

Knowing the Spirit
Discovering the Presence That Empowers Breakthrough
Power For Breakthrough Series – Part 2 (What relationship with God can do)
John 14:15-17, 23-27, John 15:26-27, John 16:7-15
2/28/26-3/1/26

Introduction

- Relationship with God as Transformational – A proper reading of the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus will quickly reveal that a personal relationship with our Creator is not only possible, it's necessary. If we want to become what we were created and built to be, we need connection with God. It is in connection to Him that all of our systems come online. It's that connection which begins to transform us, change us, morph us, from the inside out into the fullness of God's intention.
 - Open invitation – if you have not begun a relationship with God, today is a wonderful day to take that next step. At the end of our service we will have a prayer team that can walk you through that process. You can always reach out to any of our pastors to meet and talk about it. Just know that the Bible says, 'For *"everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."*¹
- 2 Crucial Concepts - There are two simple concepts that we must become experts in in order to keep this growth process continuing.
 - 1. Alignment – If God is real, then He's what it's all about. There are **two basic ways that we need to be in proper alignment to Him.**
 - A. God in the Center - God must be the center of our universe. It's not that He isn't, it's that many of us don't live in that reality. We live in a false reality that we are in the center and that everything that is happening is happening in relation to us. That is a **misaligned perspective on the universe. God is in the center. He is the Creator and sustainer of life. He is the only source of good. He is the epitome of love. He is the essence of Justice. It is only when He is properly the center piece in our mosaic that things begin to make sense.**
 - B. Us in alignment with Him – Once God is in the center we need to **discover where we fit. We fit in relation to Him.** We fit in conjunction to Him. We fit in the place where He makes available. In other words, if God is the source, **we need to be in the place to connect to that source, receive from that source, and be filled by that source.** The only way that's going to happen is if we are in proper alignment to Him ourselves.
 - 2. Abiding – Abiding means '**remaining deeply connected.**' If we are going to remain in right alignment with God to receive from Him, is that a distant connection where He must pour from the outside, or is there a way to connect to Him so closely that He is flowing from within us? That is **the miracle of the Holy Spirit indwelling us and allowing us to remain in contact with God on a continuous basis. Jesus knew that this whole concept of connecting to God**

¹ Ro 10:13

would be kind of weird, so He dumbed it down for His followers in John 15 and used an analogy that they would all understand. Vine & Branches.

- Jn 15:1–17 - *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. ¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another."*
 - It is the relationship, deepened through abiding and flowing through alignment that transforms us.
 - HS & Jesus - Today we are going to talk specifically about our relationship with God: the Holy Spirit. I realize that we are all fascinated by and connected to Jesus Christ, He's our champion. I also realize that we are the Church and thereby the Body of Christ and we talk about wanting to become more and more like Jesus. But here's the thing...

The more we KNOW the SPIRIT, the more we REFLECT JESUS to the world

Lesson

- How we have a personal relationship with God – I think one of the most confusing parts of joining Christianity as a faith is wrapping our minds around how to have a personal growing relationship with a God that we can't see and can't seem to hear. How can that be relational? How can we learn to love someone that we don't interact with. Here's the fascinating truth and some of you will have to just trust me on this since you are so new to all of this: **When you discover who God is and how**

He operates, you realize, we can interact with Him, hear Him, love Him, talk to Him, do things with Him. All the things that build a good relationship are designed to exist with us and God. How incredible is that? For those of us who have a relationship with God right now, what's primary on our mind is deepening that relationship and knowing Him more and living and partnering with Him more. Right? Great. **That's what today is about.** But, **before we get personal we need to set proper expectations about who God is.**

- God is Beyond – it's critical that we begin at the place where the Bible leaves us: **God is different. He's beyond. He is and does things that we cannot understand. He is not just a better version of us. He is not a higher version of us. He is different altogether.** What this means is that a personal existing deity must **accommodate Himself to us** for us to have relationship with Him. He has to shrink Himself, limit Himself, only partially reveal Himself, etc. **For the purpose of relationship.** We struggle to relate to abstract concepts, right? I do. So we are left with **two very clear facts we must face before talking about God at all:**
 1. We aren't going to fully get it and that's a good thing. **Mystery is a part of real connection to a real God. A made up God can be contained, the real one cannot.** We don't want to trust in a God that we can fully understand because that means He is as small as our minds. So, we can **take joy** in the mystery of God. **Some things about God can be known but not all things.**
 - What God reveals to us is not the full picture. What this means is any of our grasping to define it will still lead us to a bit of a dead end because **we aren't given all the pieces to the puzzle.** We will know some of what God is and some of what God isn't, but even if we examine all that He's told us, we are still left wanting.
 2. God wants us to understand enough for relationship – **God doesn't remain totally unknowable.** The Bible doubles-down on talking about a personal relationship with God and that means we have to **know enough to have a relationship.** That's what we are going to talk about today. We are not interested in leaving this room with a total picture of God, but we will **leave this room with a greater picture of God.**
- The Trinity – **The Bible has given us a mystery about God. He is a complex being and of a sort that we have no equal in our universe. He is ardently described as: One God revealed in Three Persons** is the most common description of God in mainstream evangelical Christianity. **Father, Son, & Holy Spirit. They are united as One as God, yet present as three distinctive people of God as they interact with us.**
 - Father, Son, & Holy Spirit called God
 - *Mt 28:19 – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."*
 - Father – Most obviously the Father is known as God. Jesus talked about Him this way constantly. For example: **Lord's prayer.**

