

DENNIS BURKE MINISTRIES

# Insights

The Way to a New Life  
MARCH / APRIL 2011



Key  
ingredients  
that will **redefine**  
**your life**



*E*NRICHING LIFE DAILY WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

BY DR. DENNIS BURKE

PART  
1

Key

ingredients that will

redefine  
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OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL, THE TRIBE OF ISSACHAR was one of the smaller and less prominent. But the Bible offers a powerful description of this tribe, stating that the sons of Issachar were those "... who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do..." (1 Chronicles 12:32).

Today God has called us to be people who fit that description — who understand the times we're living in and where we fit in His strategic plan. He wants us to see through the smoke of the enemy's tricks and to know what we ought to do to take our place in His purposes for this hour.

Through the centuries, God has always raised up certain individuals to be spiritual powerhouses who made a difference in their generation. He continues to do so today, but in much greater numbers than in the past. This is the last-days generation that carries the anointed message of power and faith. God is raising up millions of believers to carry this message to the world — to press

the limits of living in the grace of Almighty God and discover how far it will take them.

You and I are a part of that blessed group of believers. However, in order for us to take our place fully in God's plan, we must allow Him to completely redefine us as He molds us into the people He created us to be.

Hebrews chapter 11, known as the great faith chapter, lists one person after another whom God raised up in his or her generation for His purposes. All are described in different situations and settings; all believed God and exercised their faith until they saw tangible and measurable results; and all were redefined by God in the process. Then in conclusion, verse 39 states, "And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise." In other words, although these men and women of God received some benefits as a result of their faith and obedience, they didn't receive the fullness of their reward.

Verse 40 goes on to say, "God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." Another translation says it this way: "...for they can't receive the prize at the end of the race until we finish the race."

We who profess Jesus as our Savior are running the same spiritual race that those heroes of faith ran — toward the goal of our full redemption one day when we rule and reign with Christ in our glorified bodies. Over the centuries from one generation to the next, the baton of faith was handed off, creating the people God wanted to work through and the nation He wanted to build.

In this hour, that same baton has been handed off to us to do what God has called us to do in this present generation. However, we have a better covenant than the Old Covenant given to those listed in Hebrews 11. This New Covenant is the fulfillment of all that those godly men and women were able to see with their eyes of faith. In fact, this better covenant is even the fulfillment of what Paul, Peter, James, and John saw with their eyes of faith!

Those early apostles knew they wouldn't enter into the fullness of their reward until you and I had finished our race. We have a major role to play.

The individuals included in Hebrews 11 were very obscure from a historical perspective. They were merely a small part of a certain society during a specific time period. But then God spoke to them, raising them up to fulfill their part in His great plan. These godly men and women may or may not have been well-known during their own lifetime. But because they chose to believe and obey God's Word to them, they all became well-known to the generations who followed them and learned of their testimony of faith.

With that in mind, we're going to explore the lives of a few of the patriarchs described in Hebrews 11 and allow them to teach us. We want to find the divine pattern that reveals how God builds His character qualities into His people in order to bring His plan to pass in their lives. Understanding that pattern will help us walk more fully in the plans God is working in our own lives today.

First, let's go all the way back to Abraham — originally called Abram — the earliest patriarch of faith through whom God instituted His plan. Abram originally lived in a city called Ur of the Chaldees, approximately 150 miles from Babylon. One day God spoke to him, giving him a word that would set him apart from every other person in his day. We read what God said to Abram in Genesis 12:1, 2: "...Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing." It's important to understand that God wasn't just talking about Abram on a natural level when He promised to make him a great nation. God was really talking about the Messiah, who would come through Abram's lineage because of his obedience

and who would open the way for every person to walk in the blessing of Almighty God.

Abram didn't understand all of that when he first received that word from Heaven, but he did understand what God had directed him to do: to get up and leave his homeland forever. Remember, he was living near Babylon, within the evil system created by the wicked Babylonian king, Nimrod.

