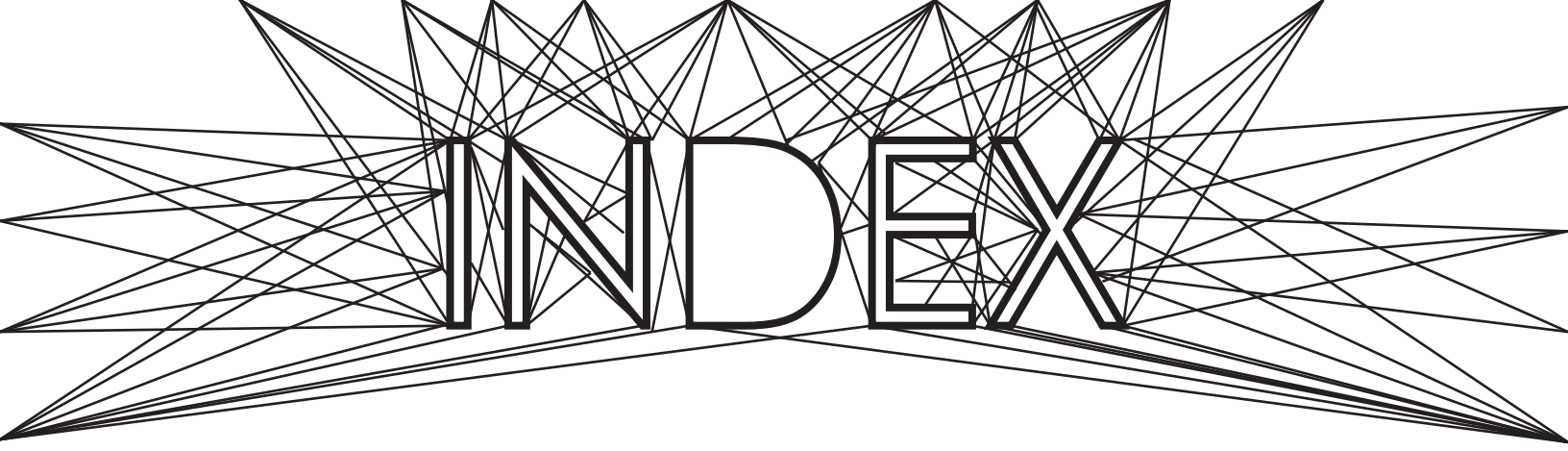


THREAD

A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR STUDENTS AND LEADERS



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"HE DOES"

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"HE MOVES"

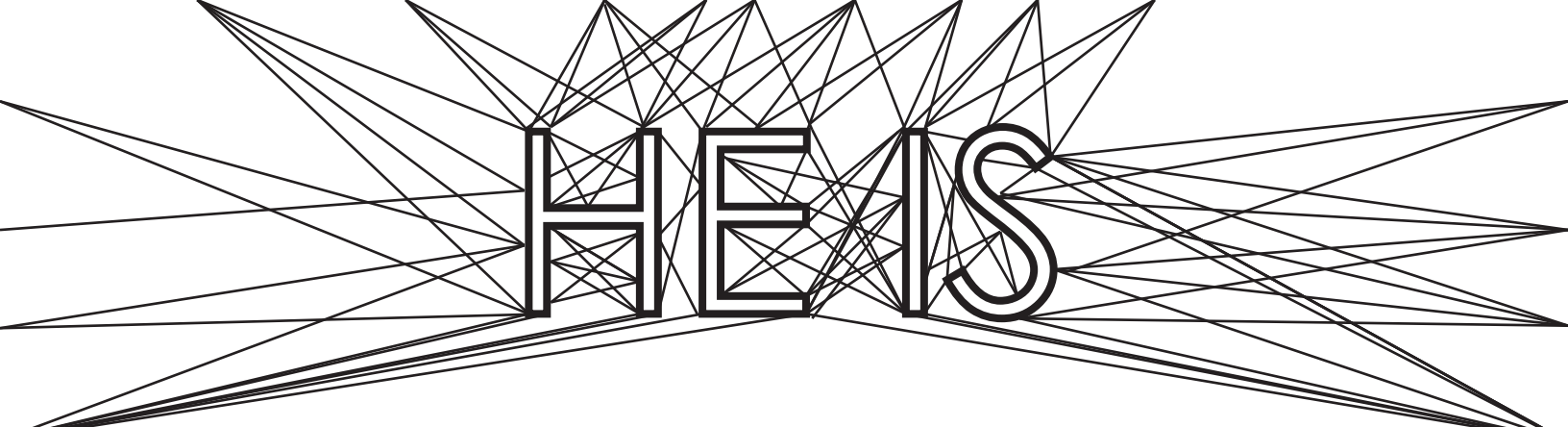
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HEAVENS

