

Seeking God's Spirit

DAY 3—VICTORY THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

"So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16, NIV).

Testimony

"There was in Him [Jesus] nothing that responded to Satan's sophistry. He did not consent to sin. Not even by a thought did He yield to temptation. So it may be with us. Christ's humanity was united with divinity; He was fitted for the conflict by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And He came to make us partakers of the divine nature. So long as we are united to Him by faith, sin has no more dominion over us. God reaches for the hand of faith in us to direct it to lay fast hold upon the divinity of Christ, that we may attain to perfection of character" (Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 123).

Jerry was a hard worker. He spent most of his adult life as an iron worker building bridges and skyscrapers. He was the guy who would walk out hundreds of feet above ground on a narrow iron beam and spot-weld it to another iron beam. But although Jerry was talented and hardworking, he also abused his body with alcohol, tobacco, drugs, women, and wild living. Whenever a Christian man would come to work, Jerry would verbally and emotionally persecute him, hoping to drive him from the job. Jerry hated Christianity and Christians.

As Jerry approached age 50, he started getting depressed. One day he decided to end his life. As he was driving home to commit suicide, he saw a sign for the Seventh-day Adventist Church along the highway. The Holy Spirit put a thought in his mind: "Maybe they can help me." So Jerry pulled into the parking lot just as church school was letting out for the day, approached the principal, and mumbled something about needing help. The principal gave Jerry my number and said, "This is the phone number of our pastor. Please give him a call." When Jerry called that evening, he told me he was in trouble and asked if I could help. I phoned an elder, and together we went right over to Jerry's house.

Jerry told us everything and added, "I can't believe I've fallen so low as to have a pastor in my home." He said he'd tried everything the world has to offer without finding satisfaction, so he had decided to end his life. I said, "Jerry, you haven't yet tried everything because you haven't tried Jesus." "You're right," he smirked, "I haven't tried Jesus. So, what do I have to do to try Jesus?" I shared the simple message of the gospel and asked, "Is there any reason why you wouldn't want to receive Jesus into your life?" Jerry said, "No, because unless He does something for me tonight, I'm going to end my life."

Inviting Jerry to kneel with us, I asked him to repeat a prayer after me. Right after we said "Amen," Jerry grabbed my arm and said, "Did you see that?" "See what?" I asked. "Right as I said 'Amen,' I opened my eyes and saw a man hovering over my head with a very evil look on his face, and then he vanished through the ceiling. You've got to believe me!" "I believe you, Jerry," I said. "How do you feel now?" After a moment of reflection he said, "I feel good, really good. I haven't felt this good in a very long time, if ever. What has happened to me?" I explained, "Jerry, you just asked Jesus to come into your life and forgive your sins. He is now living in your heart. That evil spirit you saw was trying to get you to end your life, but Jesus drove him out."

Great joy filled Jerry's home that night, so much so that Jerry couldn't sleep. He went through his home removing all of his alcohol, drugs, magazines, and anything else he could find that was sinful. He put all that stuff in a plastic bag and buried it six feet deep in his orchard. The next day he drove to a nursery and purchased a tree to plant over the top of all the stuff he buried. When I came to visit he showed me the tree and said, "Pastor, that hole in the ground and that new tree represent my life. The old Jerry is buried down there and that new fruit tree represents the new Jerry because I am now living a new life!"

Bible Texts to Pray About

- John 16:8-11—It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict us of our sins and lead us to Jesus.
- Ezekiel 36:25, 26—We are promised a new heart, a new mind, a new life.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17—If anyone is in Jesus Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away.
- John 8:36—You may be free indeed through Jesus Christ.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3—It is God's will for you to walk in victory over sin.
- Romans 6:14—Sin shall no longer have dominion over you.
- Matthew 5:29, 30—Separate yourself from anyone and anything that tempts you into sin.
- Romans 12:21—Replace negative people and things with positive people and things.
- Galatians 5:19-26—The evil desires of the flesh may be subdued by the fruit of the Spirit.

Each day, as we turn to Jesus and pray, we receive His forgiveness and grace. As the children of Israel went out daily to receive the manna from heaven, so we daily renew our relationship with Jesus, the Bread of Life (John 6:58). Through the presence of the Holy Spirit moving in our lives, we confess our sins to God, accept the righteousness of Jesus in our behalf, and are enabled to resist the temptations of the devil (Galatians 5:16).

Suggested Prayers

- Dear Lord, I know it is Your will for me to overcome all sin in Your strength. Please fill me with Your Holy Spirit and guide me into all truth (John 16:13).
- In the name of Jesus and through His blood, I rebuke Satan and his evil spirits in my life. Please, Lord, drive the devil out of my life and my home. Let only truth and righteousness dwell with me.
- Dear Father, saturate my life with the presence of the Holy Spirit. May His power flow through me to minister to those still trapped in sin. Bring them to Jesus so that their chains may be broken.
- Lord, help us to be patient and kind, showing Your love and pity to those who annoy or accuse us.
- We pray for those who care for elderly or sick family members. Give them patience, strength, and love.
- Lord, please ease the anxiety of those facing terminal illness. Grant them courage and the peace of Jesus.
- We pray for the Sabbath School/Personal Ministries Department of each local church as they reach out to their communities with loving service, Bible study, and personal witnessing.
- We pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon our youth and young leaders as promised in Acts 1:8. And we pray especially for God's blessings on youth involved with Give Him 20 and other prayer initiatives.
- Lord, please show us a God-given strategy for reaching the Jerichos of the world with the Three Angels' Messages and leading the Rahabs in every city to salvation in Christ.
- Please bless the 100 Days of Prayer (March 27 – July 4) leading up to the 2020 General Conference Session. Pour out Your Holy Spirit as we pray for wisdom and Your soon return.
- We also pray for our list of seven or more people [name the names if appropriate].
- Local Prayer Requests:

Suggested Songs

Take My Life and Let It Be (Hymn #330); Whiter than Snow (Hymn #318); Draw Me Nearer (Hymn #306); Refiner's Fire; I Will Bow to You; The Power of Your Love; What the Lord Has Done in Me.