesus commanded His recently born again converts to seek.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” Acts 1:8 ESV

7) Anointed by the Holy Spirit

You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. Acts 10:37-39 ESV

Prophets, priests and kings were anointed with oil in the Old Testament as a sign that the Holy Spirit would be working through them in their calling. The anointing was thus a sign of the Spirit's presence and power upon an individual for accomplishing things which they could not do by natural ability alone. Jesus lived under this anointing in every area of His life, including His capacity for joy and for setting captives free. We get to follow Him in this! We are also anointed by the Holy Spirit to help us carry out our assignments. This anointing increases as we abide in Christ.

But the anointing that you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about everything—and is true and is no lie, just as it has taught you—abide in him. 1 John 2:27 ESV



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Some “Unfinished” Business

Jesus sets the standard: He is our Model for ministry and Example for how to live. If He needed all of the above seven aspects of relationship with the Holy Spirit, why wouldn't we? Three of the seven have already been provided for us through faith-conversion: born by the Spirit, filled by the Spirit and sealed by the Spirit. Three have begun, but will need our intentional cultivation: being led by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit and anointed by the Spirit. One will require deliberate seeking, if we are to receive it at all: the baptism of the Spirit. Jesus abided in God, doing whatever He “saw” the Father doing. In the same way we need to abide in Christ, doing everything we see Him doing.



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CHAPTER THREE

Two Promises of the Father

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 ESV

Two Tremendous "Promises of the Father"

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,



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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. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God." Ezekiel 36:25-28 ESV

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.

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit." Joel 2:28-29 ESV

When These Gifts Were Given

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. 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 ESV

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."

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



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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 ESV

Two Ways to Receive the Gift of the Spirit

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) The Indwelling Presence

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) The Baptism of Power

Any Christian who desires it can also receive the gift of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. This [Baptism of Power](#) 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 FOUR

The Indwelling Presence

Surprise! The Holy Spirit of God is now living inside of you! He has always been with you, but now He is in you. This is our guarantee that we are indeed going to heaven, but it is so much more Holy Spirit has been sent to bring into our lives everything necessary for new life and right living. It is impossible to live as a true Christian without God's help and we don't have to: The Helper is always as close as your next thought.

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” John 14:16-17 ESV

Did You Ask for This?

As part of our birth from above the gift of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is automatic, involuntary and unheralded. The Holy Spirit is given for free without our asking or our knowing. You could become a born-again Christian without ever realizing that the Holy Spirit now lives inside you. This is partly because our focus in being saved is almost entirely upon Jesus, and mostly because the Holy Spirit rarely calls attention to Himself.

The truth is that few people ever get saved because their primary desire is to receive the Holy Spirit. They aren't even thinking about the Holy Spirit: they're thinking about getting rescued in this life or for the next. Once saved, their eyes are on Jesus. They sense His presence. They seek to follow Him. Through faith in Christ they also learn to direct their prayers to the Father. That's a lot to keep up with at first!



The Holy Spirit, meanwhile, is quiet as a whisper. He resides so gently and unobtrusively inside that He is easily overlooked. As a consequence, the Holy Spirit has been called the “mystery Person” of the Trinity. Why would God do things this way?

Our Disappearing Savior

I'm sure most of us have at one time or another thought that the disciples had it made. They had Jesus with them in the flesh! They could see Him, hear Him, touch Him, bring all of their questions and problems right to Him. What could be better? Actually, Jesus Himself said that it would be better for them that He was going away.



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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. But if I go, I will send him to you.
John 16:7

Perhaps Jesus was talking about His upcoming death. He had to gain for them (and us) a “better resurrection.” Naturally, He had to “go away” to do that by dying on the cross. But He came back. Yes, but then He went away again and stayed away. This is apparently His idea of making it “better” for us!

Even poor doubting Thomas, who was allowed to have his faith strengthened by touching Jesus’ wounds, was chided with the words that it would have been a great blessing for Him to have believed without seeing the Risen Christ in the flesh. That includes all of us. We are evidently blessed by not seeing Jesus with our natural eyes. From the Lord’s point of view gaining spiritual sight by means of faith is the greater blessing. That’s where the Holy Spirit comes in.

Our Invisible Helper

If what we had really needed was the visible presence of Jesus with us always, then that is what God would have given us. But that is not what He did. Instead, He gives us “another Comforter” by placing the Holy Spirit right inside of us! Who could have guessed He would do that? Or that He could do it? Instead of a visible Savior, known for His sudden comings and goings, we have the indwelling presence of a steadfast, invisible Helper who never leaves us.

I suspect that all too often we focus on the invisible character of our indwelling Guest, rather than the amazing FACT of His steadfast presence. Would it help if I told you that it would truly bother you no end, if you could see Jesus all of the time? Of course, there might be unlawful or immoral moments (God forbid) when you wouldn’t want to be forced to encounter a visible Lord, or anyone else for that matter. Can you see, however, that even in some legitimate private moments, you wouldn’t want the intrusion of God’s visible presence? For instance, would you really want to see Jesus standing beside you while taking a shower? Yet the Holy Spirit is present even then and you don’t mind that at all.

What is even harder to see is that we need “space” from God in order to freely choose to move closer to God. It’s a free will issue. If Jesus reveals too much of Himself it “forces” our choice, either because we’d be drawn to Him like moths to a flame, or because fear (not love) would be making us act against our desires. He has to watch over that one for us. OK, that’s as far as I’m going with this thought. The main idea is that with the Holy Spirit living permanently inside of us, we have the very comfortable knowledge of God’s abiding presence without any uncomfortable sense of invasion of our privacy. How He pulls that off is still amazing to me!

