



THE POWER TO CHANGE



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The stunning transformation of a ground-dwelling caterpillar into a delicate and beautiful winged butterfly is an example of what God is able to do in us. It's not enough to simply disguise the outside of the caterpillar by adding wings. The power of God working from start to finish must bring about a total transformation from the inside out. The change God completes in the unsuspecting caterpillar is higher than the humble creature could ever anticipate. Before our eyes, the finished product takes our breath away, but God's power to change is not limited to tiny winged creatures. We need God's transformation in our lives. The change God is able to produce in you is more than adding wings; God will make you a new creation, from the inside out.

1 How much does God care about my life?

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

1 Corinthians 10:31 "... whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

God cares about "all your ways" and "whatever you do." He who numbers the very hairs of your head (Matthew 10:30) cares about every action, decision, and moment of your life, no matter how small it may seem. Even decisions that appear insignificant to us are important to God, because He knows that "he who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).

2 What help does God give to guide me in the decisions I make?

John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things ..."

We each need help to choose what God knows is best for us. This is why the Father gives the Holy Spirit, who Jesus calls "another Helper" (John 14:16).

3 Who is the Holy Spirit?

1 Corinthians 6:19 "... your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God ..."

2 Corinthians 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

The Holy Spirit is the fully distinct and divine Member of the Godhead who dwells in us. He is in complete unity of purpose with the Father and with Jesus, the Son. Jesus commanded His disciples to teach and baptize with God's undivided authority "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

The Holy Spirit is not mindless energy, but a conscious Being with a will who speaks (Acts 13:2), commands (Acts 8:29), instructs (Nehemiah 9:20), testifies (Acts 20:23), convicts (John 16:8), teaches (1 Corinthians 2:13), glorifies Christ (John 16:14), and intercedes (Romans 8:26). He can be blasphemed (Mark 3:29), resisted (Acts 7:51), lied to (Acts 5:3), and grieved (Isaiah 63:10).

4 What does the Holy Spirit do for me?

Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

2 Thessalonians 2:13 “... God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”

Ephesians 1:13–14 “... you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance ...”

The Holy Spirit works inside us to bring about every step of salvation through the power of Jesus’ death and resurrection. The regeneration and renewing that transforms what was dead from sin by covering you with Jesus’ righteousness is accomplished by the Holy Spirit. The daily sanctification that urges and enables us to imitate Jesus in every thought and action is the Spirit’s work. The Holy Spirit teaches us God’s truth each day through the Bible. When we accept and obey God’s truth, this work of the Holy Spirit is our “guarantee” that we are a friend of God.

5 How does the Holy Spirit carry out this work in my life?

2 Peter 1:21 “... holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

Ephesians 5:18 “... be filled with the Spirit.”

Acts 1:8 “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me ...”

The Holy Spirit communicates God’s instruction—not with an audible voice or visible signs, but internally, by prompting thoughts in our mind. The voice of the Holy Spirit is our conscience (Romans 9:1), God’s “still small voice” (1 Kings 19:12) guiding us, personally. As we learn to recognize and trust God’s voice and follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, His voice fills our thoughts so that His slightest whisper empowers our eager obedience. “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts ...’” (Hebrews 3:7–8).

The Bible records many examples of the Holy Spirit’s work inside people:

Judges 13:25 The Spirit of the Lord moved upon Samson.

Exodus 35:30–31 The Holy Spirit filled Bezalel with wisdom and understanding.



“The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, always speaks in agreement with the Word of God.”

1 Chronicles 28:11–12 The Holy Spirit gave David plans for the temple.

Luke 2:25–27 Simeon obeyed when moved by the Spirit.

Luke 1:41 Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke blessings about Jesus.

Acts 13:2 Barnabas and Saul were chosen by the Holy Spirit for ministry.

6 What does God communicate to me when the Holy Spirit prompts my thoughts?

1 John 5:6 “... it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.”

John 15:26 “... He will testify of Me” [of Jesus].

John 16:8 “... He will convict the world of sin ...”

John 16:13 “... He will guide you into all truth ...”

The Holy Spirit always points to Jesus for salvation, revealing His true and perfect character that brings us face-to-face with our sin. Everything the Holy Spirit teaches, guides us to “seek those things which are above, where Christ is ... not on things on the earth” (Colossians 3:1–2). God’s Word is understood through the Holy Spirit so “that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God” (1 Corinthians 2:12) and be “thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:17).

7 How can I know the thoughts that come to my mind are prompted by the Holy Spirit?

1 John 4:1 “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

Isaiah 8:20 “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

While Satan cannot read our thoughts, he can prompt us through external influences of sin and temptation. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, always speaks in agreement with the Word of God. So study God’s Word and anticipate the prompting of the Holy Spirit that is in agreement with God’s Law and His character.

8 How can I have the Holy Spirit’s presence in my life?

Luke 11:9–10, 13 “... ask, and it will be given to you For everyone who asks receives If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

The Holy Spirit’s invitation is felt by every person; but to be led by the Spirit, we must be willing, which we express by asking in prayer. Prayer

is an important part of hearing God's loving voice. As often as we need the guidance of the Holy Spirit in every decision, we must pray. God is eager for us to ask, and He's ready to give; but He does not force His will upon us without our permission. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God ..." (John 1:12).

