

How to Build Friendships with the Holy Spirit?

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Following from the previous sermon we now enter into the third way on how to build friendships with the Holy Spirit.

3. Trust the Holy Spirit.

This is to depend upon Him.

Romans 8:11

¹¹ And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who lives in you.

Over here, the scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit is the power that raised Jesus from the dead. Think about the fact that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit walk together in perfect unity, i.e., they are the Trinity, three persons yet one God. They walk in unity so much that they entrust certain tasks to one another.

Consider the fact that Jesus allowed Himself to experience death. Even so, Jesus was God, He is God and will always be God. There was never a moment when He wasn't God, even when He was walking upon the earth. He was always God, even in His physical form. Think about the fact that the son of God allowed Himself to experience death and trusted that the Holy Spirit would raise Him up; that is dependence.

Here we see that we must too rely upon the Holy Spirit, the same spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you. If the Holy Spirit could bring the power for resurrection, then the Holy Spirit can bring power for any situation in your life, even if that situation doesn't work out the way that you want it to work. We need the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our ministries, in our businesses, in our families, in our marriages, in our relationships.

We need the Holy Spirit in our decisions, in our hobbies and in our goals. We have to learn to rely upon the precious Holy Spirit, the power that has been deposited in you. It has been gifted to you from the promise of the Father, yet many believers go their entire lives, never once tapping into that power.

Instead, so much of what we do is built upon self-reliance and we don't even realise it. As a born-again believer, you should never say or desire to do something in your own strength. No believer should say, "I want to do this without the Holy Spirit". No believer should say, "I can do this in my own strength". But although we don't consciously think

that, sometimes our actions actually demonstrate our independence from the Holy Spirit. For instance, when you go for a day without prayer and God's word you are saying to the Holy Spirit, "I don't need your help today." When you go a week without prayer, you are saying "I can handle this week all on my own". When you live a lifestyle without prayer, without involving the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you are saying to the Holy Spirit "I can live in my own strength, I don't need you".

Even though we do this, note that He will not push into your life and you need to allow Him to come and be in control of your life.

The Holy Spirit isn't limited by how we think. We have to learn that we can trust Him.

For our work, our ministries, and in our life we need programmes, we need structure, and we need to do things with excellence, but the structure and the programmes alone cannot amount to a move of the Holy Spirit.

We also have to realise that sometimes we move away from that dependency on Him because we are solely relying upon programs. There is nothing wrong with programmes, there is nothing wrong with structure, there is nothing wrong with excellence, nothing wrong with a polished look and feel of a ministry but when the church or ministry begins to rely upon that alone, we are moving in the flesh. Now we are moving in your own strength.

We need to be careful that we are not so reliant upon programmes and structures that if the Holy Spirit were to remove His influence, we wouldn't even notice that He was not in that activity. So yes, have our structure. Yes, do things with excellence. Yes, it is OK to implement programmes. That is what God calls us to do all things decently and in order well. We are to implement that which we can implement but remember to involve the Holy Spirit to do what only He can do. We do the practical and the possible, the Holy Spirit will do the miraculous and the impossible.

Acts 16:6-10

⁶Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

We see that Paul's original plans were stopped by the Holy Spirit. By faith, Paul didn't go the way he planned but changed the course to Macedonia.

No Doubt Paul couldn't see the reason why the Holy Spirit prevented them from preaching in Asia. But by trusting the Holy Spirit's leading they went to Macedonia. Macedonia became home to a number of the early churches Paul writes and mentions in his letters – Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

These young Macedonian churches were sorely persecuted from the time they came to faith, and it had left them financially devastated situation. The Bible says they were experiencing “down to the depths” poverty (2 Corinthians 8:2), yet their compassion for the persecuted Jewish believers in Jerusalem, and their willingness to act on it, became an example of generosity to the whole body of churches.

Paul's faith in the Holy Spirit made him see the wonderful result of his faith and obedience.

Sometimes we think we should do this or that, go this way or that way but the Holy Spirit has another way. Sometimes God would close one door to open another door. When we by faith follow the Spirit's leading and see the result of our faith and obedience, our friendship with him will become stronger because friendship is built on trust.

4. Communicate with the Holy Spirit

To build a friendship with the Holy Spirit, we will need to build a habit of constant communication with Him. When we do that, He will speak to you, guide you and reveal the right path to you.

John 16:13-15

¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. ¹⁵All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.”

V13a “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.”

The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth. Not just when you are reading the Bible, but all parts of your life.

When you don't know what is right, and what is wrong, the Holy Spirit will guide you and let you see the truth. When there are so many options, when you don't know who to listen to, listen to the Holy Spirit, because “He will not speak on his own, He will speak only what He hears,”

The Holy Spirit will receive instruction from Jesus, who loves us so much that He gave His life for us.

V 13b “and He will tell you what is yet to come.”