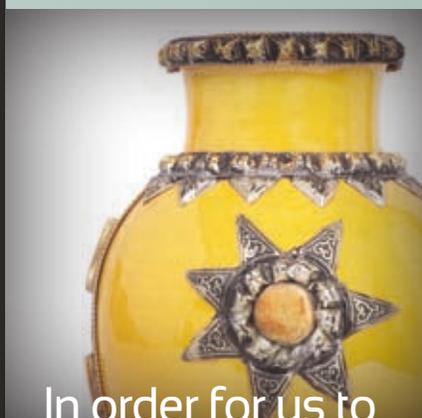
Under Nimrod's leadership, the people had begun to build the Tower of Babel, saying, "...Let us make a name for ourselves..." (Genesis

11:4). It was to be a magnificent structure, unlike anything anyone had ever seen, a mighty monument to the Babylonian system Nimrod had instituted.

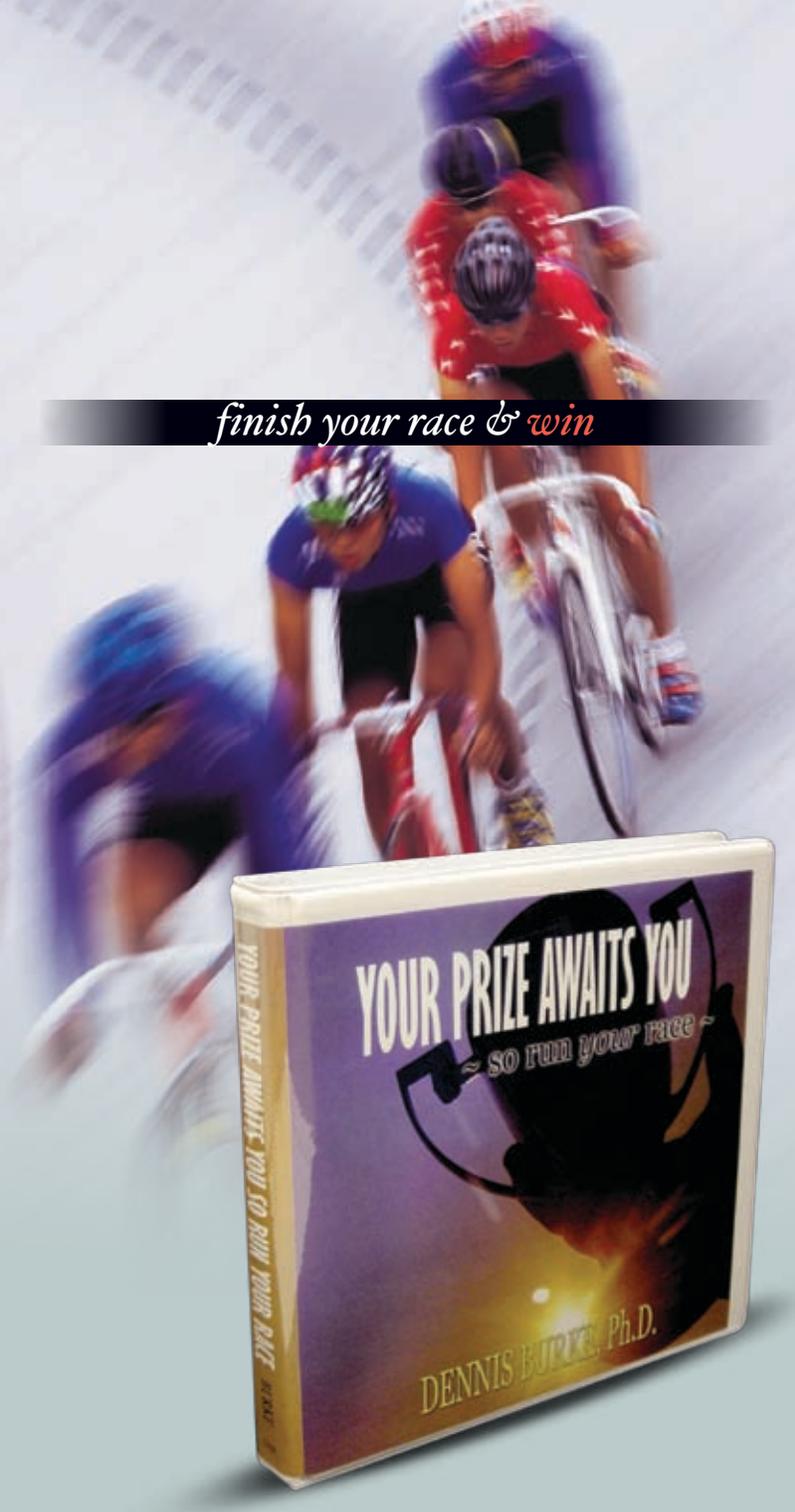
But notice what God said in contrast to the efforts of Nimrod and his people to make their own name great. In Genesis 12:2, He told Abram, "I will make your name great." True greatness always originates in God.

