

The
*Holy
Spirit*

A New Believer's Guide

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The Holy Spirit: A New Believer's Guide

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*Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are taken from the *New International Version* of the Bible.

This guide helps new believers understand the role of the Holy Spirit in their newfound faith in Jesus Christ. It covers the basic information about the Holy Spirit drawn from selected verses in the Bible. The Bible has much more to say about the Holy Spirit and as one matures in their faith they will get deeper truths about the Spirit of God. You can hear God for yourself. Listen for God's answers and obey His instructions.

INTRODUCTION

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He helps us do what God commands us to do by showing us how to apply the Word to our everyday lives. He helps us live a victorious life as our Father in Heaven intended. When Jesus was talking to His disciples before His crucifixion, He told them He was going away and He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit to be with them forever. The Holy Spirit would help them obey what Jesus commanded them to do. This is the same for us today.

John 14:16-17

"If you love me you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever-the Spirit of truth..."

We show our love for Jesus when we obey His commands. When we accept Jesus Christ into our hearts, we receive the Holy Spirit who indwells us. Before salvation, we struggle to obey God because the sinful nature controls us for we do not have the Holy Spirit to help us do what the Lord commands. After salvation, the Holy Spirit empowers us to be obedient to God. We see things in the spiritual because the Spirit gives us spiritual discernment and wisdom. Before salvation, we cannot accept spiritual truths because we do not have the Spirit in us, but after salvation we accept them because the Spirit is in us.

Romans 8:9

You however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Christ.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Bible refers to the Holy Spirit by various names that define His character. The names depend on which version of the Bible you are using. Here are the common ones drawn from John 14:16-17 & 26 and Acts 2:38:

- **The Spirit of truth.** He guides us into all truth in our situations in life. He shows us what is happening in a situation even though on the surface it looks different.
- **Counselor/Advocate.** He intercedes for us to the father. He stands in the gap for us when we do not know how we ought to pray.
- **Helper.** He helps us keep the commands of Jesus. He empowers us to obey God and do what we cannot do in our own strength.
- **Comforter.** He comforts us when we are anxious, fearful, or upset.
- **Gift.** A gift from God received after salvation.

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. **Teach** me everything I need to know about life and remind me of what Jesus said while he was on earth. You will find the teachings of Jesus in the 4 gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke & John in the New Testament. (John 14:26)
2. **Convict** me of sin. (John 16:8-11)
3. **Guide** me into all truth. (John 16:12-13)
4. **Prophecy.** He will tell me what is to come and what God is getting ready to do in my life. (John 16:13 & 2 Peter 1:20-21)
5. **Revelation.** Making known to me what is from the Lord. (John 16:14-15)
6. **Intercession.** He intercedes for me to the Father when I do not know how to pray. (Romans 8:26-27)

WHAT DOES GOD ASK US TO DO IN RELATION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Be filled with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 - Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 - And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Honour the temple of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 - Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.

DIVINE WISDOM

Divine wisdom comes from God and you discern it spiritually. There are things we will only learn if the Holy Spirit reveals them to us. Those who do not have the Holy Spirit cannot discern them and will even consider them foolishness because they cannot understand them. The Spirit of God reveals to us things about life and various situations we otherwise would not have known. If we look at these situations in the natural or through human wisdom, we will not understand what is going on. We will apply the wrong solution or have the wrong perception. Those without the Spirit cannot understand what you can only discern in the spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:14

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Before salvation, you do not recognize or accept the Holy Spirit because you do not see him. You receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus into your heart, and He lives in you. *John 14:17* tells us:

“...the world cannot accept him because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him for he lives in you and will be in you.”

The wisdom of the Holy Spirit includes:

- **Expose root causes of problems.** Some problems appear to be in the natural but they are spiritual. Our physical acts have spiritual consequences whether we know it. Many times we are trying to solve problems with our human minds and physical strength yet the problems are spiritual. We fight them in the spirit, for example, you don't break generational curses and patterns by positive affirmations. Exposure of the root causes of such problems happens through dreams, prophets, and revelation as you read the word or spiritual discernment of situations.
- **Discernment of seasons.** You get to understand the purpose of a particular season in your life so you co-operate with what God is working on in you. You will tell when one season is ending, and another one is beginning. As you learn how God speaks to you, you will know when He is putting a message across that seasons are changing.

