



Spirit Rising: Tapping into the Power of the Holy Spirit

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For some of us being a Christian is harder than it should be. Discouraged, anxious, worn down, we wonder what happened to the power and the joy that Jesus promised. Jim Cymbala believes that many of us are missing something vital. Christianity, he says, for even the best-intentioned person or church, is impossible without the Holy Spirit. You can have regular devotions, great preaching, a strong emphasis on the Bible, a great worship team, and a congregation that is trying, but if you aren't vitally in touch with God's Spirit, you are missing out on the life God has for you. The Holy Spirit, he points out, is God's agent on earth. Yet he is the least understood, least preached about, and least discussed member of the Trinity. That is sad, because without him, our spiritual lives will always become dry, mechanical, and a struggle. Too often, the body of Christ is divided into two sides. One side stresses the Word of God, separating itself from what it views as the emotional fanaticism often linked to those emphasizing the Holy Spirit. The other side is sometimes known for drifting into unbiblical manifestations and unorthodox teaching while attributing it all to the Spirit of God. But the Christianity we see in Scripture is both grounded in the Word and full of the Spirit. With stunning stories of how God is working in the lives of people and churches today and biblical teaching about the Holy Spirit, Jim Cymbala invites you to experience God in a fresh and vital way. Nothing else will change our prayer life, our study of God's word, and our worship more than opening our hearts to the Spirit. If we want power, confidence, joy, peace, and more love in our lives, then we need a better understanding of how and why the Spirit moves so we can join him there.

Spirit Rising: Tapping into the Power of the Holy Spirit Details

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Susan says

Four and a half stars. I feel he's really uncovered the difference. Very thought provoking. May be what I'm missing. Will read other books by him. Hope to visit his church.

Gary B says

Overall I enjoyed Jim Cymbala's book. Plenty of stories of his experiences, combined with biblical support. Scattered throughout the book are first-person accounts of the Spirit's work in the lives of people who now attend the Brooklyn Tabernacle. These accounts add a great deal of authenticity to the book.

I did find some of the theology or explanation of the Spirit and his work a little thin, but I suspect this is because Jim is approaching the topic somewhat gently.

Let me include a quote from the final chapter, "Why have we settled for anemic Christian living and lifeless church routines when the living Spirit of God is available for the asking?"

Christopher Lewis Kozoriz says

"Without the Spirit. Christianity is reduced to head knowledge *about* God, empty traditions, and a social club mentality. We need to ask God to give us a fresh revelation of what *his church* was meant to look like. Without that proper foundation, we'll end up building on sand. But with it we will see seasons of spiritual renewal from the Holy Spirit that produce amazingly fruitful evangelism and a growing atmosphere of love among believers." (Jim Cymbala, *Spirit Rising*, Page 193)

The author Jim Cymbala, who has been pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle for more than twenty-five years, shares his insight into the Holy Spirit and His work on this earth. It is peppered with testimonies from people from his own congregation who have been used and led by the Holy Spirit. Some of the stories will make you weep, as they are filled with tragedy, pain and restoration.

This book does not cover the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit. It mainly covers prayer and being led by the Holy Spirit. If you are looking for inspirational stories of people being used and led by the Holy Spirit, then this is the right book. However, if you are looking for an exhaustive book about the workings of the Holy Spirit, this book does not meet that criteria. Do not go into this book to learn how to operate in the gifts of the Spirit? I would go into this book to be inspired and learn how to be led by the Holy Spirit.

Jackie says

Extremely great book about the Holy Spirit in our lives. I've learn so much more about the Holy Spirit and

pray for more and more of His control in every aspect of my being. In prayer, Bible study, worship, and everyday decisions and living.

Jrosemarie says

I have the book and I have the audible version as well. When you want to understand something you read what the experts write. Spirit Rising rose my spirits and help me to grasp a very difficult aspect of the Christian walk.