However, if God's promise was ever going to come to pass, Abram had to separate himself from all the evil influences of the Babylonian system. God wanted to build His plan in the earth, and that wicked system was completely contrary to that divine plan.

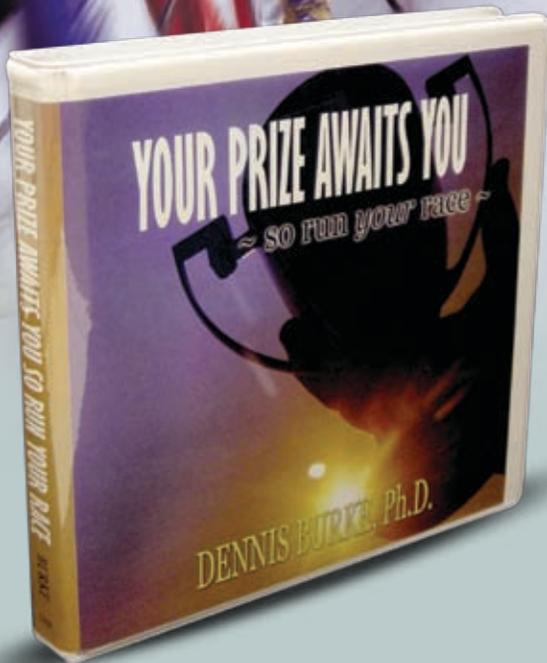
We can apply this same principle to our lives today. For God to build His character in us and prepare us to fulfill His



In order for us to take our place fully in God's plan, we must allow Him to completely redefine us as He molds us into the people He created us to be.



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We must separate ourselves from the worldly

systems that try to contain us and prevent us from thinking the way He thinks.

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purposes, we must separate ourselves from the worldly systems that try to contain us and prevent us from thinking the way He thinks. God wants us to redefine our lives, but that is possible only as we begin to think His thoughts, which are based on an entirely

different system than those of this world we're living in.

Abram had to come out of the wicked system he had grown up in. Today we can look back at that moment when God spoke to Abram and understand important truths about the plan God was working. But Abram didn't have the advantage of our perspective. He didn't understand what he had just heard, but he chose to believe God and obey anyway. That's why God gave him the title "father of faith" in Romans 4:16 — because Abraham believed that what God said was true, and then he acted on that word in obedience.

Romans 4:20, 21 goes on to say that Abraham was a man who "...staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." In the next article, we'll look at what the Bible says about Abram after he received that first word from God. Suffice it to say that we probably wouldn't describe him as a man who "staggered not." In fact, we might even conclude that he seemed more like someone who "staggered mostly"! We might even wonder, *Is God really talking about the same person?*

There is a scriptural explanation for this seeming gap between the mistakes Abram made in his early stages of walking with God and the man called Abraham, whom we know as "the father of faith." There came a time in Abram's life when everything changed and God literally redefined him and gave him a new name. Abraham finally stopped trying to figure out on his own how to make God's Word to him come to pass. From that point on, he began to simply trust the Lord to do what He said He would do.

