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Prologue: On a Fire Ant Mound

On my third jump at Airborne School, I landed on a fire ant mound. I begin this book with the single line of prayer I learned there. Before I knew the Holy Spirit as a concept in doctrine, I encountered Him as the One who taught me and protected me in moments of danger.

From Infantryman to Army Chaplain

After high school, I served for four years as an infantryman in the U.S. Army. I deployed to Panama three times, took part in the closing period of the conflict in Panama, and completed jungle training twice. Most Korean-born ministers who serve as U.S. military chaplains work in hospital or counseling settings. Among those who began in Army airborne infantry, completed both Airborne and Ranger training, became chaplains, and subsequently served with numerous combat units and on overseas deployments, I know of only one other Korean besides myself. These experiences at the limits of human endurance helped shape both my life and my faith. During my military career, I went on nineteen overseas assignments and visited fifteen countries. From 2007 to 2025, I served for eighteen years as an active-duty U.S. Army chaplain. My assignments included Dongducheon, South Korea. While with the 82nd Airborne Division, I participated in combined airborne training in Egypt. When our airborne unit deployed in response to the devastating earthquake in Haiti, I helped mission teams and entertainers from Korea carry out relief activities. I also served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. During my assignment with the 1st Special Forces Group, I joined combined Special Forces training in Australia and participated in counterterrorism operations in Mindanao, Philippines. While assigned to the 2nd Infantry Division in Washington State, I took part in allied military exercises in the Philippines and Indonesia. In 2018, amid operational planning under President Trump to deter North Korea's nuclear weapons development, I became the first active-duty chaplain assigned to Special Operations Command Korea (SOCKOR). While serving at SOCKOR, I frequently took part in parachute training at Maesari and Gunsan. (I plan to write a separate book about my ministry as a U.S. military chaplain, combat and overseas deployments, the remarkable American military commanders under whom I served, American leadership, and my life in the United States.)

Retirement and a Renewed Calling

In the summer of 2025, I retired after a total of twenty-two years of military service. To be candid, I did not want to return to ministry. I wanted to enjoy an ordinary retirement and live quietly. Then the death of the American conservative Christian apologist Charlie Kirk challenged me deeply. In obedience to what I understood as God calling me again, and after a period of preparation, I returned to the work of Holy Spirit ministry in which I had previously served, with Peru as a principal base in February and August 2026.

The Prayer I Learned on a Fire Ant Mound

There is a testimony I almost always share before praying for healing and deliverance at revival meetings and other gatherings. It happened during my third parachute jump at Airborne School in Georgia. I hit the ground so hard that the impact left me unable to get up immediately; it took about five minutes before I could finally stand. As it happened, I had landed directly on one of Georgia's notorious fire ant mounds. When I recovered my senses and stood up, I saw swarms of dark fire ants climbing all over my body. At that moment, I believed the Holy Spirit gave me an understanding of how to pray. I immediately declared, "In the name of Jesus, die!" and struck both legs with my hands as though laying hands on them in prayer. It may sound unbelievable, but at that very moment all the ants covering my body stopped moving at once. Everything came to a standstill, as though the ants had been killed by a spray of insecticide. I still vividly remember visiting a Full Gospel church in

Columbus that week and testifying about what I experienced as this astonishing work of the Holy Spirit.

If there is one thing essential to our Christian lives, it is knowing who the Holy Spirit is. The Holy Spirit is not merely power, strength, emotion, an atmosphere, or supernatural energy. He is the third person of the triune God, eternally one with the Father and the Son. He is God, who acts personally in creation, salvation, sanctification, the church, and mission.

If we pursue only the gifts of the Spirit without knowing the person of the Holy Spirit who gives them, we risk reducing Him to a supernatural function or force. But when we know Him as the personal God who is our Advocate, Helper, Teacher, and Counselor, His gifts and fruit become not badges of personal pride or spiritual rank but channels through which God's love, holiness, and kingdom are made known.

My Experiences Are Not an Encyclopedia

The personal relationship and experiences I have had with the Holy Spirit cannot serve as an encyclopedia of everything He does. My experiences are simply my personal encounters with the truths of Scripture, and not everyone who reads this book will agree with my interpretations of them. The contents of this book grow out of Scripture and the life of the church, drawing on systematic and biblical theology as well as experiences of Holy Spirit ministry on mission fields and in other ministry settings. Readers may reach different judgments. Experiences of the Holy Spirit differ from person to person, just as people understand and experience Scripture in different ways. Yet God the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures, God's Word, have not changed. We must seek to experience God's grace and providence rightly within the framework of Scripture. Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. The Word is the power of God through which we come to experience who God is.

The One Who Cannot Be Confined to a Doctrinal Framework

No one can confine God the Holy Spirit and His spiritual grace within human knowledge or ideas, or within the doctrines and theological systems of any particular denomination. The theology we study in seminaries and the teachings advocated by denominations are not themselves flawless. In my view, the Holy Spirit movement in the Korean church has experienced considerable stagnation amid negative attitudes toward Spirit-empowered ministry and the limitations of denominational politics. Human beings have spiritual limitations, and there are many things in Scripture we cannot fully understand. We must therefore seek the Spirit's leading with open hearts and humility, beyond denominational boundaries. When living encounters with the Holy Spirit are grounded in sound biblical and theological foundations, we can pursue a healthy Christian life in which Jesus alone receives the glory. We must always remain humble and willing to learn.

The flourishing of Christian life is found in personal encounter and fellowship with the triune God: God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit. We should give thanks for salvation through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and for our deliverance from eternal condemnation. Through worship, faithful living, and mission, we should desire and advance God's kingdom; through church life, we should share God's love and bear the fruit of holiness.

