

I was sowing some grass seed in our backyard the other day. And granted, I'm no expert on anything agricultural. So I'm fully prepared to be told that this is one documented example where there really is such a thing as a stupid question.

But I'll ask anyway: *Why doesn't the grass seed grow in the bag?*

What is it about tossing it on the ground, mixing it up with a little loose dirt, and sprinkling water on top of it that makes grass seed know it's time to start sprouting? I mean, what's it been waiting for all this time? Two months from now, when I go out to get that same seed bag from the shed, needing to broadcast some more handfuls into a few bare patches, why won't I find a bunch of thin, tender blades of Kentucky fescue in there instead?

Let's just say that what happens inside that bag is nothing compared to what God does with those seeds later on. And let's likewise be glad that his Spirit will always be here with us while we wait for our day in the sun.

### Read Romans 8:18-27

Seems like this earth walk could have been plenty beneficial for us without having to be so witheringly hard at times. I'd fear that I was overexaggerating about this a little, if not for the fact that the Bible comes right out and admits (Romans 8) that "the whole creation has been groaning," struggling, suffering, fighting to get through this long interlude between now and forever.

So it's not just a few of us who sometimes feel this way.

Even when we take our life with Christ seriously, it can still be a tall order to stay submitted and keep our senses sharp. There are some days when being spiritual feels nearly impossible, if not at least highly inconvenient. We don't always approach each sunrise with both windows thrown open to the wind.

But you know what? *Life isn't supposed to be easy.* Learning to walk in obedience to the Spirit is an ongoing process that he patiently guides us through, constantly teaching us new things, whether from our own mistakes or from the encouragement of actually seeing his truths break out on us in the middle of the afternoon.

So without saying that we should ever treat lightly any of our sins against the Spirit, we need to remember that he is always here to pick us up and keep us going. Though we have no reason for putting any confidence in ourselves, we have every reason to rest in his continual presence. Now and forever.

### Can't Wait To Meet You

In fact, we have more than a human lifetime to be led by his loving direction. In eternity, even though we'll finally be able to follow him perfectly—(Won't that be wonderful!)—it will still be the Spirit we're following, the sweet presence of God.

That's why it's probably a little curious that when we think about heaven, we often imagine what it'll be like to see the Father in all his glory. We wonder what Jesus will look like when we finally lay eyes on him. But I don't think I've ever heard anybody say how eagerly they're looking forward to meeting the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps we should.

He's like a pen pal we've developed a relationship with in letters, like a radio announcer we've heard delivering the news for years on our favorite station. We've gotten to know his voice. We could pick it out even if we were someplace where we weren't expecting to hear it. We know his inflections, his sense of humor, the phrase he often repeats.

Seeing him one day with our own eyes would really be special. So for now we keep listening, loving him for the tingle we feel in every skin cell when his presence is indescribable real. We keep waiting, knowing that this same voice that resonates within us is even now interceding for us before the Father. We keep believing,

assured that the redemptive work of Christ he's continually renewing in our hearts will keep working its way through our actions and attitudes.

We keep on because so does he.

### **You Mean There's More?**

The concept the Scriptures use most often in helping explain the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives is that of a "down payment." More than once, Paul returns to this idea, helping us see that the portion of God's presence we get to experience each day while we're padding around here in shoe leather is only a percentage of his visible glory.

The Spirit is but a taste, a mere glimpse of the greatness we'll one day get to see and feel and perceive.

And though we're already kept safe and secure in Christ even by the "down payment" part of his Spirit, we are readily assured that the final summing up of our salvation—our ultimate rescue from judgment and death—is awaiting us one for-sure day in the future. Until then, we are "sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (Ephesians 1:13), surrounded by his protection, engulfed in his purpose, infused with his power.

If it seems hard to realize it on some days, that's OK. Just try to remember that the mortgage on your heavenly mansion is already paid. And the "down payment" alone is more than enough to keep us afloat till we get there.

#### **Romans 8:19 "Creation eagerly waits with anticipation for God's sons to be revealed"**

*What a strange statement. How do you think the "new creation" will be different from this one?*

#### **Romans 8:23 "We also groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for adoption"**

*In what ways do you personally experience this gnawing not-quite-there unsettledness in your spirit?*

#### **Romans 8:26 "The Spirit also joins to help us in our weakness"**

*This assistance is something we can count on until the day we die. Think about how he's bringing his help to you today.*

The Spirit endures with us to the end. All the wonderful blessings we receive at the hand of the Holy Spirit wouldn't add up to much if they came with an expiration date. But even on days when we're tired of trying, when we're impatient with God and ourselves, remember that the "Spirit of the Lord" is never impatient (Micah 2:7). He just keeps going on and keeps us going on in the process.

***Dear Holy Spirit, I can't imagine making it through one day without your help. Thank you for assuring us that you'll always be here with us.***