We must do the same if we want to fulfill all God has called us to do and live in the fullness of His blessings. God is asking us to listen for His words of guidance and then to simply believe what He says and obey. As we let go of our own efforts and give Him control, He will surely bring His plan to pass in our lives.

*Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture references are taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.*

ENRICHING LIFE DAILY

WITH THE

# HOLY SPIRIT

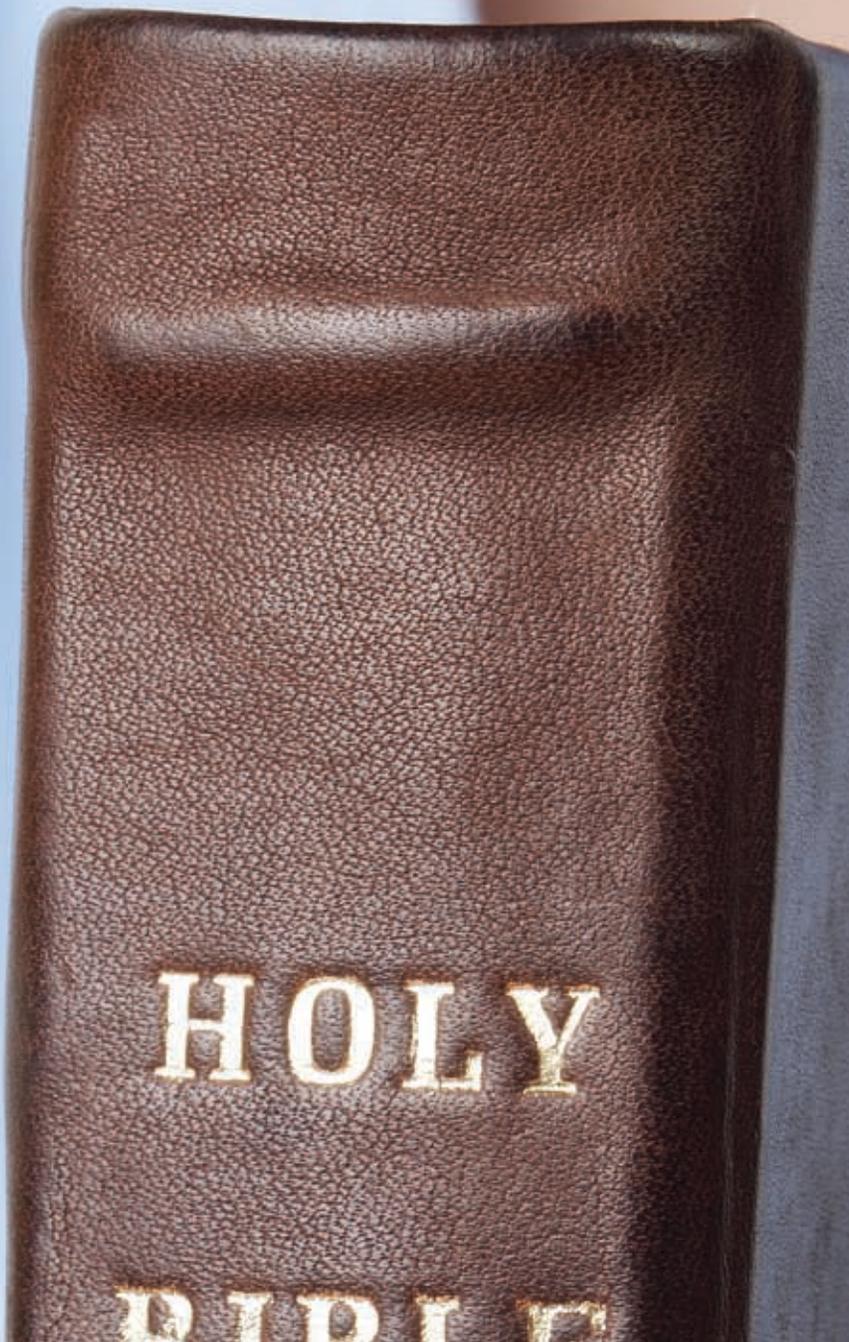


**I**MAGINE HOW THE DISCIPLES MUST HAVE felt when Jesus said, "...It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7). Jesus intended to bring reassurance and comfort to His disciples, but instead His words rocked their world, causing them to feel confusion and sorrow.

The disciples just couldn't understand how it could be to their advantage if Jesus was no longer present in their lives. They had forsaken their families and careers to join Jesus' ministry team — only to hear that after just three years, it was about to be all over. How could they possibly be better off without Jesus? He had fed the hungry, healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead, calmed stormy seas, supernaturally paid their taxes, and blessed their children.

The disciples' utter shock kept them from hearing what Jesus said — that He was sending them a Helper. Jesus was referring to the Person of the Holy Spirit. He was trying to explain to His disciples the great advantage this Helper

BY VIKKI BURKE



would provide that they didn't yet understand: The Holy Spirit would live *inside* them, not merely *among* them.

While Jesus walked on the earth, He could help only those with whom He came in contact. Someone's need would go unmet if He wasn't nearby. But Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, the Helper who would live within God's people, giving them inner access to Him 24/7 — anytime, anyplace, and for any reason.

That means we don't have to go anywhere or to anyone else to find help. Help lives within us!

