

# Spirit, Now Live in Me



Imagery helps form our understanding of concepts that rise above our comprehension. This hymn calls to mind several illustrations of the Holy Spirit.

**Dove.** This winged creature appears often in scripture: Noah sent a dove out of the ark to see if the water had receded; doves could be presented as burnt offerings and sin offerings according to the Old Testament law; the author of Song of Solomon used the word “dove” as a term of endearment. More closely related to the theme of this hymn is the reference to the dove at the baptism of Jesus: “When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased’” (Luke 3:21–22, NIV).

**Wind.** As a powerful force of destruction or gentle refreshment, wind affects our world in numerous ways. Wind has the power to clean the air and bring cooler weather, or sweep away a fierce storm. The early disciples of Jesus experienced the Holy Spirit’s presence as a strong wind: “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting... All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them” (Acts 2:1–2, 4, NIV).

**Rain.** Another potent feature of creation upon which our earth depends, rain has the capability of flooding lands, overflowing streams and rivers, destroying everything in its path. Yet rain is a life-giving necessity, a desperate need in places that lack adequate water sources. Like a revitalizing and thirst-quenching shower, the presence of the Holy Spirit falls upon those who seek God.

**Flame.** The heat and warmth of a fire gives comfort and nourishes the soul; yet fiery flames can also purify and cleanse. Fire often calls to mind passion, energy, and enthusiasm. Tongues of flame appeared on the heads of those same disciples at Pentecost, a further manifestation of the presence of the Spirit of God (Acts 2:3).

In each of these images, we discover the life-giving force of the Holy Spirit working in our hearts and lives in often unseen ways: mending hearts and bringing comfort, spurring growth within us, enlightening our understanding of scripture, purifying and cleansing us, quenching our thirst and calling us ever closer to God. Today, we acknowledge the Spirit, who dwells within us.