

Session 5 Fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit

I. INTRODUCTION

This is session five of Growing in Prayer, part 2.

- A. Paul wrote of the blessing of fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1).

¹⁴May the...love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14, NIV)

¹...if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy... (Phil. 2:1)

Paul wrote of the blessing of fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit. In 2 Corinthians 13:14, he said, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.” In Philippians 2, he talked about the “fellowship of the Spirit,” or as one translation says, “fellowship with the Holy Spirit;” it is the same reality. The Holy Spirit is a dynamic person who lives inside of our spirit. I know we all know that, but sometimes we end up reducing the Holy Spirit to a power source or an influence. He is a very powerful, dynamic, eternal person. He is as much God as the Father and the Son are: one God in three persons.

- B. The Holy Spirit is a dynamic person, who lives inside our spirit. We are to fellowship, or commune, with Him by talking with Him often. We must value and cultivate our friendship with the Spirit in an intentional way. One way to do this is by speaking to Him as the God who dwells within us.

Now just to be very simple, the point I am going to develop throughout this session is that we fellowship with Him simply by talking with Him. It does not end there, but that is the core reality. We talk to Him, and He talks back to us or inspires ideas into our heart. The point I want to emphasize tonight is that we want to value our relationship with the Holy Spirit so much that we cultivate it in an intentional way. We cultivate a friendship with Him. We do this by speaking to the God who dwells within us. We pray, “Our Father who art in heaven,” but there is a time to actually talk to the God who dwells in us. If this is a new idea to you, you will see it more clearly as we unfold the Scriptures. I know to many of you this is a familiar idea, but it is one we need to be constantly reminded of and called back to doing.

- C. Some refer to this activity as abiding prayer, contemplative prayer, communing prayer, centering prayer, or the prayer of quiet. There are other names for this type of prayer in various traditions.
- D. A vibrant walk with the Spirit is essential in our quest to experience more of God. It is futile to seek deep experiences with God while neglecting the Spirit’s leadership and relationship in our lives. We cannot go deep in God with a dull spirit. It is a glorious privilege for every believer to be able to fellowship with the Holy Spirit to the degree to which He desires.

A vibrant walk with the Holy Spirit is essential to experiencing more of God. Everybody wants to experience more of God. I do not know of any believer not saying, “Oh, I want to go deeper! I want to experience more.” A vibrant walk with the person who dwells in us is critical to that. It is easy to overlook that relationship with Him while seeking a deeper experience.

The Holy Spirit could say, “I am the escort who leads you into the fullness of God’s heart.” It is futile to expect deep experiences while we neglect His leadership in our life or our relationship with Him.

- E. Our greatest destiny is to grow in intimacy with God through the indwelling Spirit and thus share in the “family dynamics” of the Trinity. God has so opened His heart and family life to His people that we may have deep fellowship with Him. This is the essence of Christianity and of true prayer.

Our greatest destiny is to grow in intimacy with God through the indwelling Spirit. Even our fellowship with the Father and the Son is through the agency and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. I call Him “the Great Escort” to help us encounter the Father and the Son. Thus our destiny is that we would share and participate in the family dynamics of the Trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwell together in perfect love. They have beckoned the people of God, the Body of Christ, to be His family, far beyond what angels are called to. We actually participate in some of the dynamics of the fellowship, the love, and the enjoyment of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God has so opened His heart to share with us some of the deep parts of His family life, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Again it is one God in three persons, the great mystery of the blessed Trinity. This is really the essence of Christianity—fellowship with God.

Christianity is so much more than getting out of hell, though I always appreciate that. It is so much more than getting our circumstances blessed, though I really like that, too. It’s so much more than having a powerful ministry and impacting people, though I like that. The essence is that as human beings we interact and participate in the family dynamics of God forever. Beloved, this is awesome that we are called into this kind of relationship with Him. The very first priority and call of prayer is communion with God. Yes, we release His power. Yes, we release blessing, but communion and interaction with Him is the very first call of the subject of prayer. We do not limit it to that, but we do not neglect it either.

- F. Many think of prayer only in terms of seeking God’s help to solve their problems and gain blessings in their circumstances. Prayer is first a call to communion with God by the indwelling Spirit.
- G. I want to be a “person of the Spirit”—to know the Spirit in my interior life as well as in my exterior ministry. Walking in the Spirit involves much more than prophesying, healing the sick, or praying in faith to release God’s blessing on others. I also want to be a “man of the Spirit” in my inner life.

I want to be a person of the Spirit; I want to be a man of the Spirit. This involves knowing the Holy Spirit in my internal life as well as my external ministry. Some people talk about this, saying, “Oh, she is really a woman of the Spirit” or “He is a man of the Spirit.” What they mean is that those people operate in the prophetic; they see visions, they pray for people, and dynamic things happen. I love that. I want to be a man of the Spirit by that definition, but being a person of the Spirit is not limited to operating in the gifts of the Spirit.

I want to be a man of the Spirit in my interior life. I want to know Him. I do not mean just obey Him. I do want to obey Him, but I mean more than that. I want to interact with Him, I want to enjoy Him, and I want Him to enjoy talking with me. That is what I mean by being a man of the Spirit, as well as then releasing His power and being a vessel of His glory to other people.

