

## Six Streams of Christian Life and Prayer

### Study Four: Practicing the Spirit-Empowered – The Charismatic Tradition

Based on 'Streams of Living Water' by Richard Foster See items in bold type for a swifter study

#### Aim

To find ways to open ourselves to the energising work of the Holy Spirit of God.

#### You will need...

A Bible, pen and paper.

#### Starter

• **Have you ever had an advocate, someone who pleaded your case before an arbitrator or a referee — or a parent or teacher? What did he or she do for you?**

#### Prayer

Let us pray that through this study we might understand how the Holy Spirit may become active in our lives and thus enable and empower us for God's work in the world.

Jesus and the Spirit-Empowered Life Read [John 14:15-17](#); [25-26](#); [15:26-27](#); [16:7-15](#)

**These paragraphs from the Gospel of John describe the origin, character and work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says he going to ask the Father to send the Spirit to be their advocate, or helper. If we look closely we can begin to understand the nature and the effect of the Holy Spirit.**

Spirit of truth – affirms what is good, pure, true and holy. The invisible nature of the Holy Spirit makes it hard for people to believe he is real.

Teacher – he teaches believers 'everything'. Through him believers learn to pray and discern spiritual gifts and their proper use.

Witness – testifies about Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit that the good news about Jesus Christ is true, and prompts us to accept it

Prosecutor – proves the world wrong about its relationship with God, particularly about 'sin, righteousness and judgement'

Speaks only from the Father – He speaks of what is to come and passes on the things of God and Christ to the believer.

Jesus Christ's departure from the world grieved his disciples yet it was necessary for the Holy Spirit to come and begin a new stage in the work of God.

• **How do you understand the Holy Spirit's work in your life?**

#### God and the Charismatic Tradition

The Charismatic Tradition reminds us the Holy Spirit is essential for the Christian Life. Although we pray to God the Father in the name and authority of Jesus the Son, we often forget the role of God the Holy Spirit. What God the Father and God the Son began, God the Spirit completes. The distance between God and his people is bridged by the Holy Spirit, so believers become one with God, who works in them through the person of the Holy Spirit. God has chosen to empower believers to share the gospel that convicts and converts, and to endow them with abilities and gifts that build the church.

Read [Galatians 5:22-23](#)

• **Which of the Spirit's fruit has grown and matured in your life? Which has yet to grow?**

#### Practicing the Charismatic Tradition

The Holy Spirit is received, not grasped. First we must ask ([Luke 11:13](#)) Second we must wait ([Psalm 40:1](#)) When we pray for the Spirit we ask God to fill us with his presence, thoughts and words. We may expect to see works of the Spirit in our lives as we open ourselves to him through our inner attitudes, thoughts and feeling. While there are immediate, life changing works of the Spirit, most often the Spirit works by changing the way we think, and that takes time.

• **Nurture the fruit of the spirit – [Galatians 5:22-23](#) set aside 15 minutes each day to ask God which fruit needs to be more evident in your life.**

• Discover your spiritual gifts – [1 Corinthians 12:8-10](#) explore these gifts through prayer and ask God to guide you to a gift, (or more than one) that needs to be stirred up in your life or the church fellowship.

• Read the Bible with the Holy Spirit – As you read, ask the Holy Spirit to highlight a particular verse or word that is specifically meant for you to hear, spend 10 minutes reflecting on its importance.

• Listen to the Spirit when making decisions – most important ministry of the Holy Spirit is providing guidance. Ask God for insight, direction, leading. In all decisions test the Spirit by examining the Bible, the Spirit of God will never lead you into a decision that is contrary to the principles and commandments found in the Bible.