

The background of the image shows the dark silhouettes of several palm trees against a light, overcast sky with soft, diffused light. The palm fronds are detailed and appear to be blowing in the wind. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

The Promised Spirit

"you know Him
because He abides with you
and will be in you."

The Spirit of Promise

The Spirit of God in history

From the creation of the world onward, we can see how God used His Spirit to accomplish His will. We can see it in His eternal power in creation. (Rom 1:20) We read of His Spirit's power providing a son to Abraham and Sarah when they were past childbearing age. (Gen 18:13-14) We see Him when God used Moses to bring His people out of Egypt. *'And the LORD said to Moses, "Is the LORD'S power limited?"* (Num 11:23) In the Psalms we are told of His mighty power. *'But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases'* (Psalm 115:3) God reminds His people Israel that it was He alone who rescued them from slavery in Egypt. *"He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power"*

Deut 4:36-37

In the Promised Land, God's Spirit worked His power through many people and prophets.

Sampson was used by God. *'The Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily.'* (Judges 14:6)
The Spirit was with Saul *'Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be transformed into a different person.'*
1 Sam 10:6

The Spirit used Elijah *'And it came about, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.'* (2 Kings 3:15) David was used by God. (1 Sam 17:33, 37) Daniel knew the power of God's Spirit. (Daniel 6:26-27) The prophet Isaiah spoke of the power of the Spirit of God. (Isaiah 42:1) The prophet Jeremiah said. *'You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and by Your outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for You.'* Jer 32:17

There were many more whom God used by the power of His Spirit to carry out His will on earth. And then there was Mary, the mother of Jesus. *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will*

overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.”
(Luke 1:34-35) And Jesus was full of the Spirit.
‘And the power of the Lord was with Him to heal.’
Luke 5:17

The prophet Joel told of God's people receiving the Spirit of God. *"It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions."Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."*

Joel 2:28-29

The prophet Ezekiel wrote that the chosen will overcome by the power of God. God will cleanse us of sin; He will take away our hard heart and give us a new heart that is responsive to His love. He will put a new spirit in us, and more importantly, He will put His Spirit in us to enable us to live correctly according to His commandments. Ezek 36:24-27

The Bible teaches us God is infinitely powerful, so impossible is impossible for God. *“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* Matt 19:26

This work of God's Spirit is a new thing

God has empowered many people over history to do His work by the might power of His Spirit, but now there is a new work, a new way. Now God will empower all those who are truly His people. Now it is not only special people who are moved by His Spirit from above, but everyone who has saving faith in Christ will have the Spirit living in them.

At Pentecost (Acts 2:14) God began a new way of helping His people. Now the Spirit will dwell in the believer and provide an intimate opportunity to know God personally so we can know ourselves as we are and how we will be changed into the life of Christ when God calls us home. All His chosen children are empowered to serve Him only.

Jesus said: "*you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.*" John 14: 17

This is the Spirit of promise in Christ

'This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.' Acts 2:32-33

The Spirit of promise is the same Spirit that has carried out God's will since the creation of the world. But we must not assume that all those in Christ have the same expression of the Spirit that was in Christ and His chosen disciples to do miracles and signs and wonders. This working of the Spirit was to confirm Jesus' claim to be God, and to establish His body the Church on earth through the Apostles. God still does miraculous work through His children, but when He decides it is necessary.

The pouring out of the Spirit on all believes is for the purpose of us witnessing to Christ, and doing His work while we are being transformed into the image of Christ who is our perfect example.

The indwelling Spirit also secures our heavenly inheritance and identifies us as God's personal possession.

'Having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.' Eph 1:13-14

Our weakness requires the power of God

From the time of the first sin in the Garden of Eden, man has been under bondage to sin. Even with the law of God man is unable to overcome his fleshly nature. God didn't expect us to be able to keep the law; the law was given to teach us we are unable to please God by ourselves. With God's divine help by His

Spirit, and by following the truth of His Word, we can progressively overcome sin and become more and more like Christ.

'For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.'

Rom 8:3-4

God has given us the Spirit so we can be victorious in overcoming sin. We are called to walk in the Spirit always yielding to His control. (Gal 5:16-25) This means are to consistently follow the Holy Spirit's prompting in our lives so we can be holy rather than following fleshly ways and earthly thinking.

Not only is the Spirit's work needed to rescue us from the power of sin, He is also necessary

so that we know we are indeed children of God, born of God and not of the will of man. (John 1:13) Best of all, the Spirit is given to transform us into the image of Christ (Rom 8:29) and to enable us to serve God.