IN THE BEGINNING, GOD...

Before anything was created, God was there. He spoke the heavens and the earth into existence. Then with His hands He formed a man and a woman. He named them Adam and Eve and placed them in a beautiful garden—the Garden of Eden. God visited with them in the garden and walked with them in the cool of the evening. They lacked nothing. God instructed the man and woman not to eat fruit from one particular tree—the tree of knowledge that stood in the middle of the garden.

But one day, a serpent—Satan—approached Eve and deceived her. With cunning, he convinced Eve that what God had said to her and Adam about the fruit from that tree was false. So, she ate it. And Adam joined her. That's when sin entered the world. Suddenly, their eyes were opened and they gained knowledge of both good and evil. This new understanding caused them to feel shame, and they hid from God.

The first couple's disobedience and shame separated them from their Creator and Friend. It alienated them from God. God was not okay with this separation. He wanted to be close to them.

This is where the long story of redemption began. The first step in the journey was the sacrificial system. Sacrificing animals provided a temporary relief from the guilt of sin, but the root problem still remained (Romans 3:23). However, God wanted His relationship with humanity—with us—to be restored. He wanted to be able to walk with us again, to be close to us. He wanted us to be a part of His family ... for all eternity. However, one more step needed to be taken. A perfect sacrifice had to be offered, and only one Individual fit that description. His name is ...

JESUS

Jesus is God's Son, yet, because of His great love for us, He willingly gave up His divine privileges and stepped down from His throne to come to Earth as one of us—a flesh-and-blood human.

As He grew up in the house of a carpenter and played in the streets of Nazareth, Jesus continued to live a perfect life, even though His own people accused Him of being a criminal. Jesus knew all along that in order to free us from our sin and shame, He must return to the place where it all began—a garden. It was there, in the Garden of Gethsemane, that He submitted to His heavenly Father and cried out to Him in agony: "Not my will but Yours be done."

Jesus was thinking of us. He was thinking of you. In that garden He took upon Himself our pain, our shame, our sin, our deserved penalty. He was arrested, beaten, and then led to the top of a hill to be crucified on a cross. The story, however, does not end there. Three days later, the tomb where Jesus' body once laid was found empty. He had defeated the power of death and risen back to life. The way for all of mankind to have eternal life had been paved. Jesus made a way for us to become God's children.

Before He ascended back into Heaven to take His place at the right hand of God, Jesus promised His followers that He would always be with them (Matthew 28). Even though Jesus left the Earth, He did not leave us alone. He sent us His ...

HOLY SPIRIT

Ever since that day, the Holy Spirit has walked with and dwelled within the hearts of Christ's believers all over the world.

NOT AN "IT"

Many people refer to the Holy Spirit as "it." But the Person Jesus talked about and sent to walk with His believers on the Earth is not an "it."

"The Holy Spirit has a personality (Isaiah 63:10—'But they rebelled against him and grieved the Holy Spirit...'), a mind (Romans 8:27—'...for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.'), and a will (1 Corinthians 12:11— 'It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.'").

