

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: THE COUNSELLOR

Introduction: The Holy Spirit is far more familiar to us than the more vague spiritual agents that we looked at last week. However, for Christians, there is always a tension with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. This tension is between simply knowing *about* the Spirit and knowing the Spirit in a relational, obedient sense.



Watch The *Bible Project* Video on the Holy Spirit:

<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/holy-spirit/>

Q. What are your thoughts right now about the Holy Spirit, and how do you sense his presence in your life?

READ: John 16:7-14; Acts 2:1-4

Q. Jesus made it clear that it was better for Him to physically leave us and send the Holy Spirit. What are the things that the Spirit brings us that Jesus could not bring while on Earth?

Q. On Sunday, we talked about how the Spirit:

- Makes Christ real to us
- Clothes us with the “ability to do” (Luke 24:49). E.g. witness, obey, discern, heal.
- Moves our heart for others

Discuss how each of these works of the Spirit are happening in your life as a believer. Are there any of these three areas that you would like to experience more of?



Watch *Bishop James’ story* on the Leader’s Resource Page.

Q. In what ways do you think the Spirit *made Christ real*, gave James *the ability to do* and *moved his heart for others* in his situation with the Rwandan authorities?

Q. Thomas Kelly, in his book *Testimony of Devotion*, compares living life in the Spirit with building a fire. We must create the right conditions and do the preparatory work (e.g. prayer, reading scripture, praising), but God alone can bring the spark that ignites the flame in our souls. In what ways can we turn our souls into a place where we can hear the Spirit clearly and sense his fire within us intimately?

Q. Discuss what you think Paul means in Ephesians 5:18-19 when he talks about being filled with the Spirit. The below quotes from A.W Tozer and John Piper are helpful in understanding this.

- "He wants to be Lord of your life, and he wants to possess you so that you are no longer in command of the little vessel in which you sail. You may be a passenger or someone else on board, but you are definitely not in charge." (A.W Tozer)
- "What we should seek (and this applies to *all* Christians) is that God pour his Spirit out upon us so completely that we are filled with joy, victorious over sin, and bold to witness. And the ways he brings us to that fullness are probably as varied as people are. It may come in a tumultuous experience of ecstasy and tongues. It may come through a tumultuous experience of ecstasy and no tongues. It may come through a crisis of suffering when you abandon yourself totally to God. Or it may come gradually through a steady diet of God's word and prayer and fellowship and worship and service. However it comes, our first experience of the fullness of the Spirit is only the beginning of a life-long battle to stay filled with the Spirit." (John Piper)

Q. Do you desire to be filled with the Spirit? If so, pray for one another, that you may receive a fresh experience of the reality of God's presence in and through you.