

“THE HOLY SPIRIT MEETS OUR NEEDS”
Ephesians 5:1-20, I John 2:27-29, John 14:15-26
August 4, 2019

We're in our study of the Holy Spirit and we've discovered that He is the third Person of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is God with us in spirit form to guide us and help us stay faithful to Jesus. The Holy Spirit of God has power and authority to help us to follow Jesus.

We also discovered that by receiving Jesus into our lives as our Messiah, and letting Him be Lord of our life, opens us up to be able to receive the Holy Spirit. He doesn't just barge into our lives and begin His work in us, however. We must receive the Holy Spirit before He can work in and through us. We must submit ourselves to His work in order that the process of sanctification can begin, where we start the journey to become pure and holy before God the Father. We can resist the Holy Spirit, so we must open our lives and invite Him into us so that He has free reign in us to do the work of God.

So when we open up our lives to receive the Holy Spirit we find that The Holy Spirit meets our **EVERYDAY** needs. Not our wants, mind you, but our needs, as we seek to live for the Lord Jesus each day. The Apostle Paul assures us of this in Philippians 4:19 when he says, “*And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*”

When we belong to the family of God, our Heavenly Father delights to supply us with whatever we need to live for Him. Nothing is too difficult for Him because He created all things and has all power to do whatever He wishes. So with the promise that He supplies us with all our NEEDS according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus, He means that very thing. But again, it's got to be according to His will as we follow His way. So I want to lift up 7 things that the Holy Spirit does to meet our everyday needs.

First, the Holy Spirit Saves Me **TIME**. Have you ever experienced a time when you had to get somewhere and you know where you wanted to go and the way you wanted to go, but there was that inkling feeling in you that today you needed to do something different? That inkling is the Holy Spirit nudging you to listen to Him. Right then you have the choice of going your own way that you've

always taken, or to follow that inkling and go a different route.

I was once going to Milwaukee and I suddenly got this urgent feeling that I was supposed to get off of the highway and take an alternate route to the city. At that moment I prayed and asked God what I should do, and it came upon me once more to take the alternate route. So I did that, I went the other way. And when I got to my destination, I quickly looked at Google Maps on my phone, only to find out that there had been a tremendous accident on the way that I was thinking of going, and there was a huge back up on that road. The alternate route saved me that headache of having to wait in line while the accident was cleared.

God has graciously given us a number of ways of testing our inner directions if we will give in and follow them. “We will find that it is to our intelligent self-interest to become sensitive to the Helper’s loving directions. These come in several forms; urges, promptings, uneasiness...stops.”¹ In daily listening to that still-small-voice of the Holy Spirit, we will find direction in our life that saves us time from becoming frustrated, distracted or even misguided by other things of this world.

Now, realize that the Holy Spirit will never direct us to do anything shady, dishonest, impure, unloving, or selfish to bring hurt to another. That’s not how He works. The work of the Holy Spirit is to lift up Jesus Christ, teach us of Jesus and of His ways, and then enable us to live our life as an example of following those ways. So the Holy Spirit will never guide us to do evil, but will always urge and guide us to do what is good and right.

And the Holy Spirit will never tell us anything contrary to Scripture. In John 16:13-14 Jesus tells us, “*But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.*” The Holy Spirit is God with us in Spirit form, so how could He contradict Himself by saying or doing anything that is opposed to the teachings of the Bible? While **we** can easily misuse or twist the meaning of particular

¹ (Catherine Marshall, *The Helper*, [Waco, TX: Word Books, 1979] pg. 75)

verses in the Bible to benefit our own selfish ways, the Holy Spirit will NEVER say or do anything that is contrary to Scripture. Everything He does will uplift and fulfill Scripture. So if you ever get a nudging or a feeling that you are to do something that is opposite of what Scripture says, that IS NOT from the Holy Spirit. “Nothing will so strengthen our faith and convince us of the tender love of God and of His concern for even the minutiae of our lives as (will a) daily walk in the Spirit of God.”² It would be good for us to begin each day with the prayer, “O God, open my eyes, my ears, my heart, my mind, my hands, and my mouth so that all I do will be pleasing to you. Guide me by Your Holy Spirit.”

The second way the Holy Spirit meets our needs is He Guides MY ACTIONS. In Acts 13:2-4 we read about Paul and Barnabas being sent out by the Antioch church by direction of the Holy Spirit to do the work that He had called them to do. The church could have argued because the two of them had only been there a year to establish the church there, but instead, they sought out the Holy Spirit to make sure that they were hearing correctly. It seemed strange, so they wanted to affirm what they had heard. Only after their prayers were confirmed did they lay hands on Paul and Barnabas and sent them on their way with the blessing of the church.