The Holy Spirit is not a force, an influence, or a weird agent that works in our lives mysteriously. He is a Person. It is important for us to get acquainted with the Holy Spirit because He reveals God the Father and God the Son to us.

Consider some of the Holy Spirit's characteristics and personality traits:

ADVOCATE—He defends us and comes alongside us to intercede for us. For instance, the apostle Paul said, "The Father who knows all hearts knows, of course, what the Spirit is saying as he pleads for us in harmony with God's own will" (Romans 8:27, The Living Bible, TLB).

COUNSELOR—He provides advice, guidance, and encouragement as we walk with Him daily. He reminds us of the truths Jesus taught when He walked on the Earth. Jesus promised, "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26, Modern English Version, MEV).

COMFORTER—When we are worried, upset, or afraid, the Holy Spirit comforts us with words and with His presence. Have you ever felt insecure? The Holy Spirit desires to comfort us by reminding us of who, and whose, we are—God's children. "Because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, 'Abba, Father.' Now

you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir" (Galatians 4:6, 7, New Living Translation, NLT). God makes His children royal priests, and the Holy Spirit will not let us forget it.



*You are no longer
a slave but
God's own child*

HOW DO I GET TO KNOW HIM?

The Holy Spirit wants to be in a relationship with us. For example, the apostle Paul closes his second letter to the Corinthians by saying, "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (13:14, New International Version, NIV).

But how do we have a relationship with the Holy Spirit?

Just as any relationship needs communication if it is to last, a relationship between us and the Holy Spirit is no exception. Therefore, we begin our relationship with Him by talking to Him and allowing Him to speak to us. The Holy Spirit is always revealing and telling the truth, so if we listen to Him, we will not be confused or accept the lies the enemy is constantly trying to convince us to believe. We will also be able to overcome and say, "No," to any kind of temptation we may face.

A relationship with someone also requires trust. Therefore, the Holy Spirit wants us to trust and rely on Him. It is beneficial for us to lean on the Holy Spirit. If we shared with Him our personal problems before running to everyone else for sympathy and advice, our lives would be much less complicated. Also, if we tried asking Him for help with every task and situation we encounter each day, we would be able to fulfill God's purposes for our lives.

We must learn to lean on and listen to the Holy Spirit more and more every day, believing that He will never abandon us. He wants to be our friend. It is up to us to allow Him to be just that.



THE IDOLERS

STORIES OF OLD

When we read stories in the Old Testament dating back to creation, we can see that the Holy Spirit did extraordinary things through ordinary people—real people. For example, we find accounts of how the Holy Spirit came upon different men and women at different times. These individuals include Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Deborah, and many more. He gave certain people God's words—the truth—to proclaim (prophecy) to the people of Israel. He also gave extraordinary strength to Samson, enabling him to pull down an entire building full of his enemies.

The Holy Spirit also empowered kings—one in particular named David—to lead a nation and a mighty army. David won every battle he fought against Israel's enemies. Yet, everything the Holy Spirit did through men and women was to bring God glory. He did everything to make God's plans come to pass here on earth as they are in Heaven.

STORIES OF NEW

Notice that in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon individuals at different times. When Jesus came to earth, He promised that the Holy Spirit would live and dwell in the hearts of His believers. After Jesus ascended back into Heaven, His followers were baptized with the Holy Spirit. Stories of the Holy Spirit filling Christ's believers are found in Acts 2, 10, and 19.

THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLED JEWISH BELIEVERS.

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:1-4, NIV).

After being filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter preached to a crowd of people in Jerusalem with great boldness, calling all to repent and turn to God. “Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41, NIV).

THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLED GENTILE BELIEVERS.

"Even as Peter was saying these things, the Holy spirit fell upon all who were listening to the message. The Jewish believers who came with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles, too. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God" (Acts 10:44-46, NLT).

THE HOLY SPIRIT FILLED BELIEVERS IN EPHESUS.

