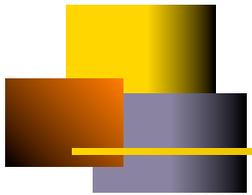


Who is our God?

“We ask too much of ourselves to trust a stranger.”

Carolyn Custis James

What is theology, and  
why should I care?



the·ol·o·gy (th-l-j) n. pl. the·ol·o·gies

- 1) The study of the nature of God and religious truth; rational inquiry into religious questions.
- 2) A system or school of opinions concerning God and religious questions: Protestant theology; Jewish theology.
- 3) A course of specialized religious study usually at a college or seminary.

Source: The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition

Why should we want to understand the nature of God at a deeper level?

Proverbs 9: 10 "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

Why should we want to understand the nature of God at a deeper level?

1 Timothy 2:5 "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,"

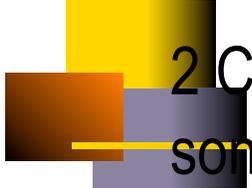
I Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

# Why should we want to understand the nature of God at a deeper level?

- 1) Theology is the root, the foundation, the framework for practical living that reflects wisdom and understanding.
- 2) If you know Christ as your savior, you have the same Holy Spirit residing in your heart, the same Word of God at your fingertips, and the same access to the presence of God as the wisest and most godly spiritual leader you know of today.

So what is theology, and why should I care?

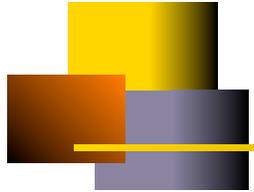
Theology is basically just the study of God—Who He is, what He does, etc. Proverbs says that such knowledge of God is the foundation for wise living. So we study theology that we may know God and be enlightened to the benefits of our relationship with Him. The result should be that our daily lives reflect the security we have in that relationship with Him.



2 Corinthians 6:18 "I will be a Father to you, and you will be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

---

**John 1:12 Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.**



Romans 8:15

15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

***But what kind of Father is He?***

## Our Father in Heaven is Sovereign

Isaiah 46:9-11 Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it.

## Sovereign

Matthew 10:29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny ? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.

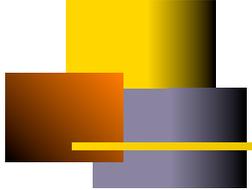
Psalm 135:6 The LORD does whatever pleases him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.

Our Father in Heaven is Compassionate.

Psalm 103:13 As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.

Our Father in Heaven is Wise.

Romans 16:27 to the only wise God be glory  
forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

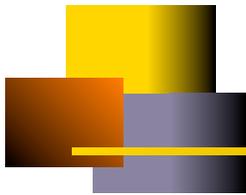


## Practical benefits of this relationship:

---

**We receive His pity, compassion, protection, and provision.**

- ? **Proverbs 14:26** He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.
- ? **Matthew 6:30-32** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? <sup>31</sup>So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup>For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

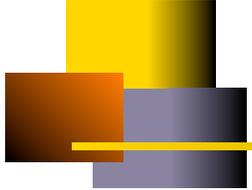


## Practical benefits of this relationship:

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**We have full access to His presence and His ear.**

- ? **Ephesians 3:12** In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.
- ? **Romans 5:2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.
- ? **Matthew 6:9** "This, then, is how you should pray: "  
'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,



## Practical benefits of this relationship:

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**We receive His discipline.**

- ? **Hebrews 12:6** because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he scourges everyone he accepts as a son.“
- ? **John 15:1-2** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

We are secure in this position and our inheritance is certain.

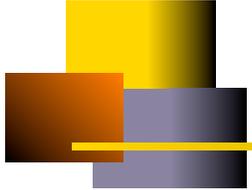
**Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

**1 Peter 1:3-4** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you,

But we are not home yet.

## **Romans 8**

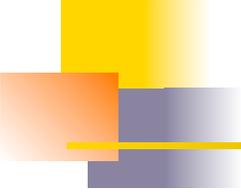
<sup>15</sup>For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father" ...Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.



## Questions for Reflection

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- ✿ Has your view of God been overshadowed by aspects of your earthly father?
- ✿ Does God's sovereign control over issues in your life make you feel angry or secure?
- ✿ Does God's Fatherhood and sovereignty impact how you view trials you are currently facing?



# God is our Savior.

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“I did not come to abolish the Law but to fulfill it.”

Jesus

Matthew 5:17

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Colossians 2 <sup>6</sup>So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfess.



What did He come to save us from?



# Deuteronomy 22

## John 8



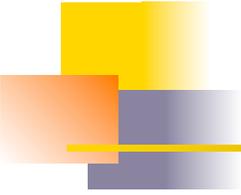
## What did He come to save us from?