II. GOD CREATED US WITH THREE PARTS

- A. God created every human being with three parts: a spirit, a soul, and a body. One man summarized this reality: “*We are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body.*” Our soul is our personality, which consists of our mind, emotions, and will—sometimes referred to as our “heart” in Scripture.

²³And may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord. (1 Thes. 5:23)

To understand fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit, it is important we understand how God created us in three parts. This is very, very, very simple and fundamental. We are spirit, soul, and body. One man said that we are a spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a body. I like that; it is a bit simplistic, and there is more to it than that, but I think that is just a good grid or framework for thinking about this. We are a spirit. When you live forever in eternity, you will not have the same body; you will have a resurrected body. You will have the same DNA, but it will be resurrected with a supernatural dimension to it. You are a spirit, you have a soul, and you live in a body.

In popular language the soul is our personality. It consists of our mind, emotions, and will. Sometimes the Scripture refers to this dimension of our human makeup as the heart. Sometimes the mind, sometimes the heart, sometimes together, it is all connected together. Paul calls it the inner man. So it is not like one verse says it all in a really systematic breakdown. Often when the Bible is talking about the heart, it combines the mind and the will in the idea of the heart, and sometimes they are distinct. The heart would focus on the emotions versus the mind focusing on the thinking, etc.

- B. At the new birth our spirit is joined to God so that we are one spirit with Him (Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:17). The reality of the new birth is that the Spirit comes to live in our born-again spirit. Salvation involves more than being forgiven. We have a new connectedness with God by the Holy Spirit.

¹⁷But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him...¹⁹Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you? (1 Cor. 6:17-19)

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:17, “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with God.” I mean that is amazing. I read that and think, “Oh, Paul, that is dramatic!”

I think Paul would say, “That is my point.” He goes on, “Do not you know”—the context of this is when he was calling them out of immorality, the different ones were stumbling in immorality—“do you not understand that your physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?” It was like he was saying that the Holy of Holies is inside of you. I mean that is not a complete statement but in that dimension of the Shekinah glory, the indwelling God, is actually in you, so you are a temple.

The reality of the new birth is much more than that we are forgiven. I love the truth of being forgiven. The reality of the new birth is God dwelling forever in the human spirit. Our born-again spirit has received the righteousness of God in Christ, the very righteousness of Christ, because the Holy Spirit could not live in our born-again spirit. He could not live in our spirit if our spirit was not made righteous, because God cannot dwell in darkness. It is in our mind and emotions that we struggle with the darkness and the desires in our body. Our human spirit is the place where God the Holy Spirit lives in us.

Now we cannot measure our human spirit by our five senses, though I would like to get a handful of my spirit and analyze it, but we cannot discern the human spirit. We cannot measure it; we cannot evaluate it by our five natural senses. We can feel the impact of the Spirit inspiring our mind and emotions, but God the Holy Spirit lives in your spirit. Not just a little touch of God, I am talking about the fullness of God dwelling in our spirit in the sense of the fullness of what God has ordained for the human spirit to have. The point I am making is that in the resurrection your spirit man does not receive more of God. Your mind and emotions are more inspired, your body reflects the glory of God more, but your spirit man already has as much of the fullness of God as God has ordained for the human experience to ever have, even in the resurrection. You have it right now, from the day you are born again. We have this new and deep connectedness with God.

- C. The Spirit flows from our spirit, which is translated as “belly” in the King James Version, and, more accurately, as “innermost being” in the New American Standard Bible.

³⁸***“He that believeth on Me...out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (Jn. 7:38, KJV)***

³⁸***“He who believes...from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.” (Jn. 7:38, NASB)***

The King James Version says, “He that believes on Me, out of his belly will flow rivers of living waters.” The New American Standard—which is probably arguably the most accurate or one of the top most accurate English translations. It is number one or two or three. Some say another one is, whatever, but it is right at the top—it does not use the word out of your “belly,” but out of your “innermost being,” in other words, the human spirit. Notice the word that Jesus used is flow. There is a flow, a progressive, sustained release of His presence. It flows like a river. That is an interesting. Forever it will be flowing in you. Not “it,” He the Holy Spirit will be flowing in you like a river.

- D. The Holy Spirit springs up from our spirit to impact our heart, i.e., mind and emotions (Jn. 4:14).

¹⁴***“The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” (Jn. 4:14)***

In John 4, Jesus refers to the same reality but says it differently. He says, “The water I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up.” In John 7 He says it is like a river flowing. In John 4, it is like a fountain springing up because the Holy Spirit dwells in your human spirit, and His influence springs up to inspire your mind, inspire your emotions, and to release the power of God through you to bless others.

- E. Jesus promised that the Spirit would flow like a river springing up out of our spirit to inspire, direct, and transform our mind and emotions and minister through us to others. He lives in our born-again spirit in fullness at the new birth, yet the measure with which He expresses Himself in our mind and emotions grows progressively. The more we engage our mind with the indwelling Spirit, the more our mind and emotions are renewed; thus we are transformed by renewing our minds (Rom. 12:2). The more our minds and hearts are renewed, the more God expresses Himself in and through us.

