

THE
DOVE
SPIRIT



Calm after the storm

Godwin Temisa

THE DOVE SPIRIT

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INTRODUCTION

The dove has always been used as a symbol of peace. Why is that? Because there are a couple of places in Scripture that point to the dove as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The first is found in the story of Noah and the flood. Following the flood, Noah sent out a dove to see if the waters had rescinded upon the earth because he wished to know if it was safe to leave the ark. The first time the dove was sent out, it simply returned to him, signifying that there was no dry land yet. The second time Noah sent the dove out, it came back with a freshly plucked olive leaf in its mouth.

Genesis 8:11 reads, “And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from the earth.” Then Noah sent the dove out a third time and the dove did not return, meaning that it found a new home on the earth. That meant that there was habitable earth once again!

In light of this story, the dove became a symbol of God’s peace following judgment. This is a repeating pattern that we can see not only throughout history but also in our personal lives. After the Storm (or war) comes the Calm (peace). We will experience great trials in this life, both internal and external, but if we walk with God faithfully as Noah did, His peace will return to us continually. The Holy Spirit will never leave us as long as we continue to walk in our faith in Jesus.

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It was the same Dove that stood over the head of Jesus after He was baptized showing the world that Jesus was the Son of God. When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him like a dove. This symbol of the Holy Spirit is especially important because it is recorded in all four Gospels (Matthew 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:29–34). Matthew says, "*And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'*" (Matthew 3:16–17).

A dove is known to represent God's Spirit and His immeasurable blessings. The Holy Spirit is pure, patient, and gentle. Jesus told His followers, "*Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves*" (Matthew 10:16).

The Dove is therefore a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The Dove is one of the most gentle birds. How then does the will of God through the Holy Spirit help us to navigate conflicts? In this book, we are going to explore who the Holy Spirit is, how He helps us to find peace in the midst of conflicts (both external and internal), and what it all means for our lives and faith.

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CHAPTER 1: NAVIGATING CONFLICT THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT

We can see that in many conflicts around the home, workplace, nations, and even in the church today.

Most of the conflict we experience in life comes from the clash that happens between the way we are called to live as Christians and the ways of the world around us. Everything around us is giving us a message contrary to what we know and believe to be true about the world as told in the Bible. But Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to *“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

God’s ways are different than the ways of the world. That puts us in a challenging place as believers. On one hand, we live in the world and in a lot of ways are subject to the way the world turns around us. But on the other hand, our true citizenship lies in God’s Kingdom, and our perspective is set on eternity. How are we supposed to manage these two truths?

The Holy Spirit makes it possible. He will lead us through every situation in life, helping us to see how to best be a witness to Jesus in the present while also focusing on work that will build

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God's future Kingdom. This is not something we can achieve on our own: we need to partner with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit will help us to live God's way instead of the world's. He will reveal God's wisdom to us, allowing us to submit to Him in everything. Then our path forward will be abundantly clear.

Pray that God, through the Holy Spirit, would point you towards His Kingdom in every circumstance of your life. Commit to following the path that He has called you on. We must submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 13:20-21 says, *“Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*

To live our lives in submission to the Holy Spirit is to live a life pleasing to God. It is how we do His will. But how are we, mere people, supposed to be able to discern the will of God?

We learn of God's will through invoking the power of the Holy Spirit as we build our relationship with God through the spiritual disciplines. God reveals divine mysteries to us through prayer, Bible reading, and fellowship. We can never doubt the importance of these practices in our lives. They are essential to the life of every Christian.

We will only receive this divine insight when we do these things in conjunction with the Holy Spirit. It's vital that we yield to His presence within us so we can hear His message and

discern the will of God. When we do, we are able to see our calling as a child of God through to fruition.

At the end of the day, the Christian walk is all about submitting to the Holy Spirit. When we do, we can ensure we are on the right path as followers of Christ

God shares with us His Will through the Holy Spirit's presence within us. When we are in right relationship with God and walk with Him daily, He makes His Will clear to us. How does this help us to resolve conflicts? Through prayer, we can bring Him any conflict or challenging situation we find ourselves in. God will share with us His will and make clear the path that we must walk to resolve the conflict at hand.

Just look at Noah! God had told Noah that the world was full of evil and He was going to cleanse it with a cataclysmic flood. That is a big conflict! Imagine how Noah must have felt hearing this news. What was he to do? He must have had a million questions running through his mind.

But Noah was a righteous man and he sought God's Will to answer his questions. Noah heard God's voice and followed His instructions. He was given a set of orders that must be completed if he was to fulfill God's purpose for his life. Noah's conflict was resolved because He chose to walk faithfully with God and be obedient to Him.

