



Series: Open The Gates (Part 3)

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INTRODUCTION

As we continue to learn about the Holy Spirit and His role in our lives, we learn that having an intimate relationship with Him is not just important, but the *most* important thing. God has made a way for us to know Him, and it is not through religion or theology, but through the Holy Spirit. Regardless of who we are and where we come from, we can all encounter the Holy Spirit and to know Him intimately.

DISCUSSION

1. In Ephesians 1:13-14, Paul writes "... When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory". How does knowing the God seals you with the Holy Spirit to secure your eternity with Him change the way you see your current circumstances?
2. In John 15, Jesus calls himself the true vine and we are the branches. In vs 2, it reads that "He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful." If we remain in Him as He is in us, we will bear much fruit; for apart from Him, we can do nothing.
 - a. What does this image of the vine and branches teach you about your dependence on Him?
 - b. What does it look like to "remain/abide" in Christ in practical, everyday terms?
 - c. What is this "fruit" that Jesus is referring to? How do we know if our lives are bearing that fruit?
 - d. Verse 2 mentions cutting away what is fruitless and pruning what is fruitful. Have there been any areas in your life where God has challenged you to "cut away"? How has God "pruned" your life, and what fruit came from it?

3. “Metamorphoō” is Greek for change or transformation through a process of time. Trials are often placed in our lives to test, develop, build and strengthen our faith. Share about a challenging time in your life that you feel God has tested your faith and how you experienced transformation.

4. When we have adversity in our lives, often our first reaction is to take control of the situation, calculate the risks and react in the flesh. But Paul recommends a better way to handle things. Galatians 5:16-17 says that when you walk in the Spirit, you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

- a. What does walking in the Spirit mean to you?
- b. Paul says the flesh and the Spirit are in conflict. Where do you see that battle most clearly in daily life?
- c. What are some practical habits that help us lean on the Spirit rather than on our own desires?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

Three Practical Principles to Walking in the Spirit

- **Rejoice in the Lord**

Practice rejoicing in the Lord, always. Phil 4:4-5

The Joy of the Lord is our strength. Neh 8:10

Regardless of circumstance, let our mouths be filled with words of praise.

- **Prayer and thanksgiving**

God holds us in the palm of His hands. We do not need to be anxious about anything, but in every situation, let's pray unceasingly with thanksgiving. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus – see Phil 4:4-6

- **Meditate**

We fill our hearts and minds with what is pure, admirable and good – see Phil 4:8

MEMORY VERSE

“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power.” 1 Corinthians 2:4-5

E1R1 REFLECTION

In John 16:25-33, Jesus promises His disciples a day when they can ask in His name and experience deep communion with God. Thanks to Christ’s redemptive work on the cross, a way has been made for ordinary humans to converse with the Almighty God of the universe. The promised Holy Spirit is the first step, the deposit, towards such intimacy. How does knowing that God wants to communicate with you, to be known by you, inspire you to share the gospel with others? No other god but the King of Kings and Lord of Lords actually wants a relationship with His people, and moved heaven and earth to make the way! What good news!