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would flow like a river and spring up out of our spirit. Again He dwells in our born-again spirit, but we want Him to inspire, transform, direct, and mold our mind and our emotions, our thinking and our feelings. It is very simple; the more we engage our mind by talking to the Spirit, the more our mind and emotions are renewed by His influence. Again He dwells in our spirit. I do not know of a perfect way to say where the location of our spirit, but I like the King James term, out of your belly. When I think of God the Holy Spirit living in me—this is an imperfect analogy and an imperfect picture but—I think of the Shekinah glory of God dwelling in my spirit, my belly, not my physical man, but my born-again spirit like the Holy of holies in the Old Testament temple. The more we engage with that Person who dwells in our spirit, the more this impacts our mind and emotions.

- F. Because the Scripture describes God as light (1 Jn. 1:5), we can think of light as being inside our born-again spirit where the Spirit dwells. I think of the Spirit as the Shekinah glory of God dwelling in my spirit. When I talk to the Spirit, I picture Him as a glorious light—a bright, diamond-like, glorious person shining in my spirit. (That is not exactly how it is, but this helps me to focus.)

The Scripture describes God as light. So I think of the Shekinah glory of God. The Shekinah glory of God is a term that they used in the Old Testament. In the temple they had the outer court, the inner court, and they had

that little room about the size of this platform—not exactly but I mean it was not really big, a little bit bigger than this. In that room there was one place on the earth where the Shekinah glory dwelt. I think of Moses seeing God in the burning bush. That manifest glory was literally residing in that little room called the Holy of holies.

Now He dwells like that in our spirit. It is an imperfect description of how to say it, but God the Holy Spirit dwells like light, like the Shekinah glory, literally dwelling in our spirit. When I talk to Him, I picture this glorious, diamond-like, radiant being, God the Shekinah glory, God the Holy Spirit dwelling in my spirit and I talk to Him. Now that is not a perfect explanation; that is not exactly how it is. I do not know of a perfect word picture or analogy, but that kind of gets you into the right framework. I think we are talking to a real Person who is bigger than our descriptions.

- G. Focusing on the Spirit will always lead us to glorify and obey Jesus and His Word (Jn. 16:14). Some false religions speak of gazing into an internal light; they present a counterfeit, because they neither possess the indwelling Spirit nor lead people to love and obey Jesus.

¹⁴**“He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.” (Jn. 16:14)**

Whenever I talk about fellowshiping with the Holy Spirit, some people get all worried, which I actually appreciate. I do not want to get so into the Holy Spirit that I forget Jesus. I think, “Good! I like that.” Believe it or not, it is the Holy Spirit who is the Author of that zeal in you. There is nobody more zealous and loyal to Jesus than the Holy Spirit. I promise you that if you talk to Him, He will be leading you into greater understanding of Jesus’ glory and greater embracing of Jesus’ leadership and Word in your life. You will not be led astray if you get into a conversation with God the Holy Spirit.

Now the reason some are worried when they first hear this is because some of the false world religions talk about God as light dwelling in the human frame, every human frame. No, there is no light dwelling in a person who is not born again. The light is only by the person of the Holy Spirit. Before the Holy Spirit comes to live in us at the new birth, there is no light. There is no inner light to connect with; that is a counterfeit, and that is a deception. Those religions do not have the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not live in people in context to those religions. The Holy Spirit is not leading people to Jesus in the theological framework of those false religions. So we are not into that at all. That is not what I am talking about, and that is not what the Bible talks about.

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, “I assure you, He will glorify Me. He will take what is Mine, He will take what pertains to Me, and He will lead people to Me. He will only reveal what makes people more loyal to Me.” So we are in good hands.

But I like it when people are a little nervous at the front end. I say, “That is good. Good, that is a good heart. Holy Spirit is already working that in you.”

III. WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

- A. Paul exhorted us to walk in the Spirit, promising that, if we do so, we shall not end up yielding to the lustful desires of the flesh (Gal. 5:16).

¹⁶**Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh [sinful desires]. (Gal. 5:16)**

Galatians 5:16 is one of the great verses where there is a condition with a promise. The condition, walk in the Spirit; the promise, you will overcome sinful desires. It does not mean they will all go away, but they will not overcome you, they will not ensnare you, and they will not bring you into bondage.

- B. Walking in the Spirit is the primary way to walk in victory over our flesh. We are to *put more focus on walking in the Spirit* than on denying sinful desires. The way to walk in freedom is by walking in the Spirit, not by focusing on the desires themselves as we grit our teeth seeking to resist them. We overcome darkness by turning on the light—focusing on Christ in us, our hope of glory (Col. 1:27).

Now what happens is there are a lot of people are very zealous for the Lord. They want to overcome. They do not want to fulfill sinful, fleshly desires. Whether it is in the realm of immorality, or various things they put in their body, or just different worldly values and experiences that are related to them, they do not want to fulfill these desires. They do not want to walk in those actions; they do not want to be overcome by those desires. What they do in their sincerity is put their energy and their focus into stopping the desire. So you know it is almost like they are gritting their teeth and focusing on, “No! No, I am not going to do it... I am not going to do it...I am not going to do it... Ugh! I did it again.”

