

## HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD! STUDY NINE

### Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

*Selected Scriptures*

*I've discovered when you get serious about spiritual things, you not only get serious about the church, you get serious about God. So far, we have spent time getting to know God the Father and God the Son, the attributes of the Father and the cross of Christ. Now we come to the tougher part, the invisible third person of the Godhead, God the Spirit.*

—Charles R. Swindoll

**W**HAT comes to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit? Do you imagine a phantom lingering in high ceilings of dark cathedrals? Or a ghost hovering over cemetery plots? The Holy Spirit proves more difficult to mentally grasp simply due to His invisible, nonbodily, immaterial nature.

The Father's glory we can imagine. The Son's human form we can picture. The Father planned salvation from eternity past, and Jesus implemented it at the right time in history. But the Spirit? He's like wind bending trees. We can only see His effects and feel His presence.

Yet, that we have trouble imagining Him does not mean He's any less significant than the Father or the Son. *He's God!* So, we will spend another four *Searching the Scriptures* Bible studies wrapping our heads around the Spirit's empowerment. Chuck Swindoll begins by blowing away the fog surrounding the third person of the Trinity so we can discover who the Spirit is and what He does.



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### Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

*Selected Scriptures*



#### PREPARE YOUR HEART

To help us prepare our hearts, let's read a passage from Romans 8 in which Paul explains how the Spirit helps us pray.

*And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, 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. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. (Romans 8:26–27)*

Take time now to still your heart and mind before God. Request the Spirit's strength. Pray for His guidance in this study.



#### YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

First, Chuck wants you to simply see what the New Testament says about the Spirit, so we will rely heavily on observation techniques in this study. Remember that we observe a biblical text by examining:

1. The who, what, where, when, why, and how
2. What you can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell
3. The logical connections, flow of thoughts, and range of subjects
4. What's repeated, emphasized, related, alike, and unalike
5. What's written before and after the passage



## Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

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After Jesus ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father, the Spirit multiplied the church into thousands of people. An important scene occurs from this fledgling community that captures the divine nature of the Spirit. Read *Acts 5:1–4* and describe how it portrays the Spirit as an equal member of the Trinity.

*He is a spirit. He isn't an it. He's a He. He has personality, mind, will, emotion. He knows. He can be grieved. He directs. He instructs. He has the characteristics of a personality.*  
—Chuck Swindoll



### Observation: The Spirit's Activity

The Spirit applies to our lives what Jesus accomplished. We cover four such activities below.

#### The Holy Spirit Regenerates Us

Read the passages below and record what they teach about the Holy Spirit's activity of regeneration. Remember to use your observation skills!

*John 3:1–8*



## **Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power**

*Selected Scriptures*

*Titus 3:3–7*

The Holy Spirit washes us clean of inward evil and gives us new power to love righteousness and obey God.

### **The Holy Spirit Baptizes Us into the Body of Christ**

Paul explained how the Holy Spirit unifies the church. Read *1 Corinthians 12:12–13* and record what it says about the Spirit's baptism.

*You will perhaps find some who teach that you need to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to be baptized in the Spirit. Never once are we commanded to be baptized in the Spirit. It happens to us, within us but not because of what we decide. Coming to Christ includes the Spirit of God placing us into the body of Christ and also placing us into Christ Himself. —Chuck Swindoll*

As a newborn baby relates biologically to its mom and dad, brother and sister, so a newborn Christian relates spiritually to the family of God.



### Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

*Selected Scriptures*

#### The Holy Spirit Seals Us

In his majestic letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul explained the permanence of the Spirit's work in us. Read [Ephesians 1:13–14](#) and [4:30](#). What did Paul teach about the Spirit's activity in these passages?

#### The Holy Spirit Illuminates Truth for Us

When God gave truth to the biblical authors, we say He *revealed* it. We call it *special revelation* because it conveys truth more powerfully about the person of God than *general revelation*, which we observe in creation. Then God continued His work in the process of *recording* the truth to preserve it. We call this *inspiration*. Read [2 Timothy 3:16](#) and [2 Peter 1:20–21](#), and record how the Spirit conducted the process of *inspiration*.



### Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

#### *Selected Scriptures*

Both *special revelation* and *inspiration* have ceased. God has nothing more to reveal to humankind beyond what's written in the Bible. But that does not mean the Holy Spirit is now retired. No, He still moves in each believer to *illuminate* God's Word. *Illumination* occurs when the Holy Spirit gives us understanding of Scripture. How do Paul's statements in [1 Corinthians 2:4–16](#) describe illumination?