Shelly McConn says

Stirring

This book was very thought provoking, and stirred my spirit. And, I look forward to reading more from this author.

Josh McCoy says

I must disclose the fact that I am an avid Jim Cymbala lover. His first book Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire is one of the few books that I would say changed the course of my life. This is important to know ahead of my review.

In Spirit Rising, Cymbala addresses the issue of the lack of the Holy Spirit in many believer's lives and in our churches today. He begins his book with an amazing story of how the spirit moved Him to begin praying for the believers in a remote village in Pakistan. Although he was powerless to offer any real assistance he knew his prayers would help. But a few days later, as Cymbala led his congregation to pray for these believers God had placed on his heart, a Pakistani woman came from out of the crowd and said that her husband (also a pastor) was there in the very village ministering to these believers! The woman's story was confirmed and many generous people from the church offered assistance to those in need.

This story serves as an example of something only the Holy Spirit could have orchestrated. In his usual matter-of-fact style, Cymbala points out that the Spirit was the one who birthed the Church, He was the life-blood of the Church, and scripture points out that He should continue to be our guide and helper in the present day. He then moves on and details the many ways we can recognize a true spiritual encounter with the Holy Spirit; such as a passion for God's word, a tangible evidence of God's love for all types of people, holiness, and supernatural power!

Cymbala ends the book by pointing out the fact that without personal surrender to the Holy Spirit we should not expect him to show up. He is not a magical genie that is meant to fulfill our desires or wishes, He is meant to empower and guide us to fulfill God's specific call on our lives! This, of course, can only be communicated to us by the Holy Spirit when we are people of prayer. This is Cymbala's forte and he doesn't disappoint in the chapters he uses to show the importance of prayer. Short summary: the Christian life is one of prayer, God's word, redemption by Jesus Christ, and empowerment to fulfill God's purpose through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

Would I recommend it?: Yes!

Strengths: Jim knows his stuff and excels in what many others shrug off as the "fluff" of Christianity. Prayer and the Holy Spirit are active ways God wants to communicate with us - we are meant to RELATE to God himself! It's also a quick read.

Weaknesses: The book is very conversational in tone (which makes it a quick read). It is not meant to be a complete theology of the Holy Spirit and how he works. I wish Jim would have gotten a little deeper into the practicalities of HOW the Holy Spirit communicates & leads us as well as how He manifests himself among us.

Sandra says

"Every Sunday millions of people sit bored in church services." And this is just the Forward!

I have read two books this summer that say basically the same thing in different ways and from different perspectives. The first was "Pagan Christianity?" and this is the second.

They both address the subject of boring church services and how many of us have been lulled into thinking that because this is what we're used to, we should continue down the same path.

Since Jim Cymbala pastors a very large church in Brooklyn New York, he deserves a fair hearing - or, in this case, reading.

Jeremy Garber says

Jim Cymbala, pastor of the successful Brooklyn Tabernacle, issues a call to revivify the actual working power of the Holy Spirit in the contemporary Christian church. Cymbala (aided by his co-writer Jennifer Schuchmann) intersperses personal reflections with the stories of people from his congregation who have been affected in tangible ways by the power of prayer and spiritual intervention. Cymbala argues for an understanding of the Holy Spirit that makes literal change in the world and empowers people to change their lives in real, tangible ways. He provides stories of miraculous rainstorms in Pakistan, exorcisms of poor and afflicted refugees, and above all the unshakable power of love. Cymbala contrasts the effervescent joy of the stories of the early church with the often cold and lifeless practices of the modern church, both "conservative" and "liberal." Ultimately, Cymbala invites Christians to reclaim the power of the Holy Spirit to provide both joy and fellowship to a fragmented and broken world.