Paul did not promise us that all fleshly desires would be gone; he said we would have the *power* to avoid yielding to them. The way to overcome the power of sinful desires is to grow in our relationship with the Spirit by being actively engaged with Him.

Paul did not state the equation as “If you deny fleshly desires, you will not walk in the them.” There is a place where we do deny them; that is a part, but that is not the primary thing. He says, essentially, “You walk in the Spirit, and that is your focus, you will find yourself experiencing an influence on your mind and emotions that will affect your body.” I do not mean all of your sinful desires will go away and you have no more temptation. That is not what I am talking about. Paul says that if you walk in the Spirit, you turn your attention away from trying to only resist bad desires, turning your attention to talking to the Spirit, interacting with that person who lives in you, then you will find that His inspiration on your mind and emotions will effect what you do with your body. Again it does not make every negative desire go away, but it gives you an inspiration, a motivation, and an empowering to resist and overcome it.

You know the old analogy. You have probably heard it over the years, that if you have a room that is full of darkness, you can’t open the window and take a bucket full of darkness and pour it out. The way you get darkness out of a room is to turn the light on. The way you overcome darkness is to focus on light.

We walk in the Spirit to the degree that we talk to the Spirit. It is as simple as can be and is accessible to every believer. We set our mind on Him and speak to Him (Rom. 8:6).

6The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life. (Rom. 8:6, NASB)

*This is one of the most important practical statements in this particular teaching: **We will walk in the Spirit to the degree that we talk to the Spirit.** If you will talk to the Holy Spirit, I mean in short, intermittent conversations throughout the day, little phrases, just short little sound bites of conversation, you will increase walking in the Spirit more and more. There are times you will talk to Him for sustained periods for five or ten minutes or maybe for an hour. I am talking about lots of little ten- and twenty-second exchanges of you talking to Him. It is as simple as that.*

Yes, there is more that we walk out. We obey Him. We believe His Word, but it begins with talking, and that is the core reality. I want to say it again. We will walk in the Spirit to the degree that we talk to the Spirit. Do you talk to the Holy Spirit in a conscious, intentional way? You might answer, “No.” When was the last time you talked directly to the Holy Spirit dwelling in your spirit? This is something you want to build a lifestyle around.

Romans 8:6 in the New American Standard, the NAS: I remember in my early days how this verse just riveted me. Paul talked about that the mind that is set on the flesh is death. The mind set on the Spirit—this is more than just thinking about the things of the Spirit, though that is certainly included—it is the mind that is actually set on a Person who dwells in you. I mean, yes, we set our mind on Jesus, and yes, we set our mind on the Father who art in heaven who dwells on His throne in heaven. It is not like one is competing with the other. God the Holy Spirit is always leading us to Jesus and to the Father, always. I remember how it was like the light went on when I saw that verse in my college years. I remember I told everybody about the mind set on the Spirit. I did not fully understand it, though actually it was more simple than I had thought. I asked everybody what this meant. I was on a real search. I read commentaries, but nobody would talk about it; nobody addressed it in the commentaries. I read many commentaries on Romans and asked a lot of people. Then after a while I just concluded it meant the mind that is set on the Spirit; it meant just that. I thought, “Oh, okay. It’s just that simple. Okay, got it.” It had seemed more complicated to me.

IV. TALKING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

- A. In prayer we can focus our mind on God in two ways—on the Father, who sits on His throne (Rev. 4), and on God the Holy Spirit, who lives in our spirit (Rom. 8:9).

“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven...” (Mt. 6:9)

⁹The Spirit of God dwells in you...¹⁰If Christ is in you...the Spirit is life... (Rom. 8:9-10)

We focus our mind on God in prayer in two ways. One, we focus our mind on the Father who sits on His throne. As we are worshipping Jesus, obviously we focus our mind on Jesus, but my point is that in prayer we are going to God in heaven and we are also talking to God who dwells in us. There are two different directions. When I dwell on God who is in heaven and the Son at the right hand, and I worship the worthiness of the Son at His right hand, my mind is going out and up. There is other times my mind is going internally, not to myself, not to some human thing, but to God the Holy Spirit who dwells in my spirit. I am talking to the Holy Spirit in prayer.

- B. The Spirit longs for us to talk with Him, but He will not force conversation or friendship on those who are not interested. When we talk to Him, He will “talk back” to us. Once we begin the conversation, He will continue it as long as we do.

The Holy Spirit longs for us to talk with Him. Here is the deal. He will not force the conversation. If you do not talk to the Holy Spirit today, then He is not going to force you into a friendship. As long as you talk, He will keep the conversation going. As long as you are interested in the conversation, He will keep it going. You will talk to him, He will be attentively listening, and He will be intermittently inspiring thoughts and touching you. I do not mean that every time we quiet ourselves and talk to the Holy Spirit we feel it, but He is always attentive is what I mean. He is engaged with us.

- C. Often when He “talks,” He does not use audible words but gives us impressions, sensitizing our emotions so we can feel His nearness, or speaks through His Word. He gives subtle impressions that release His power on our minds and hearts. God leads us by the still, small voice in our inner man—the still, small voice He used to speak to Elijah (1 Kgs. 19:11-13).