"Paul said, 'John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.' As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all" (Acts 19:4-7, NLT).

STORIES OF NOW

We have reason to rejoice because ever since Jesus ascended back to Heaven, God has been filling the hearts of His believers with His Spirit, just as He promised He would do.

The Pentecostal movement in the United States of America began in the early 20th century as teachings and reports of people being baptized in the Holy Spirit were circulating. When a man named Charles Seymour was filled with the Holy Spirit, he continued preaching and teaching in Los Angeles, California, about how God wanted to pour out His Spirit on His people.

On April 9, 1906, William J. Seymour, along with a group of people, met in a house on Bonnie Brae Street in L.A. They cried out to God, asking Him to pour out His Spirit. Eight of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues.

It is reported that a woman named Jennie Evans Moore sat down at a piano and began to play beautiful music and sing in Hebrew. Previously, she had not known how to play the piano or to speak Hebrew. A revival—which became known worldwide as the Azusa Street Revival—began that day. It ignited a spark that would spread throughout the United States and even to other parts of the world.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS IN US

God is still pouring out His Spirit on His sons and daughters today. Millions of people across the globe currently believe in the baptism of the Holy Spirit and operate in His power.

From the moment we receive salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live in our hearts. He moves us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. "He has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son" (Colossians 1:13, NLT). But there is more. He also cleanses our lives and makes them holy for His service.

Once you have accepted Christ as Savior and know your sins are forgiven, it's time to invite the Holy Spirit to make His presences known in your life. Ask Him to fill you. "He is waiting for you to

cooperate with Him.” He wants us overflowing with His presence so He can work in and through us. Some of the work He does in us includes:

CONVICTING

In this context, conviction means we realize we have sinned and need Jesus to forgive us and make us righteous. He convicts us of our sins so we can repent and turn to Christ. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit: “When He comes, He will convict the world of its sin...” (John 16:8, NLT).

TEACHING

As the Holy Spirit dwells in us, He teaches us, helping us both understand the Scriptures and get to know Christ. The apostle John wrote, “...the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So, just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ” (1 John 2:27, NLT).

THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS THROUGH US

In Luke 24 we find an account of Jesus opening the minds of His disciples to understand the Scriptures. Then He said, “And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven” (v. 49, NLT). Once the Holy Spirit clarifies the Scriptures for us, we are able to believe in Christ and all He has done and said. The Holy Spirit desires to fill us with His power.

POWER TO WITNESS

The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to live the truth they believe. He provides different spiritual gifts to help them live and witness for Christ. For example, one of the gifts He gives is prophecy. Through the prophet Joel, God promised: “...I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy...” (2:28, NLT). The gift of prophecy enable a person to speak God’s words and share with others.

But, there are many more gifts with which the Holy Spirit empowers God's people. It's up to us to allow Him to work through us.

The Apostle Paul listed several gifts of the Spirit in his first letter to the Corinthians (12:8-12):

WORDS OF WISDOM: God-given answers and knowledge for a present need or situation. In Acts 6:1-7, the apostles used this gift to handle a dilemma among believers.

WORDS OF KNOWLEDGE: God-given information the believer did not know before. In Acts 5 Peter received a word of knowledge when dealing with Ananias and Sapphira.

DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS: The ability to know whether the Holy Spirit or an evil spirit is the cause of visible manifestations. For instance, the apostle Paul discerned an evil spirit within a slave-girl (Acts 16:16-18).

FAITH: The ability to believe and trust in God and in the authority and saving grace provided by His Son, Jesus Christ, the Messiah. An Ethiopian eunuch received this faith when he heard Philip explain the Word of God (Acts 8:26-40).

GIFTS OF HEALING: God enables His believers to pray for and lay hands on the sick for them to be physically restored. Peter asked in Jesus' name for a crippled beggar to be healed, and God raised him up (Acts 3:1-11).