Eph 2:10

To do this God is willing to give us a new life so we can take part in His life. *Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*

John 3:3, 5

New birth comes after our repentance. Repentance is the act of the will to change our minds about living our lives our way to surrender to the will of God so that we live according to His will and purpose in every part of our lives. After repentance comes the giving of the Spirit of Christ in a new birth.

John the Baptist declared: *“As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”*

Matt 3:11; Rom 6:4-8

Baptism signifies an attitude of death to self to be raised up to live for God. God takes our weakness and gives us a new life with His glory so we can be His holy children on earth.

God has given us a new life by the divine power of His Spirit, and God will work this new life into reality by the same power of His Spirit. *‘His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.’* 2 Pet 1:3-4

Jesus promised another helper

To make it possible for us to be obedient children who do the will of God, Jesus promised we would receive divine help.

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."

John 14:16-17

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." John 14:25

"But when He, the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to

you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you." John 16:13-15

The promised Spirit is only for the obedient

'The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.' (Acts 5:30-32) If we are unwilling to obey all Jesus taught it means He is not our Lord and we will not receive the Spirit or His fullness.

The Spirit is for our sanctification

First, sanctification is when God sets us aside for His purpose. (Eph 2:10) Then sanctification is also the process needed for growing in Christ-likeness. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in enabling believers to lead holy lives,

dedicated to the service of God while being conformed to his likeness.

'According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.' (1 Pet 1:2) Therefore the promised Spirit is for our holiness. *'because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."*

1 Pet 1:16

The Spirit requires we are transformed

'But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.'

2 Thess 2:13

Sanctification is a necessary part of being a Christian. *'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?'*

1 Cor 6:19

The Spirit enables believers to become holy

God's children are to obey Him and live according to His commandments. Without the Spirit having His way in us we are unable to live as God's children. The indwelling Spirit makes it possible for us to keep the commandments when we live according to the life we have received from God.

'So that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Rom 8:4

'For if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.' (Rom 8:1) *'Be filled with the Spirit.'* (Eph 5:18) Being filled with the Spirit is when we are living completely under His control.

The Spirit gives us His quality of life

The Holy Spirit produces the qualities of His nature in those born again by the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is not a catalogue but an

indication that those in Christ will have available the life qualities of their God. The full fruit of the Spirit is seen in the life of Christ who is our life. *'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.'*

Gal 5:22-23

'The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.' (Rom 14:17) *'For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.'*

2 Tim 1:7

The Spirit makes us more like Jesus Christ

'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.'

2 Cor 3:18

'For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.' Rom 8:29

The Spirit is opposed to fleshly desires

'For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.' Gal 5:17

'For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.' Rom 8:5, 9

Therefore the Spirit helps us overcome the flesh. Living by the Spirit means we are under the power of God. *'But I say, walk by the*

Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.'

Gal 5:16

The Spirit is for our witness to Christ

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Acts 1:8

The Spirit gives spiritual gifts to the Church

'Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.'

1 Cor 12:4-7

'But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the

members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.' 1 Cor 12:11-12

'But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit.' 1 Cor 12:7-8

The Holy Spirit does not desire God's people to be passive. The Spirit is given to us so that we can carry out the will of God in Christ, so there are to be no bystanders watching the faithful few do the work of the church.

There is One Spirit, one body, the Church

The Holy Spirit is God's claim of ownership for those who are His in Christ. The Spirit is a down payment on our heavenly inheritance which Christ has promised and secured for us on the cross. Because of this the Spirit keeps us for the day of the Lord's return.

The Holy Spirit is given to us to assure us we belong to God. Through the gift of the Spirit,

God renews the believer with a new birth, setting us apart for His service. The Spirit produces His quality of life in our hearts, those feelings, hopes, and desires which give evidence that we are regarded as His adopted children. Because of this, our hope for our future to live with Christ in His glory is real, and our faith that our lives are in His hands is unwavering.

It is through the indwelling Holy Spirit and His teachings and guiding power that we are made complete in Christ, free from the corrupting power of sin. Because we have the seal of the Spirit we can live joyfully; always confident of our place in the future kingdom of God, looking forward to indescribable glories for our future blessing.

The Holy Spirit is the promise of God's personal enabling and Governance for the obedient believer in the context of the Church. There is no teaching in the Bible that supports a believer living as a lone ranger isolated from

the Church. God promises His personal assistance by the Spirit so His chosen people can work together, encouraging each other in the process of becoming like Christ as we do His work in the world through the church.