Often when He speaks He does not use audible words. Every now and then He may, but that is very rare. Rather, He gives impressions, He sensitizes our emotions so we feel His nearness, or we feel inspired, emboldened, resolved to obey. He speaks through His Word. So we are reading His Word, and the Word seems

alive to us; that is God the Holy Spirit talking to us through the written Word. He gives us subtle impressions that release power on our mind and our emotions. Beloved, the power that touches your emotions is God the Holy Spirit. Even though it is a small measure, it is God at work in you.

Elijah was talking to the Lord, and the Lord spoke to him. He said, “Elijah, I am not in the storm or the earthquake.” He said, “I speak to you in the still, small voice.” Now God does speak in the earthquake and the storm sometimes, but the norm is the whisper, meaning the inspiring of our mind and of our emotions that is gentle but distinct. It is not all the time, all day, but those moments when we feel tenderized or resolved to obey or resolved to believe or emboldened.

D. Augustine testified that he lost much time seeking the Lord outwardly instead of turning inward.

I like what Augustine said. He was called one of the greatest teachers in church history and lived in the 400s. Augustine said he lost much time seeking the Lord outwardly instead of turning inwardly. I am sure he would have more to say than that. I think there is a lot to be gained by worshipping the Lord out and up at His throne. I love that “Revelation 4 throne of God” coming before Him, and that is biblical and that is glorious. I am sure that Augustine would affirm that, but he is making a powerful point here about seeking the Spirit within.

V. GET STARTED

A. I suggest being intentional about talking to the Spirit—start by setting time aside three to five times each day, aiming to speak to Him directly three to five minutes each time. If we talk to the Spirit only when we are tempted, rather than as a lifestyle, then we will not sustain our dialogue with Him.

How do we get started? I suggest that this is just a framework. Don’t pull out your stopwatch and time it or anything. I encourage people to be intentional about this. Take a couple times a day, two or three times a day, three, four, or five times a day, whatever, and take two, three, four minutes each time. I mean don’t start at two hours; that is the real point I am making. Do not just let it happen when it happens. Say, “I am going to do this a couple times a day. I am going to stop what I am doing for a couple minutes, and I am going to turn my attention inwardly, and I am going to talk to a person. I am going to share my heart with Him and ask Him to touch me.”

Often when I am driving back and forth from the Red Bridge Center to here, five minutes driving by myself, I talk to the Holy Spirit, just in little five- and seven-minute time frames. I engage in my F-E-L-L-O-W-S-H-I-P prayer, those ten prayers to strengthen our inner man, or the five letters of the acronym T-R-U-S-T that we are going to look at in a moment. It is so simple. That is why we are not spending a lot of time on it; there is not much to it. It is quite simple to do it. I take just that five minutes, and I talk to the Holy Spirit.

B. At first it may be difficult to bring your mind to focus on the indwelling Spirit. As you do it more often, you will become accustomed to withdrawing inwardly to speak to the Spirit. If your mind wanders, simply turn it back to the indwelling Spirit again.

C. We practice the presence of God, knowing that it takes time to grow in our sense of connectedness with the indwelling Spirit. The more I speak directly to Him in private, the more I sense His presence in my public life with others.

- D. Linger in God’s presence: In dialoguing with the indwelling Spirit, take time to linger, speaking slowly to Him. Include declarations of your love for Him. Speak slowly, with occasional whispers of “I love You, Holy Spirit,” while gently and intermittently praying in the Spirit. Do not rush, and do not be wordy. He enjoys us when we recognize His indwelling presence. I know this, because I can feel His pleasure when I acknowledge Him. I linger with my attention turned inward to Him.

I encourage people: when you do this, linger in His presence. When you are talking to the Holy Spirit, do not get in a hurry. As you are speaking to Him, and you are speaking specifically to Him—which we are going to get to in a moment—just every now and then occasionally whisper statements of affection. “I love You, Holy Spirit. I enjoy Your presence. I love Your leadership.” So as you are asking Him to release His glory or to teach you, just every now and then express your affection for His leadership and His very presence in you. Then just gently and intermittently pray in the Holy Spirit when you are doing that, just mixing it all up together. Do not be in a rush; do not be wordy. He enjoys it when we recognize His presence.

- E. As I speak to the Holy Spirit, I do not fire off my prayers in rapid succession; I speak short, simple phrases to Him, slowly and softly. It is important to wait with a listening heart. Sometimes I will gently sigh as I pray with subtle “groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26) in between moments of total silence. I do this much more than I speak words.

When I speak to the Holy Spirit I do not do rapid-fire prayer. “God-Holy-Spirit-release-Your-glory-blah-bah-dah-blah-bah-dah.”

The Holy Spirit would say, “I am with you. I can talk faster than you.”

The reason I encourage people to dial down is because you will feel a lot more, you will feel a whole lot more when you do not have so much traffic going on in your soul. You are not so expressive, but you are more receptive. I find it best when I am just whispering intermittent phrases to Him, short simple phrases, slowly, softly, where I am not stirring my soul up in a really over-aggressive mode. I can hear and receive far more in the other posture of being dialed-down. Sometimes I will just gently sigh. In Romans 8, Paul calls it groaning that cannot be uttered. Sometimes there are those groans or sighs that come out. I talk softly and slowly, with short phrases. I do that much more than lots of words and lots of talking.

