

# A Deeper Walk with God

## How to Nurture YOUR Relationship with the Holy Spirit

Edited Transcript

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Good morning, men. Please turn in your Bibles to Acts chapter one. Once upon a time, I woke up in writhing pain and was afraid I was in the process of dying, and it was a Friday morning, so I was supposed to be coming here to teach. I didn't. Instead, my wife said, "Well, get in the back seat of the car and lie down. I'll take you over to the emergency room," so off to the emergency room we went. On the way over, I was in a sweat, and I didn't know what was going on. I really was afraid for about the first half of the ride that I was going to die. Then, the pain was so bad for the second half I was afraid I wasn't going to die. Then, we got to the hospital. It was early in the morning, so we went in.

I was really the only person there, but I saw a hospital worker, probably a nurse, on the other side of the emergency room. I called out in pain, "You've got to do something. Help. Help me. I'm dying. I don't know what's going on." They walked over and looked me over. Within about a minute, they figured that I probably had kidney stones. They needed to confirm that, so they strapped me onto a gurney, called for an orderly who wheeled me down into the bowels of the hospital where the radiology department was. I was a little surprised because I was not the only one there. There were about seven or eight people ahead of me, so the orderly pushed the cart over to the side against the wall.

My wife, Patsy, who is the Mother Teresa of my home and has the gift of mercy, she had followed us down there. I began to talk to Patsy. She's my wife. I said, "Oh, Patsy." In the process of getting this all situated, I had told them I really needed to get something for the pain. They gave me a shot of morphine. Praise God for morphine. By the time I got down to the radiology department, I was starting to loosen up. I said, "Oh, Patsy. I feel a love for God right now like I have never felt before. I feel the presence of Jesus. I feel the Holy Spirit coursing through my veins." She said, "Shut up, you dummy. That's the morphine." We're going to talk about the Holy Spirit this morning, the real Holy Spirit, but before we do that, let's do a couple of shout outs.

We have the first one going to Evangel Men, six to 10 guys. They've been meeting with us for seven years on Wednesday evenings at the Evangel World Prayer Center, Louisville, Kentucky. They're led by Paul Woods. Paul writes, "We are men teaching men how to be men from the model of the ultimate man." Wow. That's great, great prose, Paul. Thank you. "We are men teaching men how to be men from the model of the ultimate man, Jesus Christ. We are building ourselves to be a band of brothers."

Then, we have an area director helping churches disciple men more effectively with Man in the Mirror. I was looking at the word Indiana up there. Okay. I can feel it. I can feel it. Dan Hindman, and he's in the general Indianapolis area. Dan writes, "Most men don't want to fail, but I've seen most men who made choices that resulted in ruined marriages, wounded children, and failed careers. God ignited in me an intense desire to help men. Then, he drew me into a ministry that does help by teaching churches how to disciple men into the abundant life God intends for each of us." I wonder if you would join me in

giving both Dan and Evangel Men a very warm, rousing Man in the Mirror welcome. One, two, three, hoorah. Welcome, men. We are so honored to have you with us. Dan, thank you for your service in the kingdom.

The title of today's message is **How to Nurture Your Relationship With the Holy Spirit**. Tried to do a little something cute there, how to nurture a relationship with the Holy Spirit, but, really, how to nurture your relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Why do we need a Holy Spirit? Well, I met a man. He's a friend, has become a friend, and he was telling me that he had built this organization. Then, he got into some financial cashflow problems, was having difficulty paying the bills, and he's a believer. He's a very strong believer. One day, he got a phone call from a vendor. He said, "I just sat there at my desk as this vendor chewed me up and down because I wasn't making my payment on time." He said, "I was so deflated, so I was stressing out. I wasn't sleeping at night. I was grouchy when I was home. A lot of the time, I wasn't at home because I was over here trying to put things together." He said, "Basically, I felt like I was a failed man." Basically, he was in a panic. We need a Holy Spirit because of situations where we can find ourselves disheartened.

I find myself disheartened two or three times a week. Sometimes it lasts a whole day. Sometimes it lasts a half day. Sometimes it lasts until I can talk to my wife a little bit. This is after I have spent that 30 minutes, one hour, two hours down on the dock with papa and come to those 60 seconds of exquisite ineffable joy that I live in the shadow of or in the overflow of for the rest of the day. Nevertheless, you still have things that dishearten you. I still have things that dishearten me.

## **WHAT IS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

Let's begin by talking a little bit about what is our relationship with the Holy Spirit. You should be at Acts chapter one verse eight. How is it that the disciples who were the closest to Jesus, who ended up deserting him and fleeing, who actually denied that they even knew him and who locked themselves in a room or in a house like a cowering little group of cowards, how is it that they came then in the book of Acts to be preaching the word of God to thousands?

