

Conscious of the Holy Spirit



Jim Cymbala January 11, 2020

Peter was a leading disciple and yet he denied the Lord three times. After the denials, Peter went off into the night weeping. He did not lose his relationship with Jesus in that moment but he did acutely feel the pain of his betrayal and the loss of close fellowship with someone he loved deeply. The Spirit was working in him to bring the pain that leads to repentance and restoration.

Paul warned, “Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Ephesians 4:30). If the Spirit is grieved, he is vexed and sad. Although we know our salvation isn’t lost by our sin, we also become painfully aware that there is a strain in our relationship. Communion with God is affected, and we feel an uncomfortable emptiness. The sun is still there and shining, but we no longer feel its warmth. It is as if a cloud blocks it.

A Christlike life is a mystery. We live the life — it’s our voice, body, and mind — but it’s not really us at all. It’s Christ living in us through the Holy Spirit. John, the same apostle who wrote a letter to encourage believers not to sin, also included one of the best promises in the Bible: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. *If we confess our sins*, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8-9).

A nugget of truth I heard many years ago is the key to being aware of and staying in touch with the Holy Spirit: “To be conscious of the Holy Spirit solves 90 percent of our problems.” We must discipline our minds to stay conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Christ’s plan was to replace “me” with “him” through the Spirit’s presence. This is somewhat like a “corporate takeover” — but it results in a life filled with peace and joy.

Jim Cymbala began the Brooklyn Tabernacle with less than twenty members in a small, rundown building in a difficult part of the city. A native of Brooklyn, he is a longtime friend of both David and Gary Wilkerson.

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