- F. One of my favorite prayers—the one I use most often—is asking the Spirit to *let me see what He sees and feel what He feels* about my life, my family, and other people, as well as what He sees and feels about Jesus, the Church, the great harvest, the nations, the end times, and so on.

One of my very favorite prayers, at the very top of the list—I have shared it many times over the years—I love to ask, “Holy Spirit, let me see what You see and let me feel what You feel about...” and you could put one of a thousand subjects in there. I love to ask the Holy Spirit, “Lord let me see what You see and let me feel what You feel about the students at IHOPU, about my neighbors, about the world economy, about my adversaries. How do You feel about them?” He feels a lot more generous than we do about that person who is bothering us or blocking our goals or the person who is stepping in line to take our position. The Holy Spirit feels a lot differently about those kinds of people than we do. “What do You think about Europe? What do You think about the police force in our city? What do You think about” any subject? He knows everything about everything.

VI. T-R-U-S-T

I use a five-letter acronym, **T-R-U-S-T**, to help me focus. I try to pray through this on a daily basis.

You do not limit your talking to the Holy Spirit to these five, but they are just a good jumpstart; it is a good place to start you off. I do not by any means limit myself to this, but often when I start my prayer time, it is like Smith Wigglesworth said—he was a famous healing evangelist in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s—he would say, “I begin in the flesh, and I end in the Spirit.” What he meant by “I begin in the flesh,” is that I begin without feeling anything, without a sense of inspiration.

I just start talking to the Lord, and over a little bit of time I feel inspired, though not every time. So I begin without inspiration, and then a few moments later, not every time but sometimes, I feel inspired. I begin in the flesh and end in the Spirit. I have heard that quote from Smith Wigglesworth many times over the years.

Well, this five-letter acronym, T-R-U-S-T, helps me to focus. I try to pray it on a daily basis, try to pray it a couple of times. I can pray it in five minutes, a minute for each one. You do not have to wait for two hours, but you may get focused on one of the letters and you do not have to finish the list. The Holy Spirit just loves talking to you. He does not care if you finish the list; He does not care if you get off the subject. He really likes you, and He has a lot to say to you, but He will not force you to talk to Him.

T: Thank You

The first thing is to turn our attention inward to recognize the Spirit’s presence and simply thank Him for His indwelling presence. I say, “Thank You, Spirit, for Your presence in my spirit.” Occasionally add affectionate phrases like, “I love You, Holy Spirit, and I enjoy Your presence.”

First I start with “Thank you.” I turn my attention inwardly—we are going to do this in a moment for our short ministry time—I turn my attention inwards, and I recognize, acknowledge, His presence. Again—I mean it’s an inadequate picture, but it is the best way for me to describe it—I picture that glorious, diamond-like radiance of God, like the burning bush of Moses, dwelling in my belly, in my human spirit. I do not mean in my physical part, but am talking about in my human spirit. I turn my attention inward, and when I first begin to do this it was a little awkward. I could not really connect with it, but I found if you stay with it the sense of connectedness, the sense of feeling the inspiration, will grow. It will grow if you stay with it, because the Holy Spirit wants to help you do this.

I have talked to the Holy Spirit a number of times. I would say, “Holy Spirit, teach me how to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, really.”

He would say, “Oh, I am really good at that! I can tell you a lot about how to do that.”

I say, “I want to know how to fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Would You show me? Would You take me by the hand and lead me?”

Anyway, back to Paragraph, T., thank you. So I will just turn my attention—and I do not get in a big hurry—“Thank You, thank You that You are there.” Again, in the imperfect way, I am just gazing into that Shekinah Glory, and just intermittently, just every now and then, I will just say a phrase, “I love Your leadership.” “I love Your presence.” “I enjoy You, thank You, God the Holy Spirit.” “You are in me. Wow, thank You!” I know He likes it because just in my human senses when I do that, not every time, but sometimes, I feel His presence. I think, “Oh, what is that?”

I am just imagining He is saying, “I like you talking this way. I like it when you talk to Me this way.”

I encourage you to do this. I love just to lock into the first T, the “Thank You.” Just stay there for a while; pray in the Spirit a little bit; just be kind of quiet; again do not kick into rapid fire, but just kind of linger there. Stay there a minute or two, stay there three or four minutes, or maybe stay there five or ten minutes. Sometimes you will stay there for long periods of time. I do not want to put out some big number and then that is the new “gold standard” to reach if you are really deep. Forget all that! Just start. Start little, and some seasons you will sustain it more, and then other seasons you kind of lose your grip on this. Then you recommit, go back and sign up again. At least that has been my experience.

R: Release revelation of Your glory

Paul prayed that the Father of glory release the spirit of revelation to His people (Eph. 1:17). Moses prayed, “Please, show me Your glory” (Ex. 33:18). Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see the realm of God’s glory, that you may encounter more of His glory and heart.