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- Our sins
- The effects of the fall of man on us all
- Our estrangement from God



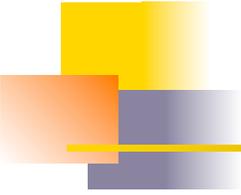
He doesn't just save us and leave us. He unites with us for the rest of our lives.  
We are ONE with Jesus.



# Vine and Branches

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**John 15** <sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup>Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup>"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. <sup>8</sup>By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

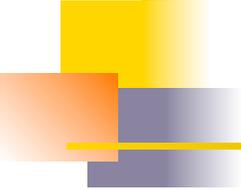


# Abide

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## ***Meno***

to remain, abide; to sojourn, tarry, not to depart; to continue to be present; to be held, kept, continually; to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure; of persons, to survive, live; to remain as one



# Vine and Branches

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**Colossians 2** <sup>6</sup>So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

<sup>8</sup>See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

<sup>9</sup>For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, <sup>10</sup>and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.



## Married to Christ

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**Eph. 5** <sup>23</sup>For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup>Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

<sup>25</sup>Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup>to make her holy, cleansing<sup>[2]</sup> her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup>and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup>In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

<sup>29</sup>After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church--



# Head and Body

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**Colossians 1** <sup>18</sup>And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.



## Head and Body

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**Luke 22** <sup>19</sup>And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

**I Cor. 10** <sup>16</sup>Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? <sup>17</sup>Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.



# Head and Body

---

**Eph. 1** <sup>22</sup>And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

**Ephesians 3** <sup>6</sup>This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.



## Head and Body

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**Colossians 2** <sup>19</sup>He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

**Colossians 3** <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.



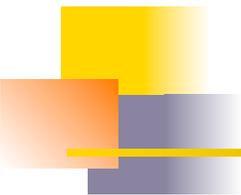
## Questions for Reflection

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**How has Christ rescued you from your sins and the penalty of the Law?**

**What practically does it mean for you to abide in Christ?**

**If Christ is the Head and you are part of His whole Body, the Church, how does this impact your relationship with other Christians?**



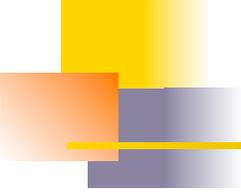
# Head and Body

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Consider also Romans 12:4 - 8

Ephesians 4:1-28

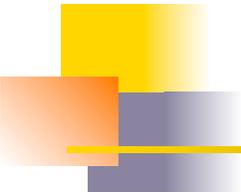
I Corinthians 12:12-27



# God is Our Help.

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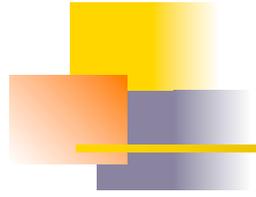
**John 14:16-18** "... I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, ... I will not leave you as orphans ..."



The Holy Spirit is called the Comforter/Counselor/Helper.

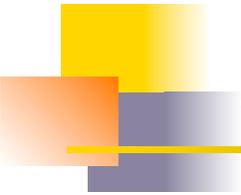
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**John 16** <sup>6</sup>Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. <sup>7</sup>But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the **Counselor** will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup>When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:



# Parakletos

One who comes alongside in aid

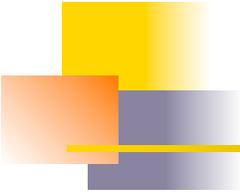


The Spirit does not elevate Himself. He always points to Christ.

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**John 15** <sup>26</sup>"When the **Counselor** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. <sup>27</sup>And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

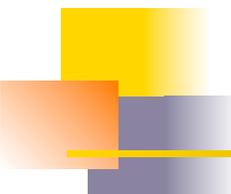
**John 16** <sup>12</sup>"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. <sup>13</sup>But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. <sup>14</sup>He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.



The Spirit does not elevate Himself. He always points to Christ.

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**Acts 5** <sup>30</sup>The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead--whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup>God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. <sup>32</sup>We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."



The Holy Spirit is called the deposit, seal, and guarantee of our salvation.

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### **Ephesians 1:13-14**

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.



The Holy Spirit is called the deposit, seal, and guarantee of our salvation.

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**2 Corinthians 1:21-22** Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

**Ephesians 4:30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.



## **Deposit**

- Money lodged with a party as earnest or security for the performance of a duty assumed by the person depositing.



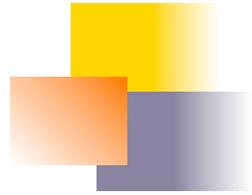
## **Seal**

- To set or affix a seal to; hence, to authenticate; to confirm; to ratify; to establish; as, to seal a deed.
- To shut close; to keep close; to make fast; to keep secure or secret.

