

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS

SESSION 7 NOTES: TRANSFORMATION IN CHRIST

Not that I am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. (Philippians 3:12)

The Holy Spirit is at work in us to change us and make us holier.

- Jesus wants us to enter into a deeper relationship with him every day. He wants us to become more and more as he is—holy and perfect. But we can't make ourselves holy and perfect as God is holy and perfect: God himself must bring about our holiness and perfection, and he will if we let him. *"God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."* (Philippians 2:13)
- The Holy Spirit is working to draw us into a deeper union with God and one another, to give us a fuller experience of the new life.
- He is working to make us realize the need for us to turn away from wrongdoing, to reorder our priorities, to take away all those things that make us less loving. Include personal sharing on how the Lord is changing us.

We can expect to experience trials and difficulties as we grow: they can be a means of growth.

- Problems like doubts, fears, lack of trust, self-pity, temptation; difficulties like distractions and dryness in prayer, mistakes in following the leadings of the Spirit, and trials like persecution or misunderstandings are commonly experienced in these weeks.
- These problems, difficulties and trials are normal and to be expected. The Lord uses them for our growth. *"God works for the good in everything with those who love him."* (Romans 8:28)
- We now have a new power to deal with difficulties. The Lord will teach us things through overcoming difficulties. *"Rejoice always, pray continually"* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17)
- Help is available from members of the community, especially those more mature in the life of the Spirit.

In order to grow, we need much more - the Life in the Spirit Seminar is only a beginning

- We need to learn a great deal more about the Christian life. It is important to take advantage of the teaching which is available in the community.
- We need the strength and support of others, the sharing of experience, advice. A good way to put out a fire is to pull the logs apart; a good basis for starting a fire is to put them together in the right way.
- We need a situation in which we can learn how to serve the Lord. Include personal testimony to the value of community and its importance for growth in the life of the Spirit.
- Find out about what is happening in your Parish and Diocese: prayer groups, communities, conferences, training programmes.

Written by Alastair Emblem, based on the Life in the Spirit Seminars Team Manual (Catholic Edition) by Stephen B Clark. Copyright © 1973, 1979 The Word of God.

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINARS

DAILY SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION WEEK 7: TRANSFORMATION

Day 1

“But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ Immediately Jesus reached out His hand and caught him...” Matthew 14:30-31

Peter is doing fine walking the supernatural walk until he takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses on his situation: the storm and his natural inability to walk on water - then he begins to sink until he cries out to Jesus again and is rescued. To grow in the gifts of the Spirit we have to keep our eyes on Jesus and on what He can do, not on what we know we can't!

Day 2

“Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong” Acts 3:6-7

The same Peter who denied Jesus to a serving maid a short time before is now stepping out in the gift of healing for this lame man. What has brought about this amazing transformation? Now he is filled with the Holy Spirit – the same Holy Spirit you are filled with!

Day 3

“When all the jars were full, she said to her son, ‘bring me another one.’ But he replied ‘There is not a jar left’ then the oil stopped flowing.” 2 Kings 4:6

This story of the prophet Elijah helping a widow by multiplying the small jar of oil has a deep truth in it for us. The little jar kept pouring as long as there was space into which it could be poured: when there were no more jars, i.e. no empty space; it stopped coming. Oil in scripture is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Is there space in our lives for more of the Holy Spirit to be poured in? The blessing of the infilling of the Holy Spirit will continue until there is no more space within us – then it will stop. What might be filling that space?

Going forward

If you have enjoyed these readings, then now is the time to continue them for yourself. Open your bible and begin to read the story of the early Church, how it grew once it was filled with the Holy Spirit. We call that story the book of Acts, the acts of the apostles as they began to fulfil all that God had called them to do and be, using this new power of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter in their lives. What will He do with and through you?

May God bless you and keep you and make His face shine on you in all you do for Him!

© Written by Dominic McDermott for Northampton DST Life in the Spirit Course 2020