- Phil 2:11 – “...to the glory of God the Father.”
- Son – **Jesus is called God and operated in the position of God** even while here on earth by receiving praise, claiming God titles, and power to forgive sins.
 - Phil 2:5-6 – “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God,...”
 - Heb 1:3 – “The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”
 - John 1:1 – [speaking of Jesus] “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
- Holy Spirit – **The Holy Spirit is called God** on many occasions and is consistently **linked as God in activities**. For example:
 - Ac 5:3-4 – “But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴ While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God.”
 - 1 Co 3:16 – “Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?”
- Separate – Many times the Bible talks about the three Persons of God as distinct even in the same story. The most common examples are:
 - Creation account – Father's voice creates, Son did the creating, the Holy Spirit did the organizing.
 - Jesus' baptism – Father's voice from the clouds, Holy Spirit descending like a dove, Jesus in the water.
 - 2 Cor 13:14 – “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”
 - Who did Jesus pray to? – simply the concept of Jesus praying explains that their ability to be separate is not just for looks, but real.
- Together – **Christianity is a Monotheistic faith**. It believes in ONE God and only One God. No matter what we say of the Trinity it does not result in three separate gods.
 - The Jewish prayer of Shema is a quote from Dt 6:4 – “Hear O Israel: the LORD our God, Yahweh is ONE.”
 - The New Testament constantly explains there is only one God (James 2:19; Rom 3:30; Jn 1:18).
- Why Jesus is so popular – I just wanted to interject a point real quick here. It's worth asking the question: Why is Jesus so popular? Out of the Father (who was the big deal in the Old Testament), the Son and the Holy Spirit, why is so much emphasis in the Church today (New Testament reality) focused on Jesus? Why does He get all the press and attention? There's **a simple answer: The Father**

sent Him here to us (relatability; touchability) and the Holy Spirit's job is to reveal Him to us and talk about Him to us (continued focus).²

- The Holy Spirit as a Personal Entity
 - Roles matter – **The reasons why we should understand the differences between the THREE is that they have different roles to play. Roles matter.** Roles are HOW the strategy and mission is accomplished. Roles are how the relational system integrates. Roles are the organization of what God wants to do on heaven and earth.
 - Roles create relationship – **one of the great struggles of the Christian life today is developing a true loving, personal relationship with God.** How do we connect with a verbally silent, invisible God? We learn more about Him. We connect on His terms. We learn to love Him as He reveals Himself to be. **One of the best ways to do that is to understand God's triune nature in terms of roles: what they do, how they do it.** It allows us to put some form to God so we can reach out and connect.
 - The fun nuance of 3 – the Father didn't die for our sins, nor the Holy Spirit. That was the Son. The Son isn't the primary person placed inside us as a guaranteed of our future inheritance, that's the Holy Spirit.³ The Son isn't our Provider in the same way that the Father is. The Son was the only Person to take on humanity/flesh. The Holy Spirit fills the temple with His glory. The Father kicks everything off for us and is the prime initiator.
 - Tons of overlap, but – so yes, there is **tons of overlap** with everything that God does within Himself, they are of one essence, one mind, one heart, one focus, one plan. Yahweh is full integrous, complete, whole, without any deviation.
- The Importance of Relationship: The Right Way to Hear a Famous Passage – We are about to read a famous passage in John 14 that many of us have read incorrectly our whole lives. One way leads to performance exhaustion, and the other way leads to freedom. So let's turn to John 14:15...
 - John 14: 15-17, 23-27 - *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. [PAUSE HERE TO CONSIDER] ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, [“allos” ‘of the same kind or equal quality.’] 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... ²³Jesus answered [one of His disciples – the ‘other’ Judas], “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me. ²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with*

² John 16:13-14 - “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

³ Eph 1:13; 4:30; 2 Tim 1:14. Although John 14:23 is clear that the Father and Son do indwell us in some way as a whole.

you. ²⁶ 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. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