What the Holy Spirit Does for Us

This is only meant to get you started.

1) The Holy Spirit Is Our Helper

Imagine anything you might need help with: memory, reason, skill; studying, planning, organizing; working, buying, trading; loving, laughing, weeping; cooking, cleaning,



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crafting... The list could be endless! All along He has been with us. He was there in the beginning helping us learn to nurse as babies, teaching us our native language, guiding us into play and laughter as little children.

Now the world's Greatest Teacher is living inside us. This can give us an edge in any field of endeavor: learning how to yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit's enabling power can carry any of us much further than mere natural abilities alone. The key thing to remember is that He is called the Helper, not the Doer. It is still up to us to take the steps that He helps us with.

2) The Holy Spirit Is Our Sanctifier

That's a five-dollar church word if ever there was one! Strictly speaking it means being set apart: We have been set apart as a dwelling place for God; we are now holy because He who lives in us is holy. In that sense we are already sanctified. But hold your horses! We're not in the home stretch yet. Between here and heaven, the Holy Spirit will be working to [sanctify](#) us step by step as He helps us separate from wrong thoughts, wrong beliefs, wrong attitudes, wrong actions and wrong desires.

3) The Holy Spirit Is Our Truth Teller

This is, perhaps, His most important and all-encompassing job. He has come to reveal truth to us so that we can a) recognize sin and turn from it, b) envision righteousness and turn towards it, and c) become ever more convinced that God's judgments in these matters is all that matters. Basically He points us to God's Word and to the Person of Jesus to awaken our conscience and settle the issue: Where the Bible is clear the case is closed; in other matters we look to Jesus. How would Jesus handle it? What would He do? What would He want us to do? Whatever is contrary to the nature and character of Jesus is sin; whatever aligns with Him is righteousness.

4) The Holy Spirit Is Our Guide

Not only does He show us truths to believe, He has also come to lead us in the true path. He is our Guide, our Companion in the way who knows the Way. If we are attentive to Him, He shows us the next right thing to do. In this way the one who is Truth can lead us step by step through each day and through the whole of our lives. This carries His gift to us as Truth Teller into every dimension of life. By trusting our hearts to God through faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit lifts and [leads us](#) into a whole new way of living. We emerge into the glorious liberty of the children of God!

5) The Holy Spirit Is Our Source of New Life

By dwelling within us the Holy Spirit is in position to help us dwell within Jesus. The indwelling Spirit is essential for our being able to experience, cultivate and live filled with the fruit of the Spirit—peace, love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. This good fruit comes to us as we abide in Christ through trusting and obeying His leadership over our lives. All of these beautiful and enjoyable qualities comprise that river of "living water" which Jesus said would flow out of our hearts.

Naturally enough, the Holy Spirit is a self-starter. He isn't going to sit on His Hands waiting for us to get in the right mood in order to begin His divine assignments. With or without our permission He is ever at work helping us, sanctifying us, revealing truth to us, guiding us and supplying us with the fruit of new life. It just goes so much better when we cooperate! Good spiritual health is letting the Holy Spirit have His way.



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CHAPTER FIVE

The Baptism of Power

Jesus actually told the first disciples “Don’t leave home without this!” So important is this spiritual empowerment that even the followers who had been trained by Him in person, who had received saving faith and the indwelling Spirit on Easter evening, even these dedicated believers were told to stay in Jerusalem and pray to be “baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If they needed it, don’t we?

“And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:49 ESV

Will You Ask for This?

Unlike the gift of the [indwelling presence](#) of the Holy Spirit, this baptism of power is not automatic, involuntary or unheralded. You have to desire it and ask for it, sometimes praying and waiting diligently for it to come. On the other hand, it can just as easily show up with the first prayer uttered, but rarely does this empowerment come upon a person who isn’t looking for it. That’s how it was with the first disciples: They were told by Jesus to seek it through prayer. Why would we think it would be any different for us?



Why would anyone not go for this? I hope you never find out! Oh, you may one day say as I and countless others could, that it was this or that fear or offense which hindered us. But if you press in to receive it (as I hope you will) then there is that indefinable gift of grace within you carrying you past the many obstacles to receiving this blessing. In this regard it is similar to receiving salvation. There are plenty of obstacles in everyone’s life turning them from the way of faith, but once you have been saved, you really can’t imagine anyone refusing the offer!

The Surpassing Power

It is impossible to read the gospels and not be surprised and delighted by the supernatural events that seem so “natural” wherever Jesus goes. Miracles were happening around Him with breath-taking frequency. On at least two separate occasions He even sent His disciples out and they took part in it too. Just for the record, none of them had ever been to seminary or were previously trained as prophets or priests. They were regular people like you and me. It clearly surprised and delighted them that they were able to do many of the supernatural things that Jesus did, such as healing all manner of diseases and casting out demons.



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Were these supernatural events only meant to happen through Jesus' earthly ministry? Evidently not! After His resurrection, Jesus carefully instructed His recently born-again disciples to wait for what He called "the promise of my Father." They were to stay in Jerusalem until they could be "clothed with power from on high." Did they just hang out, hoping it would show up? No, they sought it diligently, praying for it to come to them. Once it arrived, the supernatural flow of miracles broke forth all over again, along with extreme boldness in witnessing. The Book of Acts chronicles the way that this original band of regular folks became strong in the Word of the Lord and in deeds of power by the Holy Spirit.

