

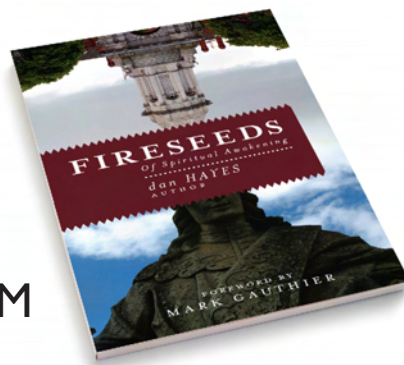


FIRESEEDS OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING THE SATISFIED? PRAYER EXPERIENCE

For over two decades, Fireseeds has inspired us to pray, to expect the impossible, and to trust God for new works of His Spirit-in our lives and on the campus. Fireseeds is a proven tool for igniting campus wide, student-led prayer.

But it is more than a book on prayer. It is a book of stories; stories of great prayer movements, revivals, and the students who gave leadership to them.

This is not simply a reprint of an old classic. Fireseeds has been updated and expanded to include recent accounts of student revivals as well as stories from around the world and not simply the U.S. The new Fireseeds also recounts the contribution of women to these revivals as they are often overshadowed, and contains an additional chapter on the filling of the Spirit (including the Satisfied Prayer Experience). Last, the revised version opens with a foreword by Mark Gauthier, and a vision to trust God for movements everywhere.



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The Satisfied Prayer Experience

NOTE: This prayer experience is intended to be adaptable to your prayer group.² It can be as short as forty minutes or as long as two hours, depending on how you use the optional sections. Don't feel constrained to follow this format. Adapt it to your group and environment. May God give you and your group a rich time of celebrating and experiencing the powerful presence of His Spirit!

[Divide into groups of three or four. You don't want groups to be too large. You want everyone to actively participate and experience all God has for you during this time of prayer.]

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The Promise of Satisfaction

Satisfaction: (n.) fulfillment of one's needs, longing, or desires

Begin by thinking back over the last thirty days. What three words would you use to describe your Christian life during the past month? Share these with one another, along with a brief explanation of why you chose those words.

Are you satisfied with your experience? Do you desire more? Usually answers will reflect a broad range from deeply dissatisfied, to somewhat dissatisfied, to feeling generally okay, to very satisfied. But I suspect that almost all of us would admit that we desire more in our relationship with God.

Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." John goes on to tell us, "By this he meant the Spirit" (John 7:37-39). The Spirit is the source of the truly satisfying life, quenching our deepest thirsts and longings. It is the gift of the Spirit that will be the focus of our prayer together.

The Divine Gift

Divine: (adj) given by God

God has given us His Spirit so that we can experience intimacy with Him and enjoy all He has for us. The Holy Spirit is the source of our deepest satisfaction.

Optional. If time is short, skip to 1 Corinthians 2:12 below.

Five times in the "Farewell Discourse" Jesus spoke of the gift of the Spirit. Work in groups of three or four, and use the promises of these verses as a basis of short conversational sentences of praise and worship. (It can be

helpful to have these passages projected on a screen or printed on a handout.)

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—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. (John 14:16-17)

The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. (John 14:26)

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. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning. (John 15:26-27)

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. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. (John 16:7-11)

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

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will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you. (John 16:13-15)

Paul applied the Spirit's ministry of revealing truth and wisdom in his first letter to the Corinthian believers (1 Corinthians 2:9-3:4). He stated, "We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

[In your groups of three or four, use short sentence prayers to thank God for many things that God has given us in Christ and that the Spirit has helped you understand and experience. Be specific. For example, "Thank You, Lord, for enabling me to know and experience Your love. I know and understand Your love through Your Spirit." Or "Thank You, Lord, that by Your Spirit I have come to know Your wisdom and knowledge."]

The Present Danger

Danger: (n.) a thing that may cause injury, loss, or pain

We cannot experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us if we fail to depend on His Spirit. Our failures are often rooted in one of two problems. The Christian life is like a road and we can slip into the ditch on either side.

In the one ditch we begin to trust our own efforts and strength to live the Christian life. This is, of course, a source of great frustration. "Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?" (Galatians 3:3).

When we discover the futility of that, we can cross over to the other ditch. We may give up and succumb to our own

selfish desires, seeking to please ourselves rather than God. “The sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want” (Galatians 5:17). Then, as with the Corinthians, our lives begin to manifest symptoms of the flesh and worldliness. “Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men?” (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).

[Spend the next segment of time in silent confession. Examine your life for symptoms of self-dependence or self-centered living. Confess them to God and claim His forgiveness according to 1 John 1:9.]

The Intimate Journey

As we learn to walk in the Spirit, we increasingly experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us. Walking in the Spirit is a moment-by-moment lifestyle, learning to depend upon the Holy Spirit for His abundant resources as a way of life. “Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ... Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25).

[In your groups, share testimonies of how you first learned to walk in the Spirit.]

As we walk in the Spirit, we experience intimacy with God and all He has for us. The fruit of the Spirit is one description of what we experience through the Spirit. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).

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[Think about the challenges you are currently facing. What do you need to experience most at this time? Remember, it is the role of the Spirit to produce it in your life. Pray in your groups, claiming the fruit you seek (such as love for specific relationships or joy for specific trials). As you become aware of more areas where your attitudes or responses have fallen short (Romans 3:23) and have been displeasing to God, breathe spiritually. That is, exhale by confessing your sins, thanking God for His forgiveness, and then inhale by expressing your dependence upon the Spirit.]

The Empowering Presence

Empower: (v.) to give ability to

We are filled with the Spirit by faith, enabling us to experience intimacy with God and enjoy all He has for us. The essence of the Christian life is what God does in and through us, not what we do for God. Christ's life is reproduced in the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit. By faith we experience God's power through the Spirit.

Paul prayed that his beloved Ephesian believers would experience these realities. "I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Ephesians 3:16-17).

[In your groups, pray Paul's request for yourself and each other. Pray that you would fully experience the Spirit's strengthening with power in your inner being, so that Christ would be living His life in and through you.]

Optional: In your groups, pray for others you care for or minister to by name. Pray that they would experience the empowering of the Spirit and know the love of God. "I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have

power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:17-19).

The Turning Point

Turning point: time when a decisive change occurs

It is our desire that all of us would know with confidence that we are experiencing the fullness of the Spirit today and throughout the days ahead.

[As we conclude this segment of prayer, examine your hearts one more time. Ask yourself these three questions.]

Am I genuinely surrendering control of my life

◇ to the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 12:1-2)?

Have I confessed my sins, according to 1 John

◇ 1:9, and genuinely turned from them and back to God?

Am I sincerely desiring to be filled—that is,

◇ directed and empowered—by the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39)?

If you confidently answer yes to each question, silently reaffirm your faith in the Spirit's filling in your life according to His command (Ephesians 5:18) and promise (1 John 5:14-15). Ask God to fill you with His Spirit, enabling you to understand and experience in greater ways your intimacy with Him and your enjoyment of all He has for you.

If, in the integrity of your heart, you are unable to answer yes to the above questions, let us encourage you to take

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some additional time alone to be honest with God about the issues that are blocking your experience of His love and provision. Then go to a trusted leader or friend and share with that person what you are struggling with, asking him or her to pray with you and for you.

We need each other! As the letter to the Hebrews says, “Encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first” (Hebrews 3:13-14).

NOTE: Provide each participant with a copy of the *Satisfied?* booklet. Encourage them to review it, to pray through it as you have today, and to share with others.