God's salvation plan for the believer means we all need to work together as we work out the purpose of God in the world.

Evidence of our salvation is seen in the outworking of the indwelling Spirit. Our Christ-likeness depends on our intimacy with the Spirit of God who must rule in and through us. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can help us enjoy a relationship with Jesus Christ that is essential to having eternal life.

However not all those who are in Christ are dedicated to laying down their lives to live the Christ life as mature children of God. A failure to grow means remaining immature with limited ability and knowledge.

Are we carnal or spiritual?

The spiritual man is obedient and receptive to the Spirit who reveals the truth of God to the people of God so that we may know the *'things freely given to us by God.'* *The natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God.*

1 Cor 2:12-14

Paul reminds us there are those who have received a new life but have not grown into maturity but have remained spiritual infants because they continue to live just like those who do not have God's Spirit. *'But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?'*

1 Cor 3:1-3

We all need to be reminded that we are not our own, we belong to God and that God now lives in us. *'Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? (1 Cor 3:16) 'You belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.'* 1 Cor 3:23

According to God's word, the spiritual man has received the Spirit because he has surrendered to the Spirit's rule and authority.

Acts 5:32

A spiritual man has a diet of solid biblical food and is able to teach others according to the fullness of God's word.

'For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.'

Heb 5:12

Paul teaches us that the Christian who still lives with his interest in the world and their own abilities, is not spiritual. The Christian

who is still controlled by unloving emotions and selfish desires is not yet spiritual. It doesn't matter how much doctrine we have, if we cannot live the Christ life we are not mature. We come into the category of *'Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.'* 2 Tim 3:7

Those who have not given themselves to be governed by the Spirit in all things cannot be truly spiritual. The Spirit is only given in His fullness to those who are determined to be obedient. Obedience is costly. Jesus calls us to deny ourselves and take up our cross to follow Him. (Luke 9:23) This is only possible for those who will obey Him, regardless of the cost.

Knowing all doctrine and doing much Christian work doesn't make us spiritual. This is evident because Paul recognised that the Corinthians had all the outward signs of having salvation, they lacked nothing regards any spiritual gift and we're eager for the return of Christ. (1 Cor 1:7) but even then he saw they

needed to become complete, that is, to be mature and of the same mind and judgement.

1 Cor 1:10

Therefore as long as we are unyielding to the continual governance of the Spirit we are not able to receive or understand spiritual truth. Spiritual truth only benefits the spiritual who allow the Spirit to enable them with His powerful work to go and make disciples.

When the Church fails to give God's teaching on the Holy Spirit, or the people have their own agenda for life, there will be little knowledge of the work of the Spirit who is to live in the individual as the life of the Church. Though we may have received saving faith, we may not know of the Spirit's work or His power to overcome sin so that we do the work of God as sons of God. It is difficult for those who know nothing of the indwelling Spirit to yield to Him when they don't know of His presence and power to make them like Christ.

The Spirit is given so we can become like Christ while doing His work in the world. Therefore we must surrender to God and be willing to remove any defect so our heart is in a suitable condition for the Spirit's occupation and our continued growth.

It is the Spirit who rules in us who makes it possible for us to put to death the deeds of the flesh of the natural man to become increasingly more spiritual. Rom 8:29; Cor 1:28

The Holy Spirit's powerful work guides us into growing in the knowledge of the truth. *'Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* (John 8:31-32) Continuing in His word means living in obedience to all He taught so that we have victory over sin and death.

Many people seek the Spirit's work in earthly things. They keep looking for material well being and perfect health. They keep looking for a miracle when the greatest miracle is a spiritual life abiding in Christ while being led by the Spirit of God. If we do not live as God intends, we cannot obtain all the benefits from the greatest treasure of God in Christ.

True spiritual understanding depends on being spiritual so that the power of the Spirit can make our thoughts spiritual in accordance with the mind of Christ. (1 Cor 2:16) *'If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.'*

Gal 5:25

The Spirit is God's Sufficient Grace

"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." (2 Cor 12:9) This is God's unsearchable love poured out into our heart by the Spirit. (Rom 5:5) His loving presence is more than sufficient for all our needs in every situation; nothing can separate us from His love.