Beyond the Book

Were these supernatural events only meant to happen through the ministry of the apostles? Definitely not! The Early Church for the first two centuries was characterized by miracles and deeds of power. These continued in sporadic outbreaks throughout the next 18 centuries, often through uniquely gifted individuals, rather than trained clergy. In fact healing miracles and supernatural deeds have always been one of the primary qualifications for bestowing the designation of "sainthood" by the Roman Catholic Church. The RC's are not alone in this. Periods of revival, seasons of persecution, the birthing of new movements have also witnessed the supernatural workings of God through devoted individuals.



Since the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement began in the early 1900s, however, millions of people have been moving in the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit for miracles, healings and demonic deliverance. "Birthing" the revelation of the baptism of power back into the church was both joy and battle for those early Pentecostals. Ironically, the movement was born in a stable at Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California (sound familiar?). For years it struggled to survive "outside the camp" due to the entrenched ridicule and hostility of the mainline denominations which rejected the truth of the revelation they had received. Now, it is the largest and fastest growing branch of Christianity in the world. You can be a part of it, too!

Why Don't We Get This Automatically?

Why didn't we get the baptism of power in the [Starter Kit](#)? That's a fair question. No explanation is given, though there are two kinds of facts which show us that it usually comes later: Biblical facts and the personal experience of Christians. The Biblical fact is that it came later for the disciples. They were born again in the Upper Room on the evening of the Resurrection and received the indwelling Spirit at that time. The baptism of power came 50 days later on the day of Pentecost, after praying and waiting for it as Jesus directed.

The early Pentecostal pioneers at the end of the 19th century were deliberately seeking this experience to be restored to the church. Ever since then, the majority of Christians who have received it, experienced it as coming after their salvation experience, not concurrent with it. For this reason, it has often been called the "second blessing," though in reality there are no limits to the revelatory experiences Christians can have. These facts show us that it often comes later, but they don't tell us why.



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A Possible Answer

Perhaps, although this is mere supposition, the Lord has intended for it to be separate in order that the beauty and power of the baptism in the Spirit would not overshadow the beauty and power of having the Holy Spirit dwelling secretly and silently within us. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is united to us—it doesn't come and go as the manifestation of the Holy Spirit does when the gifts of power are in operation. It is certainly good for us to know that salvation and the indwelling Spirit go hand in hand. That way our salvation-confidence can be based upon our faith in what the unchanging Word of God says that Christ has done for us, regardless of our feelings.

With the baptism of the Spirit feeling and experience rise to the forefront. Moving in the power gifts requires an attentiveness to the manifest presence of the Holy Spirit. The anointing of His presence comes and goes like the wind, and so does our sense of His leading or directions. That's no foundation for confidence about our eternal position in Christ! From this standpoint it is an extremely good thing that our salvation doesn't depend upon sensing the Holy Spirit, but in believing God's Word alone.

What Comes with It?

These are observations based on general experience, so there are plenty of exceptions in real life. This is just to get you started in recognizing some of the benefits of this experiential encounter with the Holy Spirit. The best way to find out what the baptism in the Spirit is all about is to seek it wholeheartedly and then, when it comes your way, you will be able to explore it from the inside, not the outside!

1) A Greater Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

Many Christians (not all) who only have the indwelling Spirit display very little practical awareness of the Holy Spirit's day to day operations in their lives. For them the Holy Spirit is indeed the "Mystery Person" of the Trinity. This is never the case for believers who have received the baptism of power. Not only do they know that they have met the Holy Spirit, they have a graced ability from that encounter to connect the dots of personal experience and recognize the Holy Spirit's presence and activity in all kinds of ways that they had previously attributed to other causes.

2) A Greater Ability to Comprehend the Scriptures

Unquestionably, there have always been pastors and teachers who could understand and communicate the Word of God, regardless of whether or not they received the baptism of power. Nevertheless, for the vast majority of Christians the Bible is a difficult book to penetrate and comprehend. Those who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, however, universally report that they now have a much greater ability to read the scriptures and receive revelation directly from them. The answer to this riddle is easy: The Holy Spirit who wrote the scriptures is, in some significant way, more personally known and accessible to them.

3) A Greater Ability to Engage in Spiritual Warfare

The discerning of spirits is one of the nine manifestation gifts of the Spirit. Not everyone who is baptized in the Holy Spirit becomes a vessel for the full manifestation of this gift to operate, just as not all Christians are gifted at evangelism, but every Christian can share their faith. Similarly, few Spirit baptized believers see into the invisible realm, but most of them typically display a greater sensitivity to the presence of evil spirits as well as the Holy Spirit. They are willingly trained as spiritual warriors for intercession or for demonic deliverance. This does not guarantee the accuracy of their discernment, anymore than having sight guarantees you won't walk into a door jamb or slip stepping off a curb. But it does give you a practical advantage over an unsighted person.

4) A Greater Potential for Being Led by the Spirit

An enhanced ability comes with the empowerment to sense the leading, prompting, checking and grieving of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that all individuals choose to submit to these overtures, but for those who do, a heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit is indispensable for being guided by the Lord step by step through the day. Just look at the way Paul was [guided by the Holy Spirit](#). Certainly, he put a lot of stock in the Word of God, but he followed the path the Holy Spirit led him by within boundaries set by the Word. Jesus didn't give us only a Book to follow; He gave us His Holy Spirit to lead us as well.

5) A Greater Ability to Pray for Healings and Miracles

Without doubt God hears every prayer and heals at times in all denominations and churches. Unquestionably, His sovereign will is inscrutable. Every one of us experiences perplexing, heart-breaking times when prayers go unanswered. No one bats 100%. Even 5% would be a great average where dramatic, immediate answers to prayer for healing is concerned. Having said this, it is nevertheless a FACT of history that Pentecostalism was birthed—just like the Early Church was birthed—through vast occurrences of supernatural power for healings and deliverances. And it continues to this day.