- A Telling Reading – IF you read John 14:15 with the emphasis on the "IF", you will tend to lean into a performance-based relationship with God. In other words, it would say, 'if you really loved me you would do things better.' However, if you read the statement with the emphasis on "WILL", you will tend to operate FROM a relationship with God and into activity. That shift is significant. I believe that Jesus was telling His followers that it all centered around a love and personal relationship with Him. I believe the point was that IF we got that right, our allegiance, our alignment, our relationship dialed and deepened, it would result in a life of obedience. We will fulfill the commandments - and what are Christ's commandments?
- Christ's commandments – two things we need to balance about Jesus' ministry are: 1.) He was building off the old (Mt 5:17-20); 2.) He was re-aligning for the new. What this means is that Jesus wasn't saying all that God asked for and did in the Old Testament was a waste, or gone, or unnecessary. He was saying that the old was always leading to the new and that it was good and right and we should build upon it with adjustments here and there for right alignment. We are still to do the things that the 10 commandments revealed (treat others rightly). But if we see what the 10 commandments and the whole Mosaic law was leading to it was the greatest commandment (Mt 22:35-40) to love God and love our neighbor rightly. Jesus was shifting the center of our activity and faith from one of merely right action (do this; don't do that) to one of right relationship which causes right action (I will honor them because I love them). But the new commandment focus was going to be on loving God and loving people as Jesus did (Jn 13:34-35). Jesus called this 'new' not in the sense that it was a brand new idea to love people in a godly way, but that the emphasis needed to be here more than any other place so that all the details of the expectations would be met naturally. We give children basic commands (don't go in the street, don't touch fire), but when they get older we share the details behind those commands and they morph (don't go in the street when a car is coming and don't touch fire with your bare hand). The same thing happened with God instructing mankind. Jesus filled in the details. For a greater treatise on this consider John 15:1-17 (which I addressed briefly in the introduction). One note there (which I didn't talk about) is how loving God creates a healthy cycle. When we love Him, we obey His commands, when we obey His commands, His blessings flow. As the blessings flow, we love Him more (because we know Him more and feel connected and loved by Him), and then in turn want to serve Him more. So, I don't want to make it sound like obedience to commands doesn't matter but only love. That's

immature. Disobedience stops the blessings and disrupts the relationship. Obedience, keeps it flowing.

- Mt 5:17–20 - *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”* (cf. Mk 10:17-19)
- Mt 22:35–40 - *“And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”*
- Jn 13:34–35 - *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*
- Back to Abiding – it is here again we run into the concept of abiding in Christ and how everything we do in Christianity must flow from a connection to Him. **It’s His initiating love that allows us to know how to love. It’s His initiating grace that allows us to forgive and extend grace. It’s His power that can do the miraculous through us. So, everything is contingent on being plugged in (like a machine to the outlet – brought online and ceases if unplugged) to Jesus as our source. Once we are deeply connected, all that God built us for will flow properly.**
- What did we learn about the Holy Spirit in that passage? – while we are talking about all those important things we may have missed a few amazing revelations about the Holy Spirit along the way. Notice how John talks about the Holy Spirit. Personally.
 - Personal Pronouns – Whenever the Bible talks about the Holy Spirit, and not just His effects, it uses personal pronouns to describe Him. It uses **He, him, not IT.**
 - Personality Descriptions – Another important thing to know is that **the Bible describes the Holy Spirit in very personal and engaging ways.** The Holy Spirit feels emotions, and responds to our behavior. This personal aspect, of **someone you can talk to, walk with, partner with,** is the point of Jesus highlighting that the Holy Spirit was **‘another helper just like Jesus’.** They may be unique in their personalities, but they operate with people in a very similar fashion. Probably the most helpful aspect to remember is that **the Holy Spirit feels deeply and tends to linger where He’s wanted.**
 - OT: The Holy Spirit was Grieved by Rebellion of His people – **Is 63:10 - “But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.”**

- NT: The HS Can Be Grieved - Eph 4:30 – “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*”
- The HS can be outraged - Heb 10:29 – “*How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?”*
- It’s Possible to Quench the HS Supernatural Ministry - 1 Th 5:19–21 – “*Do not quench the Spirit.* ²⁰ *Do not despise prophecies,* ²¹ *but test everything; hold fast what is good.*”
- Not just for the super religious – perhaps it’s not necessary to say but it’s important that everyone realizes that **ALL true CHRISTIANS get the Holy Spirit**. It’s not just for the charismatic or the Pentecostal, or the “2nd baptized” or the uber-religious. It’s for all true believers. That’s what the Bible tells us. So, whether or not you understand all that other supernatural stuff, doesn’t even matter at this point. The point is that all of God is personal and wants to connect with YOU. It’s what that John 14 passage is saying.
- Personal Care - Another Gentle and Loving Side of God
 - Helper - The Paraklete⁴ - In the John 14 passage we’ve been studying we see a Greek term translated ‘HELPER’. **It can refer to partner, assistant, helper, advocate, counselor,** and a bunch of other things. It really means to assist in what’s needed. All of those words are trying to translate the Greek term *parakletos*, which means **someone that makes someone else better off in a series of ways**. So, what do you want to call it? If you are blessing someone in a legal way, or a gentle comforting way, or a teaching way, it’s all the same word and concept. SO, really **it’s the context** that helps you determine what type of blesser the paraklete is being at any time.
 - If we need... – if we need Truth to replace lies, the paraklete teaches us. If we need comfort in our pain, the paraklete comforts us. If we need defense, the paraklete defends us.
 - The Holy Spirit **loves**

