

Rick Gamache

PURSUING THE SPIRIT TO EXALT CHRIST

I. Introduction: To Our Advantage?

A. Background

a. The Farewell Discourse (John 14-17)

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7)

“Another Helper” (John 14:16)

“Spirit of truth” (John 14:17)

- B. Do I really believe that it’s to my advantage, for now, for Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to me rather than for him to have stayed to dwell on the earth in bodily form?
Do I live like I believe that’s true?

II. God’s Empowering Presence

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. . . 20 In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. (John 14:16-18, 20)

“I am convinced that the Spirit in Paul’s experience and theology was always thought of in terms of the personal presence of God. The Spirit is God’s way of being present, powerfully present, in our lives and communities as we await the consummation of the kingdom of God. Precisely because he understood the Spirit as God’s personal presence, Paul also understood the Spirit always in terms of an empowering presence; whatever else, for Paul the Spirit was an experienced reality.”¹

III. The Broad Work of the Spirit

A. Born of the Spirit (John 3:6)

B. Sanctified in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11)

a. Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22)

¹ Gordon Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1994), xxii.

IV. The Spirit's Main Mission

A. To Magnify Jesus

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26)

“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.” (John 15:26)

“He (The Holy Spirit) will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:14)

V. Application

A. Pursue and Anticipate God's Active, Empowering Presence

B. Seek Fresh Infillings of the Holy Spirit

a. Ephesians 5:18-20

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything

to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .”

i. An Imperative

ii. Plural

iii. Present Tense

b. Already Full; More Full

i. More Full through the Word of Christ

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)

C. Earnestly Desire

“ . . . earnestly desire the spiritual gifts . . .” (1 Corinthians 14:1)

a. Don't Throw the Baby Out with the Bathwater

b. The Risk Is Part of the Design

c. Christ Is Glorified when the Church is Built Up

D. Encounter Together

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” (Matthew 18:20)

“. . . they were all together in one place.” (Acts 2:1)

“When you come together . . .” (1 Corinthians 14:26)

“. . . [we are] being joined together, growing into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”
(Ephesians 2:21-22)

The Bible says that each believer in Christ is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). This means that the Spirit of God Himself has come to live within you and made you, as a temple, a place of worship. You don't have to go to a temple to worship God; you are His temple. That's why private worship . . . can happen wherever you are . . . it is also true that God will manifest His presence to you in congregational worship in ways you can never know even in the most glorious secret worship. That's because you are not only a temple of God as an individual, but the Bible also says (and far more often) that Christians collectively are God's temple . . . Today we may rightly point to each individual Christian and say “the temple of the Holy Spirit.” But we must also look at our local community of believers and declare with equal conviction “the temple of the Holy Spirit.” And there are experiences with God that can be known only when you worship within that “spiritual house.” . . . God manifests His presence in different ways to the “living stones” of His

temple when they are gathered than he does to them when they are apart.²

E. Simply Ask

“And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.” (Luke 11:9-13)

² Don Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church*, (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1996), 80-82.