

Deeper with Jesus: Spirit Filled and Spirit Led

“It’s like we are in a time of war!” These are the words that my mother said earlier this week when I spoke with her. It made me stop and think, have I ever experienced anything like what is going on in the world today? I remember the confusion I felt on 9/11 and the grief I felt as I watched our first house fill with water during the 2008 floods, but neither of those compare to the feelings I have had in the last week.

I’m sure you have heard it a dozen times this week, but we have entered into a new season of life where we all have to stay home, distance ourselves from work, church, friends, and even family. We live in a state of unknown every day because of the COVID-19 virus. We watch the news, scroll the internet, and the topic fills almost every conversation we have. How do we plan for the future when every day is filled with more of the unknown?

The night before Jesus’ death, he spent time with his closest friends in the upper room, sharing a last supper and telling them of all that was to come. When gathered with his disciples, Jesus said,

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you (John 14:15-20).”

Jesus knows that he is leaving to go be with his Father in Heaven—which means the disciples will be left without their closest friend and teacher. Yet, Jesus doesn’t say that he is leaving for good, instead he promises them the Holy Spirit. Here is what we know about the Holy Spirit:

1. The Holy Spirit is a GIFT that comes from the God
2. The Holy Spirit is a HELPER
3. The Holy Spirit is an ADVOCATE
4. The Holy Spirit is TRUTH
5. The Holy Spirit is with us FOREVER

Jesus wanted this to bring the disciples comfort, just like he says in John 14:1 *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me.”* This promise was not meant just for the disciples THEN, it is meant for US NOW! The Holy Spirit helps us in times of need, is an advocate that looks out for us, one that speaks truth to us in times of fear and will not leave us. Our lives are supposed to be filled and led by the Holy Spirit!

So, what does being Spirit-filled and Spirit-led look like today? I think it means what Jesus says—to not let our hearts be troubled but believe! Believe what Jesus promises and allow the Holy Spirit to fill you. Invite the Holy Spirit into your decisions and emotions during this time of unknown. When you are feeling fear—pray for the Holy Spirit to give you peace. When you

worship is feeling dry-pray for the Holy Spirit to fill you with joy. When your mind feels clouded-pray for the Holy Spirit to bring you clarity. In any situation: anger, hurt, sadness, loneliness...pray for the Holy Spirit to fill you and lead you.

In John 16:33 Jesus says, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

Today, may we trust that even in unforeseen times that Holy Spirit can fill us with peace and reveal victory in Jesus Christ.

Closing Prayer:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

Every day lately has been troubling and disheartening. At times, we have felt afraid, anxious, sad, and angry. Holy Spirit would you help each of us find comfort in you. Thank you that you never leave us and that you are always looking out for us, even in challenging times like this. Today would you fill our hearts with the truth of your love, and would you lead us every step of every day in the comfort of your presence.

In Jesus name, Amen.

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Discussion Questions:

1. What emotions have overwhelmed you this week and made you feel distant from God?
2. What comfort does it bring you knowing that the Holy Spirit is a gift, helper, advocate, speaker of truth, and with us forever? Can you think of a time when you have experienced the Holy Spirit in one of these aspects?
3. In what ways does the Holy Spirit point us to Jesus?
4. When you pray, how has the Holy Spirit comforted you?