

Adjusting to the Holy Spirit, Part II

The Lord is near. —Philippians 4:5

There are several ways in which He may test our willingness to welcome Him. He may gently suggest that your attitude toward someone is not right. If you push this thought to one side, the chances are that the Spirit may well unobtrusively slip away. You cannot be selective in the manner He may choose to come. When the Spirit departs like this, as I have been saying, you usually feel nothing at first. And yet you do feel something—righteousness in yourself that your attitude is justified.

I've been in that position a thousand times. I know what it is to feel so upset that they could do such a thing! Often I have conversations with myself, imagining what I will say to the other person. I rehearse what the other person did. "That can't be right," I keep saying. I even imagine that I hear God saying, "Of course that's not right." I start feeling good, as if God is on my side—not theirs. I tell myself that I sense the presence of the heavenly Dove. Wrong! If anything, it's a pigeon.

When I welcome the Holy Spirit I must take Him as He wants to come. He may flood my soul with joy and peace. He may highlight a verse as I read the Bible, showing me something I hadn't seen before. I love it when He applies the Word to a current situation in such a manner that I know what to do that day. I don't like it, however, when that Word instructs me to apologize to my wife—or a deacon, friend, or fellow minister—before I can feel great peace again.

Of one thing we can be sure, however. The end result of the Holy Spirit's manifestation provides considerable inner peace.

Peace.

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