"Silver and gold have I none but what I do have, I give to you in the name of Jesus. Stand up and walk." How is it that these disciples went from the tepid, weak faith that they had to these powerful disciples? Well, it was Pentecost, and we see the answer at Acts chapter one verse eight in the last or some of the last or near last words of Jesus. He says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you." This is the same power, this is the same Spirit that was hovering over the waters in Genesis chapter one verses one and two. God is Spirit the Bible tells us. The same Spirit that was in these disciples, these powerful disciples, is the same Spirit that is in you and me. To each one of us has been given the manifestation of the Spirit.

What does that mean? Well, turn with me to John chapter 14 verse 26. I'm pretty sure I cite this verse to myself every day. "Jesus says, 'But the counselor,'" this word counselor or some of your versions may say helper, some of your versions may say advocate, it's the word parakletos, which we get Paraclete from. It's a Greek word from which we get Paraclete. How many of you ever heard the word Paraclete? For those of you who have not, para is alongside. It's someone who comes alongside another person to be a helper. Jesus called himself a Paraclete because he said, "I'm going to send you another helper, another Paraclete." "But the counselor or the Paraclete, the helper, the advocate," and then he names

that advocate. "But the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you."

Wow. "I will teach you all things. Everything you need to know that you do not know now, I will teach you." How does he do that? Well, he doesn't do it if you go crawl in a hole or pull the covers up over yourself and refuse to get out of bed. The Holy Spirit tends to do his best work when we do our best work. The way that the Holy Spirit teaches us all things is he invites us to join him in an intimate relationship with his word, whether we read it or listen to it, to come to church and hear the word of God proclaimed, come to a Bible study like this, to be part of a small group. These are some of the ways that Jesus teaches us everything we need to know. How many times have you come here, for example, in the morning with some kind of a problem really bearing down on you, and you walk out, and you say, "Gosh. That's exactly what I needed today"?

That's because God knew that and either I said something that I planned to say, but more likely I said something I didn't plan to say or, more likely, I said something and you heard something very different than what I said. I can't tell you the number of times somebody's come up and said, "Thank you for saying this and that." I just nod my head. I never said anything like that. That's just what they heard. "I will teach you all things, everything you need to know that you don't already know, and remind you of everything I have said." God gave supernaturally the apostles super memory, the ability to reconstruct the teachings of Jesus. How does the Holy Spirit remind us of everything that Jesus has taught us? He's given us this book that we call the Bible, the Holy Bible, by which we can be reminded of everything that the Holy Spirit thought was... All scripture's inspired by God.

The Holy Spirit inspires these men to write the things down that he wants written down. The things that God wanted us to be reminded about are written down for us to review so we don't have to trust our memories. Now, some of the things that are said of the Holy Spirit. There are books, thousands of books, I suppose, I know hundreds of books written about the Holy Spirit, but from the scriptures, some of the things that the Holy Spirit does. He convicts us. He saves us. He is how we gain the gospel. He is the promised gift. He is a deposit of our inheritance. He sets us free from law. He is in all believers. He is the Spirit of sonship. He testifies with our spirit that we are sons of God. He helps us in our weakness. He intercedes for us. He sanctifies us. He comforts us. He counsels us. He teaches. These are all Bible verses. He teaches us. He reminds us. He gives us gifts. He gives us fruit. He gives us power, on and on and on.

How is he our helper? One example, Romans 8:26 and 27, if you want to look that up, "But the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not even know how we ought to pray." We've got this panic going on. We have these bills that can't be paid. I've been this grouch around the house. My wife hates my guts right now. She loves me, but she still hates my guts right now. "But the Spirit helps us in our weakness even when we don't even know how we ought to pray. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groans so deep that words can not express, interceding for all the saints in accordance with God's will." The Holy Spirit, when you can't even muster the courage, the strength, whatever, to pray, the Holy Spirit does it for you. He intercedes for you with groans that you can't even. You feel this kind of... The Holy Spirit is praying for you, interceding for you with the Father with groans so deep that words cannot express.

We have an incredibly, potentially incredibly powerful relationship, love relationship with the Holy Spirit. I told a story here a few months ago about my wife and I at a stoplight next to a Lamborghini that lit it up. For those of you didn't hear this story, it was actually pretty funny. I put in the Christian man book. It was really pretty funny. This guy's got this, I don't even know how you pronounce it, Aventador.

Something like that. Anyway, it's like 700 horsepower, V12, zero to 60 in 2.7 seconds. Have you ever been in a car that went zero to 60 in 2.7 seconds? Well, Porsche Turbo does that. I actually decided to test drive a Porsche Turbo once that went from zero to 60 in 2.7 seconds. The salesman was saying, "Go ahead and light it up," so I did. It had traction control, so very little wheel spin. Honestly, I was so dizzy by the time we got to 60 I had to slow down. I was dizzy. I'm a race car driver, and I was dizzy.

