

MARCUS AND THE MAGIC RING

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From the moment Marcus woke he knew it was going to be a good day. He could feel it in his bones. At first he couldn't figure out why, because this day didn't look any different from all the others. Then he remembered, and the events of yesterday flooded through his mind, bursting through his thoughts the way a broken dam floods everything in its path. The magic ring. He had the magic ring. After all those years of plodding along in the rut wishing something exciting would happen to him, all those years of wondering if this was what life was all about, just this humdrum existing day by day.

But everything had changed yesterday, now that the ring was his. He felt for it on his finger, just to make sure it was real and not a dream. After all, he'd dreamed about it so many times he'd quit counting. But there it was, encircling his finger and looking for all the world like any ordinary ring. But ordinary it was not. No, this was a treasure, to be kept safe and cherished at all times. This treasure made everything different. His life would no longer be the same. This ring was magic.

Every answer to every question was within this ring. It took a normal, mundane life and wove magic, adventure, and excitement through every aspect of it.

He lingered in bed a few more minutes, savoring the feeling. After all, the mornings were cold now, and getting up to build a fire took some willpower.

Eventually, though, his hunger forced the issue, and sliding out of bed he grabbed a blanket to wrap around his shivering body. Surprisingly enough, he didn't feel as cold as he had expected. The sun must have warmed things up quicker than usual. He considered not even building a fire, but then decided it wouldn't hurt to take the chill off the room, and soon he could feel its warmth seeping through his blanket. Sitting down he ate some bread and cheese, enjoying his favorite breakfast. It tasted better than usual today.

Suddenly Marcus realized that he'd have to hurry if he was going to get up to the castle before Cook got in. Once she got there things would be off to a fast-paced start. She didn't look kindly on people who slowed her down or got in her way, but

Marcus had worked under her for so long that he had the routine down. Do his job, be alert to her needs, and stay out of her way except when she wanted him. It wasn't a bad job really, just kind of boring. Every day looked the same, felt the same, and as far as he could see he would be doing this the rest of his life. Cook liked him and depended on him, though she would never admit it, not even to herself.

He finished off the bread, then carefully wrapped the rest of the cheese and tucked it into the small corner he'd made from stones he found by the spring. The cool stones helped his cheese stay fresh longer. He was proud of his idea, and it had proven to be a good one. As he washed his face and hands and pulled on his clothes, he made a mental note to get some more bread, otherwise he'd be hurting when mealtime came again. With that, he was out the door and on his way.

Was the sky bluer and the trees greener or was it his imagination? Did the air smell better than usual, or was that just his excitement? After all, life was different now.

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT HOLY SPIRIT?

There is something in us that cries out against the mundaneness of life. We all dream of something that will not only blow away the cobwebs of daily routine, but give us the edge on life's problems. We all want a magic ring or invisible cloak, or whatever it is that will help us fight the dragon of life and win. We want to wake up each day with a zest for life and a feeling of adventure. It is created in each one of us to rise above boredom, to be challenged and stretched. To be allowed to be creative and find fulfillment in the things around us.

The wonderful thing is that at salvation, when we receive Holy Spirit, we receive all this, and more. He is better than a magic ring or an invisible cloak.

He is supernatural. He can tell us things that will help us understand the people around us, and secrets that are just between the two of us.

He is powerful. His protection comes with Him and cannot be bought. His boldness will become our boldness, His thoughts our thoughts, and His power will work through us. In danger He is the one who will help us, show us how to escape, and remind us of the power in the name of Jesus.

He will give us gifts, like the gift of discernment, the gift of knowledge, and the gift of prophecy. He will give us revelations of who He is and how He works. He will give us a sword that is better than any magic and tell us things that will happen in the future.

He will supernaturally give us dreams and visions. He can disguise himself as a dove, a roaring wind, a gentle breeze, tongues of fire, oil, or anything else. He will guide us into our life focus and help us find our niche.

He brings to us all that we will ever need to make it successfully and joyfully through life. He's the friend we've always wanted. He knows us inside and out. We can tell Him all our secrets and he'll never tell anyone else. He's someone whom we can talk to anytime and anywhere, and not only that but he will talk back! He will remind us of things we've forgotten, and help keep us from doing or saying things that we'll later regret.

We learn how Holy Spirit works through our relationship with Him. He is the third person of the Trinity. He is not tame and boring. He is awesome, mighty, and splendid. He is God. And He lives in us, so He is always with us. He is an active, separate person, but He wants to work with us, help us, and be our best friend. He will teach us things. At the same time, He will never force us to do it His way. All the things that have to do with us, like how we function, change, walk supernaturally, and learn, are Holy Spirit's work.

We can do nothing towards our destiny without Holy Spirit being actively involved in every choice, every aspect of our lives. He is the greatest Tool we can have, the greatest Guide, Teacher, Friend, Encourager, and Empower-er. You could say that He is the magic ring. After all, He is our engagement ring, our guarantee of the wedding of the Lamb. He is what Jesus gave us to show the world that we belong to Him.

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (II Corinthians 1:21-22) And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's

possession-- to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

Holy Spirit is so vital that without Him we could not be a Christian, we could not walk in our destiny, we could not have any relationship with God (which is the ultimate goal, remember the first commandment), nor could we function in the kingdom. We would have no kingdom resources to draw from, no direction or guidance, and no fun without His perfect joy and peace, not to mention His new wine. It is because of Him that the sun shines brighter, the birds sing sweeter, we are madly in love with Jesus, and our days are filled with adventure. It is because of Him that no matter what our circumstances are we are content, able to walk through them strong and certain in our steps, head held high, in the knowledge that we are the bride of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

The Holy Spirit brings both the ability to walk in destiny and the relationship we need to fulfill it. Therefore, when it comes to destiny, there is none without Him. He is the first and foremost key. He's the first step, the first piece of the puzzle, the first ingredient in the cake, the battery in the CD player, the crust of the pizza, and the ink in the pen. He's the flow, the power behind anything we do.

See what I mean? Who needs a magic ring when we have Holy Spirit? How totally, totally awesome is that!