- **Invisible barriers.** These are obstacles that do not allow you to move forward no matter how hard you try. It doesn't matter how many positive affirmations you recite each day. They mainly come from the ungodly spiritual inheritance from your forefathers in your bloodline. The Holy Spirit gives you divine wisdom and revelation on how to identify this inheritance and how to deal with it in your life. Invisible barriers can be in form of limiting beliefs.
- **Spiritual insight.** The Holy Spirit shows you hidden truths in a situation you are not privy to but are important for you to know. These can be secrets people use to deceive you into making a wrong decision to benefit the other party. They can also be secrets the devil uses to deceive you in a situation so you will not pray and mess with the influence of his kingdom.
- **Things yet to come.** This is revelation through prophesy, whether through the written (Bible) or spoken word of God (e.g. through prophets). This helps you pray about things God reveals to you whether good or bad. Pray for the good things to manifest in your life. Pray the bad things do not manifest. For those unpleasant things that will happen, God will give you the wisdom and grace to deal with them.

HOW DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAK?

The Holy Spirit speaks to each of us in a language we understand. When you ask God to speak to you, note the various ways He does and you will see a pattern of how He communicates with you. Some ways are common to all like the Bible, the still small voice, prophets, etc.

One time I was looking for a house in a certain neighbourhood and I went to an area where I knew I would get a vacant house. However, I was not pleased with some aspects of the surrounding area and I got disappointed and wondered "what next?" As I was walking, I looked up and saw a "mini billboard" advertising Johnnie Walker and it said "Keep Walking" and so I did and a while later, I ended up in a section where I found the house I wanted. Previously, this sign meant nothing to me (considering Johnnie, and I parted ways a long time ago) but at that moment it gave me direction.

Sometimes I have not been sure I heard the Holy Spirit and I ask God to confirm. Sometimes the confirmation comes through the word of God, peace in my heart, a friend and the list is endless.

I have had to pay attention and be alert to how God speaks to me. Hearing God with clarity helps me obey without hesitation. God is gracious that when the devil tries to hijack the hearing process, He repeats the message so I will know it is Him unmistakably.

Hearing God takes practice and spending time in His word. As you become more sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, you will discern when it is Him speaking. Sometimes I have asked for an answer and heard nothing and wondered why God is silent. Then the answer comes 3 months later and then I understand I would not have comprehended the answer when I first prayed because I needed a time of preparation to receive it. Preparation involved God addressing my fears, granting me emotional healing, changing my perspective and walking me through what I don't want to face. This has built my faith.

Some ways that the Holy Spirit speaks to us include:

The word of God. He gives you revelation in the word that opens your eyes to the truth.

Still small voice. When you are quiet and reflecting you hear the voice of God within you.

Promptings. You feel led to take a certain action step.

Peace. You are at peace regarding making a certain decision.

Dreams. They reveal what is happening in your life you are not paying attention to or something that will happen.

Prophets. You encounter a prophet who gives you a prophetic word from God. Keep in mind that God's word says you need to test the spirits to ensure that you are receiving a word from someone who has the Spirit of God.

Books. You read a book and a word or a phrase jumps at you and it is addressing a certain issue or thought you are having.

People. Friends, strangers or others who give you a solution to a problem that has been puzzling you.

Media. For example, signs, billboards, magazine or newspaper articles, TV programs etc., that are timely and specific to something that is troubling you.

Movies. You get a movie and find it is passing on a message from God in a way you quickly understand.

Situations. God uses a certain situation as an analogy to explain what He is trying to say to you.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts which enable us to serve God and others. God gives each gift for the common good of the body of Christ. We need these gifts to ensure that there is harmony and unity in the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit determines which gift to give to each one of us. Some gifts mentioned include the five-fold ministry gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. Others include the message of wisdom, message of knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, helping others, administration, speaking in different kinds of tongues, etc. We use these gifts to help others in the church, marketplace or our communities.

The Holy Spirit reveals to you your spiritual gifts. A good place to start is discipleship programs in your church or programs designed to help you connect with God. If your church does not offer a program like these, there are churches that offer them, check whether another church could have such a program you could attend. Be open to how the Holy Spirit will reveal your gifts to you, there are no limits on how he can reveal them to you.

References: Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 & 28-30, Romans 12:6-8

SPIRITUAL DILEMMA: UNEQUAL YOKE

There is a spiritual dilemma for those who have become believers of Jesus Christ. The dilemma is this: now you have become a believer, what do you with your unbelieving friends or relatives because God's word commands you not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14-17). They have been there for you all your life and separating yourself from them feels like betrayal. Some may have accused you of this. They don't understand that you are discerning things in the spirit and they are not. Some unbelievers are part of your family and you live with them in the same house. You cannot walk away from them, yet the heat of the spiritual war is making you feel you will melt like wax.