If you want to see tremendous miracles and multitudes of healings you may have to travel to the Third World, but you will only find it being done there through Holy Spirit baptized and empowered individuals and churches. As a general rule, only Spirit baptized believers move in the manifestation or “power” gifts of the Holy Spirit: prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, discerning spirits, miracles, healing, faith, tongues and interpretation of tongues. Though these gifts have some counterparts in ordinary Christian life, as supernatural manifestations they have a unique character all their own.

6) A Greater Boldness for Spreading the Gospel

Because of the qualities listed above and because of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit baptism, there is often more boldness and success in spreading the gospel—just as Jesus said there would be. Remember that His specific purpose in having his born

again disciples pray for the “empowerment from on high” was for the purpose of world evangelism. Do not think of this simply as sharing faith and preaching the word. The truly powerful combination then, as now, is signs and wonders (healings and miracles) accompanying the Word.

What Doesn't Come?

Maturity and true Christian character cannot be conveyed to us by any gift. They must be cultivated over time. The baptism of power is made available to empower us for witnessing to the Risen Christ, for deeds of power, and by enhancing our life in Christ with greater conscious connection to the Holy Spirit. Character and integrity are cultivated in us by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit—if we are attentive to His work in us. By convicting, convincing, and judging us where sin and righteousness are concerned, the Holy Spirit cleanses us of our old ways and enables us to live as New Creations.

The indwelling Spirit is essential for our being able to experience, cultivate and live filled with the fruit of the Spirit—peace, love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It is He who lifts us into new life and then flows through us, carrying us with peace and freedom from one moment to the next whenever we are released by faith-surrender to Jesus. You don't need to be baptized with power to experience this or excel at this. That's not what the baptism is about, though it certainly should bring enhancements to our ability to abide in Christ and live by the Spirit.

Sadly, however, many who have been baptized in the Spirit fail to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. Please, guard against this! The baptism of power does not guarantee spiritual growth. It is not a short cut to maturity, the fruit of the Spirit, real holiness, integrity or character. You can be baptized in the Spirit and display none of these essential elements of a faithful believer. Don't let that be you! The truth is that with the proper combination of these two gifts any believer can become a valiant warrior who advances the Kingdom.



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CHAPTER SIX

Praying in Tongues

Do you have to? No, but you can if you want to and you just may want to. Paul did. In fact he was glad that he prayed in tongues more than the people to whom his letters were addressed. Since he also wrote more of the New Testament than anyone else, he ought to know why something this "scandalous" is so secretly good!

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. Corinthians 14:18 ESV

How It Began

It is worth remembering that the gift of tongues came as a complete surprise. No one in the Upper Room was seeking tongues: they were all seeking power. Just ten days earlier they had been commanded by Jesus to stay in Jerusalem and pray for "power from on high" that would help them spread the good news of His resurrection and do the supernatural works He had done. Apparently, Jesus didn't consider that being born again and receiving the indwelling Spirit (from Him personally!) was sufficient for completing anyone's assignment under the New Covenant. So there they were, "gathered in one place" in prayer and expectancy for the arrival of something Jesus wanted them to have.

What came was the "[the baptism of the Holy Spirit](#)." The first outward sign of this empowering experience was the sound of a "mighty rushing wind"; next came "divided tongues as of fire" resting above each one; then came what we call the private prayer language. These devoted men and women had begun by praying in their native language, but when the baptism of the Spirit occurred their prayers and praises shifted into languages they had never spoken before. Since there was no need for an interpretation—this was a private meeting of disciples—they simply praised God with these new languages out of the abundance of emotion welling up within them, evidently trusting the Lord to understand the content of their speech.



Then 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 ESV

What then ensued was offense and controversy. It has surrounded and hounded the practice of tongues ever since. The exuberant, exhilarated, ecstatic gathering got noisy! On festival days



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Jerusalem was packed with people from all over the Mediterranean basin. It didn't take long to draw a multitude of "amazed and astonished" onlookers. No doubt some sensed the spiritual nature of what was taking place; others mocked, deriding them for being drunk on "new wine." That was a very interesting observation in light of Jesus' comparison of His ministry to new wine, but it wasn't intended as a compliment to either Jesus or His disciples! When confronted with strange and "bewildering" occurrences some are intrigued; others are frightened. This division continues into our own day.

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? ...we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." Acts 2:5-8, 11-13 ESV

Peter took good advantage of the situation and steered the people's attention to the Hebrew Scripture prophecy where power such as this was promised to be given in the "latter days"—days which had now arrived along with the astounding signs. Peter spoke to shift their focus from the sign which was offending them to the salvation Jesus offers and the baptism of power they, too, could receive. He was the first, but certainly not the last, Pentecostal preacher to try to get people to look past the offense of tongues to see the gift in a wider, more inviting, context. Following in his footsteps, we now turn to examine the private prayer language in the wider context of many scriptures.

Is It Necessary?

Tongues are not necessary for getting anyone to heaven. For that you must be born again through faith alone in Christ alone. If that is all you are looking for, then you needn't look any further. But Jesus would want you to. Remember, it was the Lord who commanded His first believers to seek the baptism of power. When they received it, tongues came with it. Are tongues, therefore, necessary for receiving the baptism in the Spirit? That's putting the question the wrong way around. Tongues are a sign that the baptism in the Spirit has been received. It certainly operated in that way for the leaders of the Early Church who expected this sign to come forth when they prayed for the Spirit baptism.

