

Satan's Dangerous Deception to Keep Christians Impotent

Lord, I don't want to settle for the closeness I have with You now. I know there's more—a lot more. I want more of Your Spirit's closeness, more intimacy with You, more Christlike transformation, and more power in my life. I'm crying out for more of You, Jesus, for I know there is so much more to be had.

May our desire to experience more of the Holy Spirit be our starting point, not our end-game. And may we open our hearts and lives to His presence and action more fully than we have ever done before. By the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, we can be a people who live a life of transformation and power—a life that clearly points to the one who deserves all of our praise. It is by the power of the Holy Spirit that we are progressively made into the image and likeness of Christ, and it is by His might that we are empowered to live the life Jesus called us to live.

You might think that calling the Holy Spirit the “forgotten God” is a bit extreme. Maybe you agree that the church has focused too much attention elsewhere, but feel it is an exaggeration to say we have forgotten about the Spirit. I don't think so.

From my perspective, the Holy Spirit is tragically neglected and, for all practical purposes, forgotten. While no evangelical would deny His existence, I'm willing to bet there are millions of churchgoers across America who cannot confidently say they have experienced His presence or action in their lives over the past year. And many of them do not believe they can.

There is a big gap between what we read in Scripture about the Holy Spirit and how most believers and churches operate today. In many modern churches, you would be stunned by the apparent

absence of the Spirit in any manifest way. And this, I believe, is the crux of the problem.

If I were Satan and my ultimate goal was to thwart God's kingdom and purposes, one of my main strategies would be to get churchgoers to ignore the Holy Spirit. The degree to which this has happened—and I would argue that it is a prolific disease in the body of Christ—is directly connected to the dissatisfaction most of us feel with and in the church. We understand something very important is missing. The feeling is so strong that some have run away from the church and God's Word completely.

I believe that this missing *something* in our church experience is actually a missing *Someone*—namely, the Holy Spirit. Without Him, people operate in their own strength and only accomplish human-size results. The world is not moved by love or actions that are of human creation. And the church is not empowered to live differently from any other gathering of people without the Holy Spirit. But when believers live in the power of the Spirit, the evidence in their lives is supernatural. The church cannot help but be different, and the world cannot help but notice.

My prayer is that your changed life would produce this kind of astonishment: “When they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were illiterate and uneducated men, they marveled. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13, MEV).

Pray and Experience Scripture

Let God transform you into a new person (Rom. 12:2).

Pause for a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to show you an area of your life that needs His transformation—specifically, a change that is needed that will only be explained by the work and presence of the Spirit of God. Ask God's Spirit to make such a change in you that others can't help but recognize that

you have been with Jesus.

Holy Spirit, what part of my life needs to change today? What part of my life needs to change in such a way that people around me can't help but notice? Show me, Lord. And then empower that change within me. I want to be a beacon of transformation that points others to You. {eo}

Excerpt from Cry Out to the Lord that includes this full article and more than 20 authors.