Who is a believer, and who is an unbeliever?

Believer

A believer is one who has accepted Jesus Christ into his or her heart and is saved. He or she has received eternal life.

Romans 10:9

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved .

Unbeliever

An unbeliever is one who has not accepted Jesus Christ into his or her heart.

Romans 8:9

...And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to Christ.

How do you obey the command to not be yoked together with unbelievers?

Relatives

Your relatives will always be your relatives. It's difficult to separate yourself from your father, mother, children, sisters etc even if they are not believers. Seek God on how to relate with them going forward but be careful about the counsel you seek from them.

You can pray for them and stand on God's word in Acts 16:31 which says "...Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved - you and your household."

Remember, God calls us to be the salt and light of the earth (read Matthew 5:13 -16) therefore be a good example to them they may see your good deeds which will draw them to Jesus Christ. Matthew 5:16 says "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven" (NKJV).

Friends

When you are born again, several things change. Things that used to be a priority for you aren't and as you walk closer with God, He will shed off several worldly things. There could be friends comfortable with where you were in life and find it hard to let you move forward. Pray and seek God about such relationships as He may want you to let go of them; it's not that they are bad people but you may not need them on this part of your journey.

Friendship is a difficult area to navigate without God's help; you need to seek God. God says in His word in James 1:5 "If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help and won't be condescended to when you ask for it." (MSG). The New King James Version says "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

When I began my walk of faith, some friends joined me in salvation – those I kept close. Others didn't understand why I no longer wanted to do the things we used to do and have the conversations we used to have; I had grown and we no longer had things in common to talk about – those I continued to minister to but did not allow them to speak into my life. Others had unpleasant things to say about my salvation – those I forgave but kept them at a distance. God cares about every single aspect of your life. He will remove unhealthy relationships from your life and bring the right ones, if you let Him. The key thing is to OBEY when He instructs you to let go; He knows better.

We cannot totally disengage from all unbelievers, judge them harshly or even condemn them; remember God calls us to be the salt and light of the earth. However, there are those that you should allow to speak into the core of your life, and I believe those should be believers. The unbelievers can be friends who you can speak into their lives (if they are willing) but be careful about seeking counsel from them.

Girlfriends / boyfriends / spouses

If you are dating, it is very important to seek God whether the relationship is God's will. Never get married to someone that God has not confirmed should be your spouse. God knows you better than you know yourself and you could save yourself some heartache or even divorce by seeking God first. When you seek God, be ready to OBEY if He tells you to disengage from a relationship; He can see what your eye cannot see.

What if you got saved after marriage?

If you made a mistake and didn't seek God's counsel before you got married, God is gracious and can turn what is harmful into good. It doesn't mean that when you get saved and your spouse is not that this is a reason for divorce.

1 Corinthians 7:12-14 says "...if any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise you children would be unclean, but now they are holy" (NKJV).

In addition, do not neglect your duties as a wife or husband, instead be a good example as God could use you to minister to your spouse, but seek Him first. 1 Peter 3:1-2 says "wives, likewise be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear" (NKJV). This applies to husbands as well- play your God-given role. Pray for your spouse and leave the rest to God. It is God who gives people the gift of salvation therefore pray and let God do His work in them.

Colleagues / Business Partners

It is impossible to work in an environment where there are no unbelievers. The same principles under "friends" apply. Seek the counsel of the Holy Spirit and be careful about who you let speak into your life. An important thing to look out for is values, especially for business partners – do they share the same values as you? e.g. ethical principles.

The key things to remember are:

- Foremost, seek God's counsel (this cannot be over-emphasized). The Holy Spirit is our helper and we should consult Him.
- Pray for the unbelievers in your life.
- Be ready to OBEY when God gives you instructions on how to navigate relationships.
- God calls us to be the salt and light of the earth therefore the goal is to win souls for Christ. Be a good ambassador for Christ.

CONCLUSION

To follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, you must be:

1. Willing to walk the path that God has set before you
2. Obedient and follow God's instructions
3. Silent to hear what God is saying to you

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Hi, I love writing and my latest eBooks include: *Life Purpose: A Beginner's Guide*; *Demystifying the Grey Kingdom: The Truth about the Kingdom of Light and the Kingdom of Darkness*; and *Maiden Book: How to Plan, Outline and Write Your First Book*. They are available on Amazon Kindle, Kobo, iTunes, Barnes & Noble and several other eBook stores worldwide.

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