God has a plan for each one of us – IF we are willing. If we are open to hear the call, and if we are willing to obey the call, the Holy Spirit of God will guide us, protect us, instruct us, and use us to do the work of God. My call into ministry caused me to seek the Lord and search for that same confirmation that it was what God really wanted me to do. While I had interests in biology and art, God used a variety of people and situations to affirm His call for me to be a pastor. Even as I gave God three “tests” to help me see that it was Him calling me into ministry, the Holy Spirit’s call was validated to the point that I could clearly see that it was what God had called me to do. I had the choice, then, of either obeying that call, or refusing that call and going my own way.

And it is true for each one of us. The Spirit cannot guide us as long as we insist upon finding our own way. It takes compliance and obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit so that we follow the

² (*The Helper*, pg. 76)

way of God and do His work. Jeremiah 29:11 says, *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.”* God’s desire is to bless us abundantly so that we might be at work for Him to the glory of His holy name. It’s up to us to follow Him.

The third thing the Holy Spirit does to meet our needs is He PROTECTS ME. Proverbs 1:33 says, *“But safe he lives who listens to Me; from fear of harm he shall be wholly free.”* Being a part of the family of God has its dangers from the anger and hatred of the world against us. But when we are guided by the Holy Spirit, He helps keep us safe.

“If we were willing to accept the Spirit’s help and to listen to His voice, many of the evils, difficulties, and accidents that befall us would be avoided.”³ In the year following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, there were many testimonies of individuals who were delayed or prevented from being at work that day in the towers. Some people were delayed by travel, others were forced to stay home because of illness or the need to care for family members, and yet others had other things happen to them, keeping them from being at work on time or at all in their offices in the World Trade Center. One man had taken an extra-long time in his quiet time that morning and was running late, but got a couple of blocks away from the Trade Center when the first plane plunged into the upper floors.

The Holy Spirit protected many folks from death as they missed work or were late. “But what about the others who were at work, who were on time, and suffered because of it? One thing we know. God is no respecter of persons. He loved them as much as He loved the ones who were late or not there. Then did the Spirit try to get a message through to one or more of those in the building? No doubt. Though there can be no definitive answer, surely we need to ponder the important interplay between man’s free will and the Spirit’s mission to guide and protect us.”⁴

As I was on my way home from Neenah on Thursday evening I was on highway 23 just east of

³ (*The Helper*, pg. 81) ⁴ (*Ibid.*, pg. 82)

Fond du Lac when I saw a deer cross the road ahead of me. She was quite a ways ahead, but the Holy Spirit spoke to me telling me, “You know, where there’s one deer, there is always another one following.” So I slowed down, watching for that second deer. Sure enough as I got closer, out popped a little speckled fawn right into the road following Mama. Because I had slowed down, I was able to stop in time to keep from hitting the little one. Had I not listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit, surely I would have collected an unwanted hood ornament. He protects us when we listen to Him.

The fourth thing the Holy Spirit does for us to meet our needs is He Is With Me In Everyday SITUATIONS. Jesus promised us in Matthew 28:20 “...*And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.*” The Holy Spirit is the presence of God with us always, each and every day, wherever we go and whatever situation we find ourselves in.

Another name for the Holy Spirit is Paraclete, a Greek word that means ‘One by our side.’ With the promise of Jesus being with us, the Holy Spirit walks alongside of us to work in us, guide us and protect us. “Actually, when we human beings feel most capable of handling life on our own, invariably that is when we are most in need of Jesus’ help mediated to us by the Spirit...It is a practical, workaday assistance that the Helper longs to give us.”⁴

How many of you have gone looking for something and you just can’t find it? Your glasses; your car keys; your car in the parking lot of Festival Foods or Meijer’s; the note you made for yourself and had put in a place so you wouldn’t lose it; the tool you need to finish a project? Instead of calling out to St. Francis, pray to the Holy Spirit and He will guide you to finding that which is lost. He delights to be with us in every situation in order to refine our schedules and work so that we can do even more work for the Lord.

The other day I was going to a meeting and had just enough time to go to the store to get a bag of rice before my meeting. The time was tight and the store was huge, Woodman’s in Appleton, and so I asked the Lord to guide me through the store to get the rice and get back to my car quickly so I wouldn’t

⁵ (*The Helper*, pg. 84)

be late for my meeting. Well, I had a quick tour of the store, but found the rice in good time and made it to the registers at just the point where two of them were open. I quickly paid for the rice and was on my way once more. I was only in the store about 5 minutes and was finished. The Holy Spirit made it possible for me to get to my meeting early. He delights in making our schedules work out so that we might praise Him for the help and guidance.

Jesus tells us in John 15:5, “*I am the vine, and you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me.*” The Holy Spirit is the One who gives us the direction and assistance we need to accomplish all that God has given us to do. If we rely solely upon our own strength, wisdom, and resources, we will ultimately fail. But when we rely upon the Holy Spirit’s strength, wisdom and resources, it is amazing what we can do for the Lord.

