



The Power of the Holy Spirit

by Tammias Smith

Stephen Ministry taught me to listen to the Holy Spirit.

Coming to know the Lord as an adult, I was not really sure what the Holy Spirit was or did. I knew it was part of the Trinity, but not sure of much more than that.

Stephen Ministry simply teaches people how to be good caregivers. "Stephen Ministers" are just regular people in the congregation of a church who have been nominated, trained, ordained and then deployed among the church family to care for others.

During my five months of Stephen Ministry training, I learned so much about care giving in different situations. I would hear the instructors say, "You need to rely on the Holy Spirit to help," but I couldn't imagine what that would be like.

And then I got my first care receiver - the first person I was assigned to meet with and care for as a Stephen Minister.

I was so nervous! I knew this was a fragile situation with a woman who had recently lost her husband. Before I met with her, I sat in the car and prayed and prayed. My prayer was to rely on the Holy Spirit, not truly knowing what that would mean.

As I listened to this sweet woman talk about her husband and their wonderful marriage, I was sending up silent prayers to give me the right words to say. Before I even realized I was speaking, a word I had never used before came out of my mouth.

I sat there thinking, "Where did that come from?" I didn't even know the meaning of the word or if I had pronounced it correctly. I just shut my mouth while the woman looked at me without saying anything for several minutes.

Then she started laughing - a deep-down-in-the-stomach belly laugh. I just knew I had made a fool of myself. But when she wiped away her tears of laughter, she told me that I couldn't imagine what I had just done for her. She said the word I had used was a special word between her and her husband. They used it in tough situations to make each other laugh. It was so rare she thought she would never hear it again. She told me that hearing it made her realize her husband was okay and with the Lord.

As I sat there listening to her, I tried to remember what the word was, or how I used it in the sentence. I walked to my car in stunned silence, and I still don't remember the word. What I do know, now, is power of the Holy Spirit.