WORKINGS OF MIRACLES: God-given power and strength to operate by faith in a situation where the need can be met only by a supernatural intervention from God. Paul was given the ability to perform unusual miracles (Acts 19:11-12).

DIFFERENT KINDS OF TONGUES: The ability to speak in a language the believer has not learned. Following the initial outpouring of the Spirit, Jews from every nation heard their own languages being spoken by the believers who were speaking in tongues (Acts 2:1-12).

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: The ability to interpret or "translate" what has been spoken in an unknown language. (Paul wrote to the church in Corinth about the importance of having someone interpret a word given in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:26)).

PROPHECY: The ability to communicate God's will or to speak a message to an individual or to the Body. This word from God could be delivered in the form of exhortation, encouragement, direction, or revelation. A man named Agabus approached the apostle Paul and spoke as the Holy Spirit's messenger. He told Paul about what he would face in his missionary journey (Acts 21:10, 11). He prophesied.

In the book, *This Is That! Empowered by the Holy Spirit for 21st Century Life*, Derek Prince is quoted as saying these gifts can be divided into three different categories:

Gifts of the Spirit

REVELATION GIFTS

Words of wisdom
Words of knowledge
Discerning of spirits

POWER GIFTS

Faith
Gifts of Healings
Workings of miracles

VOCAL GIFTS

Different kinds of tongues
interpretation of tongues
Prophecy

We must be careful not to confuse these gifts with the ministry gifts listed in Ephesians 4: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. The Holy Spirit empowers us with these gifts so that other believers may be encouraged and built up in their faith and so that nonbelievers may look to Christ and be saved.



HE MOVES

The first record in Scripture of the Holy Spirit “moving” is found in the second verse of the Bible: “The Earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the surface of the waters” (Genesis 1:2, KJV). The Bible contains many more stories that describe the Holy Spirit as moving in miraculous ways. And each time He moves, His goal is to capture the hearts of people and turn their attention toward God our Creator and beloved Father.

MIRACLES

Proof of the Holy Spirit’s activity can be seen in miracles such as healing, supernatural intervention, deliverance, and the giving of spiritual gifts.

HE HEALS: Peter prayed and spoke to a young woman who had died. When he told her to get up, she obeyed and revived (Acts 9:36-43).

HE SUPERNATURALLY INTERVENES: Paul and Silas were miraculously set free from prison (Acts 16:16-40).

HE DELIVERS: When Philip preached in Samaria, he performed miraculous signs and many evil spirits were cast out (Acts 8:4-8).

HE GIVES SPIRITUAL GIFTS: The Holy Spirit gave the apostles the ability to perform many miraculous signs and wonders (Acts 2:42, 43).

The Holy Spirit performs these miracles through us to point others to Christ so those who do not know Jesus may look to Him and be saved. One of His primary roles is a witness of Jesus. “God exalted him [Jesus] to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him” (Acts 5:31, 32, NIV).

