



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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ISSUE 3

Who Is The Holy Spirit?

(And What Difference Does He Make In Your Prayer Life?)

The Holy Spirit stands as the neglected member of the Trinity. Believers often forget about Him in both their faith and walk. Most believers readily and warmly respond to the description of Jesus as the Son of God. This is true because it speaks about His humanity. Moreover, the designation "Son" indicates a relationship (son-father) with which we are familiar. At the same time, in Christ, we come to know and call God "Father." "Father" conveys a rich source of images that believers relate to personally.

Yet, the title "Holy Spirit" tends to convey a remote, cold image. It makes the Holy Spirit seem distant and impersonal. The title "Holy Spirit", and especially the older designation "Holy Ghost," expresses vagueness and mystery. For these reasons, believers often see the Holy Spirit as distant and impersonal by comparison with the Father and the Son.

At a Bible conference, a woman approached me after a service. She said that she had an important question to ask me. I asked her to sit down and share her question with me. She gazed into my eyes for a few moments. Then she leaned forward and said, "Do you have *it*?" I know that I had a perplexed look on my face. She said it with greater emphasis, "Do you have *IT*?" I didn't think that I had any kind of virus or illness. I thought I was

healthy. We continued to talk and it became apparent that she had reference to the Holy Spirit. In her mind, the Holy Spirit was an "it," a cold, impersonal force, the power or energy of God.

The title "Holy Spirit" is not merely a synonym for the power of God. This title does not refer simply to God's energy. The Holy Spirit is a Person, the third Person of the Trinity. The Bible attributes to Him mind, will, and emotions, which are exclusively characteristic of a person. Impersonal objects do not have these qualities, but the Holy Spirit does. At the same time, He is equal to the Father and the Son in power and glory. The Bible attributes to Him divine qualities. These qualities reveal that He is God. The Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal to the Father and Son in power and glory.

When a sinner turns to Jesus Christ in true faith, the Holy Spirit indwells that believer (**Romans 8:9**). The Holy Spirit lives inside of the believer! He comes to reside and preside in the child of God. The purpose of the Holy Spirit's indwelling is to enable the believer to live the Christian life. If you didn't need help to live the Christian life, why did God give you a Helper? The only way that any person can know and live for God is through the presence

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and work of the Holy Spirit.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit enables the believer to pray. He is the Author of prayer (**Galatians 4:6**). Prayer is the gift of the Spirit. Because of this, we must grow in our understanding of and love for the Holy Spirit. This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will focus on the Holy Spirit. Our goal is to aid you in deepening your relationship to and love for the Holy Spirit. As you know Him more intimately and yield to Him, you will grow in your prayer life. The deeper your understanding of and love for the Spirit, the deeper and more powerful your prayer life.

The Holy Spirit Is God

The Word of God reveals that the Holy Spirit is God (**Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:17**). He is the Lord and Giver of life. He is equal to the Father and the Son in power and majesty. The Athanasian Creed (fifth century A.D.) declares, "And in this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another. But the whole three Persons are coeternal and coequal. So that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshiped."

Because the Holy Spirit is God, worship Him. In your times of prayer, take time to adore the Spirit. Praise Him for who He is and for what He does. Use the names, titles, metaphors, and works of the Spirit to magnify Him.

Because the Holy Spirit is God, fellowship with Him (**2 Corinthians 13:14**). You can talk with the Spirit. You can listen to Him. Pray for greater sensitivity to Him and fellowship with Him.

Because the Holy Spirit is God, realize that He loves you. The Holy Spirit loves you as much as the Father and the Son do. The Holy Spirit jealously desires your love and surrender.

The Holy Spirit And The Believer

The Holy Spirit carries out a variety of ministries in the life of a believer. These are a few of His works. You can read and meditate on the Scripture. Then consider with us how you can apply these truths to your prayer life.

He regenerates and gives new life (**John 3:3, 5**).

The Holy Spirit raises us up from spiritual death and gives us spiritual life. It is by His mighty power that we go from spiritual death to spiritual life. No sinner can regenerate himself; no sinner can make himself a new life. This is the work of the almighty Spirit. Adore the Holy Spirit for His mighty power in bringing you out of spiritual death and into spiritual life through Jesus. Who do you know that needs to come to Christ? Pray that the Spirit will work in their lives raising them from spiritual death and giving them new life through Christ.