R, I ask Him to release the revelation of His glory, that whole realm of His glory. The Holy Spirit is our escort into the realm of the glory of God. I want to see the heavenly, supernatural realm. I mean only God the Spirit can bring you into that realm in a right and a godly way. I know there is the demonic counterfeit, but I am talking about in a holy, biblical, wholesome way. So I ask Him, “Let me see Your glory. Let me encounter Your glory.” I mean there are so many ways that believers have encountered the glory of God in direct, supernatural encounters. I say, “I do not care how, I just want more of those. I want little ones, big ones, dramatic ones, and subtle ones. I want more of the realm of Your glory. Father of glory, let me have revelation of You, and encounter You. Open my eyes in dreams and visions and dramatic encounters. I will trust Your leadership. If I do not have them very often”—which I do not—“then I trust Your leadership, but I want them.”

U: Use me

Paul exhorted us to seek diligently to be used in the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1). The Spirit promised to release His gifts through every believer (Acts 2:17-21; 1 Cor. 12:7). Thank the Holy Spirit for His gifts and ask Him to release them to you in a greater measure. Ask Him to give impressions to you to bless people, that you may be a vessel of His presence to glorify Jesus.

*U, use me. The Bible tells us that we are to seek diligently the gifts of the Holy Spirit. People have said, “We are suppose to seek His face and not His hand.” That is not true. We are to seek His face **and** His hand, and we are to seek His face **first**. The statement, “Seek His face, not His hand” is not a biblical statement at all. We seek His face first, but we also seek His hand diligently.*

Paul said to diligently seek the gifts of the Holy Spirit and desire them. One of the most diligent ways is by asking. I ask the Holy Spirit, “Give me impressions. Give me impressions, subtle impressions.” That is the foundational way the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate, not the only way, but the day-in, day-out, core, foundational way.

He will give you an impression. You will be talking to your friend, and you will just have, not even necessarily a whole sentence, but a phrase or an impression, a picture. You will say it to them. You do not even have to say, “God showed me...” As a matter of fact I encourage people not to say “God...” but just say it to them, “You know I am going to pray that the Lord is going to have a breakthrough in this area of your life...”

They reply, “Hey, that is the very area I am praying for.”

I mean you do not have to say, “God showed me this is the area.” Just tell them, “I am going to pray for that area.”

They may say, “How did you know? That is the very area...” It’s okay if then you say that God showed you, but you do not have to say that.

If you say, “God showed me” too many times, people quit listening to you. You can do it supernaturally natural. You can ask for impressions and phrases and just put them into the conversation. Say, “Hey, I want to pray this over you.” You can say that this is something that you believe the Lord is going to emphasize in their life or He is going to show them more of.

They may say, “Wow,” not always, as sometimes it will not mean anything to them, and other times it will mean something to them later. You flow in the gifts by starting off saying those phrases and then more happens if you stay with it. That is why I encourage people in ministry time just to come up and try it, not just in friendship groups or home groups or just in social events, but anytime ask the Holy Spirit for impressions.

I say, “Holy Spirit, use me. Let me see what you see, feel what You feel.” For the leadership meeting I am going to go to in a few minutes, right before I go I will pray, “Just give me a phrase, give me a feeling, give me a picture.” I do not have to verbalize to everyone exactly what I saw, but I operate on it. I will say something related to it.

Again I will say something like, “I think the Lord wants us to highlight this.” Or often I will just pray it over people, or I will inject an idea into the conversation.

Sometimes people say, “Well, that is the Lord,” and other times they say, “That was really dumb,” and sometimes it was dumb. I want to keep growing in it; I want to keep doing it. I ask the Holy Spirit, “Use me. I want those impressions.”

S: Strengthen me

The Spirit will strengthen our inner man by touching our minds and emotions with the might of His presence. We can draw on His strength by thanking Him for the reality of His power that is already in our born-again spirit. Because the Spirit lives in us, the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, and so on—is in our spirit now. We can experience more of the power of this fruit by thanking Him that it is already in us.

¹⁶...to be **strengthened with might** through His Spirit in the inner man. (Eph. 3:16)

²²The **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

²³gentleness, self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23)

S, strengthen me. In our last session we talked about ten prayers using the acronym FELLOWSHIP, in session four of our Part Two series on Growing in Prayer. I gave ten prayers related to the acronym FELLOWSHIP. So when I get to “S” here, and I ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen me, I might go into a few of those ten prayers related to the acronym FELLOWSHIP or maybe I will just say, “Holy Spirit, strengthen me with might.”

Galatians 5:22-23 is not just about doing, but also asking for the strength that is in our spirit to inspire our emotions and our mind. That is what we are asking. We are asking Him to strengthen our inner man; we are asking for the power that is already in our spirit to impact our emotions and our thinking. In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul says that the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, etc. These are nine different results of the Holy Spirit.

Beloved, all of those nine virtues are already dwelling in your spirit from the day that you were born again, the fullness of them. The power to love and the power for peace are already fully in your spirit man. The problem is you want that power to touch your mind and emotions. It is not enough that it is in my spirit; I want it in my mind and emotions. One way we do this is we thank the Holy Spirit for the strength that is in us. I do not mean it is the strength that is in my mind and emotions; it is the strength that is in my spirit. I say, “Holy Spirit, thank You for strength, thank You for love, thank You for peace.”

You will be in a disturbing situation where your mind is troubled and your emotions are starting to get in a storm. Just retreat inwardly. Say, “Thank You for peace.” Just by thanking Him for the peace, the strength that is already in your spirit will affect your soul, your mind, and emotions.