Peter saw the sign of tongues falling on Cornelius' household as he preached to them which indicated to him that they had received the Holy Spirit. Incidentally, Peter also learned from this experience that water baptism doesn't have to come first. In this instance faith-conversion and Holy Spirit baptism occurred together.

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. Acts 10:44-48 ESV



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When Paul came across twelve believers in Greece who had not “received the Holy Spirit,” he prayed for them and they began speaking in tongues. This was evidence enough that they had received the same baptism of power as the disciples at Pentecost.

And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ...On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. Acts 19:2, 5-6 ESV

Even the unbelieving magician, Simon, “saw” the sign as evidence that power from the Holy Spirit had been received.

Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:17-19 ESV

In light of these passages we can see that the gift of tongues, or the private prayer language, and the baptism of the Spirit go together. We can't say that it's impossible to be baptized in the Holy Spirit without speaking in tongues (for nothing is impossible with God). But we can say it would be an unusual breach of the Biblical pattern. Tongues are the sign that the baptism of power has been received. We can also say from this that if you want to pursue the supernatural workings of Holy Spirit, you will need to be open to receiving the prayer language. It is not for us to dictate to the Lord how He should empower us!

What's It For?

Tongues would be interesting enough if they were “merely” a sign of the mighty power which comes with the baptism in the Spirit. It is a gateway, therefore, leading to the [Nine Gifts of Power](#). But the private prayer language is more than a sign or a gateway to “better things”: it carries powers of its own.

Prayer in tongues “builds up” the believer. The private prayer language is always available to us for praying or singing, either silently or aloud. This strengthens us in our inner spirit.

But you, beloved, build yourselves up in your most holy faith; pray in the Holy Spirit. Jude 20 ESV

The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church. 1 Corinthians 14:4 ESV

Speaking with tongues and deliverance are signs that go with believing. Christians who speak in tongues also exhibit boldness and willingness to do the work of demonic deliverance.

And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new tongues. Mark 16:17 ESV



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Praying in tongues is a way of thanking, praising and glorifying God.

For they heard them talking in [unknown] tongues (languages) and extolling and magnifying God. Acts 10:46 AMP

What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. 1 Corinthians 14:15-16 ESV

Praying in tongues is a way of interceding for others. This is especially helpful when we don't know what to pray for or when we want to keep on praying but are feeling hindered by saying the same thing over and over again.

Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. Ephesians 6:18 ESV

Praying in tongues provides direct access between our spirit and God's Spirit. It releases the deep burdens within our hearts, cares and concerns that we may only dimly comprehend. Not only that, but by praying in tongues, we literally give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to use our own tongue to intercede through us!

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27 ESV

Paul desired that every believer would speak in tongues—as well as prophecy.

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:5 ESV

Desire to receive and cultivate your own prayer language. Then perhaps prayer in tongues in public and prophecy will come as additional gifts.

Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret... For you may be giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. 1 Corinthians 14:13, 17 ESV

CHAPTER SEVEN

Nine Gifts of Power

Jesus never intended for His church to be powerless or penniless. Just as the tithe is the Lord's provision for material supply, so the baptism in the Spirit is His provision for supernatural supply. Neither is forced on anyone, but when believers come into obedience, watch out—the “windows of heaven” open wide! Through the baptism in the Spirit, Jesus pours out gifts that will manifest as signs and wonders for the sake of ministry to someone He wants to bless.

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:7 ESV

A Context for Understanding

The main passage concerning the nine gifts of supernatural power is Paul's account in 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 where they are set within a wider context. Since he was writing to a church that was experiencing these gifts and was already familiar with how they worked, Paul doesn't take time to describe them. That's a pity for us, because many of us grew up in churches devoid of these supernatural operations.

Experience is the best teacher when it is available; absence of experience gives false ideas plenty of room to grow. Nevertheless, we can surmise what these gifts would have looked like then, by their appearances in other passages of scripture and by the way they are breaking forth in Charismatic and Pentecostal churches where the baptism of the Spirit is flourishing today. Before we examine the individual gifts, let's look at the context Paul gave them.



Context #1

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. 1 Corinthians 12:1 ESV

According to St. Paul, the very first thing that we need to know concerning spiritual gifts is to avoid being “uninformed.” Learning about something is usually the first step towards doing it, but it is also a necessary step towards allowing others to do a thing. Why does that matter? In western churches many people have pulled away from the supernatural operations of the Holy Spirit due to fear and false teaching. By being uninformed of the truth, they not only aren't seeking to make themselves available for God to work through them, they are actively hindering others from going forward.



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Context #2

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ESV

The whole of the Trinity is involved in the operation of these gifts: The Holy Spirit who works through the gift we are given, the Lord Jesus whose church is being served by the gift, and God the Father who oversees it all for the sake of everyone involved. Elsewhere Paul will describe other gifts and their place in the Body of Christ. Here his concern is only for certain gifts he now calls “manifestations of the Spirit.” Whatever is “manifest” has been brought to the light. It is something obvious and evident. These are gifts which make it obvious that God is at work through them. They display supernatural power in a way that the other gifts do not.

Context #3

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 ESV

Because these gifts are manifestations of the Spirit, it is God alone who “apportions”—who chooses who, when and where. Although these “activities” can be counterfeited by the enemy, the operation of the true gifts is entirely under the Holy Spirit’s control. They can’t be worked up by human effort. This is an important point for discerning how these gifts differ from normal human abilities. For instance, anyone who teaches can convey intellectual knowledge about a subject, but that is not what is meant by the “word of knowledge.” We look to doctors for healing, but their gifts are not “gifts of healings.” Certainly, God may work through doctors and teachers (let’s hope He does!), but His work is hidden, not manifest, except in outcome. These nine gifts manifest during the process of ministering to others.