He grants the assurance of salvation (**Romans 8:16**).

The Holy Spirit reveals to the believer that he is a child of God. He bears witness that the believer belongs to God. Praise the Spirit for His work of granting assurance. He lives in you to show you that you belong to God. He witnesses to you that you have come to Christ and have the hope of heaven. In the times when your assurance fluctuates, call on the Spirit to grant you the calm, confident assurance that you are God's child.

He sanctifies you (**1 Peter 1:2**).

The Holy Spirit is "holy." He lives inside of you to make you holy. He works to help you root sin out of your life. At the same time, He labors to produce godly character in you. He will not let you stay the same. He has come to make you different. Confess to the Holy Spirit your willingness to change. Praise Him for this work in your life. Ask Him to open your eyes to those sins that you need to confess and forsake. Plead with Him to show you those areas of your life that you need to change. Pray that He will produce His fruit in your life (**Galatians 5:22-23**). Cry out to Him for the deepening and broadening of His sanctifying work in your life. Daily ask the Spirit to make **1 Thessalonians 5:23** a reality in your life.

He teaches you (**John 14:26**).

Jesus reveals that the Holy Spirit will guide us in the truth. This means that He will enable us to understand, apply, and obey the truth of God's

Word. This is impossible in our own wisdom and power. The Holy Spirit must reveal the truth to us if we are to understand it, apply it, and practice it in our lives. Confess your inability to understand the Word apart from the Spirit. Call on Him to teach you the truth of God's Word. Pray that He will help you apply and obey the truth of God's Word. Don't settle with just being a hearer of the Word; call on the Spirit to empower you to make it a part of your life (**James 1:22**). This is His desire and ministry!

He guides you (Acts 8:29, 16:6-7).

The Holy Spirit lives in you in order to guide you. He seeks to lead you in the will of God. He works to guide you in opportunities to bless and minister to others. He also warns you of wrong directions and unwise decisions. Adore the Spirit for His willingness to guide you. Pray that you will grow in your sensitivity to His leadership. Plead that you will not harden your heart to His warnings. Pray for the grace to hear and obey His guidance and His warnings.

He guides and blesses you in spiritual warfare (Matthew 4:1-11).

As a child of God, you will face the enemy and his wicked schemes. If you follow Jesus, you will go into battle (**Matthew 4:1**). Yet, the Holy Spirit will aid you in the battle. He will not forsake You but will empower you. He will give you the strength and the help that you need to stand against Satan's lies. Remember that greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world! Satan is no match for the indwelling Spirit of Jesus. Praise the Spirit for His help in the midst of your spiritual battles. Confess your weakness and vulnerability without Him. Pray that He will equip you and mature you in fighting the spiritual battles of your life. If you know of others who are in the midst of battles, plead that they will depend on and rest in the Spirit, His power, and His Word.

He empowers you to witness (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit enables you to share Jesus Christ with others. The Spirit empowers you to share the life-transforming message of Jesus Christ with lost people. Without Him, we cannot powerfully and effectively share Christ. With Him, we have the hope and confidence that we

can tell others about Christ and that they will come to Jesus. Thank the Holy Spirit that He empowered others to tell you about Jesus. Pray that He will transform you into a powerful and effective witness for Christ. Ask Him for the following:

- A lifestyle that shows the power of the gospel.
- Opportunities for witness.
- The power to speak boldly and wisely for Jesus Christ

He empowers you to pray (Galatians 4:6).

The Holy Spirit enables you to cry out "Abba, Father." He is the One who makes it possible for you to speak to and commune with God. Jesus Christ has provided the access to the Father (**Ephesians 2:18**). Now, the Holy Spirit empowers you to take advantage of this privilege. In other words, Jesus opened the door to God; the Holy Spirit empowers you to enter and have fellowship with God. Praise the Holy Spirit for the gift of prayer. Thank Him for this gracious work in your life. Since the Holy Spirit enables you to pray, plead with Him to teach you how to pray. Call on Him to guide you in how to communicate with the Father. Pray that He will show you how to fellowship with the Father, the Son, and Himself. This truth stands as a warning to us. It's a reminder for us to slow down and remember that we must have the Spirit's power to pray rightly. Many times, we rush into prayer without taking the time to slow down and confess our need of the Spirit and to ask for His power to pray. Strive to slow down and seek the Spirit's help in your praying. Take the time to yield to the Spirit and have your mind and heart prepared to spend time with God.