That's what that Lamborghini will do. He lit it up. I said, "Wow. Can you believe that?" My wife says, "No, I can't believe that either. That's just so dangerous." Anyway, I told that one before. Anyway, the one I wanted to say today is that I now have this Lamborghini. I now own a Lamborghini. I own that Lamborghini. Not really, but for today, I own Lamborghini, and I want to give this Lamborghini to one of you. Who would like this \$400,000 car? All right. Daniel, I know you're a Lambo man. Lambo is your car. How you pronounce that, Aventador? Aventador. Lamborghini Aventador. Daniel, my man, I got to go away on a trip for six months, and I want you to take care of my car. Here's the thing. I can't have you just keeping it in the garage. You got to be driving this thing like every day. Can you handle that?

Oh, one more thing, Daniel. One more thing. I don't want you just taking this thing over to the gym and the grocery store. This car is made to be driven. This car is powerful. In order for this car to be in good shape when I come back, it needs to be used. Can I count on you, Daniel, to take this car out into the country, to light it up, to roam the wild plains of Western Florida, to put the top down and feel the wind blowing through your hair? Can I count on you to do that? All right. Well, the Holy Spirit's a little bit like having all of that power, that Lamborghini, all of that power and keeping it in your garage and only taking it out every now and then. Then, when you do, you only go to the grocery store. What kind of a waste of power is that? This gets us to a Big Idea today: **Am I taking full advantage of all the help the Holy Spirit has to offer?** Are you? Am I taking full advantage of all the help, he's the helper, all the help that the Holy Spirit has to offer? It's a huge issue. This is just an aside, but I was talking to my wife. I said, "You know, I think the problem is you talk about God the Father, and you kind of have some anthropomorphic reference point for our Father. You talk about Jesus, and you can look at the scriptures, and you can see that he was a real man. It's not even an anthropomorphic analogy. He was a man. You start talking about the Holy Spirit. What are you talking about?" There is some sense in which the Spirit does fall into, well, just not being taken advantage of all the help that he has to offer.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

Why is this important? Turn to Galatians chapter five verse 16 with me, please. Galatians chapter five verse 16. You and I have been called, watch this, you and I have been called to strenuously contest a battle that has already been won. It's like this. Maybe you follow MMA or maybe you watched Wimbledon tennis or something like that. Imagine if, at the beginning of the match, the two contestants came out, and the umpire raised the hand of one, "I would like to announce so-and-so is the winner of this match. Now, gentleman, begin the match," but that's exactly what happens with us. The battle that you and I are fighting, the outcome has already been determined, but we still have to contest it. We see this in Galatians chapter five verse 16 and following.

"So I say walk by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh." There's the battle. "For the flesh desires," here it is. "For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do whatever you want, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law." Then, it goes on to describe the acts of the flesh or the sinful nature, the things that we're battling

against, sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like.

Now, you know, you read over these, say, "Those are really, really bad things," but if you start drilling down on those things, idolatry, how many of you love money? Sexual immorality, how many of you guys are into pornography? Go ahead and raise your hands. I'm just kidding. Don't raise your hands. I don't want to know. Hatred, how many of you just hate the opposite, "I can't believe those republicans. I can't believe those democrats. I hate them"? I'm sorry. I'm just reading out of the Bible. If you don't like it, don't get me a low rating on Facebook or something or Amazon or something. Hey, I've decided that what social media is about is that everybody is entitled to have my opinion. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, peace, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Oh my gosh.

My friend, as he laid the phone back down in the cradle after talking to that vendor, he got down on his knees, and he prayed. He said, "God, I owe you an apology. I had taken over control of this company, but this is your company. This is not my company. I repent, and I apologize for doing that. I was trying to run this company in my own strength instead of relying on the power of your Holy Spirit. I am so sorry. Because I do trust you, what I'm going to do right now is I'm going to say to you that you see that big pile of bills over here on the corner of my desk? They're yours. I'm going to go home and have a nice meal with my family and play with my kids. I'm going to trust that you're going to take care of these bills."

Now, obviously, there was some things that he was led to do over the next few weeks, but would it surprise you to learn that every one of those bills got paid? Every one of those bills got paid because he was depending on the help of the Holy Spirit. That's why this is important, is because it's central to us being able to live the life that he has for us, to enjoy the fruit of his Spirit that he wants for us. Ask yourself the question, "Am I," like my friend, "Am I taking full advantage of all the help the Holy Spirit has to offer?"