OPEN YOUR EYES

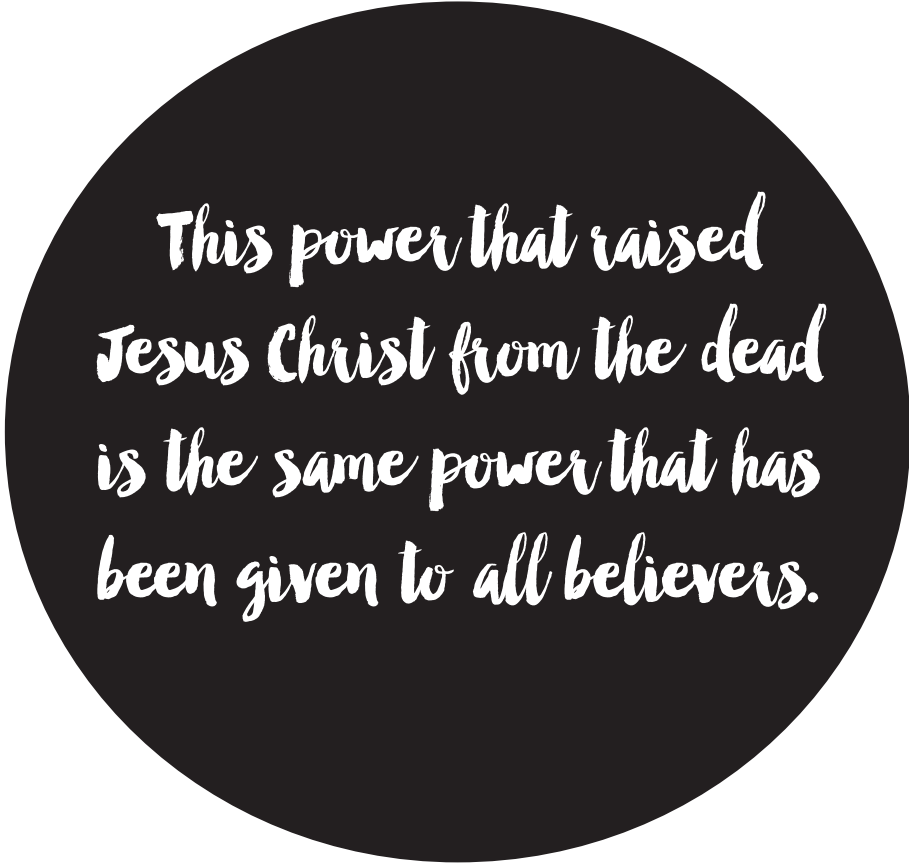
The apostle Paul wrote a letter to the church in the city of Ephesus. He told them he was praying that their hearts would be flooded with light so they might understand the hope Christ has given to those He called—His holy people. He said he was also praying that they would understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for those who believe Him. “This is the same

mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms" (see Ephesians 1:18-20, NLT).

This power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is the same power that has been given to all believers. Just prior to His ascension into Heaven, Jesus said to His disciples: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere" (Acts 1:8, NLT).

When the Holy Spirit moved upon Jesus' followers, they moved. They could not remain within the four walls of the building where they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They ran out into the streets of Jerusalem and witnessed about Jesus. Later, Jesus' apostles went out into surrounding cities throughout Judea, in Samaria, and even to the ends of the Earth.

Open your spiritual eyes to see the Holy Spirit moving all around you! He wants us to move out into the streets, surrounding cities, and even to the ends of the Earth with the power He gives to witness about Christ. Will you allow Him to flow through you in miraculous and mighty ways?



*This power that raised
Jesus Christ from the dead
is the same power that has
been given to all believers.*



HE TRANSFORMS

Have you ever felt stuck? Sometimes we repent of a sin and then find ourselves doing the same thing all over again. We may try giving up this or laying down that, but we don't seem able in our own strength to overcome it. God understands the struggles we face. So, He gave us His Spirit to help us be victorious.

WE ARE FREE!

The apostle Paul referred to a method of torture used sometimes in the Roman Empire. The person being punished would have a corpse chained to their back. Then he would be forced to live in the wilderness until he himself died. As awful as this sounds, it illustrates the condition we are in until we look to Jesus for salvation.

When we ask Jesus to save and forgive us of our sins, He breaks the chains of sin with which the enemy has us shackled and gives us freedom. Our sinful nature and desires no longer have the power to overtake or destroy us! "For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and humanity—the man Christ Jesus. He gave his life to purchase freedom for everyone" (1 Timothy 2:5, NLT).

The Holy Spirit also takes residence in our hearts and gives us the desires and power to do what pleases God. Centuries before the Holy Spirit outpouring at Pentecost, the prophet Ezekiel spoke this promise: "I [God] will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations" (Ezekiel 36:26-27, NLT). Then, following Pentecost, the apostle Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Philippi: "God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him" (Philippians 2:13, NLT).