The Amplified version of John 16:7 adds more detail to the character and the role of the Holy Spirit. It reveals the multidimensional personality of the Holy Spirit as the Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengtheners, and Standby. It would take volumes to detail all the benefits contained within these various facets of the Holy Spirit, but let's take a brief look at how each of these roles can benefit our daily lives.

First, the Holy Spirit is our Divine Counselor who knows the answer to all our problems. He knows the future and can give us advice before something happens! Sometimes His advice prevents us from getting in a lot of trouble. We don't need to know why the Holy Spirit tells us what to do — we just need to trust Him and obey!

Best of all, the Divine Counselor doesn't charge you a penny! You don't have to spend hundreds of dollars and wait long periods of time to get the advice you need. No appointment is necessary! The Holy Spirit's office is always open, and your name is at the top of His schedule. What an advantage to have access to the Divine Counselor anywhere, anytime, and for any reason!

But too often when problems arise, we ask everyone else what we should do instead of first asking our *Divine Counselor*

what to do. Then after we follow people's advice and things turn out badly, we are upset with the very ones we shouldn't have listened to in the first place!

But the truth is, we have no one to blame but ourselves when we don't go first to our Divine Counselor for advice. He will counsel us about how to raise our kids, how to choose the right job, whether to sell our home, where to invest our money — or any other answer we might need. The Holy Spirit knows all things, and Jesus promised that His Spirit would show them to us. So instead of going to the phone for help, it's time to go to God's throne!

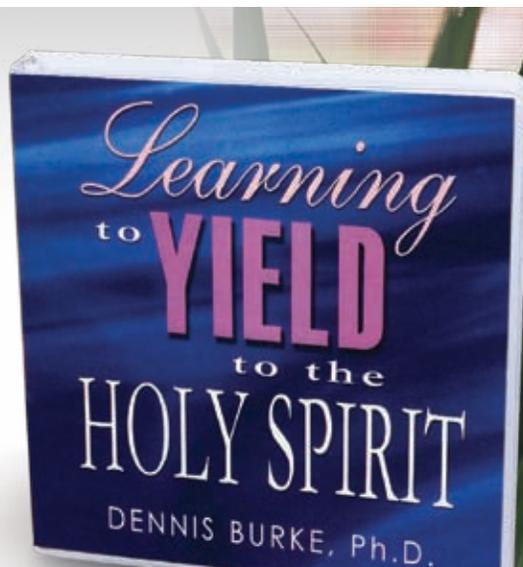
Second, the Holy Spirit is our Divine Helper. Romans 8:26 tells us, "...The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness..." The Greek word "help" is *sunantilambono*, which means *to take hold together with against*. That's a big definition for a small word like "help," but it packs great meaning! It means that whenever problems come against us, we have Someone who will pick up His

