



reflecting Jesus

BETA

the Holy Spirit transforms me
as I choose to co-operate with him

19

?

did you know...



God has all the power to change our lives
but that does not necessarily mean that we will change...

...do you know why?

SXC: befo_camin



the facts of his story

1. How eager is God in Luke 11:11-13 to give you his Holy Spirit?

2. What are the conditions that Jesus makes for receiving the Holy Spirit? (Luke 11:9-10)

3. God cannot make us repent and obey, only we can choose that. But what does God promise that the Holy Spirit will do for us?

1. John 16:8 _____

2. John 16:13 _____

4. Even while we are filled with the Holy Spirit, what will we have to struggle against throughout our lives? (Ephesians 6:12)

5. As you work with the Holy Spirit, what is the promise that you can always claim in Isaiah 41:10—even when life is tough?

Teach your children that it is their privilege to receive every day the baptism of the Holy Spirit...
Ellen White, CT 131



thinking it through

1. After what you have read, why do you think that growing under the power of the Holy Spirit depends on our choices?

2. Following God does not come easily to Paul. He is preaching the gospel and notes that "To this end I labour, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me." (Colossians 1:29) Why do you think Paul has to "labour" when he is working under the power the Holy Spirit to do God's work? Are there any lessons for you here?



habits for reflecting the will of Jesus ~ working with the Holy Spirit for change

God has all the power to change our lives. He desperately wants to transform us to be like Jesus. We long to reflect the character of Jesus. So why do we so often feel such a lack of God's power in our lives?

Part of the answer is found in what Jesus taught his disciples about the Holy Spirit. He said that the Holy Spirit has two important tasks. First, he will show us what we are doing wrong in our lives—"when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin" (John 16:8, NLT) Second, he will show us what is right—"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13) But here is the bottom line: while the Holy Spirit will show you the sin in your life, and show you the right way to go, he is not able to make you repent or obey. Our lives will only change as we choose to repent and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. If we don't do these two things, we won't change at all!

So how can we cooperate with the Holy Spirit for inner change?

working with the Spirit

Being transformed to be like Jesus does not happen by accident. Nor does it happen by just wanting it to happen really badly. It happens as we work together with the Holy Spirit. So let's look at how we work in harmony with God to pursue changed lives. As we explain the process, we'll highlight the process, and apply it to an example. Our example will be about

overcoming discouragement caused by hearing gossip which causes us to feel really bad about our situation. To help us remember this process, the first letter of each word forms the acronym, APCAT.

Admit your weakness. Tell God that you don't have the power or the intelligence to change yourself or to know what is right, and that you are in need of his supernatural power. (Psalm 6:2; James 5:15; Hosea 5:13) Example: "Lord, I feel discouraged, and I know that in my own power, I just don't have the strength change the way I feel."

Pray for the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

We will only change as we have help from Heaven. Ask God to show you what to do, or how to change. (Luke 11:13; James 1:5; Proverbs 3:5-6) Remember that the power of the Holy Spirit does not necessarily come with any sort of feeling, because it is by trusting in God that we grow. Example: "Lord, give me faith, discernment, and the power of the Holy Spirit, so I can overcome my discouragement."

Claim God's promise of help. It's one thing to pray for help, but it is another thing to believe that God will help you. But without faith—complete trust that God will do what he has promised—we won't experience a change. So it is helpful to quote God's promises back to him—to show him that you do trust what he has promised to do for you. You may like to begin

memorising God's promises for you to remember when you are in need. (John 14:26; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Isaiah 41:10) Example: Pray according to the promises that God makes that show us we don't need to be discouraged. "Lord, you say in Isaiah 4:27-31: "Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God"? Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He

What we need is the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Without this, we are no more fitted to go forth to the world than were the disciples after the crucifixion of their Lord. (1 SM 411)

will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." So Lord, I would like to claim your promise here to me."

Act. Do what you know to be right, according to God's word, no matter how you feel. Often we don't do the right thing because it "feels" hard. So don't trust your feelings to do the right thing, but trust God's direction

in the Bible and his promises. (Philippians 2:12-13) If you begin doing something and are worried that it is the wrong thing, don't worry. Talk about the matter with God and trust that he will guide you the right way. Example: when feeling discouraged it is tempting to begin treating other people differently, such as those who we think are making our lives difficult. But we have just claimed a promise that the Holy Spirit will bring help and strength. So act like this is true. Don't hole yourself in a corner and feel sorry for yourself, but go out knowing that God promises you power to lift the discouragement from your life.

Thank God for his work in you. Again, thank God no matter how you feel because thanks is faith in action! Thank God, not because you can

see how things will change, but because you are confident that God is working for you according to his promises to you—right now. (Philippians 4:4-6; Psalm 28:6-7; Psalm 56:12) Example: "Lord, thank you so much that you are with me and you promise joy in all situations. Whatever people may say, I am confident that I am in your hands." This is faith—believing that God will do for us what He has promised. And this faith, allows the Holy Spirit to act within us.

We can use this APCAT process for all sorts of things in our life where we desire to reflect the character of Jesus. Do remember that God's work in you is normally a process. Sometimes God does miracles for us that literally happen overnight, but most of the time, the Holy Spirit works in

us over time, so we learn how to cooperate with him. After murdering an Egyptian, it took Moses 40 years in the desert before he was ready to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. So don't get discouraged if change doesn't happen as fast as you would like. God has heard your prayers. He is at work for you right now. Trust him, and he—along with the whole of Heaven—will be working for you.

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son..." (Romans 8:28-29, NLT)



putting the pieces together

In "the facts of his story" we saw that 1) God eagerly wants us to have the Holy Spirit, but 2) we have to ask for him. However, our lives won't change unless we work in harmony with Him and 3) make the tough decisions to obey and repent which allows the Spirit to work in us. 4) Satan is always there to tempt us, but 5) God will always be there to give us whatever we need.

In "thinking it through" you were challenged to think about your own growth under the power of the Holy Spirit. Growing is not always easy or pleasant, but as we keep choosing to have the Holy Spirit within us, there is no power that can overcome us.

In "habits for reflecting the will of Jesus" we looked at APCAT, a simple process for dealing with things we want to change in our lives to more fully reflect the character of Jesus. This is a process of change where we are working in harmony with the Holy Spirit.



my time with God

Pray and ask God to show you something that he would like to do in your life. During each of your devotional times with God this coming week, follow through the APCAT process. Use your Journal to record your prayers, what you did (or didn't!), your thanks, and what happened through the week.



pass it on!

Can you teach APCAT to someone this week?



extra help

1. Messages to Young People chapter 40, "Exercise of the Will", by Ellen White
2. Desire of Ages chapter 17, "Nicodemus", by Ellen White. This is about the work of the Holy Spirit.