

THREADS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, LESSON 18: SPIRIT OF GOD

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. (Romans 8:9, ESV)

YOU KNOW YOU WANT IT: that unparalleled secret to golf excellence that reduces your scores starting tomorrow and gives you the one-up on your buddies. Oh wait, these are our *buddies*. If we truly find a secret to good golf, shouldn't we share it with them too, so we can all enjoy the game that much more? It's the dilemma of the fisherman who wonders whether he should give away the location of his favorite little spot.

In our lives with God, we might say that the "secret" is the Holy Spirit. The Gospels paint a concrete picture of Jesus, and we get a number of glimpses into the nature of the Father, particularly as he interacted with Moses.

But when it comes to the Spirit, we think often of the unseen realm and the somewhat mystical aspects of our faith. We can name the fruit of the Spirit, but we're not sure exactly how they develop in us or why gentleness seems to be strong in us today but not so much tomorrow. We know, too, that we have been gifted by the Holy Spirit for the work of ministry with fellow believers in the body of Christ, yet we question whether all the gifts mentioned in Scripture are active today—and if not, then just how are my Jesus-loving friends in the church across the way speaking in tongues?

Yet the biggest idea, and the one that deserves our full attention, is that the Spirit of God indwells those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah. That's right, the Spirit of God lives in you.

This would not come as a surprise, except that we so often speak of Jesus living in our heart. That is not altogether improper imagery, for we know from the writings of the apostles that the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ are one and the same. The Trinitarian tangling of the Godhead cannot be unraveled, the realization of which makes it far easier to demystify the Holy Spirit.

Have you placed your trust in Jesus Christ? If so, you have gained not only his righteousness imputed to you for your salvation, but you have gained his Spirit within you, so that "the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

Opening questions What little tricks help you get around the golf course even when your swing isn't really working? Have you ever shared these secrets with others?

READING Genesis 1:1, Romans 8:1-11, Ezekiel 36:27, 1 Corinthians 3:16

How old is the Holy Spirit?
Who hovered above the waters at the beginning of time? What does this tell us about the "age" of the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to you that the Creator can also indwell you?

Sin life and Spirit life
How do we attain the indwelling Spirit? How is life apart from the Spirit contrasted against life with the Spirit indwelling? Where might we say our ability to act righteously comes from?

Living at the Spirit's impetus
How might we say Ezekiel 36:27 and 1 Corinthians 3:16 are related? What does the indwelling Holy Spirit compel us to do?

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2015 Links Players International. A 5-minute video accompanies today's study at <http://youtu.be/Tt-EoH9D81o>