

Do You Really Know the Holy Spirit?

I'm sure most of us can remember Saturday morning cartoons or comic books filled with superheroes. These defenders of humanity were very strong and always showed up in the nick of time ready to "save the day!" How exciting!

But real life isn't at all like the cartoons, is it? Life is more serious than a comic book. And often it might feel like we have no one to help us in hard times. However, as Christians, we do. We have the extraordinary, supernatural power of the Holy Spirit available to us each and every day of our lives.

When we accepted Christ as our Savior, the Holy Spirit came to dwell on the inside of us. You could say that God gave us each a piece of Himself. That means a lot more than we can imagine, because He brought with Him all the power, the peace and the presence of God. He came to live in us and have constant fellowship with us.

Jesus told His disciples in John 16:7-8, "I am telling you nothing but the truth when I say it is profitable (good, expedient, advantageous) for you that I go away. Because if I do not go away, the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengtheners, Standby) will not come to you [into close fellowship with you]; but if I go away, I will send Him to you [to be in close fellowship with you]" (AMP).

What they didn't understand at first was that Jesus was *with* them, but the Holy Spirit would come to live *in* them. He is the same Holy Spirit-Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengtheners and Standby-Who lives in us today! And all of His authority, strength, comfort, creativity and help are available to us as we need it. All we have to do is

ask. He's the real-life Superhero Who doesn't just show up in the nick of time, but He is *always* there! And He is available to help you right now.

Do you need a Comforter? In 2 Corinthians 1:3, He is called the God of all comfort. And He cares about everything that we care about. When we are hurting, many times we will look to other people to help us feel better—and often, we find they don't have everything we need. But the Holy Spirit, Who dwells on the inside of us, knows us better than anyone else, so when we are hurting, He knows exactly how to bring the strength, healing and *comfort* we need. He will often use other people to comfort us, but we need to learn how to turn to Him first.

Maybe you need a Counselor. How many times have you run to the phone when you needed advice? When you have a problem, who do you tell your troubles to? People can only help you to the degree that God enables them to help you. But, it is amazing what can happen when we ask the Holy Spirit for answers to our problems. Now, I'm not saying don't ever ask people for advice. The Bible tells us there is safety in seeking wise counsel. But if we seek the Holy Spirit first, He will guide us, whether by giving us the answer directly or leading us to the right counsel.

Do you need the Helper? He wants to help us with every single detail of our lives. I know for years, I felt like it was okay to come to Him with my "serious" problems while I didn't want to bother Him with "small" things. But the truth is it doesn't matter whether it's a serious issue, such as conflict in a relationship, or something as simple as fixing your hair in the morning. God is bigger than any of our problems and He cares about everything that concerns us. I think the most spiritual prayer we can pray sometimes is simply, "Help me, Lord!"

How about an Advocate or Intercessor? The Holy Spirit prays for us and through us. The Bible says He not only intercedes

on our behalf to the Father, but He also helps us to pray when we don't know how or what to pray (see Romans 8:26). And as our advocate, He is always ready to stand with us or to defend us. No matter what, He is *always* on our side!

Perhaps you could draw on the Strengtheners. It's the strength of the Holy Spirit that enables us to do whatever we need to do in life. I never start my day without asking Him to strengthen me—physically, mentally and every other way. Because no matter how strong, talented or capable we think we are, every single one of us needs God's strength to accomplish His will in our lives.

He will always be your Standby. If you've ever been on "standby" status for an airline flight, you know it means you have to wait for an open seat to become available. When that opening comes, you can board the plane. In much the same way, the Holy Spirit waits patiently for us to seek His comfort, counsel and strength. The moment we ask for His help, He is *always* ready to step in.

This life is so unpredictable, who wouldn't want the ability to live victoriously! If you are born again, the Holy Spirit is *in* you. He wants to enable you to live your life to the fullest. He knows exactly what you need and when you need it, and He is always ready and willing to help. It doesn't bother Him in the least if you ask for His help a thousand times a day. He knows you better than anyone, and if you let Him, He will lead and guide you according to His perfect plan for your life!

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