God must have a solution or a recipe for ensuring that men can live in peace with one another. We find that solution by walking in obedience to God just as Noah did. We, too, can seek His Will and follow it in our lives. Then we also will find the fulfillment of our God-given purpose in life.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit demonstrates God's continual presence and power within us. He is the Helper, the Advocate, and God's very own Spirit. He has made His home inside every believer. The Holy Spirit's goal is to guide every Christian on their chosen path and fill them with the power to carry out the mission God has called them to.

God created us to live lives led by the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit resides in the heart of every believer. When you focus on His presence within you, He will guide you to your path to freedom. Seek attunement with the Holy Spirit through the spiritual disciplines. He will fill you with the power to break through to new paths.

Titus 3:4-7 says, *“He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior.”* As we go through life, we often become weighed down by the problems of the world. Not only that, but the hectic schedules we lead today also lead us into physical burnout. As the trials of life build up over time, we find ourselves in desperate need of renewal.

The Holy Spirit gives us that, and so much more. Not only does the presence of the Holy Spirit give us refreshment in the moment, but He also teaches us how to live a healthier lifestyle

according to our design. The Holy Spirit is our guide through life, leading us to our God-given purpose and helping us to not only gain a new perspective but also to reprioritize our lives according to that purpose. As we do that, our schedules start serving us instead of us serving them.

In John 14:26, Jesus says, “*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.*” Let’s face it: we can’t do it all alone! There are times in life where we will need help. This is not a sign of weakness, but rather a sign of spiritual maturity. God has given us the Holy Spirit for strength, wisdom, and encouragement. It shows that our faith is strong when we reach out to the Holy Spirit within us in times of need. We must rely on His strength and not our own.

In John 16:13, Jesus says, “*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.*” We live in a world with a myriad of worldviews all in conflict with each other. Everywhere you look, you see conflict after conflict arising because people are clashing based upon their own interpretation of the truth. When you don’t have a foundation of truth to stand upon, you can develop any kind of worldview that you’d like. This becomes dangerous very quickly, as we can see from the state of our world at this present moment.

That’s precisely why we need objective truth. And where is objective truth found? Within the pages of the Bible. The Holy Spirit works from within us, helping us to apply what we learn as we study God’s Word. Not only that, but in those moments when we need it more than ever, the Holy Spirit is there to

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remind us of God's truth and how we should respond in any given situation. He will lead us in truth at all times.

In 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, Paul writes, "*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.*" Has the Spirit revealed your Spiritual gifts to you? God gives each believer unique spiritual gifts that help them to live out their God-given purpose in a profound way. When we live Holy Spirit-led lives, those gifts will be revealed to us along with our purpose.

Explore different areas of ministry and pray that your spiritual gifts would be revealed. Once you have a good grasp on them, utilize them in every way you can for the furtherance of God's Kingdom! Through living out your purpose, you will not only grow in faith, but you will also be continuing Jesus' redemptive work.

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Matthew 28:19 says, "*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.*" The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is at the center of our faith. It is a profound mystery that reflects the incredible nature of God and His immense uniqueness in the cosmos. The more you dive into the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the more you realize that there is truly no one like God.

What is the basic nature of this belief? That God is comprised of three persons in a single essence. It's the truth that He is a single God made up of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who live in

perfect harmony, unity, and love with one another. They are all eternal and all equally God.

That's precisely why the Holy Spirit is so powerful. He has always been God and always carried immense power with Him. That's also why it's so meaningful when Jesus tells the apostles that He will send the Holy Spirit once He has ascended. He was trying to explain to them that His presence would be right inside of them forever even though He was returning to the Father for the time being.

Meditate on the glorious truth of the Holy Trinity. Realize the incredible power God has placed within you. God wants to partner with you today in Kingdom work, and He is ready to do it all right alongside you.

Jesus was our perfect example of someone operating out of a place of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was always gentle and humble, seeking out the needs of others before His own. Just flip through the Gospels. Jesus is spending a majority of His time teaching, healing, and ministering to others in a variety of ways. He takes time to cultivate His relationship with God, then He continues in His work again. His life was the perfect example of what it means to follow the Will of God and live a life reflecting the true nature of God's Holy Spirit.

On the contrary, we see in the Bible what happens when someone fails to walk in the Spirit. Luke 22:47-51 reads:

“While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

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When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear.

But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him."

As Peter was watching his teacher, Lord, and friend get arrested, he acted according to his emotions rather than the Will of the Spirit. He lashed out in violence, contrary to God's ways, instead of embracing the gentleness of the Spirit. That's precisely why Jesus chastises Him and heals the man that Peter had injured.

