John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Luke 3:16.

It was a sin in the ancient economy to offer a sacrifice upon the wrong altar, or to allow incense to be kindled from a strange fire. We are in danger of commingling the sacred and the common. The holy fire from God is to be used with our offerings. The true altar is Christ, and the true fire is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is to inspire, to teach, to lead, and to guide men, and make them safe counselors. If we turn aside from God’s chosen ones, we are in danger of inquiring from strange gods, and of offering upon a strange altar....

The most powerful preaching of the Word will avail nothing unless the Spirit teaches and enlightens those who hear. Unless the Spirit works with and through the human agent, souls will not be saved or characters transformed by the reading of the Scriptures. The planning and devising that is done in connection with the work should not be of a character to draw attention to self. The Word is a power, a sword in the hand of the human agent. But the Holy Spirit is its efficiency, its vital power in impressing the mind.

“They shall all be taught of God” (John 6:45). It is God that causeth the light to shine into the hearts of men. Will my ministering brethren remember that it is essential that God be recognized as the source of our strength, and the Spirit as the Comforter? The great reason why God can do so little for us is that we forget that living virtue comes through our cooperation with the Holy Spirit.—Manuscript Releases 2:45, 46.

The Spirit is constantly showing to the soul glimpses of the things of God. A divine presence seems to hover near, and then if the mind responds, if the door of the heart is opened, Jesus abides with the human agent. The Spirit’s energy is working in the heart and leading the inclination of the will to Jesus by living faith and complete dependence on divine power to will and to do of His good pleasure. The Spirit taketh the things of God, just as fast as the soul resolves and acts in accordance with the light revealed.—Manuscript Releases 2:46.

This devotional is taken from Ye Shall Receive Power by Ellen G. White.