

Pursuing Spiritual Breakthrough

Consider Your Legacy

I never met either of my grandfathers. My father's father was a Roman Catholic Irish immigrant who settled in Washington DC and became a postal mail carrier. My mother's father was a Scottish Presbyterian minister. Though I did not know them, each one made an impression on me. Their legacy was rich, and far more spiritual than tangible. Neither was monetarily wealthy, but both were spiritually sound. I inherited from each a profoundly important and distinct spiritual tradition. From my paternal grandfather, I received the heritage of catholic discipline; and from my maternal grandfather, a steadfast Biblical faith. As a result, before I was even born I was two-thirds of the way toward a three streams faith.

What legacy are you leaving? Proverbs 13:22 declares that "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children..." If all we leave to our grandchildren is material wealth, however great or small, we have not done right by them. The Psalmist says, "The Lord is my chosen portion...I have a goodly heritage." (Psalm 16:5-6) We have received an inheritance from God, and we can choose to accept or reject that gift. The Psalmist says that he has "chosen" to receive the Lord as His portion, and in so doing he now has a "goodly heritage". Jesus said, "the heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13) Have you asked Him? This is a time to pray for and pursue spiritual breakthrough. We need God's gift of His Holy Spirit. It is important for us to receive this gift, but not just for us. This is a legacy that we can pass on to future generations.

As was noted in the first precept, to experience spiritual breakthrough we must want it, pursue it, and say "Yes!" to God. What we are asking for in that "yes" is the Person of the Holy Spirit. God's gift, as we see in the Luke 11 quote above, is not the "gifts" the Holy Spirit bestows; rather the "gift" is His Person. In receiving Him we become transformed, our identity is changed. The two—the Holy Spirit and you—become one, just as in marriage. And the offspring of that union reflect the parentage. But we are not talking solely about physical offspring. Every life that we touch, and especially the younger lives—the members of the next generation who are looking to us for spiritual guidance—need to see the Holy Spirit at work in us. They may not know it, but they are desperate for God's Spirit to be at work in their lives. To touch them with God's love, to impart the Holy Spirit to them, that is our legacy. You may never know whose life you will affect by walking in the Way. I didn't know my grandfathers, but because they walked in the way of the Holy Spirit I was an inheritor of God's love. They left a legacy. Are you walking in the way of the Holy Spirit?

Consider your legacy. To what or to whom have you united yourself? Earnestly desire and ask for the Holy Spirit, that your children and your children's children (both your physical and spiritual children) may be made in His image. You say, "I have asked. I have received the Holy Spirit." That is good, but this is not a one-time event. This is a daily seeking—a persevering pursuit of holiness. As St. Paul said in Ephesians 1, and as we pray in our prayer for the parish, let us pursue "a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him", and earnestly desire "the immeasurable greatness of his power in us." Make it your daily prayer that our union with God's Holy Spirit may grow in fervency and in power. Future generations are counting on us. What legacy will we impart to them?