

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness by James K Manley

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Refrain:

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free;
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valley of sleep;
and over the eons you called each thing:
wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

Refrain:

You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,
you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with idols and lies,
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

Refrain:

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

Refrain:

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
with bold new decisions your people arise.

Refrain:

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness calling and free;
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

Psalm 104:30 *“Then you send your Spirit, and new life is born to replenish all the living of the earth.”*
The Living Bible¹

Isaiah 11:2 *“The Lord’s spirit will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of planning and strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. He won’t judge by appearances, nor decide by hearsay.”*
Common English Bible²

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Do you consider the Holy Spirit to be gentle? Why do you feel that way? Are there advantages to the Holy Spirit being gentle? What do you see as an advantage or disadvantage to a gentle Holy Spirit?

How can the Holy Spirit be restless? What can that mean to restlessness mean to the world? To you?

Is their danger in placidness? What does that look like to you? How can the Holy Spirit stir you from placidness?

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valley of sleep;
and over the eons you called each thing:
wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

Psalm 65:6-8,11-13 "He formed the mountains by his mighty strength. He quiets the raging oceans and all the world's clamor. In the farthest corners of the earth the glorious acts of God will startle the everyone. The dawn and the sunset shout for joy! Then he crowns it all with green lush pastures in the wilderness; hillsides blossom with joy. The pastures are filled with flocks of sheep, and the valleys are carpeted with grain. All the world shouts with joy and sings."

The Living Bible¹

Where do you see the Spirit in the world around you? Is this easy for you? Why? What part does nature play in your experience of faith?

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then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.

Joshua 24:14 *“So revere Jehovah and serve him in sincerity and truth. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshipped beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Worship the Lord alone.”*
The Living Bible¹

2 Kings 17:15-16a *“They rejected his laws and the covenant he made with their ancestors, and despised all his warnings. In their foolishness they worshipped heathen idols despite the Lord’s stern warnings. They defied all the commandments of the Lord their God and made two calves from molten gold.”*
The Living Bible¹

1 Corinthians 10:13-15 *“But remember this – the wrong desires that come into your life aren’t anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it for he has promised this and will do what he says. He will show you how to escape the temptation’s power so that you can bear up patiently against it. So dear friends, carefully avoid idol worship of every kind. You are intelligent people. Look now and see for yourselves whether what I am about to say is true.”*
The Living Bible¹

What idols do you struggle with? Are they the idols that previous generations in your family struggled with? If so, why do you think this continues? Do Paul’s words to the Corinthians help you see ways you can break that generational habit? In what ways?

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Luke 2:6-7 *“While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born. She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger. That’s because there was no guest room where they could stay.”*

New International Reader’s Version³

Matthew 27:45-46 *“From noon to three, the whole earth was dark. Around mid-afternoon Jesus groaned out of the depths, crying loudly, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ which means, ‘My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?’”*

The Message⁴

John 14:26 *“But when the Father sends the Comforter instead of me - and by the Comforter I mean the Holy Spirit - he will teach you much, as well as remind you of everything I myself have told you.”*

The Living Bible¹

Acts 2:1-4 *“Seven weeks had gone by since Jesus’ death and resurrection, and the Day of Pentecost had arrived. As the believers met together that day, suddenly there was a sound like the roaring of a mighty wind storm in the skies above them and it filled the house where they were meeting. Then what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on their heads. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in languages they didn’t know, for the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.”*

The Living Bible¹

Jesus called out to the people throughout His life, and through the Holy Spirit continues to call to us today. Do you feel the presence of the Holy Spirit within you? Why do you feel that way? How does that impact your faith?

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
with bold new decisions your people arise.

John 17:13-24 Jesus prayed: *“And now I am coming to you. I have told them many things while I was with them so that they would be filled with my joy. I have given them your commands. And the world hates them because they don’t fit in with it, just as I don’t. I’m not asking you to*

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take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from Satan's power. They are not part of this world any more than I am. Make them pure and holy through teaching them your words of truth. As you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world, and I consecrate myself to meet their need for growth in truth and holiness. I am not praying for these alone but also for the future believers who will come to me because of the testimony of these. My prayer for all of them is that they will be of one heart and mind, just as you and I are, Father - that just as you are in me and I am in you, so they will be in us, and the world will believe you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me - the glorious unity of being one, as we are - I in them and you in me, all being perfected into one - so that the world will know you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me. Father, I want them with me - these you've given me - so that they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me before the world began!"

The Living Bible¹

Jesus' prayer for His followers emphasizes Jesus' connection to God, and His followers' connection to God through Him, but also His wish for all followers to "be of one heart and mind." Yet all these years later, Jesus' followers are not of one mind or heart. What "bold new decisions" do you see that need to be made in order for this to happen? How do you think these decisions will help? Do you see the work of the Holy Spirit in your thoughts? In what way?

**"For the Spirit of God has made me,
and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."
Job 33:4 The Living Bible¹**

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