We must be careful to always demonstrate the gentle nature of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We must never act out in hatred or violence against others. If we do, we are living lives controlled by our fleeting human emotions and not by the wisdom and grace of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 3: JESUS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus was led into the desert before His public ministry by the Holy Spirit. There He faced temptation. The Holy Spirit will guide us through desserts and valleys as well. His story was a powerful example for us to follow because it shows us how to command the power of the Holy Spirit even in the times of our greatest trials.. Let's look at it in detail. We are going to be taking a look at Luke 4:1-14:

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God,"

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he said, “throw yourself down from here. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered, “It is said: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

This is a remarkable story with so much to unpack. The first thing to note is that Jesus was led into this situation by the Holy Spirit. It wasn't Jesus' own mistakes or errors that brought Him here. The Jewish people long knew the wilderness as a place of preparation. It was a place where their faith was challenged but also grown. It was a place of spiritual training where they could bloom into their full potential in the Lord. This imagery went all the way back to the Israelites' time spent in the wilderness during the book of Exodus. This makes it the perfect place for Jesus to be before the start of His public ministry.

What happened to Jesus in the wilderness? He was tempted by Satan himself. Satan is crafty in his ways, for he loves to deceive. He starts by asking Jesus for a declaration of His power in order to prove who He really is. But Satan knows full well who Jesus is. All he is attempting to do is goad Jesus into obeying his commands.

It's brilliant how Jesus counters Satan. He uses Scripture. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 8:3, a verse that refers to the Israelites' time in the wilderness: *“He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your*

ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.” Jesus knew that He didn’t have to succumb to the intense hunger that He was feeling because His sustenance came from the Lord. The bread would not allow Him to endure this time of trial, but God most assuredly would.

Then Satan takes Jesus to a high place where He could see all the Kingdoms of the world. He told Jesus that he would give Him power and authority over all of them if only Jesus would worship him. Jesus once again quotes Scripture by turning to Deuteronomy 6:13.

Satan attempts one last deception, demanding another display of Jesus’ power. He takes Jesus to the highest point on the temple and tells Jesus to throw Himself down from there! For his reasoning, Satan gets even more tricky and quotes Scripture himself! But Jesus sees right through it, countering these deceptions with the Word of God once again and casting Satan away from him, thus completing His trial.

Verse 14 shows us what this time in the wilderness accomplished. It tells us that He returned to Galilee “*in the power of the Holy Spirit.*” Through these actions, Jesus showed us how to properly engage in and succeed in spiritual warfare. He defeated Satan head-to-head, even in a weakened state, and all by the power of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 4: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGHOUT THE SCRIPTURES

Acts chapter 2 chronicles Peter's sermon at Pentecost. So many people came to faith in Jesus that day, and the Holy Spirit entered them all. It happens the same way when we first call on Jesus' name today. The Holy Spirit enters us as well.

Acts 2:38 makes this process crystal clear: we repent and become baptized in the name of Jesus, and then the Holy Spirit is gifted to us. And take note of the importance of that word, gift: the Holy Spirit is a blessing from God in every way imaginable. It is not something to be earned but rather something that God graciously gives us.

Acts 2:38 reads, "And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit is not a gift for only certain believers with certain callings. He is a gift received by every individual that calls upon Jesus' name. God does not withhold the power of the Holy Spirit from any believer. No matter who we are or where we come from, the Holy Spirit can radically transform our lives.

The Holy Spirit is an inseparable part of the Christian faith. That's why it is so essential that we learn to walk with Him throughout our days. When we do, we will be living lives truly pleasing to God.

The giving of the Spirit was prophesized by Jesus in Acts 1:38: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

As children of God, we know that we receive incredible power from the Holy Spirit. Through this unparalleled gift, we are able to do things that we were never able to do before. Our lives are so different, in fact, that just by being vessels of the Holy Spirit, we are incredible witnesses of Jesus.

People see how vibrant and different our lives are, and they want to know what is fueling that. Our witness in and of itself opens up wonderful opportunities to share how God has worked within our lives. Our testimony can have a vast influence on another's heart. Consider for a moment your own faith journey. It's likely that someone's testimony has been of great motivation to you along the way! You have the chance to do the same for others.

The Holy Spirit helps us to tap into the unlimited potential God has placed within us all. The Holy Spirit also helps us to develop the unique skill-set and perspective that God has endowed us with. All of this, combined with our testimony, makes us powerful ministers of the Lord in our fallen world.

God is freely offering you power through His Holy Spirit. Embrace that power today.