9 Will the Holy Spirit take control of my choices?

Philippians 2:12–13 "... work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

Romans 6:12–13 "Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God."

Salvation is not something God does without us. The outward work of choosing and obeying is carried out by us as we yield in faith to the inward work of the Holy Spirit. We participate with God by joyfully saying, "Yes!" to the Holy Spirit in every decision until it becomes our habit and our character. God will not revoke our freedom, even in Heaven!

You choose for yourself to "hear what the Spirit says" (Revelation 2:7); read and follow every Spirit-inspired "word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4); yield to God's will, saying "Your will be done" (Luke 11:2); exalt God's will over your own: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30); and finally, "live in the Spirit" and "walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

10 Will the presence of the Holy Spirit give me a special feeling so I know what thoughts are from God?

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked"

Proverbs 28:26 "He who trusts in his own heart is a fool"

Feelings are not trustworthy evidence of what is true—even feelings of warmth, happiness, or peacefulness. Jesus spoke of those who feel like they are His followers, but do not obey God: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21). The Word of God is the standard that confirms what is true, even when our feelings do not yet offer confirmation (Acts 17:11). However, the continuing influence of the Holy Spirit begins to restore even our emotions, so that God's Word brings delight: "Great peace have those who love Your law ..." (Psalm 119:165).

"As often as we need the guidance of the Holy Spirit in every decision, we must pray."



11 What if I don't understand every reason for what God asks me to do in His Word?

Isaiah 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways"

Psalms 147:5 "... His understanding is infinite."

Psalms 118:8 "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

1 Samuel 16:7 "... For the Lord does not see as man sees"

Proverbs 14:12 "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."

Psalms 23:3 "... He leads me in the paths of righteousness"

Hebrews 11:7 "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household"

God has "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3). Even if we don't grasp all God's reasons from our limited understanding, we can safely surrender our pride and obey God's Word in faith. Our promise is "the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6). When following God leads you through difficult paths, you can say, "I will fear no evil; for You are with me" (Psalm 23:4).

12 Is it possible to live a Christian life without the Holy Spirit?

1 Cor. 15:50 "... flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"

Romans 8:5–9 "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His."

It is impossible to live a true Christian life without the Holy Spirit, even though our life seems comfortable and admirable to carnal eyes. When living “in the flesh,” we follow our own desires and rely on our own inadequate strength to please God. Salvation is “not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord ...” (Zechariah 4:6). Every step is motivated by the Spirit, so that all the glory goes to God alone. Each person who is saved through Jesus will be filled with the Holy Spirit as a gift from God “who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us” (Ephesians 3:20).

13 What changes will be seen in my life when I follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit?

Romans 13:14 “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Every change of thought or action prompted by the Holy Spirit leads us to be just like Jesus, so God can say of us that He is “well pleased,” just as He said of Jesus (Matthew 3:17). God invites us to bring “every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5). Through the Holy Spirit, we begin to love what God loves and desire what is righteous and holy. God can bless those desires because they come from Him and they lead to eternal life (Psalm 37:4).

God not only wants to improve you; He desires you to be “transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is what Jesus calls being “born again” (John 3:3), starting over with Him leading your life.

14 Can I claim to be sinless because of the work of the Holy Spirit?

Philippians 3:12 “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect; but I press on ...”

Hebrews 6:1 “Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection ...”

If we claim to be sinless, we deny our need of God’s grace to overcome sin. The Holy Spirit keeps the goal always before us—perfect unity with God that reflects His character. God continues to perfect our Christian character in every decision where we yield to His will. Step by step, we

“Step by step,
we become more
like Jesus ...”



become more like Jesus, “being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

15 How can I know the Holy Spirit is able to bring about these changes in me?

Mark 10:27 “... ‘With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.’”

1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”

We know because we have learned to trust God’s Word. His promise is to “put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes” (Ezekiel 36:27). We take Him at His Word. Then, we act in agreement with His promise. As we trust the Holy Spirit’s prompting, we will be strengthened to continue trusting that every command of God is a promise: “... He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

16 If I sin, does the Holy Spirit leave me?

1 John 2:1 “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

2 Corinthians 7:10 “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation ...”

Isaiah 55:7 “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him ...”

The Holy Spirit gives us conviction for sin, which is God’s gracious invitation to return. Don’t wait; confess and repent immediately so you do not drift from God, “nor give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27). Study



“A life directed by the Holy Spirit is not gloomy or full of self-denial.”

David’s words in Psalm 51:10–11, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.” The Holy Spirit also gives us the assurance that “there is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). The penalty is paid by Jesus, who does not turn us away.

Matthew 12:31 “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.”

Jesus “is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him” (Hebrews 7:25). Salvation through Jesus is limited only when we “resist the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:51). We “quench the Spirit” as we would extinguish a flame, by neglecting God’s voice, or covering it up beneath our own selfish desires (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The more we push the Holy Spirit away by holding onto a favorite sin, the less we will hear God’s voice, until we no longer desire to be like Jesus. The only sin God cannot forgive is the sin we will not let go. God does not leave us, but we may choose to leave Him.

