



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

believe that we must strive to be relevant and to meet people where they are. Yet, this is non-negotiable – the Spirit has to do the work through the Word. Without this, it would be more appropriate to call our churches **“Unregenerate Improvement And Enjoyment Societies.”** In a day when consumerism reigns in the church, we must anchor ourselves in the fact that the church has to be, must be, established by the Spirit through His Word and His power. Plead that your church will be established by and anchored in the Spirit – by His Word and His power. Ask that your church will depend on the Word and the Spirit to grow and to make a difference in your area. Call on the Spirit to draw and save lost people through the preaching and witness of your church. Pray that your church will depend on the Spirit by fervent prayer and faithful preaching and teaching of God’s Word.

He unifies the church (1 Corinthians 3:16).

The Holy Spirit brings believers into the body of Christ. He joins believers together in unity. The unity of believers is based on the presence and work of the Spirit in our lives. We belong to each other because the Spirit lives in us. We are joined together by the Spirit who indwells all believers. Pray that the unity of your church will rest more on the Spirit’s work than feelings and personal preferences. Ask the Spirit of God to deal with anything that will hinder the unity of your church. Call on the Spirit to draw all the believers together with one heart and one purpose.

He equips the church (1 Corinthians 12:4).

The Holy Spirit equips the believers with gifts for ministry. He grants these gifts for believers to build up and encourage all the believers that make up the church. These gifts also enable believers to reach out to lost people. Adore the Spirit for His giving and empowering of spiritual gifts in the church. Ask the Spirit to give the believers a heart for ministry and that they will actively use their gifts for this. Pray that your church will use its gifts in order to present the gospel to the lost in your area in powerful and compelling ways.

He guides the church (John 16:13).

The Spirit not only guides believers, but He also guides the church. The Spirit can lead the church in the path that God has purposed. He knows the mind and will of God. He can then reveal what God has purposed for the church. For this reason, the church must depend on the Spirit for its direction. The church must submit to Christ as its Head and the Spirit as its Guide and Teacher. The church can walk in God’s will only as it yields to the Spirit’s leading through the Word and prayer. Pray that your church, especially your leaders, will be surrendered to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Ask that your church will forsake dependence on fleshly power and human wisdom. Plead that your church will hunger for the guidance of the Spirit of God for its life and its ministry.

He appoints and places ministers in the church (Acts 20:28).

The Holy Spirit places people in their leadership positions. Your leaders are in place because of the Spirit’s appointment and enabling. They are not in place because of chance or luck. The Spirit places them where they are and grants them the power to serve. Because of this, we must give honor and respect to our spiritual leaders. There must be a willing submission to their leadership. Pray that the church will honor, cherish, and respect the spiritual leaders in your church. Call on the Spirit to mold them and shape them into more powerful and effective leaders. Ask that your leaders will remember their accountability to God and their need to depend on the Spirit for their particular ministries.

He empowers the preaching and teaching of your church (1 Corinthians 2:2).

In this text, the apostle Paul declares that his preaching was done in the power of the Spirit. He attributes the success of his ministry in Corinth to the power of the Spirit through the Word. This truth stands even to this day. The power of the Spirit and the faithful preaching and teaching of God’s Word creates genuine change in peoples’ lives. This combination is needed for real change in peoples’ lives. Pray that your pastor and the teachers of your church will be clothed with the power of the Spirit. Ask that the

Holy Spirit will work powerfully as they preach and teach God's Word. Call on the Spirit to transform people as the Word goes forth. This is a powerful reminder of the necessity of faithfully preaching and teaching the Word of God. You cannot expect powerful moves of the Spirit apart from faithful declaration of God's Word. The Spirit works through the Word of God. If you do not teach and preach God's Word, don't expect genuine life-transformation. The Spirit's tool for changing people is the Word of God.

Sins Against The Spirit

The Word of God reveals there are particular sins that we can commit against the Holy Spirit. These sins hinder our experience of His power and work. They keep us from knowing and experiencing a greater fullness of Him. The following are sins against the Spirit and how to deal with these.

Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30)

In this text, the Bible teaches us that personal sin grieves the Spirit. He is the "Holy" Spirit; He lives inside of us. When we tolerate and compromise with personal sin, He is grieved. It insults Him. It angers Him. It wounds Him. When this happens, He withholds His power. He limits His work. He does these things to show us His displeasure with these things. He also wants to teach us to hate sin and to repent. How do we deal with this sin?

- *Ask the Spirit to cause you to feel about sin as He does.* Pray that you will hate sin and grieve over sin like Him.
- *Quickly and sincerely confess your sin.* Don't allow sin to go unchecked and unconfessed. Plead for the cleansing power of Christ's blood when you sin.
- *Be sensitive to the Spirit's conviction.* When the Spirit convicts you, respond to that conviction. Don't harden your heart to any conviction of the Spirit. He doesn't convict you just to cause you pain. He desires to lead you to confess, repentance, and restoration.
- *Be quick to listen to the Spirit's warnings.* The Spirit will warn you when you are

moving toward what is sinful. Don't harden your heart or close your eyes; obey His warnings. The pleasure that sin promise cannot compare to the pain you will feel when the Spirit is grieved over your sin. The Holy Spirit who gives comfort can also make you very uncomfortable when it comes to sin.

Quenching The Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

The Holy Spirit desires to work powerfully in your life and through your life. He desires to make you holy. He longs to teach you the Scripture. He strives to speak to the lost through your witness. Quenching the Spirit means failing to believe and trust Him for His supernatural work. It is unbelief concerning His mighty power and amazing grace. The Spirit of God works powerfully in an atmosphere of belief. The Spirit withholds His power and work in an atmosphere of unbelief (**Matthew 13:58**). How do we confront this?