Rom 8:39

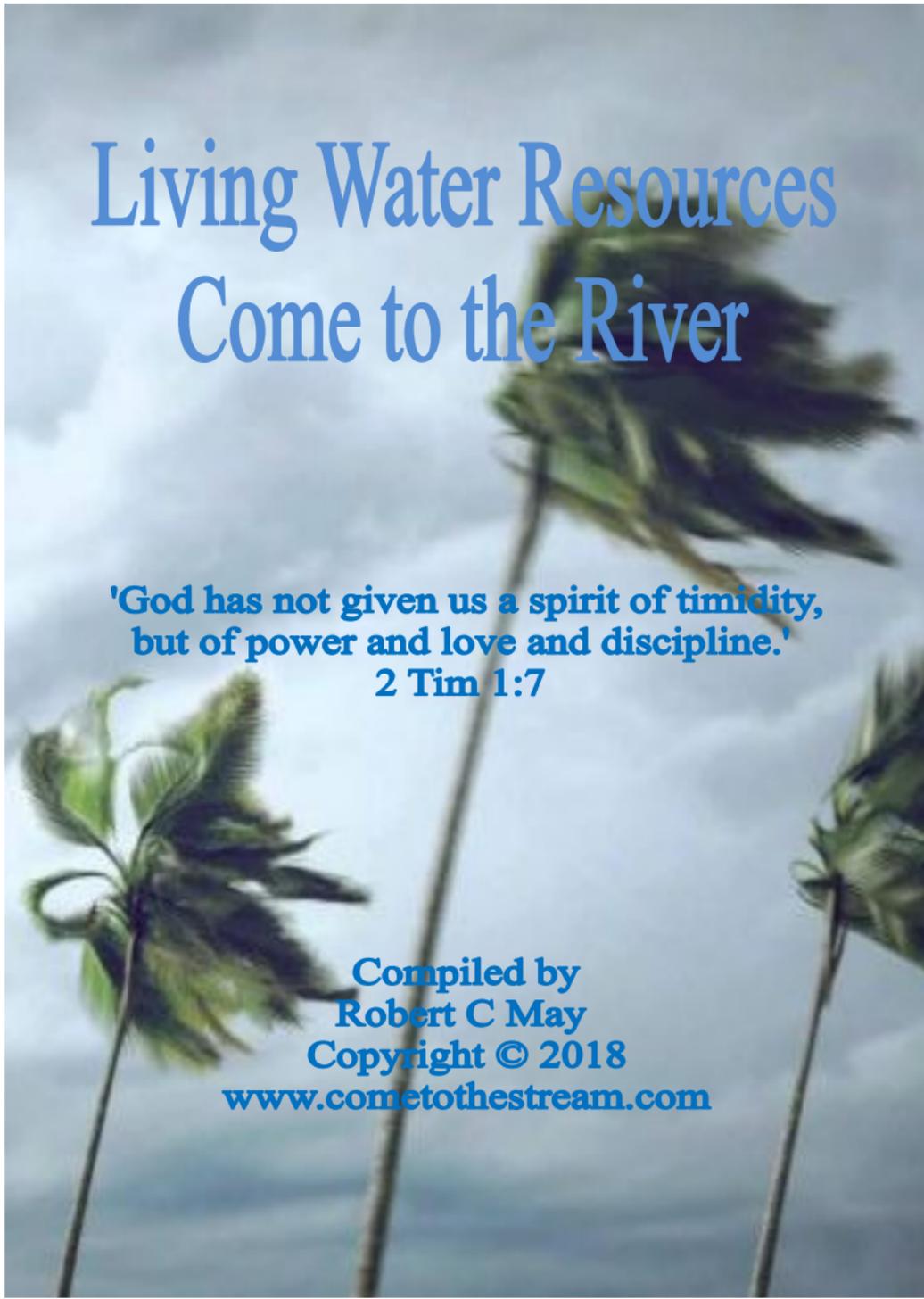
But only the empty unoccupied heart is suitable for the Spirit to be able to take up residence and satisfy our needs. In this life, God the Spirit does not share His throne room, there is no dual occupancy. Only a heart emptied of self interest can be filled with the desire of God for us to be like Christ doing His work in intimacy with God, cross and all.

We can have peace because this Spirit of God gives us peace. (Gal 5:22-23) Therefore Jesus said. *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”*

John 14:27

The peace Jesus is speaking of is His presence by the Spirit who enables believers to remain calm in the most fearful circumstances while we continue to witness to His glory.

Please abide in Christ and walk by the Spirit so that you can be filled up to the fullness of God.



Living Water Resources Come to the River

**'God has not given us a spirit of timidity,
but of power and love and discipline.'
2 Tim 1:7**

**Compiled by
Robert C May
Copyright © 2018
www.cometothestream.com**