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We also see the Holy Spirit working through the Old Testament, though not overtly named. The Spirit's work is in the process of regeneration. Another word for regeneration is "rebirth," from which we get the concept of being "born again." The classic proof text for this can be found in John's gospel: "*I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again*" (John 3:3). This begs the question: what does this have to do with the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament? Later on in His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus has this to say to him: "*You are Israel's teacher...and do you not understand these things?*" (John 3:10).

The point Jesus was making is that Nicodemus should have known the truth that the Holy Spirit is the source of new life because it is revealed in the Old Testament. For instance, Moses told the Israelites prior to entering the Promised Land that "*The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live*" (Deuteronomy 30:6). This circumcision of the heart is the work of God's Spirit and can be accomplished only by Him.

CHAPTER 5: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR MODERN DAY WORLD

There are many things in our modern-day world that hold us back from the neverending peace of the Holy Spirit in our lives: the fear of losing out, peer pressure, survival instinct, greed, etc. All of these things blind us and make it hard to see God's blessings in our lives. But that's precisely why we must be laser-focused on the Holy Spirit and His presence in our lives. When we are, we will be able to see past our limited human perspective and into the boundless scope of God's Will.

The world will try to rob us of our peace. Often we sacrifice our own inner peace to find "success" as defined by the world around us. But we must ask ourselves this question: in the end is success really complete without inner peace and peace with one another? God's peace is found when we are attuned to God's Holy Spirit within us. That's why we must seek Him with all our hearts!

Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, *"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You*

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are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.”

In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Paul expresses an extremely profound truth: God has granted us the blessing of our bodies being temples of the Holy Spirit. God has given divine purpose not only to our souls but also to our bodies. We are remarkably blessed by this gift.

To truly comprehend it, we must look at the imagery behind God’s temple in the Old Testament. The temple was comprised of many courts. The further you advanced into the courts, the more sacred the space became. This went on until you got to the innermost sanctum: the Holy of Holies.

The Holy of Holies was considered so Holy that only the High Priest could ever enter and only on one day out of the year: the Day of Atonement. This rule was in effect because they believe that this is where the Spirit of God dwelled. When Jesus’ was sacrificed, the temple of the Holy of Holies was torn in two, the significance being that the barrier between God and humanity had been broken and now the Spirit of God was available to all.

This is the reality we live in now. Our bodies have become the temples of the Holy Spirit, and we have access to Him always.

The Holy Spirit offers us the freedom to live unshackled by the sin that once held us back. We can now find our true purpose in the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:17 says, “*Now the LORD is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the LORD is, there is freedom.*” We’ve already established that our bodies are vessels of God’s Holy Spirit. Here, in 2 Corinthians 3:17, Paul teaches us that wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. That means,

being vessels of the Holy Spirit, that God has granted us freedom. But what exactly does that mean?

We must expand and see the full scope of this remarkable word. We must look at the true freedom God gives in contrast to the false freedom of sin. Sin attempts to entrap us with a promise of freedom. Sin tells us that if we follow its ways, we can do whatever we want, calling that freedom. But when we follow that trail, we end up becoming ensnared in our actions and it ends up not being freedom at all! Instead, we become slaves to sin!

The freedom we receive from the Holy Spirit is the freedom to live lives uninhibited by evil and pain that sin perpetrates in our lives. As followers of Jesus, we have the freedom to follow God untainted by the perverting nature of sin that separated us from God in the first place!

A life of freedom in the Holy Spirit is a beautiful life indeed. Don't fall for the false freedom that sin offers. Instead, embrace the true freedom that Jesus so freely gives and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:11 says, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you." In today's world, most of us have crazy schedules and an ever-increasing list of responsibilities. It's completely normal for us to feel worn out and run down. There's only so much we can do on human strength alone. Even though we live in a society that promotes self-sufficiency, we must admit we need help!

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Thankfully, God provides us with the sustenance we need to do everything He has called us to do and more. We receive this sustenance through the Holy Spirit! In Romans 8, Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is the same one who raised Jesus from the dead and that His power is alive in us. That power fuels us for every good work.

But what does it mean to receive life from the Holy Spirit? It means that we always have the motivation, guidance, and inspiration we need to accomplish everything that God has called us to do. The Holy Spirit will provide us with everything we need at just the right time so we will never be lacking when the moment comes to impact the world for God's Kingdom.

When your calling seems bigger than you can tackle, remember the presence of the Holy Spirit inside of you. His power is greater than your own, and you can make anything happen with Him by your side. Freedom, peace, and joy are at your fingertips: all you have to do is walk with the Holy Spirit.