17 What is the reward enjoyed by people like me who are filled with the Holy Spirit?

John 15:11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.”

Romans 5:5 “... the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”

A life directed by the Holy Spirit is not gloomy or full of self-denial. It is the joyful experience of God’s presence filling every moment. The generous privilege of the Holy Spirit is ours: “the comfort of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 9:31), the “joy of the Holy Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 1:6), and “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

Romans 8:11 “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead

dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”

Revelation 22:3 “And there shall be no more curse”

God’s plan is to restore us to what He intended for His children from the beginning: a perfect, never-ending, righteous life of faith that comes from His presence, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). God’s promise is not only to restore our sin-damaged bodies when Jesus returns. God’s plan is even better: to restore our character, which the Holy Spirit is already working out within us. “... it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2). Those who love God will love to be like God in every thought and action through all eternity.

18 Can I put off asking for the Holy Spirit until a later time?

2 Corinthians 6:2 “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

1 Corinthians 6:9 “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?”

Jesus will return soon, as He promised, to rescue those who eagerly long for Him. Why wait to enjoy the blessing of a righteous, holy character? God wants to give the Holy Spirit today, while you are still hearing His invitation. Every delay gives Satan the opportunity to lead you away from God’s will. God does not take away your free choice, and He will not change your character for you in Heaven, because your choices create your character. Those who chose their own way on earth would continue to choose their own way if they were allowed into Heaven, bringing sin into God’s restored Universe, again. The transformation to become like Jesus is happening right now, as you choose to be led by the Holy Spirit. Accept His invitation today.

“Jesus will return soon, as He promised ...”



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY LIFE TODAY?



1. To ask God for the Holy Spirit means you trust Him to know the best plan for your life. Will you ask the Holy Spirit to fill your mind with His thoughts, plans, and will for you?

2. Every choice begins with your thoughts. Without God, our thoughts are motivated by selfishness. How has the Holy Spirit prompted your thoughts in a way that agrees with God's Word?

3. The Holy Spirit prompts you to obey God, even though that decision may be difficult. What step of faith is the Holy Spirit prompting you to take in your life? "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

4. Who do you know that needs to hear what you have learned?

"Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say" (Exodus 4:12).

Additional Notes:

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR ME IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?



1. The Holy Spirit helps in our prayers when we are weak. “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26).

2. The Holy Spirit keeps you closely connected to God. “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father” (Ephesians 2:18).

3. The Holy Spirit is power. “For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance ...” (1 Thessalonians 1:5).

4. When the Holy Spirit dwells in you, you don’t have to try to be like Jesus. You just “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

5. The Holy Spirit adopts you into the family of God! “... you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’” (Romans 8:15).

6. The Holy Spirit brings unity among Christian believers. “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

7. The Holy Spirit filled and directed the life of Jesus, our perfect example. “Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit ...” (Luke 4:1).

LESSON SUMMARY

1. The Holy Spirit is a fully distinct person of the Godhead who brings the blessings of salvation through faith in Jesus.

2. The Holy Spirit settles you firmly into God’s truth by teaching what is always in agreement with God’s Word.

3. God still communicates today, prompting your thoughts by the Holy Spirit in you.

4. Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot live a Christian life that is obedient to God’s will.

5. You are in control of your own choices. God persuades, but He does not force.

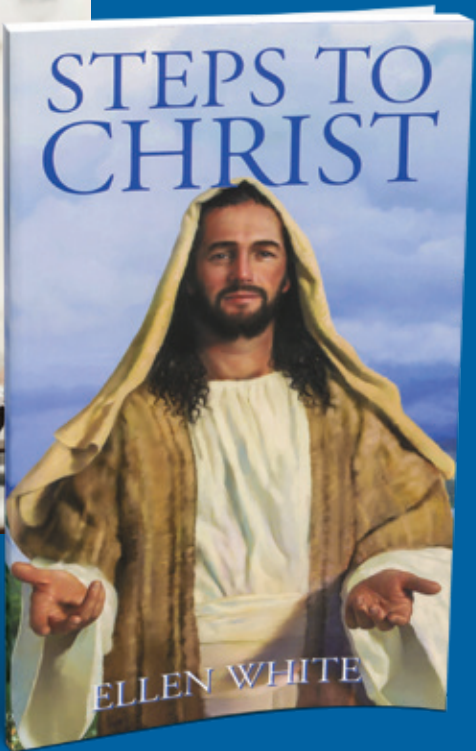
6. When we resist the Holy Spirit, we lose the ability to hear God’s voice and instead allow Satan to direct our lives.

7. Sanctification is a daily, continual work of cooperating with God to restore you into His image.

Additional Notes:



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STUDY GUIDE
5

...in the presence of the Holy Spirit...
11 "And the smoke of the Lament ascends forever and ever; and worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."
12 Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.
13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."
14 Then I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one like the Son of Man, having a golden crown upon his head, and a sword coming out of his mouth.