weapon and fight alongside us until we *win!* All the power and resources of Heaven back us when the Holy Spirit becomes our Helper. He will get right down in the trenches with us to help fight our enemy.

However, the key to our success is this: The Holy Spirit won't come against our weakness unless we are against it first. God will never do for us what He has already told us to do.

When a close friend of mine lost a gold bracelet that her husband had given her as a gift, she asked the Holy Spirit to help her find it. She refused to accept the loss of something that was so precious to her. After a few years, she stepped out her back door and noticed a small shrub that had died. Grabbing a shovel, my friend began to dig the dead shrub out of the ground. Suddenly she experienced a big surprise: Her gold

"The Holy Spirit won't come against our weakness unless we are against it first."



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bracelet had somehow been buried under that shrub all those years, just waiting for her to find it.

The Holy Spirit cares about the things we care about. He will help us with every need we have if we will simply ask Him for help, listen for His voice, refuse to give up, and obey what He tells us to do.

The Holy Spirit performs another special work when we are facing difficulties or impossibilities — He prays for us. Romans 8:26 says, “...We don’t know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit *prays* for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.” How many times have we faced baffling situations in which we were not only at a loss about what to do, but we didn’t know the right words to pray? In those situations, the Holy Spirit will enter that place of helplessness and intercede for us.

I recently experienced this when a friend was diagnosed with Stage 4 lymphoma. She is a strong woman of faith and knows how to receive from

God. It would have been appropriate for me to minister the Word to her, but at the time, that just sounded like a cliché to me. I was at a loss for words to share with her, so I did the only thing I knew to do — I began to pray in tongues. As I prayed in the Spirit, I heard myself pray in English, “Nothing is impossible with God” over and over — not once or twice, but nearly a dozen times. Then I began to add over and over, “Nothing shall be impossible to him who believes.” After a while, I combined the two and began to say, “Nothing is impossible to him who believes that nothing is impossible to God.” After praying that repeatedly, these were the next words that came out of my mouth: “Jesus turned water into wine, malignant to benign.”

Instantly I knew that this was the voice of the Holy Spirit, helping me by entering into my prayer. Only after I began to pray did He begin to pray through me with the answer I needed to give my friend.

I had never had those thoughts before and probably never would have if I hadn’t prayed. When I shared those words with my friend, they imparted divine life directly from Heaven.

This was Paul’s perspective about his own feelings of weakness: “...I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me” (2 Corinthians 12:9). A sense of weakness or inadequacy wasn’t able to intimidate Paul or run him off. He faced weakness head-on, knowing that the Divine Helper would provide His strength where Paul lacked the natural ability to meet the need.

*The Amplified Bible* describes another valuable role of the Holy Spirit. He is our Advocate who pleads our case in the Divine Court of Justice. Revelation 12:10

says the devil accuses us day and night, attempting to make us feel guilty over the craziest things.

In a court of law, an accused person is required to enter a plea for the accusation brought against them. He or she

can plead *guilty*, *not guilty*, or *no contest*. But as believers, we have a fourth option when the devil accuses us: We can plead the blood of Jesus!

Jesus paid the price for all our wrongdoing, and it would be unjust to punish two people for the same offense. We are not guilty! Romans 5:1 (*AMP*) boldly declares, “...We are justified (acquitted, declared righteous and given a right standing with God) through faith....” We have been acquitted in the Court of Heaven! That means every reference to the enemy’s accusation against us has been expunged or obliterated from our record. Our position before God is literally “just as if we’d never sinned.” Our Legal Counsel, intercedes for us before the Judge of the Universe — who just happens to be our Father — and His Throne is the mercy seat! Talk about an advantage!