The Nine Gifts of Power

For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 NKJV

1) The Word of Wisdom

Wisdom is available to everyone who asks for it or seeks it. The whole of Proverbs, for instance, is devoted to helping us gain practical wisdom and understanding for daily living. This accumulation of good sense and insight is akin to, but not exactly, what is meant by “the word of wisdom.” Solomon’s most famous judgment gives us an example of this gift in operation. Having previously prayed for wisdom, God gave Solomon the



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perfect solution to a troubling dilemma: which prostitute was the true mother of the child who died and which was lying. Solomon's decision in the case revealed to all Israel that God was with him, giving wisdom.

Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice. 1 Kings 3:27-28 ESV

2) The Word of Knowledge

This gift has a very strong prophetic component, giving "knowledge" to both the one who receives it and the one being ministered to that God is at work in a given situation. This elevates the faith level of everyone present for whatever it is that the Lord desires to do. Often, however, it doesn't seem like a word at all. In the context of a healing service it may be a sense of pain felt by the prayer minister in a very specific part of their body. When that "word" is spoken out ("Someone here has ringing in their left ear that God wants to heal"), a person in the congregation with that condition will usually experience increased faith, often receiving healing as a direct result. When the blind man was told Jesus wanted to see him, his faith level was certainly enhanced. Jesus saw his response, noted the faith, and the healing happened.

And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way. Mark 10:49-52 ESV

3) Faith

All who believe in Jesus have already received the gift of faith, so saving faith or faith in Christ's death and resurrection is not what is meant by this gift. This gift conveys a supernaturally sustained ability to trust God in a specific situation or to believe for a specific thing that the Lord wants to accomplish. Persons who receive it don't have to "work" at believing God against what may seem like impossible odds. They only have to make sure they don't lose what they have received. Often this ability to believe for a specific thing is activated by a specific word "quickened" from scripture or received directly from the Spirit. David's confident faith for killing Goliath seems to have been sustained by this kind of gift.

And David said, "The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you!" 1 Samuel 17:37 ESV



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4) Gifts of Healings

There are so many things about us that can go wrong: physical sickness, systemic disease, organ failure, accidental injury, mental disease, and emotional wounds. It's no wonder that many "gifts" for "healings" are needed. Everyone should pray for healing, all of us can seek to receive a greater capacity for effective prayer, but certain individuals have already been unquestionably gifted by the Lord for healing. Many of them are consciously aware of an anointing from the Lord which "signals" His presence upon them to heal someone. Sometimes it is a sensation of physical warmth on their hands; at other times it may be an ability to "see" faith upon someone, as with Paul in Lystra.

And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked. Acts 14:8-11 NKJV

5) The Working of Miracles

Of course, sudden healings are miracles in themselves, but what is (likely) intended here are those activities of God which affect the natural order, not the human body—what are usually termed "signs and wonders" in the Hebrew scriptures. Nature, too, can go awry. Jesus rebuked the wind for His disciples' sake. God stopped the mouths of lions for Daniel's sake. He also brought forth water from a rock and provided mana in the wilderness for His chosen people. We, too, need miracles of all kinds in our lives: miracles of escape from imminent danger or looming debt; miracles of provision; miracles of deadly forces in nature stopped or turned aside. We have an awesome God-given ability to "speak" even to mountains, commanding nature just as Jesus did.

And he said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" And the fig tree withered at once. When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither at once?" And Jesus answered them, "Truly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' it will happen." Matthew 21:19-21 ESV

6) Prophecy

There are many levels to the prophetic. At the entry level is the kind of seeking we all do in prayer to find a word of encouragement or just the right book from an inspired author to match a friend's need. Jesus says that all of His sheep "hear" His voice. Some do more than others. Those with a prophetic gift hear more frequently and more specifically from the Lord by means of a "language" of prophetic communication that may include dreams, visions, symbols and pictures, even more than words. This does not mean they get it right all of the time, but that they develop a dependable track record for accuracy which makes it worthwhile for others to pay attention to, weigh, and sift their sayings. Agabus' prophetic gift helped the church prepare for a famine.

Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there



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would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. Acts 11:27-29 ESV

7) Discerning of Spirits

Having been active in the field of demonic deliverance, I can testify that there are at least two levels to the operation of this gift. There are some people (myself at times) who can discern by inward sense which demon needs to be cast out of a person, which spirits are oppressing a church or other organization, and even where angels or demons may be positioned around a room. There are others who have been given sight to see into the invisible realm that surrounds us all. I have worked with many people who evidently had this ability, whose credibility and Christian character gave support to what they reported seeing. In battlefield conditions having someone with this gift is like having a spy behind enemy lines. To Balaam's chagrin, however, his donkey saw the angel blocking their path before he did. Nevertheless, it was a good thing he finally listened to what the donkey discerned.

And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No." Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. Numbers 22:30-31 ESV

8) Different Kinds of Tongues

In addition to "tongues" or languages that can be learned by the usual human means, there are tongues "of men and of angels" which are given by God for His own specific purposes. On the day of Pentecost everyone in the Upper Room was baptized in the Holy Spirit and given an ability to speak human languages that they could not have previously known. This was a sign to the multitudes who heard them "speaking in their own tongue"—a convincing display of God's power which led to Peter's sermon and the conversion of 3000. There are also "tongues of angels" by which the Lord may be worshiped or entreated. These tongues have no human counterpart. The tongues spoken of here may be of either variety, but the setting is public worship, which is why it is stipulated that an interpretation should be given, something that is completely unnecessary if they are simply a part of the person's private prayer language (see [Praying in Tongues](#)). Such a setting requires interpretation for the sake of proclaiming the prophecy it contains.

Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up... So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. 1 Corinthians 14:5, 12 ESV

9) The Interpretation of Tongues

The interpretation of publicly uttered tongues is necessary for the Lord to accomplish what the tongues describe. Without the interpretation coming forth, no one knows what

was said. No one can even be confident that the tongues conveyed a message from the Lord or were initiated by Him, rather than from of the speaker's own soul. This gets tricky really fast because the speaker has to have faith that someone is present who will be able to interpret what he/she believes God has prompted them to say (perhaps that will be themselves); likewise the interpreter has to have faith to believe that they are hearing from God at least enough of the message to launch out in faith to let it flow in fullness.

Therefore, one who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret. 1 Corinthians 14:13 ESV

Learning about these gifts is not the same thing as doing them, but it is a necessary beginning. To go further you will need a fellowship of like-minded believers who are committed to discovering how to make themselves available to God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit at this level. You can be sure that there are others who are pursuing these things of God, as well as the Lord Himself. Passion for Jesus and compassion for others will carry anyone a long way towards the unfolding of every gift the Holy Spirit desires to release through us—if we don't set preconceived limits to what is possible. You can be sure that the Lord doesn't!



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CHAPTER EIGHT

The Etiquette of Intimacy

Here we seek to lift the veil on aspects of our relationship with the Holy Spirit that are more intimate and subtle and, therefore, harder to describe. That should not surprise us. The closer we get to any mystery, the more mysterious it becomes.

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

A Good Pair of Shoes

One of the first things everyone notices about the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is that He doesn't seem to be there! Oh, we sense well enough when He seems to be absent, and we certainly are aware when He is manifesting His presence—may we have more of those times please! But, if we are honest about it, much of the time He can be easily forgotten or overlooked. He fits into us so well that, like a good pair of shoes, you don't even notice Him at all. That may sound like a shockingly casual way of talking about the Living God—He is far from being mere footwear—nevertheless, this whole new way of living in us is His desire.

We are to “walk in Him” just as we would a pair of shoes that is both comfortable and protective. He loves us far too much to want to be the kind of spooky, “super-holy,” uncomfortable presence that would have us jumping out of our shoes at every turn. Nor would that serve His purpose. He doesn't intend to draw attention to Himself, but to Jesus. So, naturally, He is not forever saying to us, “Here I am! How'd you like what I just did? What do you think about that idea I gave you?”



It is not necessary, therefore, to anxiously apologize for not noticing Him, or thinking of Him. Simply thank Him whenever the reminder comes that your mind has drifted away from God and Jesus and refocus. Of course, you're not going to notice the Holy Spirit (most of the time). That's the whole point! We can get so super-serious around the subject of God that we may miss the great good fun He has in doing things for us on the sly. Don't you love doing things secretly for your loved ones? Their joy is your reward. So too with Holy Spirit.

Becoming One

If we could bludgeon the English a bit, we would say that the goal of the Atonement is “at-one-ment.” Just as Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Jesus, so Jesus wants to be in us and



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have us be in Him. The way this is done is through the Holy Spirit becoming at-one with us. This cannot be forced, nor does it need to be. Grace works best as we seem to do nothing but trust.

Consider how it would be if you were trying to be “at-one” with your body. At the most fundamental level you and your body are already seamlessly joined, how and where you don’t know. You just take it for granted and go about your day. We don’t go through our days intensely aware of our body, unless something is wrong with it. Otherwise, it is there, powerfully enabling us by sense and exertion to enter into the world surrounding us and partake of its life.

So, too, we are sealed by the Holy Spirit —united to Him in our spirit at the deepest level of our soul, beyond sight, beyond comprehension. Don’t try to go through your day, seeking to focus on the Holy Spirit. Seek, rather, the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Seek Jesus. Seek the Father’s will. Seek the path of peace. Seek the next right thing to do. The Holy Spirit will gladly (and imperceptibly) help you with all these things. As you enter into the flow of such a day given over to the pursuit of God, the Holy Spirit becomes at-one with you.

Other people will usually want to be noticed whenever they have gone out of their way to help us, and it is only right to show them generous appreciation. That’s good etiquette. The Holy Spirit, however, isn’t looking for appreciation. His great desire is to serve the Lord Jesus by effectively serving us. Of course, He appreciates it when we notice what He has done and thank Him for it. But the reality is that He is going out of His way to help us all of the time. Yet, this is not an onerous task that takes Him away from His preferred desires, it is what He has freely chosen to do. It is what He loves doing. That’s why He climbed inside of us in the first place!

If we were to thank Him for all that He does, it would leave no room for anything else. That’s not His goal. And besides, what would you think of a child who was constantly thanking mother or father for every little thing they did? Might you think the child had too little confidence in the parent’s love? Just relax: If you really appreciate Him, He knows.

Who to Pray to?

Do we pray to the Holy Spirit? After all He is fully God. Why not go to Him for everything? The answer may be that we can, but it is preferred that we direct our prayers either to the Father or to Jesus. In fact, Jesus explicitly states that when it comes to requests, we are to “ask the Father in His Name” or pray directly to our Lord Himself. No reason is given in the text, but a few can be reasonably surmised, the first one being that the Holy Spirit prefers to turn our attention towards the other two, not Himself. Divine etiquette prompts us to abide by the Spirit’s desire.