T: Teach me

The Spirit is the Teacher who leads us into God’s will and ways so that we are able to live in partnership with God. We ask the Spirit to teach us about God’s Word, will, and ways by giving us wisdom and creative ideas for every area of our life, including how to steward our money, excel in a career, manage our time, prosper in relationships (in our family, church, workplace, etc.), function in ministry, and walk in purity and health (physically and emotionally). He will guide us in ways that help us walk in holiness, have health in our bodies, and so on.

26“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit...He will teach you all things.” (Jn. 14:26)

T, teach me. The Holy Spirit is the teacher who leads us into God’s ways, God’s Word, and God’s will, all of those things. The Holy Spirit came to teach us. Again I love to say this: He knows everything about everything. He has created ideas for you, for every area of your life. He can teach you how to steward your money better. He can teach you how to excel in your career and how to manage your time. Ask Him how. Say, “Holy Spirit, I want wisdom in my relationships”—whether in the home, in the office, the school just all of your relationships, the hard ones, the easy ones, the new ones, the old ones—He knows about all of your relationships.

Say, “Teach me, tell me how to walk in purity. Tell me how to walk in health.” He knows about your diet. He knows about your exercise. He knows about your sleeping patterns. You know people say that their sleep is all messed up. Ask the Holy Spirit. I mean I am all for searching out what science and natural facts are, but ask the Holy Spirit. Say, “Give me a phrase, give me a key about why I cannot sleep, and why I do not have energy. Speak to me.”

Again, there are physical and natural laws that are good to know and follow. I mean they are very important to know and participate with, not just good to do. The Holy Spirit often will give you a phrase. He may not give it to you right away, but He will. Sometimes it is through the lips of somebody else, sometimes it is through a book you are reading, and there it is. You say, “Thank You, Holy Spirit.”

Amen, let’s stand. We are going to talk to the Holy Spirit for a just a few moments, just for two or three minutes here. I like looking out there because a bunch of you are smiling right now. No, actually smiles. There you go, good, good. “Holy Spirit, we are going to do it,” that is how I interpret that smile. Some of you might be smiling as in “We are finally done” but anyway...just kidding! No, I can see some of you have that anticipation, “I want to do this. I want to do this.”

*Let’s just close our eyes for a moment. I mean, you don’t **have** to close your eyes to do this, but I find it sometimes good just to get rid of the distractions. But that is not good when you are driving; keep the eyes open when you do this. When I drive home, I keep my eyes open when I do this.*

Okay now, just focus your mind inwardly; you are talking to God the Holy Spirit, that burning bush that Moses saw, dwelling in your spirit, right in your belly King James says. Again that is not perfect language, but just lock in there. There is radiant, glorious being.

So we are going to do T, start with the first T. “Thank You, Holy Spirit.” Just kind of whisper it. Do not say a lot of words at once, just, “Thank You, Holy Spirit, You are there...I love Your leadership...I love Your presence.” Some of you just want to go like, yeah. Go ahead, you can do that. When I kick into that, I mean go into that mode, that “Ohh,” even just those short little sighs, sometimes it is just the Holy Spirit connecting with you as Paul talked about in Romans 8. “Thank You, Holy Spirit, You are here.”

There is R, the revelation of His glory. “Escort me into the experiences of glory of God. Holy Spirit, lead me, lead me, lead me into all truth,” That is the T at the end of TRUST. Right now I am talking about wanting encounters with the angelic realm, the glory of God, the throne realm. “I want to see the angels ascend and descend as Jesus said.” Again I am talking way too much. If I were talking to the Holy Spirit, I would speak way less than that, way less than that. “I want to experience Your glory. Usher me in.”

The next one in TRUST is U: use me. “Holy Spirit, give me impressions. Let me see visions. Let me be a blessing to speak those phrases that unlock the power of God in people’s lives. Use me in the gifts. Lord, You said that the sons and daughters will all see visions; give me those short, mental visions or those open visions, either one. Let me operate in the gifts of the Spirit.” Again, I would speak way less if I were talking to the Lord. I would pause in between each one of those phrases.

Now we are at the fourth letter, S: strengthen me. “Thank You for strength in my spirit. Thank You. Strengthen my inner man. Cause my mind and emotions to be inspired by Your strength. Strengthen me.” Again at this time I might go into a few of the acronym phrases for FELLOWSHIP, a few of those. “Unite my heart to fear Your name. Strengthen my inner man.”

Every few moments you might just say, “I love You, Holy Spirit. I love Your leadership. I want to feel Your presence.” Just those words of affirmation. Every now and then you pray in the spirit a little bit and just be quiet for a moment, you know, thirty or forty seconds or longer. Those little sighs that you feel like, “Oh,” those groans that are just very subtle. Many times they are subtle; sometimes they are far more overt.

Then T: teach me. “O teach me about the Word! Show me the Word. Teach me about Your ways for my body, for my schedule, my time, my money. Teach me.” Again that is too many phrases in one sentence when you are talking to Him. “Teach me, Holy Spirit.” Amen and amen, and just do that over, thousands and thousands of times over the next years.