IT'S OUR CHOICE

If we choose to submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit and follow His guidance, we remain free. "Wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Corinthians 3:17, NLT).

But this level of submission isn't always easy. The apostle Paul understood our struggle with our sinful nature. He explained it this way: "I want to do what is right, but instead I find myself doing what I hate" (Romans 7:19, 20 paraphrased). As followers of Christ, we agree with God's Word. We know the laws He gives are for our good, but sometimes we still find ourselves doing what we know is wrong.

Paul defined this dilemma as a battle in our minds. In Romans 7:25, he wrote: "...In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin" (NLT). He continued that theme in chapter 8: "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death" (Romans 8:1, 2).

Because the Holy Spirit has set us free from the power of sin, we are no longer obligated to obey the enemy or the sinful desires in our minds. He has given us the power to overcome the cravings that lure us into sin and chain us to death. We have been given the power to say, "No" to temptation and "Yes!" to the desires the Holy Spirit places in our hearts.

TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES SURRENDER

Not only does the Holy Spirit set us free from our heavy burden of sin and its power, He also restores us and transforms us into God's image. This means that with the Holy Spirit's help, we will look and act like Him. In his letter to the Romans, Paul announced this transforming power: "...I bring you the Good News so that I might present you as an acceptable offering to God, made holy by the Holy Spirit" (15:16, NLT).

Later in the same letter, Paul wrote: "God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like his Son..." (Romans 8:1, 2, NLT). This transformation, however, is not something we are able to do on our own; the Holy Spirit does the work in us. Our responsibility is to surrender to Him and His working in our lives. "God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit will never barge their way into any area of the personality. They come in when we put up the white flag of surrender, and, by a conscious act, agree to their residing and presiding within us."

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

When we choose to follow the Spirit in every part of our lives, the Holy Spirit produces Godlike characteristics in us. Paul called these traits "fruit" (Galatians 5).

"When Paul refers to the flesh, he talks about 'works,' but when he refers to the Spirit, He talks about 'fruit.' 'Works' indicate something manufactured, not natural. 'Fruit' points to something that is a natural outcome. As someone said, 'When we are in Christ, evil is alien, but goodness is natural.'"

The fruits of the Spirit can be divided into three types:

Fruits of the Spirit

UPWARD

Love: God's love prompts us to love others as He has loved us which includes actions of generosity, forgiveness and selflessness (see 1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

Joy: The Holy Spirit fills our hearts with peace and delight. We have the assurance that God is in control regardless of our circumstances (see Philippians 4:4).

Peace: The Holy Spirit empowers us to be at rest and in harmony with God.

OUTWARD

Patience: To have patience is also to possess "longsuffering." This helps us to keep peace with others and endure through the hard times in life.

Kindness: This is the ability to show thoughtful attention and mercy toward others.

Goodness: A good person possesses godly character.

INWARD

Faithfulness: The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to remain loyal to God and His truths, to believe and trust in Him and His Word.

Meekness: The Holy Spirit helps us to be gentle and humble. With this fruit at work in our lives, we are able to submit to God's commands.

Self-control: The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to make godly decisions.

IT TAKES TIME

Have you ever planted a fruit tree? First, the ground must be plowed and fertilized; then the seeds can be planted. After much time, sunlight, and water, a small green stem will begin to emerge from the ground. Eventually, this seed will grow into a plant that produces beautiful fruit. Just as this tree took a lot of nurturing and time, it also takes time for us to see spiritual fruit produced in our lives.

Godlike characteristics don't appear overnight. Our transformation is a process. The Holy Spirit waters the seed of God's Word in our hearts. As we choose to follow the Holy Spirit in every part of our lives each day, we will be transformed more and more into God's image.