The fifth way the Holy Spirit meets our needs is He Is My REMEMBRANCER. Now, what do I mean by that? We heard Jesus tell us in John 14:26 “*But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*” The Holy Spirit teaches us ALL THINGS and helps us remember what Jesus has said to us! So that means that when we let the Holy Spirit come into our lives, He becomes the keeper of all our memories, and all the data that we have accumulated in our human computer we call the brain. He then can access a particular piece of needed information at just the right time for just the right purpose when we ask His help. He helps us remember verses, names, streets, and a variety of other information as we depend upon Him.

Not only that, He will speak through us “when we are brought before kings and governors for Jesus’ name sake” (Luke 2:12-15). That means when we find ourselves in touchy situations, when we ask the Holy Spirit to give us the right words to speak, He supplies us with whatever we need to represent Jesus with honor and dignity. He even counsels us when we are to keep quiet and not say something, and allows the question or situation to be remedied in another way for us. And He invites us to trust in Him. So we can experiment in small ways at first and then learn to lean on Him for every

situation. He will be our Remembrancer to help us relax and be His ambassador for Jesus sake.

The sixth way the Holy Spirit meets our needs is He Gives Me **NEW DESIRES**. Many of you know that I have a dairy allergy. I've had it for a number of years now, and I have to tell you it is hard to give up all dairy in my diet. I live in the wrong state to have a dairy allergy. Wisconsin is the dairy capital of the United States, producing cheese, yogurt, custard, and a variety of other products from the milk produced on our farms. It was so hard for me to just quit eating dairy, but I gave it to the Lord and said, "Lord, I need Your help. Please change my tastes so that I'm not craving dairy anymore." That simple prayer opened up the avenue for the Holy Spirit to come and begin to transform my tastes to other non-dairy foods so that I could remain healthy.

The Holy Spirit can change our desires and our tastes and our habit patterns as we depend upon Him to guide us to those new ways. God delights to help us become new creatures as we trust in Jesus, so He has given us His Spirit to enable us to make those changes in our lives. He can change the way we dress, the way we speak to each other, the way that we think, the way that we drive, the way that we do business, and the way that we relate to each other. In each area of our life, the Holy Spirit provides us the ability to change so that we demonstrate the beauty of His presence within us. Just as nature all around us portrays the glory of the Lord in big and small ways, so He desires us to trust Him to do the very same thing in each one of us.

Trust in the Holy Spirit totally changes our life – IF we let Him work in us. Again, we have the power to resist the Holy Spirit and limit His work in our lives by doing our own thing and going our own way. But as we trust in the Holy Spirit's guidance, we find not only abundant blessings coming to us, but we also have the glory of the Lord shining on us and through us into the lives of others.

Finally, the seventh way the Holy Spirit meets our needs is He Changes My Undesirable **HABIT PATTERNS**. Each one of us faces a struggle throughout our lives. We have this tremendous tendency to disobey God's commands and rebel against following His ways. The world we live in is so quick to offer alternatives to God's standards, and we are easily led away from obedience to the laws and ways of

God. And quite often these alternatives to God's ways become so natural to us that we feel there is no other way to live but how we are living – against the ways of God.

Fortunately we are not confined to this without hope of relief from our sin and disobedience. Jesus Christ died for our sin, paying the price demanded for our redemption. He makes it possible for us to become the new creatures in God's own image as we claim His work of Salvation for us. Yet we live in a sinful world that quickly strives to reclaim us, so the Holy Spirit has come to enable us to change our habits and lifestyles so that we might be pleasing to God in all our ways once again. But only by the Holy Spirit in us can changes take place to transform us out of our sinfulness into God's glory. Only by being born again in the Holy Spirit, having claimed Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, can the new patterns in our life begin to take place.

It might be anger, it might be swearing, it might be drugs or alcohol, it might be smoking, it might be carousing, it might be pornography, or X rated movies, it might be any other dangerous behavior – no matter what it is that has become a habit pattern in your life, if you give it over to the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit will change your life in such a way you will be able to retrain yourself and develop healthy habits for your life. It could be an addiction to watching sports, or playing video games, or obsessively watching the news – whatever is getting in the way of your relationship with God and others, the Holy Spirit can create new habit patterns in you as you give them to Him and trust Him to lead you to new life.

The fifth chapter of Galatians gives us great direction to see the contrast between the ways of this world and the ways of the Holy Spirit. Here we see the fruit of the Holy Spirit that He gives to us to make us new. He helps us "increase in wisdom...and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). Let the Holy Spirit take you and remake you into the image of God once more. Let's pray...

"Change my heart, Oh God, make it ever new! Change my heart, Oh God, may I be like You. You are the Potter, I am the clay, mold me and make me, this is what I pray. Change my heart, Oh God, make it ever new! Change my heart, Oh God, may I be like You" in Jesus holy Name. AMEN.