An additional role of the Holy Spirit is to be our Strengthened. Unfortunately, the

“...look to our  
Divine Helper  
before we look  
anywhere else.”

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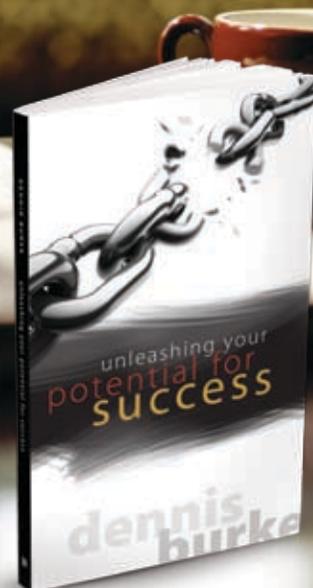
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Holy Spirit isn't responsible for strengthening our physical muscles; we have to do that at the gym ourselves! Instead, He will strengthen us in our inner man when we're faced with a challenge that is bigger than we can deal with in our own strength. Once again, Paul points us to the Holy Spirit when we are weak, saying, "I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit" (Ephesians 3:16). I especially like the way the *Ben Campbell Johnson* paraphrase says it: "May he give you an infusion of strength in the depths of your being by the Spirit."

When God called on Gideon to lead a battle against the oppressive Midianites, Gideon replied that he wasn't the man for the task because his family was the weakest in all the tribes of Israel. And if his ancestral line wasn't pitiful enough, Gideon had his own self-image to deal with. He went on to tell the angel delivering God's message, "...I am the least important member of my family!" (Judges 6:15 *GWT*). (I'm so glad God didn't check my family history before He qualified me to serve Him!)

Gideon's excuse didn't even deserve a response from the angel, who just responded, "...Go in the strength you have..." (v. 14). And when Gideon did everything in the natural God had instructed, the Holy Spirit added His supernatural power, which brought Israel complete victory.

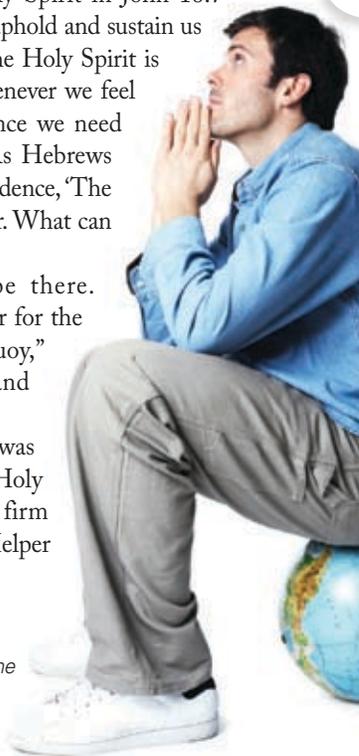
The power we receive from the Strengthener who lives in us is all we need. God has never expected us to fight in our own strength. He expects us to call on our Strengthener, who will empower us to do the impossible.

The final role assigned to the Holy Spirit in John 16:7 (*AMP*) is that of our Standby. He will uphold and sustain us when we feel like we cannot go on. The Holy Spirit is standing by, ready to encourage us whenever we feel discouraged. He gives us the confidence we need to stand tall in the face of trouble. As Hebrews 13:6 declares, "So we can say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?'"

The Holy Spirit will always be there. When it looks as if we are going under for the third time, He acts like a divine "buoy," pushing us back up to the surface and keeping us afloat.

Jesus was so right when He said it was to our advantage for Him to send the Holy Spirit. Now it's up to us to make a firm commitment to look to our Divine Helper before we look anywhere else.

*Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptures come from the New Living Translation of the Bible.*



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