



# Holy Spirit, Come Upon Me

The last phrase of each stanza in this hymn is “everlasting mystery.” You already know that, but the reminder is here because of how significant and important that everlasting mystery is. It would be a crushing and frightening thing to learn that we had come to know all there is to know about God. Our God would then be, indeed, too small. (see: J.B. Phillips, *Your God is Too Small*, Macmillan, 1961).

The term “everlasting mystery” suggests that even in Heaven, we will not know all there is to know about God. That’s especially true here on earth and it is also especially comforting. The hymn asks the everlasting mystery to come upon us, to engulf us. Let us breathe the mystery and see others through the lens of the mystery, and process life through the filter of mystery, the everlasting mystery that is God, the Holy Spirit.

Notice that when we acknowledge God as mystery, we begin to name God, the everlasting mystery with the names of the things around us, for we see through the lens of mystery. God is dove, flame, wind; everywhere we look, everything we see, seems to glow with God and the everlasting mystery of God’s presence with us and God’s love for us. Jesus is a lamb, yes; and a lion and a lily and a rose, and a rock, and a fountain, and an eagle and a hen. Everything we see, everywhere we look, there is the everlasting mystery of God with us, the Spirit within and around us. Holy Spirit, come upon me, let me see life in this way.

Our hymn also reminds us that the Holy Spirit is a teacher. The hymn prays that the Holy Spirit will become our teacher. Spirit teach us how to trust, how to love, how to live, and all of it more fully. We can sing this knowing that we are not really going to let the Holy Spirit do that, or we can sing this hymn, with hearts and minds open for the Holy Spirit to come upon us and within us and to help us, not only with the resolve of this moment, but with that same resolve in the moments and hours into which we will step when we leave here.

This hymn is an important prayer. Even if we sing it hesitantly, it takes us right up to the point of actually meaning it, giving us a glance over into what that kind of life might be. The courage to sing this hymn is commendable. Don’t beat yourself up if you sing it, then back away from its prayer. The Holy Spirit is with you and will lead you back to that place again. Then when the day comes that you are ready to make this hymn your honest prayer, the Holy Spirit will be there with you to say, come on, let’s go. I’ll go with you.

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