Why I Wrote This Book

The purpose of Who Is the Holy Spirit? is to explain foundational truths about the person and work of the Holy Spirit, one of the three persons of the Trinity, a central Christian doctrine. I also seek to testify that the gifts of the Holy Spirit continue to operate today and to help readers discern other spiritual beings and influences that must be distinguished from the Holy Spirit. I wrote this book to foster a fuller understanding of how the Holy Spirit works. I earnestly hope it will become a sound

theological and practical foundation for ministry in the Spirit within the Korean church. My prayer is that ministers and believers at revival gatherings will encounter Jesus personally; find healing for afflictions of mind and body; discover a way through seemingly intractable difficulties; receive new strength for living; recover the joy of faith; and bear good, restorative fruit in their lives and communities. I pray that knowing the Holy Spirit will equip us for effective mission and the salvation of souls. I have not written this book to criticize others. My desire is for more soldiers of God to rise up and be used by the Holy Spirit.

Four Parts and Eighteen Chapters

This book comprises four parts and eighteen chapters. Part I (Chapters 1–2) recounts my experiences of the Holy Spirit during childhood and immigrant life and the grace of God who called me again when, like Jonah, I tried to run away, and who formed me through theological study. Part II (Chapters 3–7) explains the Trinity and the Holy Spirit as witnessed in the original biblical languages and narratives (Chapter 3); the language Paul uses for walking with the Spirit (Chapter 4); pneumatology as articulated by the early church fathers and modern theologians (Chapter 5); the history of modern revival movements led by the Spirit (Chapter 6); and the distinction between the Holy Spirit and angels (Chapter 7). Part III (Chapters 8–15) examines manifestations and gifts of the Spirit (Chapter 8), Spirit baptism (Chapter 9), tongues and interpretation (Chapter 10), dreams, visions, and spiritual discernment (Chapter 11), prophetic ministry (Chapter 12), deliverance ministry (Chapter 13), divine healing (Chapter 14), and encounters with the Holy Spirit on mission fields (Chapter 15). Part IV (Chapters 16–18) considers a life increasingly attentive to the Holy Spirit's guidance (Chapter 16), the fruit of the Spirit (Chapter 17), and the life of disciples and witnesses, the ultimate purpose of Spirit-empowered ministry (Chapter 18).

Who I Hope Will Read This Book

To whom would I recommend this book? I believe it can offer solid theological and practical help to those who need renewed passion for mission and evangelism, those confused about spiritual gifts, new believers, Christians who want to know the Holy Spirit more deeply, the many believers who long for Him and feel spiritually hungry, and those already engaged in or interested in ministry in the Spirit. I have tried to write accessibly so that anyone can understand the Holy Spirit and His ministry. Rather than merely cataloging supernatural phenomena, I have sought to bring Scripture, historical and contemporary theology, and experiences from practical ministry together. I have witnessed many powerful events and heard remarkable testimonies in ministry, as well as stories of failure. Space has prevented me from recounting them all, and I have deliberately exercised restraint where accounts might be misunderstood as excessive mysticism.

Dunamis Parakletos and the Title

When I first began writing, I considered the expression "Dunamis Parakletos," bringing together two Greek terms found in Scripture to convey the Holy Spirit as the Advocate who works in power. The Holy Spirit pours out divine power upon the church, expressed by dunamis, while also serving as the Parakletos, who helps, comforts, teaches, and guides believers. To express the book's central message as clearly as possible, I considered several titles and ranked them in order of preference: (1) Desire, Yet Discern: Who Is the Holy Spirit?; (2) Desire Spiritual Things, Yet Discern: Pneumatology for the Twenty-First Century; (3) Like a Mighty Rushing Wind: Who Is the Holy Spirit?; (4) Encountering the Holy Spirit on the Battlefield: Dunamis and Parakletos; and (5) The Advocate: God Within Me.

Dunamis means power, strength, ability, and effective force, including God's miraculous power. The English word "dynamite" is derived from this Greek word.

Acts 1:8 — “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Luke 24:49 — “And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 — “And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”

Parakletos refers to a helper, advocate, counselor, comforter, or intercessor. Jesus used this term in reference to the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16 — “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.”

John 14:26 — “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 have said to you.”

John 15:26 — “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”

John 16:7 — “Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

Finally, I wish to honor and encourage the missionaries who are still translating Scripture for unreached people groups, those risking their lives in dangerous places, those serving people in remote regions, church planters ministering anonymously in places few know, those supporting God’s kingdom with their financial resources, and those serving meals, cleaning churches, or teaching Sunday school. I also want to honor those who faithfully lead and love their small groups, serve regularly on worship teams or with audiovisual ministries, and rise early to pray, day after day. Even if you have never experienced what is commonly described as a sudden and powerful manifestation of the Holy Spirit—even if you have not witnessed extraordinary manifestations—never forget that the Holy Spirit dwells within you, guides you, and remains with you. He walks alongside you and can use your faithfulness and devotion. I hold your faithful service in the highest regard and want to encourage you.

As readers work through this book, I hope their long-standing questions will be answered clearly. For those who feel spiritually hungry and long to encounter the Holy Spirit, I pray for grace that brings healing and answers amid physical and spiritual struggles. I pray that our lives will be marked by longing for God’s Word, receiving Jesus Christ the Son of God as Lord of our lives, being filled with the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent, and entrusting ourselves completely to the sovereignty of God, the Lord of all creation. We must never lose our desire for the Holy Spirit, but we must discern every spiritual experience through Scripture, theology, the wisdom of the church, and the fruit of our lives.