HE LIVES

HE IS PRESENT

The Holy Spirit lives and is present among people of every age, generation, race, and gender. In his Day-of-Pentecost sermon, Peter promised the throng gathered around him: "...you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, and to your children, and even to the Gentiles—all who have called by the Lord our God" (Acts 2:38, 39, NLT). Peter based this message on a prophecy spoken centuries earlier by the prophet Joel: "...I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants—men and women alike" (2:28, 29, NLT).

STILL ACTIVE TODAY

Many people believe the Holy Spirit's activity ended when the original apostles died. We know, however, that He is still alive, present, and active today. He still lives in believers' hearts. He still does miracles. He still fills believers with His power.

For example, Paul told the Corinthians that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to everyone who is a part of the body of Christ—not just the apostles (see 1 Corinthians 12:8-12). Therefore, we can conclude from reading God's Word that that includes everyone who is a member of Christ's body today.

Why does He move in us miraculously? To point unbelievers to Christ and to establish, teach, and strengthen His body of believers.

HE UNITES


The Holy Spirit unites believers, causing us to treat each other as family. The book of Acts gives us a great illustration of how this "family thing" works:

"A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They

worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved" (2:43-47, NLT).

Throughout Scripture we read where the Holy Spirit demolished walls of separation between believers. He did this so they might love and support one another and bring glory to Jesus Christ. For instance, in Acts 10, the Holy Spirit broke down the racial walls between Jews and Gentiles at Cornelius' house. In Acts 15, the Holy Spirit tore down the walls that separated people of different faith traditions.

Paul instructed the believers in Ephesus to remain "united in the Spirit" (Ephesians 4). Since the Holy Spirit has made us one with other believers, it is our responsibility to remain united and not allow each other's faults, or our own pride, to divide or separate us.



*The Holy Spirit unites
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HE EMPOWERS US TO LOVE

Immediately following the passage of Scripture about spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12), Paul teaches that trying to operate in the gifts of the Spirit without love is pointless (1 Corinthians 13). Love must be the driving force and motive behind everything we do.

The gifts of the Spirit should be used in a loving fashion. Sometimes, it is hard to love those who have hurt us or who do not love us. Therefore, the Holy Spirit empowers us to love them when we look to Him for help. Also, with His love in us, we will want to use the gifts we have been given to help others and point those around us to Christ.

WHY ME?

You may be thinking: Why does the Holy Spirit want to do work in and through ME? Because He loves you. He has great plans for your life, and He wants to walk alongside you and lead you down a path that brings hope and a future. He wants what is best for you. He knows your potential. He sees that you are capable of pointing others to Christ, and in your uniqueness you are capable of bringing glory to God. He wants to help you, restore you, and empower you to do these things. And the comforting knowledge He has given us is this: He'll never leave or abandon us! May we trust Him with all of our hearts instead of leaning on our own understanding!

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek His will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take” (Proverbs 3:5, 6, NLT).

When God wrote the redemption story, He had you in mind. Every step He took was to get as close to you as possible. His greatest desire was that one day you would run into His arms. Included in the pages of His story is a chapter with your name on it. The perfect Author longs for you to trust Him with the pen. Will you surrender to the Holy Spirit's leading and let God write your story? If you do, your chapter will be one that tells of God's faithfulness and points directly to His Son, Jesus Christ!

ENDNOTES

- i. Fredrick K. Price, *Holy Spirit, the Missing Ingredient*, Harrison House, Inc., 1978.
- ii. Bold type is added in some Scripture passages for emphasis.
- iii. Doug Beacham, *PLUGGED IN TO GOD'S POWER*, Charisma House, Lake Mary, Florida, 2002, p. 56.
- iv. *This Is That! Empowered by the Holy Spirit for the 21st Century Life*, International Center For Spiritual Renewal, a compilation of wisdom from past and present ministry greats, Charisma Media, 2010.
- v. Aimee Semple McPherson, *This is That! Empowered by the Holy Spirit for the 21st Century Life*.
- vi. Aimee Semple McPherson, *This is That! Empowered by the Holy Spirit for the 21st Century Life*.