⁴ 3875. παράκλητος paráklētos; gen. paraklētou, masc. noun from parakalēō (3870), to comfort, encourage or exhort. It is properly a verbal adj. referring to an aid of any kind. In the Greek writers, used of a legal advisor, pleader, proxy, or advocate, one who comes forward in behalf of and as the representative of another. Thus, in 1 John 2:1, Christ is termed our substitutionary, intercessory advocate. Christ designates the Holy Spirit as Paraklete (John 14:16), and calls Him állos (243), another, which means another of equal quality and not héteros (2087), another of a different quality. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is designated by Jesus Christ as equal with Himself, i.e., God (1 John 2:1). This new Paraklete, the Holy Spirit, was to witness concerning Jesus Christ (John 14:26; 16:7, 14) and to glorify Him. The Holy Spirit is called a Paraklete because He undertakes Christ’s office in the world while Christ is not in the world as the God–Man in bodily form. In addition, the Holy Spirit is also called the Paraklete because He acts as Christ’s substitute on earth. When Christ in John 14:16 designates Himself as a Paraklete, the same as the Holy Spirit, the word must not be understood as applying to Christ in the same sense as in 1 John 2:1 where it refers to our substitutionary Advocate who pleads our cause with the Father. It should rather be taken as He who pleads God’s cause with us (see John 14:7–9). The words parakalēō (3870) and paraklēsis (3874), the act or process of comforting or advocating, do not occur at all in the writings of John.” The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the NT

- Ro 15:30 – *“I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit...”*
 - The Holy Spirit is **friendly**
 - 2 Co 13:14 – *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”*
 - The HS is our Comforter - Ac 9:31 – *“So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.”⁵*
 - The HS brings Believers Peace and Joy - Ro 14:17 – *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”⁶*
 - The HS brings Believers Hope - Ro 15:13 – *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”*
 - The HS brings Love - Ro 15:30 – *“I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf...”*
- The Holy Spirit as the Indwelling God – **10x’s in the NT⁷ we learn that the Holy Spirit is the person of God who dwells in us.** I know we have been trained as kids to believe that Jesus is in our hearts, but theologically He’s seated at the right hand of the Father and sent the Holy Spirit here to dwell in us.
 - How is this Incarnation possible? - **NT Wright insight** at the Ash Wednesday service. We talk about the blood of Jesus shed on the cross as cleansing us so that we can go away to heaven, but the greater reality is that the cleansing blood of Jesus on the cross makes it possible for God to come near to us right here and now. **The Father sent Jesus to make a way so that the Holy Spirit could indwell.**
- How a personal relationship creates perpetual help
 - Becoming more like Christ (transformation into His image)
 - John 16:7, 12-14 – *“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...”¹² *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth...”¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”**
 - A live in tutor – What this is saying is that **the Holy Spirit has taken on the role of a permanent tutor** in our hearts and minds. **He is consistently**

⁵ “God of all comfort” in 2 Cor 1:3; “eternal comfort...good hope...comforts our hearts” in 2 Thess 2:16.

⁶ cf. 1 Cor 1:6

⁷ 1 Co 3:16 – “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (9 more references to this - cf. 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 1:22-24 Guarantee; 2 Cor 5:5; Eph 1:13 sealed; 2:22; 2 Tim 1:14; 1 Peter 4:14; 1 Jn 3:24; 4:13; opposite is Jude 19)

revealing to us what we should do, how we should behave, what we should think, how we should perceive things. He is relationally and consistently guiding us to become all that God built us to be.

Conclusion

- We don't do it alone – The point of living this life with and for God is never a concept of living alone and doing things FOR God. Everything is designed to do WITH God. The Holy Spirit indwelling us is the connective source and relationship that we need to align and abide with so that we can live fruitful, joyful, powerful lives.
- Later in our series – we will talk about **one of the major roles that the Holy Spirit plays in our lives is revelation**. He is the One telling us what the world is really all about. He is constantly bringing to mind what Jesus said (who of course learned it from the Father).⁸ He is our personal guide **walking us through the Bible** and highlighting things that we need to know. Just keep this in mind, **the Holy Spirit is constantly interacting with us and we don't realize it**.

⁸ John 15:26-27