

Friday June 12, 2026

The Holy Spirit Brings Power

Titus 3:4-5

As you enter your time with God today, take a moment to quiet your mind. Breathe this prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, come. Fill me with your Spirit. Open my heart that you might share your words of life with me."

We read today from Titus 3:4-5. Read the passage now or at the end of this devotion. What does this passage teach us about the Holy Spirit giving us the power of God?

I have a lot of stories that I know, that when I bring them to mind, they discourage me. As much as I may want to avoid them, in some cases, I can't because they involve people I have known and loved.

They are the stories of people who once confessed faith and love for Christ but shifted to embrace a lifestyle that completely rejects Jesus.

There are the celebrities who once professed faith as young people who now embrace sexual, philosophical and theological freedom that does not include anything of Christianity. There are the pastors I know of who once led churches with a fervent passion to point people to Christ. Now one is shackled up with a woman, not his wife, that he has fathered a child with. One has disappeared into alternative lifestyle communities that affirm any one of several different identities he has claimed, none of them include knowing the redemption of Christ. One has simply stopped believing. "My dog loves me. I feel his love. That's way more than the God who I never knew loved me." Oof.

The personal ones are the hardest. There are 'friends' who do not call me friend anymore because if they interact with me, they will hear about Christ. Once they sat with me and mined the depth of Christ's love in discussions about grace. Now, they simply want me to affirm that their new lifestyle, completely immersed in the world, is something I celebrate with them. When you don't do that, the conversations become less and less. It's really very sad because my love for them remains and my prayers continue, but I do not know who they are anymore. It is discouraging.

I expect all of us have similar stories. I expect we feel similar discouragement. I hope we also hear something else very important in these stories.

I hope we hear the echoes of grace.

"But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."

One of Paul's final challenges to Titus is to cling to the power of grace. The greatest power that the Spirit brings to children of God is the Gospel. That power must not only be recognized, but be relished, pursued, and cherished by God's children.

When we forget the power of grace, that's when the discouraging stories begin to be told in the lives of believers.

When a believer forgets that God loves and accepts his children by grace *no matter what we do*, we've taken a step down that road. When we misunderstand the activities of worship (church participation, prayer, discipleship in scripture, etc.) and understand them to be "grace wages" that earn us God's favor, we put another foot down the road towards rebellion. When we believe anybody is beyond God's love including our enemies or most importantly ourselves, we've made a left turn away from the narrow road that leads to Christ.

Many of the discouraging stories I know started with lots of little steps that shifted people away from grace.

The irony of saying all this is that none of these stories is beyond the grace of Christ. Somewhere in the stories that I know and see with eyes of judgment, the Savior sees with eyes of love and mercy. That's just how big his grace is.

So, when we hear, witness, or are confronted with the stories of those who have confessed Christ getting lost in the muck and the mire of this world, remember;

Remember that although we might see things one way, Christ is the holder of grace, and it is always bigger and wider than we believe grace to be.

Remember that the Spirit's power is not done. While a person still breathes, there's room for God's grace to transform.

Remember that you have been given the gift of grace. Cherish it. Nourish it. Give thanks and share it. It is the greatest gift we can ever know. Our best response is to say thank you for grace in our worship and proclamation of Jesus Christ.

Those stories discourage. They should, especially when they are people we love. But THE story; the Father's love for his Creation, Christ's love for his people, and the Spirit's love for each heart claimed by God should encourage, embolden, and strengthen us as we both cling to and proclaim his grace with everything we've got forever and always.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord turn his smile towards you and give you his peace.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I love you all. Blessings.

Feel free to share this devotion with others.

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