Because the Holy Spirit knows what the future holds, He will tell you the way that is good for you. He will make sure that what comes out is good for you so that Jesus can be glorified. (v14) A friend is someone you can share your thoughts and your needs, so we should talk and listen to the Holy Spirit all the time.

A friend is someone who is there for you. A friendship is built when that person accompanies your life, when that person is part of your life, whatever the situation you are in he is there for you, and so is the Holy Spirit. When you are broken and lost how do you depend on Him? How do you pray? How do you consult Him? How do you ask for His guidance?

You need to be aware of His presence. You received the Holy Spirit at the very moment you were born again so what I am talking about is how to receive that connection that has already been established. I am talking about how to walk and surrender and be obedient to the point where you are actually communicating with the Holy Spirit and more aware of Him and His nearness every single moment.

Psalm 139:7-10

⁷Where can I go from your Spirit?

Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn,

if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰even there your hand will guide me,

your right hand will hold me fast.

Here it says, where can I escape from your Spirit? The Holy Spirit is everywhere at all times. He is present every moment, and this is what is so precious about the Holy Spirit. There are no moments when the Holy Spirit cannot be involved and there is no moment so small that the Holy Spirit will not be involved.

The Holy Spirit is there when the doctors diagnose the cancer, and He is there when the cancer is healed. He is there when you get accepted into that college or that university and celebrates with you, but He is also there when you are struggling in your studies, when you don't feel that you have what it takes, and you feel the pressure of expectations and you don't know what to do.

He is there when you are struggling to raise your kids. He is there when there is tension in your marriage. He is there when there is an issue in your finances. He is there when situations don't end the way you want them to end. We don't always get the results that we want to experience but He is there. He will never abandon you, He will never leave you, and He will never forsake you.

He was there when you were born again. He was there when you were touched by the Holy Spirit. He was there when you felt like going to church. He was even there when you don't feel like going to church. He is there when you are enthusiastic and you are ready to open the scripture and He is still there when you lay the scripture aside and He is prompting you, calling you, giving you a royal invitation to come and be with Him. He is there when you feel like praying. He is there when you don't feel like praying, He is there when you are on the mountaintop, and He is there when you are in the valley.

He is there when you feel like shouting praise and worship. He is there when your soul is crushed and you can't even let out a whisper. He is there when you make a decision to resist temptation, affirming that decision, rejoicing over that decision. But He is also there when you make that mistake, and you think you have gone too far and you think you have messed up one too many times. You feel you don't even have the boldness to look at God, you don't want to pray, you don't want to read because of the shame that you feel and you are beating yourself up saying, "I did it again," even after I said I never would.

He is there at your accomplishments. He is there at your failures. He is there when the work is beginning, and He is there when the season comes to an end. He is there when you feel like friends are all around you. He is also there when you feel lonely, rejected, despised and misunderstood. He is there when you take a step of faith, and He rejoices at that decision. But He is also there when you choose to give in to fear, then He gives you Grace and mercy and He says, "Let's do this again."

He is there when you step out and use the gift as He told you to use it and He is there when you didn't step out and use the gift, but you kept your mouth shut, or you didn't witness or you didn't do what you knew you should have done, and He comforts you and says, "There is no condemnation, let's get this right," and He helps you move forward. This is not to give you a licence for wrongdoing and disobedience but to help you get it right. He is there when you feel qualified. He is there when you feel disqualified because of your sin. He is there when you feel sure of yourself, and He is there when you feel insecure.

He is there on the wedding day. He is there even if your spouse leaves you and you are served with divorce papers. The Holy Spirit is your ever-present help in times of need. He brings comfort to the broken-hearted, strength to those who need boldness, and understanding to those who cry out for wisdom. He gives power to those who need a miracle. He is there when you feel His power manifested on your physical body and

He is there even when you feel numb, no emotion, nothing whatsoever. Thank you, precious Holy Spirit for being there, a true friend.

He prays for you.

Romans 8:26

²⁶In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

He prays for you according to the will of God, the one who knows you like no one else knows you, is praying for you like no one else can pray for you. He understands your weaknesses, he understands your strengths and he can pray accordingly. When we are so weak that no words can express our pain, our broken heart, our discouragement, our hopelessness, He takes over and starts praying through our cries. He is not giving up on you. He does not leave you alone even when you give up on him. The Scripture declares he is faithful even when we are not, for he cannot deny who he is.

You may have said, "I wish I had a friend, a true friend like that". Well, realize that you do. When you walk in that awareness with Him, that communication with Him, knowing that He is available every moment, that changes everything. You can talk to Him while you are driving to school or to work. You can talk to Him in your heart, and retreat to that inner place even when you are with your friends and family. You can acknowledge Him when you are playing with your children or on a date with your spouse.

He is there, He is ever-present, full of mercy and love, giving peace and joy. He is your comforter. He is your friend. He is not abandoning you.