## **HOW DO WE NURTURE THIS RELATIONSHIP?**

Then, finally, how do we nurture this relationship? The title of the message is How to Nurture Your Relationship With the Spirit. First thing we talked about, what is the relationship and why it's important. Now, let's talk a little bit about how we can nurture this relationship.

Turn with me to Ephesians chapter five verse 18. "Do not get drunk on wine which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit." This is a continuing imperative. It's the Holy Spirit. Jesus analogizes the Holy Spirit to water. You don't drink one glass of water and then say, "Oh, man. I'm set, baby." You drink water many times a day, and that's the way it is with the Holy Spirit. The analogy here is that make sure it's the living water that you're drinking. Don't get drunk on wine and all that, but rather drink, be filled with the Holy Spirit several times a day, many times a day, all day if you can get to the place where you're like Brother Lawrence, and you just basically are continually practicing the presence of God. I'm not where Brother Lawrence was. Well, actually, I probably am where he really was, but he wrote about it in such a way that I probably never could be there.

Nobody's that perfect, not even Brother Lawrence. You certainly aren't. Look, if I'm not there, I know you're not there. Hey, we're working on it, though. Right? We're working on it. We want to nurture this relationship. How do we explain this idea, being filled with the Spirit? Here's how you can understand it. Have you ever said of another man he was full of himself? Well, what did you mean by that? He was arrogant, cocky, prideful, maybe coarse, thought he had all the answers, wouldn't listen to advice, et

cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Right? He was full of himself. Well, what would you say about a man who was full of the Spirit? You know, he's loving. He's joyful. He has peace. He's patient. He's kind. He's gentle. He's faithful. He has self-control. You could tell the difference. I mean, I wouldn't want to say that you could look at somebody and tell everything that's going on, but there are some people you can tell they're full of themselves. There are other people you can tell they're full of the Spirit.

I was walking up, longest hike I ever did last week, to the top of Rocky Top Mountain, that Rocky Top. I hiked all the way up there, 3,721 feet of ascent. Took me eight and a half hours, top and back. On the way up, I stop, and there's this guy. He just walks right by me like he's out on a... When I get to the top, he's up there. We get into a discussion. Turns out, he's a believer. He said, "I knew you were a believer. When you walked by me, there was something about you that gave me the sense that you were a believer." He just looked full of the Spirit. I mean, he did. The first way we nurture this relationship is just to be filled. Prayer, the Spirit intercedes for us, but Ephesians 6:18 says, "Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of requests," to be people of prayer.

There's so many things I could tell you and would love to tell you, but I think I'm just going to finish up with this one thing here. This is how do you nurture this relationship. I have probably logged well in excess of a million miles on planes with this ministry stuff and a little bit of business before it. I've always admired these guys and gals who had these noise-canceling headsets. I've never had any. Well, now that I don't fly as much, I thought I'd get some. Actually, I got a good deal on them, so I decided to get these noise-canceling headphones. These are really, really fine, but, you know, it came with a little instruction manual. I've had them for about a week. I did finally figure out how to actually, I can turn it on now. Power on, okay. That's good. Then, let's see. I want to listen to music. Okay. I push play on the music.

One nice thing is I can't hear you anymore. I can't even hear that. Okay. That's interesting. There's still no music, so now what do I do? I'm not connected. I got the headphones on, but I'm not connected. How do I do that? Let's see. Oh, Bluetooth. Okay. Bluetooth connected, music, okay. Here it is. The battery has to be charged. I figured that out. The headphones have to be on my head. I figured that out. The power has to be on. I figured that out. Then, Bluetooth has to be connected. I figured that out. If you want to nurture your relationship with the Holy Spirit, here's just a visual for you. Why not just make sure that your battery is charged, that your headphones are on, that the power is on, and that the Bluetooth is connected back to the word, back to the Lord, back to the Spirit? Hey, if you really want to think about it, why not just picture yourself walking around all day long with a pair of headphones on connected to the Holy Spirit?

What's the Big Idea? It's a question. Right? **Am I taking full advantage of all the help the Holy Spirit has to offer?** Am I wearing my headphones all day long, all the time? Am I keeping them charged? Am I wearing them, but the power's off? Is the power on, but I'm not Bluetooth connected? Take the step, take full advantage of all the help the Holy Spirit has to offer, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. Let's pray. Our dearest Father, Lord, thank you so much for these noise-canceling headphones. These are really cool. I thank you, Lord, for the metaphor that it gives us, that we can always be connected to you, but we have to be connected. We need to keep ourselves recharged, charged up, and we need to keep the power on. Lord, I pray that you would help each of us to enjoy and nurture our relationship with you so that we might be those men that other men are saying, "Huh. I wonder what they have." In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

