

MADE KNOWN TO US

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God has made Himself known!

He wrapped Himself in the visible creation.

Romans 1:19 [People] know the truth about God because He has made it obvious to them. ²⁰ For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see His invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature.

Not only did God make His divine power and nature known, but He sent His Son, Jesus, into the world so that we might gain a greater understanding of His character. God became a man!

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word.

God wrapped Himself in human flesh.

Jesus Himself said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!" (John 14:9).

Not satisfied, He revealed Himself still further by sending the Holy Spirit to dwell within all those who believe in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 6:19 Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?

God has wrapped Himself in the church, the family of God.

Nearer, nearer, nearer, until He became one of us!

The same blood, the same flesh, one of us.

The same skin, the same breath, one of us.

The same dust and dirt, the same trials and hurts, one of us.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, was ever there a name so wonderful?

(The Name of Emmanuel, by Matt Redman)

Last week we discovered the seven roles of the Holy Spirit:

- Regenerator
- Empowerer

- Guide
- Uniter
- Intercessor
- Comforter
- Refiner

Since He has done so much for us, and continues to do so much for us, why wouldn't a Christian want to become close to the Holy Spirit? And yet, so many still today, 2,000 years after His arrival, are hesitant to get close to the Holy Spirit. For many, He remains the third, and distant, member of the Trinity.

If He were still commonly referred to as the "Holy Ghost," that might explain some people's reticence.

If you only think of Him as an ethereal vapor—an invisible, impersonal, supernatural force—that might explain your leeriness.

But Jesus described Him as "another Advocate like myself." That's hardly a put off. Who wouldn't want someone like Jesus to be at your side?

Pause for a few moments and ask yourself, What do you think it is that spooks people about the Holy Spirit? That He's invisible? That He knows us too well? That He's, well... too holy? That He may be too controlling? That He may ask us/make us do things we don't want to do?

How necessary is the Holy Spirit? Well, let's see...

The world in which we live was *created* by the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

Jesus would *never have been born* without the Holy Spirit. The angel told Mary, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and He will be called the Son of God*" (Luke 1:35).

Jesus' baptism would have been *much less significant* if it hadn't been for the Holy Spirit:

Matthew 3:16 After His baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on Him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."

Luke 4:1 Then Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan River. He was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ² where he was tempted by the devil for forty days.

And the *grand result* of that period of testing was this:

Luke 4:14 Then Jesus returned to Galilee, filled with the Holy Spirit's power.

In fact, Jesus attributed His *calling and ministry* to the Holy Spirit:

Luke 4:16 When he came to the village of Nazareth, his boyhood home, he went as usual to the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up to read the Scriptures. ¹⁷ The scroll of Isaiah the prophet was handed to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where this was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, ¹⁹ and that the time of the Lord's favor has come."

And Peter reflected on the *effectiveness* of Jesus' ministry with these words:

Acts 10:38 God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

After 72 of Jesus' disciples reported a successful period of ministry in His name, Jesus Himself was "*filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit*" (Luke 10:16).

Jesus *depended* on the Holy Spirit routinely. Shouldn't we, also?

The Holy Spirit was even with Jesus after His death, when it was said:

Romans 1:4 [Jesus] was shown to be the Son of God when He was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And now this same Holy Spirit has been given to you! In no uncertain terms, Paul wrote:

Romans 8:11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you.

When the Holy Spirit speaks, it's the same as Jesus speaking! For Jesus said, "*He will not speak on His own but will tell you what He has heard. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever He receives from me. The Spirit will tell you whatever He receives from me*" (John 16:13-15).

This is the Heavenly Pipeline: Father to Son, Son to Spirit, Spirit to you, and you to the world!

Since this is so, isn't the Holy Spirit the *undeniable Source and Strength* of our lives and ministry opportunities?

He is so closely tied to our faith, that Peter forever linked the two:

*Acts 2:38 "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
39 This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God."*

Paul added:

Galatians 3:14 Through Christ Jesus, God has blessed the Gentiles with the same blessing he promised to Abraham, so that we who are believers might receive the promised Holy Spirit through faith.

We cannot even *worship God* apart from the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment! This is how He brings us closer to Christ.

Philippians 3:3 For we who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised. We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort.

You can sing songs without the power of the Holy Spirit. You can clap your hands in time to the music without the Holy Spirit. You can sway with the rhythm without the Holy Spirit. What you cannot do is worship God without the Holy Spirit.

For worship is bowing down in humble surrender to God.

Worship is gazing in awestruck wonder at the greatness of God.

Worship is life's deepest intimacy, and unashamed exposure, in the presence of God.

Worship is the highest thrill of ecstatic union with God.

Worship is simple, heartfelt obedience to God, the Lover of your soul.

Worship is soul stillness before the Rock of all the ages.

And we cannot experience that apart from the Holy Spirit.

And then He fills our hearts with God's love. Every day.

When you think about the lengths God has gone to so that you could come near and know Him and experience His grace and love, what keeps you from entrusting yourself fully to the Holy Spirit?

Don't you think it's time you confronted that hesitation?

Don't you think it's time you moved past that awkwardness?

Don't you think it's time you kicked over that roadblock and claimed God's gift and blessing for yourself?

This promise is for you...

Don't you think it's time to quit hedging your bets and go for broke with God?

Don't you think it's time to stop playing church as a Sunday-morning-Christian, and really live your faith from day to day? You won't do that perfectly, but you can't do that at all without the Holy Spirit.

How can you hope to have a supernatural influence on friends and family without the supernatural of the Holy Spirit at work in you?

Do you imagine that you can just keep on thinking and speaking and acting like an ordinary person and the Holy Spirit will somehow use you anyway?

Enough of that!

It's time to give God His due. Give Him YOU! Give Him YOU! Give Him ALL of you!

As long as you are full of yourself, there is no room for Him.

If you will empty yourself before God, Jesus Christ will fill you with the Holy Spirit.

The promise is for you... What will you do with it?