He helps you fight against temptation (Galatians 5:17).

The Holy Spirit will aid you in saying "No!" to temptation. He can empower you from fulfilling the lust of your flesh. The temptations of our lives seem overwhelming. It appears that we cannot overcome them. Yet, by His power, we can face and conquer temptation. As we "walk" in the Spirit, we can deny our fleshly desires and say "No" to temptation. Walking in the Spirit means daily yielding to the Spirit through the spiritual disciplines of the faith. It is continually

trusting in Him and crying out for Him to work in you as you pray, get in the Word, worship, and fellowship. Pray that you will walk in the Spirit. Plead that you will keep in step with the Spirit and will say "No!" to your fleshly desires. Call on the Spirit to give you the discernment when you are getting out of step with Him. Ask that you will have great sensitivity to those times when you are about to enter into temptation.

He equips you for ministry in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7).

The Holy Spirit has given you a gift or gifts to build up the body of Christ. In His sovereignty, He grants these to believers as He wills. The gift(s) that you have are the result of His sovereign power and grace. He desires that you use these gifts in your church. He wants you to encourage, strengthen, and mature your brothers and sisters in Christ. By using your spiritual gifts, you can impact your own church. If you know your spiritual gift or gifts, praise the Holy Spirit for granting this to you. Pray that you will grow in your ability to wisely use this gift(s). If you aren't sure of your gift(s), call on the Holy Spirit to help you identify them. Ask Him to help you use your gift(s) for the building up of your church. Don't let the giftedness of others take away from the miracle of the Spirit in your life. He has given you spiritual gifts that will enable you to build up your church. Your gifts are distinct and unique gifts of the sovereign Spirit. Because of that, you have a special and necessary place in the church.

He encourages you (Acts 9:31).

The Holy Spirit lives inside of you in order to encourage you. The "comfort" of the Spirit in this text is His encouragement. He is able to give you the strength to continue in your walk with the Lord. When you don't feel that you can go on, the Holy Spirit will encourage you. When you feel overwhelmed and don't think you can stand, the Holy Spirit can enable you to stand. When you are burdened and can't see any hope, the Holy Spirit will bear you up and keep you from sinking into despair. The Holy Spirit loves you and desires to encourage you in the adverse times of your walk with God. Praise the Holy Spirit for His supernatural encouragement. Adore Him for His love and care for you, even in

times of struggle. When you need encouragement, call on the Holy Spirit whose ministry is to encourage. When you see others who need His encouragement, plead that He will unleash this in the lives of others.

He can speak through you (Mark 13:11).

The Holy Spirit can speak through you to others. He can speak powerful words of conviction to the lost. He can use you to say the words that a wounded believer needs. He can use your words to lift up a believer who has fallen. The Spirit who lives in you can speak through you to others. In order to be a vessel through which the Spirit will speak, you need two things – a clean heart and a Scripture-saturated mind. The Holy Spirit is "holy"; He desires a clean vessel. Diligently confess your sins. Deal harshly with evil when it rears its ugly head in your life. At the same time, fill your life with God's Word. Study and memorize the truth of the Word. The Word of God is the Spirit's primary way of speaking to individuals. If you desire to be a vessel for the Spirit to speak through and minister to others, fill your mind with the truths of God's Word. Flood your life with the Word. The Spirit will speak through you as you fill your life with the Word.

The Holy Spirit And The Church

The Holy Spirit also carries out a variety of ministries in the church. As you learn about these ministries, it will provide you with a variety of insight of how to pray for your church.

He establishes the church

The Holy Spirit is the Builder of the church. By the Word and His power, He draws the lost to Christ. He brings them into the body of Christ. He adds them to the body, grows, and matures them by His Word and power. By His Word and power, He uses the church to reach out to the lost and hurting. This is a powerful reminder for us today. A church must be established by and through the Spirit and the Word. We cannot give in to the latest fads in the church world. We cannot compromise for the cheap tricks and worldly schemes to build and grow churches. I