Also, observe [John 16:12–15](#). How does this passage add to our understanding of the Spirit's work of illumination?

*The Spirit illuminates for our benefit. Knowing the truth gives us an edge in the world in which we live. It gives you an edge not only to survive but to thrive. You're guarded against the teaching of cults. You are instructed in the truth so that you are equipped to handle whatever comes to you. Whatever impacts you.* —Chuck Swindoll



### Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

*Selected Scriptures*



#### Interpretation: The Comforter

Now take time to reflect on the passages you observed above. They contain truth you will find nowhere else—truth that comes from God for your sake, for your good, not your harm. After thinking over the passages, write a summary paragraph of how the truths above benefit our lives today.

Chuck notes three benefits of the Spirit's activity in this message.

1. *The Spirit gives us the permanent presence of God.* While our sense of His presence increases and decreases, God always says, “I am with you.”
2. *The Spirit supernaturally enables us for the work of God.* We have the power to spread the fragrance of life wherever we go because of the Spirit’s empowerment.
3. *The Spirit sufficiently instructs us in the will of God.* God is not like a mean teacher who causes us to fail a test by withholding information. God wants us to succeed and thrive in His will. The Spirit guides the way.

Which of the benefits above holds special meaning in your current season of life? Record below how and why it does.

*When you relate to the Spirit of God, you're relating to One who has it all known, has it all understood, and His major role is to communicate it to you in bite-sized chunks that you can take and apply. That's His role. —Chuck Swindoll*



## Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power

*Selected Scriptures*



### Application: Maintaining Intimacy

For many, certain barriers keep us from enjoying the Spirit's presence and benefits. They prevent us from allowing the Spirit to fortify our faith in His power. Before applying the truth from this *Searching the Scriptures* biblical study, Chuck identifies three such barriers to tear down.

1. *The fence of the invisible and unknown*—a barrier of fear—keeps us from pursuing the Spirit's presence and relying on Him in prayer. Sometimes, we simply need to be still and wait for Him.
2. *The wall of traditional resistance*—empty, unbiblical doctrine—either contorts the Spirit's role or shoos Him off altogether. But He is a person whose personality will not be stifled or manipulated. We must receive Him as He is in order to have a thriving relationship with Him.
3. *The hurdle of personal excuses*—peer pressure, constant coming-and-going, or technology-filled downtime—keeps us from enjoying a heightened sense of the Spirit's presence.

Did you find that any of the barriers above hinder your current relationship with the Spirit of God? If so, how can you remove the barrier and find more delight in the Invisible One?

What is an encouraging new insight from our study of the Spirit that you can take with you today?

So we have journeyed from checkpoint to checkpoint in the divine forest of New Testament truth. How *vital* the Spirit is in our lives . . . the personal, powerful, presence of God!



## **Getting Reacquainted with the Spirit of Power**

*Selected Scriptures*



### **A FINAL PRAYER**

End this study with a prayer, giving thanks for the Spirit's work in your life and requesting continued guidance in the days ahead.



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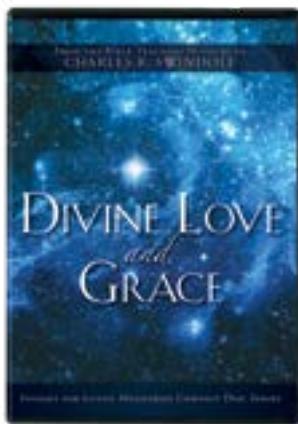
*Selected Scriptures*



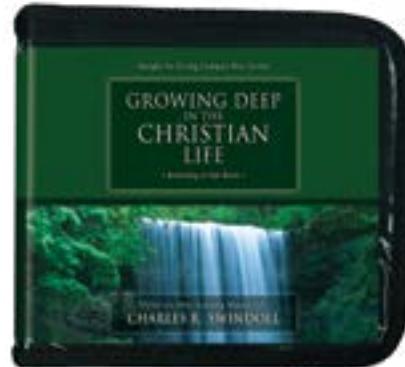
### Tools for Digging Deeper



How Great Is Our God  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
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Divine Love and Grace  
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For the 2019 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Aaron Massey in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of Pastoral Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.