I am often frustrated that theology devolves into looking for parts of the "other side's" argument that one doesn't agree with and then dismissing everything that person – or party – has to say. So I was pleasantly surprised at how life-giving and affirming Pastor Cymbala's book was despite some of my theological differences with him. I'm sure Pastor Cymbala would call me a "liberal." But, despite my skepticism about some of his stories, I found his call for a communal life founded on joy and fellowship flowing from theology rather than marketing strategies or "doctrinal preaching" refreshing and personally rejuvenating. I also found the stories of people lifted up from racism and poverty heartening – Pastor Cymbala's church is obviously working against both in a tangible and productive way. What would happen if all churches – both

liberal and conservative – moved away from condemning and theoretical inerrancy to focusing on the power of God's love and grace together? That is the call of the surprising Holy Spirit – a call to which I hope all Christians can respond.

Debby says

I really enjoyed this book for several reasons. First, it is sound scripturally. Secondly, I was glad his anecdotes/testimonies showed that the Spirit moves differently in individual lives. In some instances prayers and healing were instantaneous and others, it was after months or years of praying that healing or deliverance took place.

I would call this a good read for any one.

donna neal says

Spirit Rising

I love this book. Inspirational messages from the Holy Spirit come alive in this book. A pleasure to read and well written.

Lyndel Lee Jr. says

Powerful

What a powerful book! This book completely changed the way I view and interact with the Holy Spirit. It is a must read!

Debra Abshier says

Great timeless read

Usually I read a book in a fair amount of time, but not this book. Although it is easily understood and not at all labor some to read still it is thought provoking. It is often soul piercing ... Even to the point of being in need of prayer. I found myself putting down my reading to go an pray asking Holy Spirit to how me myself.

Eric Wright says

Sated and rather disappointed by a video series of Cymbala used by our church's small group ministry, I put off reading this book for weeks. I don't like the sub-title. It struck me as turning what should be Spirit-

centred into how we can find power for ourselves. Then one Sunday, I sat down and read it almost through. I came away with a new appreciation for Cymbala and our need of the Holy Spirit. I'm often put off by the books and videos put out by famous and highly promoted preachers. So I'm glad I persevered.

That which sets Cymbala's book apart for me was the combination of a solid rather than aberrant theology of the Holy Spirit, astounding examples of conversion and deliverance seen in his church in Brooklyn, and the transparency of Cymbala himself. Instead of coming across as a theological or practical expert on the subject, Cymbala repeatedly emphasizes his own fears and needs. He cries out in prayer for the Holy Spirit again and again. Through it all he is very balanced and very biblical.

The book is divided into three sections: God's Agent on Earth, When God's Spirit moves, and when we surrender to the Holy Spirit. In this first section he describes the basic biblical teaching on the Spirit but seasons this with examples; the astounding answer to prayer for Pakistani Christians suffering from a terrible example of persecution and the conversion of Roma, a wild player in New York's drugs and gambling scene. In this first section he also laments the deadness and lack of spiritual power in most of our churches.

The second section also comes alive through illustrations of dramatic interventions of the Holy Spirit. He underscores our need of the Spirit to understand and apply Scripture, to find joy, to find power for living a Christ-like life, and to interpret the sign and symbols of renewal.

Section three brings the Holy Spirit even more intimately into our lives. He shows how only the Spirit can help us love the unlovable, impress us with our need for fellowship, overcome fear, and enliven our prayers.

Spirit Rising is an inspiring read that plateaued Christians, and those who think they aren't—like me—should read. I do, however, wish Cymbala had included many more examples of the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit on more ordinary Christians. Too many of the examples highlight dramatic deliverance of people from unbelievable evil and problems. And what about when the Holy Spirit does not answer prayer. What about perseverance. Nevertheless, a very uplifting read

Trevor Lund says

Thoughts...I need God, not church. How can I give the Spirit pre-eminence in the church? It's not about talk, it's about power. I cried a lot reading this book. Reading about ordinary people doing supernatural things so naturally...it's what my heart longs for. How do I gently lead this Spirit? I guess I need to live it and you'll show me :)