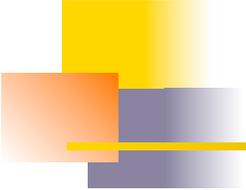


## **Guarantee**

- Something that assures a particular outcome or condition; a promise or an assurance, especially one given in writing, that attests to the quality or durability of a product or service; a pledge that something will be performed in a specified manner.
- A guaranty by which one person assumes responsibility for paying another's debts or fulfilling another's responsibilities.



**2 Corinthians 5** <sup>1</sup>Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. <sup>2</sup>Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, ...so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup>Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.



# He indwells all believers

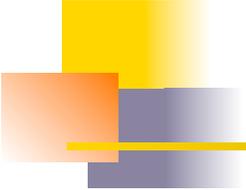
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## **John 14:17**

the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

## **1 Corinthians 6**

<sup>19</sup>Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;



# He indwells all believers

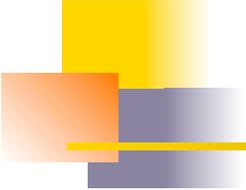
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## **Romans 8:9**

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

## **Ephesians 2:22**

And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

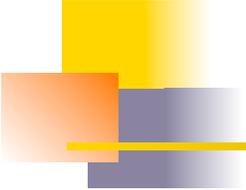


## He intercedes for us in prayer.

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<sup>26</sup>In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. <sup>28</sup>And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. <sup>29</sup>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup>And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. <sup>31</sup>What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Romans 8**

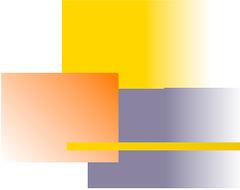


# Sanctification

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- One of the Holy Spirit's major functions in the Trinity.
- *“Sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit”* (2 Thes. 2:13, 1 Pet. 1:2)
- Becoming what you are.
- Justification is a relative change in state; sanctification is a real change of the whole man.

II Corinthians 3:18 “And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit”.

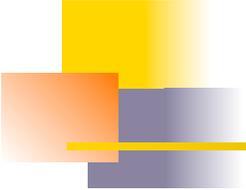


# Sanctification

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“Sanctification is the work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die to sin, and live to righteousness.”

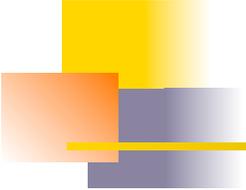
**Westminster Shorter Catechism**



# Who's Doing the Work?

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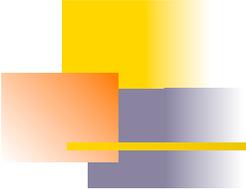
**Philippians 3** <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ... <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. ... <sup>20</sup>But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup>who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.



# Who's Doing the Work?

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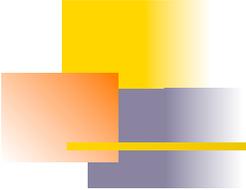
**Leviticus 20** <sup>7</sup>" 'Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. <sup>8</sup> Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD , who makes you holy.



# Who's Doing the Work?

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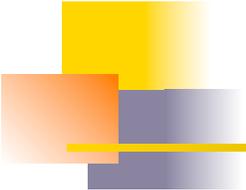
**Philippians 2:12-13** Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.



# Who's Doing the Work?

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**Phil. 1: 3-6** I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ;being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;



# How do I become sanctified?

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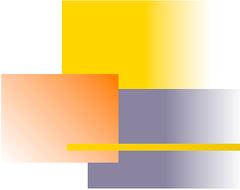
**John 17** <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

## **OT picture: Who fought the battle of Jericho in Joshua 6?**

- The Lord promised Israel up front that they would defeat every enemy in Canaan.
- The enemies in Jericho were much stronger than the Israelites.
- God performed a miracle by bringing the walls of Jericho down at the trumpet blast.
- The Israelites could not be passive—they had to make themselves available to God by marching around the walls as He instructed them.



See also Colossians 2:6 – 3:10.



# Discussion Questions

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- What does it mean practically that the Spirit is my comforter/counselor/helper?
- What does it mean practically that the Spirit is the deposit guaranteeing that God will not default on His promises to me?

## Practical Application of this Theology?

**Ephesians 4** <sup>29</sup>Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

<sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

<sup>32</sup>Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.



**Galatians 2:20-3:3** “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! You foolish Galatians...Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?”



***The best way to deal with sin is not to attempt to reform but to adore the Savior. Winning over our lower nature is made possible by adoration...Rules, instead of limiting our sin, define sin, rivet our attention to it, lead us to desire it. Worship avoids all interest in sin, pointing our hearts and minds in a totally different direction.***

–Calvin Miller