- *Pray that you will grow in your faith.* Ask that you will grow in your trust of the Spirit and His power to work in you and through you.
- *Confess your unbelief.* Ask God to help you root it out of your life. Unbelief robs the believer of experiencing the fullness of the Spirit's work and power.
- *Ask for an atmosphere of belief in your church.* Call on God to cultivate an atmosphere of belief in your church. Pray that your church will long for, pray for, and expect powerful moves of the Spirit.

Resisting The Spirit (Genesis 6:3, Acts 6:9-10, Acts 7:51)

In the above texts, people are said to "resist" the Spirit. What does it mean to "resist" the Spirit? Each of these texts has the preaching of truth in view. **Genesis 6:3** refers to the preaching of Noah. The references in **Acts 6** and **7** both deal with the preaching of Stephen. According to these texts, resisting the Spirit is resisting the preaching of the Word. The preaching and teaching of the Word is a work of the Spirit. It has a human instrument. Yet ultimately, the preaching of the Word is the Spirit's unique work. To resist the Word is to

resist the Spirit. This dangerous sin must be avoided. How can you avoid this?

- *Ask God to prepare your heart to hear and receive God's Word.* Heart preparation is essential to hearing and receiving the Word. Resisting the Spirit happens when you do not prepare for the preaching/teaching of the Word.
- *Don't be content with simply hearing the Word.* Don't be deceived into thinking that hearing the Word is enough. We must combine hearing and obedience. God wants you to hear and put the Word into practice.
- *Strive to apply at least one truth to your life when you hear the Word.* When you hear a sermon or a lesson, labor to make at least one application to your life. Respond in at least one way to the truth of the Word.
- *Combine faith with hearing.* Receive the Word for what it is – the Word of God. When you sit under the preaching and teaching of the Word, trust and accept His Word as the very Word of God.

Intimacy With The Spirit

The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son. He loves you and desires you as much as the Father and Son. You are to cultivate intimacy with the Spirit. You are to develop your relationship to the Holy Spirit. The following prayers are offered to help you pray for this greater intimacy.

Holy Spirit, I worship You. I adore You as God. You are equal to the Father and the Son. Teach me more about You. Help me to know You as You are.

Holy Spirit, make me sensitive to You and Your work in my life. I don't want to harden my heart to You. I yield myself to You.

Holy Spirit, fill me with Your power. I need Your power. I can't make it without You. Help me, Holy Spirit, help me. You are my indwelling Helper.

Holy Spirit, increase my faith in Your ability to work and move. Deliver me from the unbelief that quenches You.

Holy Spirit, thank You for indwelling me. Guide me every day. Lead me in the Father's will. Shut the doors that are not in the Father's will for my life.

Holy Spirit, make me holy. You are holy; transform me. Help me to root out sin; produce your fruit in my life.

Holy Spirit, I want to keep in step with You. Help me to walk in Your power and direction each day.

The 3/10 Partners

God has blessed this ministry with numerous opportunities. The newsletter goes out worldwide. We are producing a variety of materials being used in churches and seminaries. We are in the process of building a ministry facility that will house our ministry and enable us to hold seminars and conferences. We are looking to expand our radio and television ministry. Our web sites receive hits from believer and unbelievers from across the world. We are striving to create relevant materials that will encourage and equip believers and churches in prayer and revival.

As the opportunities come, we also have the challenge of financing this ministry. Our growth has presented us with a blessed challenge – sustaining this ministry financially. We stand in need of financial support to continue our ministry and to act on the opportunities that are offered to us.

We do trust God for the provision of what we need. Yet, at the same time, we also know that God uses people. We believe God for the finances. However, we have to have God's people give and support this ministry. For this reason, we are beginning **The "3/10 Partners."** We are asking for 3000 believers who will give \$10.00 or more a month to this ministry. People often tell me that they can't give much. They say they want to give but that they can't give much. If you will give, God will honor your gift.

God will bless and use what you give. It's not so much about your ability to give, as it is your faithfulness to give. God will bless your faithfulness.

If you become a **3/10 Partner**, we will send you monthly updates, prayer requests, and envelopes for your gift. You will also receive special offers on our materials. At the same time, you will join us in reaching and touching the world for Jesus Christ. Your donations will go to ministry. No one at The Prayer Closet receives a salary. Your gifts go to making a difference in the lives of people.

We need believers who will give and pray faithfully for this ministry. We ask you to join us in touching and reaching the world for Christ. If you would like to become a **3/10 Partner**, please contact us at The Prayer Closet, P.O. Box 278, Hickory, MS 39332, 601-646-2295, prayer@prayerclosetministries.org.

No School Left Uncovered
Prayerwalking And Interceding For Your School

The devil is out to destroy our children and youth. He has made the schools of our

lands the battleground. The church must stand in the gap for the schools of our land.

For this reason, The Prayer Closet is sponsoring a seminar entitled "*No School Left Uncovered.*" This seminar is designed to help believers and churches pray faithfully and powerfully for the schools around them. It will offer a variety of ideas, ministries, and materials to aid you in covering your schools. It will also instruct believers on how to prayerwalk their schools. Dr. Kevin Meador will lead this seminar. This conference will be on July 28 at Hickory Baptist Church in Hickory, MS. It will from 9:00 AM to noon. For more information about this conference, please contact us at The Prayer Closet.

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