

Are You Befriending the Holy Spirit?

I committed my life to Christ in the summer of 2000. I was 11 years old. Though young, having been raised in a Christian home, I understood the implications of such a commitment. As it goes with conversion experiences, my meeting with Christ, the Son of God, was quite dramatic. However, in the coming months, I was to experience numerous intense and transformative divine encounters.

You see after I was saved, I became increasingly fascinated by the person of Christ. He became my fixation—I read about Him, listened to sermons about Him and prayed to Him. His royal countenance, majestic and alluring, inspired within me a passionate pursuit. Soon enough, my soul longed for one thing, and that one thing was encapsulated in these simple words: “Jesus, I want to know You more.”

Those words began as a whisper but soon grew to be an inner shout. My desire to be drawn closer to Jesus began to demonstrate itself in long hours of prayer and the reading of several Bible chapters a day. My every moment was filled with an immediate awareness of God’s nearness. Throughout my days, I sensed a purposeful pull upon my will; I could sense the guiding hand of God. He used circumstances, conversations and occurrences to speak to me. And I was listening.

The more I knew of Him, the more I wanted to know. There was a beautiful and energizing grace that compelled my every spiritual act. There was a flow to my prayer and devotion.

But then, seemingly out of nowhere, I felt a growing distance between God and myself. The clear image of Jesus, that the eyes of my heart had so clearly beheld, began to fade.

On this point, I must briefly digress to clarify: I do not

believe that God ever abandons the believer. On the contrary, the Scripture declares that He is an ever present help in times of need.

“God is our refuge and strength, a well-proven help in trouble” (Ps. 46:1).

I know now that when God “withdrew” from me, He did so only in regards to my feelings. And He used that sense of distance to cause me to seek Him more, for He loves to be sought. He wasn’t toying with me by any means. Rather, He was testing me and moving me to greater depths. The reward for seeking Him is a revelation of Him. Nonetheless, that reward, at that time, seemed to be negative. I mistook the privilege of His drawing for the punishment of distance. But He was drawing me deeper.

He wanted to show me something greater!

So what was He trying to show me?

I’d soon discover it.

During that time when I felt disconnected from God, I became frustrated. I so badly wanted to close the “gap” and know more of Jesus. Feeling as though something was missing in my spiritual life, I prayed prayers like, “Father, there must be more than this. There just has to be more!”

I agonized and pleaded in prayer. My sense of desperation was so profound that my physical body would tense. Clenching my fists, I would press my face into a tear-drenched carpet and call out to God. Unsettling thoughts intruded my mind—thoughts like, “God, are You angry with me?” and “Lord, did I do something wrong?”

I had applied everything I knew. I had read the books on prayer, attended the church conferences and even had mighty servants of God lay hands on me for impartation. My efforts proved to be of no avail.

Throughout those days, God was rarely far from my mind. Every moment in which I accommodated a pause, I pondered my severe need to connect to God in greater measures.

Was that all? I wondered, *Was that all there was to be experienced the I AM – Eternity Himself?* A quiet but deep knowing assured me, “Son, there’s something more.”

It was because of this seeking despair that I began to watch Christian television. As much as was possible, I wanted to take advantage of my time for the sake of spiritual growth. That time included my TV viewing habits. I was trying to fill my days with the richness of biblical revelation.

But what I was longing to experience is not possible to receive from mere learning. What I would come to embrace needed to be caught, not taught. And, through the sovereign use of my frustration and desperation, God had already set me on a path to divine destiny.

Because of what I had experienced, my spiritual hunger pangs grew. And that desire for sustenance placed me before the TV, expectantly watching God’s anointed servants.

It was truly divine destiny.

So there I was, flipping through the various Christian TV networks. Suddenly, on TBN, an image appeared on my screen that pulled me in. The moment my eyes caught a glimpse of the programming, the atmosphere in my room changed—it became alive and energized! Forgive my use of the word, but what I saw was hypnotic!

I watched as slow-paced camera shots transitioned from one peaceful face to another. I immediately could tell that I was watching a worship service.

The people seemed to be captured in a glorious state of euphoric spiritual ecstasy. I watched as tears streamed down

faces. The worship music sounded heavenly as if angelic beings had joined in the melodies. The words they were singing had a rich, lofty depth to them that I, in an instant, came to appreciate. Starting with a soft and gentle praise, the people in this worship service began to raise the intensity with which they worshipped. The choir, accompanied by piano and violin, led thousands in glorious adoration of Jesus.

Suddenly, the worship scenes were disrupted by a transition to another portion of the church service. I expected at this point to hear preaching or teaching, as I had seen on all of the other Christian TV programs. I was pleasantly surprised.

This time, it was different.

A man, elated with astonishment, came to the stage, praising God and claiming to be healed of some crippling ailment. Leaving his wheelchair behind, the man leaped for joy, as the crowd erupted in celebratory commotion.

The pastor was just as excited and went to interview the man claiming to be healed.

At this point, I was already glued to my TV.

Then, as the pastor approached the man and the group that accompanied him, the people fell backward as if overcome by some unseen weight. The moment I saw that, something deep within me ignited. Whatever it was the preacher carried, I wanted it. The presence of God was so heavy upon him that people couldn't stand up next to him while he was under that anointing.

I can't really explain it, but somehow I knew that this was the "something more" I so desperately sought. Not only did I know it was something I needed to glean from, I knew, even as a kid in that divine moment of destiny, that this was the ministry God had for me.

That something more was the in-filling of the Holy Spirit.

That something more was my call to the healing ministry.

That something more was the manifested presence of the Holy Spirit.

After witnessing what I witnessed on TBN, I was forever changed. My prayer life was re-energized, and I knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, what I was called to do for God.

The Holy Spirit intensified the reality of Jesus with such detail and clarity that Christ became more real to me than my own flesh! But I didn't just see Him more clearly. His person possessed, filled and took over more of my very being!

Soon, my prayer life began to change. I prayed bold and audacious prayers. "Holy Spirit," I prayed, "This pastor says that I can know You as a friend. He tells me that You can use my life for Your glory. Please, Holy Spirit, use me. Give me a double portion! Guide me. Fill me. Empower me. Let my hands be Your hands; heal through them. Let my eyes be Your eyes; let me see through Your truth. Let my feet be Your feet; tell me where to go. Let my ears be Your ears; speak to me! Let my mouth be Your mouth; speak through me! Let my being be Your Being. Let my heart beat as one with Yours. Let my will be crucified; I'll live for your will, not mine!"

It was only after this season of my life that I began to see things shift. There was an ease added to my prayer, worship and devotion. I went from sipping from a cup to being carried by a river! The toil and strain of the flesh were replaced by the simplicity and ease of the Spirit.

That experience with the person of the Holy Spirit radically changed everything about me. After that, miracles began to happen all around me. Total strangers would begin to weep and shake around me for reasons unknown to them. (We know it's the Holy Spirit and God's glory.) Demons began to manifest. I

began to experience the book of Acts!

That something more changed everything for me, and that something more can change everything for all who believe.

It was then that I realized that the glory of God is not something to be experienced in a fleeting moment. It is the fullness of His ever-present being, whole and complete, lacking in neither power nor substance, abiding in you. You are God's dwelling place, His holy habitation, a host of His presence, a carrier of His glory.

Dear reader, you can have that too. I'm writing about a friendship with the person of the Holy Spirit. He will enable you to pray more effectively, live more righteously, worship more sincerely and know Jesus in greater depths than you ever imagined possible.

To learn more about being God's dwelling place, go to .

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