Growing in intimacy with God and Jesus may be additional reasons. Being more or less required to go to the Father for what we need, “forces” us to face the most intimidating Person of the Trinity directly. This grows our relationship with our Father by leading us to discover that He is not as we may have feared Him to be. The fear of God, rightly understood, is immensely helpful to us, but godly fear is too often supplanted in our anxious hearts by a craven fear of God, which fears what He may do, or allow, or ask of us. That kind of fear never comes from God! Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are at work to turn Adam’s frightened children around and lead us back to the Father of Light that we tend to keep running away from.



That Jesus invites us to pray to Himself directly surely has to do with cultivating that intimacy of conversation with our Savior and Best Friend which both the Father and the Holy Spirit evidently desire us to enjoy. See if this image helps you get oriented. On those dusty Galilean roads, the disciples spoke with Jesus face to face as they traveled along, bringing Him all their hopes and dreams as well as all their requests. He wants to have that same kind of communion with us as we walk with Him through each day.

Then, the Holy Spirit was with the disciples, helping them to stay focused on Jesus. Now, that same Spirit is in us, helping us to keep our focus on the Lord. In fact, in my limited experience, few things attract the Holy Spirit like praising Jesus in fully focused worship. At those times it seems as if the Holy Spirit comes rushing in like a mighty wind, so great is His desire to honor our Lord.

Grieving, Quenching and Snubbing

Scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit as a dove, perhaps the gentlest of all the winged creatures. Doves by their very nature evoke the peace they have come to symbolize. In a very real sense the Holy Spirit is the peace of Christ which abides with us. Don't we want this gentle dove of peace to rest always upon us as He did with Jesus at His baptism? Then let us take care how we act around Him. Doves are very easy to startle into flight!

Grieving

We are advised neither to "grieve" the Holy Spirit nor to "quench" Him. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we take on attitudes against others whom He loves just as much as He loves us. Judging and accusing others, holding resentments against them, and speaking ill of them behind their backs, runs the risk of grieving the Holy Spirit. That's a discernible pain on the inside which can be felt just beyond the hard edge of our anger. It's His way of calling us to return to our first love and the commitment to mercy which got us started.

Quenching

Quenching the Spirit is what can happen when we resist what He desires to do through us. Naturally, we probably all miss a lot of what He desires to do (or our lives would look radically more like that of Jesus), but quenching happens over things He has repeatedly demonstrated to us. To ignore a prompting He has trained us to notice, often results in a sudden feeling of deflation, as if the wind had gone out of our sails. This may have been because we were already tired and just couldn't be bothered, or we pulled back due to the challenge level of what He is asking, or we stubbornly insisted upon our own way.

Snubbing

Snubbing the Spirit is admittedly a non-Biblical term which is being used here to denote a serious breach of etiquette when thinking about the Holy Spirit. It is acting as if He is somehow less of a person than we are. I'm not sure what effect this has upon Him, but I am quite sure it does us a great deal of mischief to think of our mysterious Guest as being something other than the marvelous and unique individual He is. The problem here is that our cultural conditioning has been training us to think of spirit as an impersonal force or benevolent power, something nebulous and ill-defined.



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"Spirituality" Verses the Spirit

When people talk of "spirituality," this seems to be what they have in mind. Yet, when Jesus said that God is Spirit, He could not have meant the limitations which we ordinarily place upon that term, for Jesus is Himself God and therefore fully Spirit. Our God has emotion, intellect and will, not in any fallen way, but heightened by perfection and filled with glory. He who made us in His Image and gives life to each one of us, cannot be less than we are. Whatever it is that we mean by soul, personhood and personality, God is that and more. In *Mere Christianity* C. S. Lewis addressed this gap in our perceptions.

A good many people nowadays say, "I believe in a God, but not in a personal God." They feel that the mysterious something which is behind all other things must be more than a person. Now the Christians quite agree. But the Christians are the only people who offer any idea of what a being that is beyond personality could be like. All the other people, though they say that God is beyond personality, really think of Him as something impersonal: that is, as something less than personal.

If we are to think rightly of the Holy Spirit we must imagine Him as a Person, one of the Three Persons of the Godhead. It would be bad form indeed to think of Him as a mere power or force: Never refer to the Third Person as an "It"! Nor, would it be Biblically correct to use any other personal pronoun than the male when referring to Him. The Holy Spirit is described both as the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit sent from Jesus.

Just as we are clearly intended to think of the Father as male and just as surely as Jesus is now forever the God-man, so the scriptures leave no option but to think of the Holy Spirit in male, not female, terms. Why this might be so, can be debated or explored, but we must at least acknowledge that we are not the creators of our revelation, but merely the receivers of it. It's good etiquette to address people according to their stated preference, especially divine Persons.

Solitude, Silence and Serenity

If you wish to keep the divine dove resting upon you, learn to avoid grieving, quenching and snubbing the Spirit, but above all, seek to cultivate a resting place within your own heart. Make friends with solitude, silence and serenity. A more inviting landing zone for the Holy Spirit can hardly be imagined. This may require working with the Lord to gain a few divine reversals in how you perceive these three states, now that Christ has come into your life.

In solitude, we are no longer alone for He is always with us, therefore we need never give way to loneliness. In silence, the eternal Word is always speaking good things to our soul, therefore we need never rely upon others to build us up. In serenity, the real work of the world remains in His Hands while we do the one work required of us, therefore we need never succumb to anxiety and business. Admittedly, these are not easy lessons to learn, but it gives the Holy Spirit great pleasure if we sign up for His course of instruction.

Being content to live with Him in the peace of interior solitude, silence and serenity is the best etiquette of all. May the river of peace that flows in us through Him carry you into great adventures of life and ministry!



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