

**Praise for**  
*The God I Never Knew*

“In an hour when spiritual hunger is increasing and practical clarity is needed to avoid the confusion to which too many are vulnerable, it is a delight to affirm the wisdom, truth, and integrity with which Robert Morris speaks, teaches, and lives. I know no leader today who exceeds the trustworthiness and genuine love for people than Robert, and you will find no better person to introduce you to friendship with the Holy Spirit of the living God.”

—JACK W. HAYFORD, founder and president of The King’s  
University

“I have learned more about the Holy Spirit from Robert Morris than any other pastor. His insight into this very important topic will motivate, teach, and equip us to embrace the third person of the Trinity, as well as launch all of us into a fresh new season of worship.”

—BRADY BOYD, senior pastor of New Life Church and author  
of *Fear No Evil*

“So much controversy and confusion has surrounded the topic of the Holy Spirit. In fact, most people don’t understand who He is at all. In *The God I Never Knew*, Robert Morris brilliantly clears up the misconceptions and introduces the Holy Spirit as someone you will want to be your best friend.”

—CHRIS HODGES, senior pastor of Church of the Highlands  
in Birmingham, Alabama

“*The God I Never Knew* gives life-changing insight into the mystery of the Holy Spirit. If you have questions about the Holy Spirit, Morris’s book will put you at ease and lead you to know and love our comforter, helper, and friend.”

—CRAIG GROESCHEL, senior pastor of LifeChurch.tv and author  
of *Weird*

“In *The God I Never Knew*, my friend Robert Morris captures the magnificent power, friendship, and treasure that God has given us in the person of the Holy Spirit. He effectively demystifies the common misperceptions associated with this part of the Godhead and will evoke a deeper passion and love for God within every reader. No matter where you are in your walk with God, this book will intensify your relationship with Him.”

—STOVALL WEEMS, lead pastor of Celebration Church  
in Jacksonville, Florida, and author of *Awakening*

The God  
I Never  
Knew

## **Other Books by Robert Morris**

*The Blessed Life*

*From Dream to Destiny*

*The Power of Your Words*

# ROBERT MORRIS

How Real Friendship with the Holy Spirit  
Can Change Your Life

# The God I Never Knew



WATERBROOK  
P R E S S

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*This book is dedicated to two of my spiritual fathers, Pastor Olen Griffing and Dr. Jack Hayford, who showed me through the Scriptures and their everyday lives that we can have a vibrant, personal relationship with the Holy Spirit, and that people who believe in the person and work of the Holy Spirit can be doctrinally sound, genuinely humble, and not weird!*

# CONTENTS

1	The God I Never Knew . . . . .	1
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## **PART 1 Who Is This Person?**

2	Helper . . . . .	7
3	Friend . . . . .	19
4	God . . . . .	31

## **PART 2 What Is This Person Like?**

5	His Personality . . . . .	37
6	His Soul: Mind and Will . . . . .	45
7	His Soul: Emotions . . . . .	53

## **PART 3 The Grand Entry**

8	Wind and Fire . . . . .	65
9	Pentecost Now . . . . .	75

## **PART 4 The Power Transfer**

10	Immersed . . . . .	87
11	Three Baptisms, Three Witnesses . . . . .	95
12	Empowered to Live . . . . .	105



**PART 5 The Giver**

13 Acts of Grace . . . . . 115

14 The Discerning Gifts . . . . . 123

15 The Declarative Gifts . . . . . 131

16 The Dynamic Gifts . . . . . 137

**PART 6 The Language of Friendship**

17 Why the Controversy? . . . . . 147

18 The Word and the Language . . . . . 155

19 Beneficial Language . . . . . 161

20 The Choice Is Yours . . . . . 167

**PART 7 The God You Need to Know**

21 Your New Best Friend . . . . . 181

Study Guide . . . . . 187

Acknowledgments . . . . . 211

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# The God I Never Knew

**T**he knock at the door startled Irene Adkins. The seventy-nine-year-old great-grandmother wasn't expecting any visitors. A cautious peek through the peephole revealed a well-dressed silver-haired gentleman with a kind face that struck her as vaguely familiar. It was something about the eyes and nose. As she opened the door, her certainty grew—the stranger definitely reminded her of someone. But who?

It would take her a while to realize that the man's face indeed bore an uncanny resemblance to one she knew better than any other—her own. Irene's seventy-three-year-old brother, Terry, had come for a surprise visit. It was quite surprising because Irene never knew she had a brother.

Back in 1932, in the depths of the Great Depression, a desperate and confused young English couple unhitched their tattered camper trailer on the side of the road and drove away. Police later found three small, hungry children inside. Irene, at ten months of age, was the youngest. The three were placed in separate foster homes and grew up unaware of the others' existence. Meanwhile, the young couple eventually achieved some stability a few years later and had another child—their son, Terry.

When Terry was fourteen, his parents revealed their shameful secret. They told him of the desperate straits in which they'd found themselves and of the wrenching decision to abandon the trio of hungry mouths they could not feed. Shortly thereafter Terry began a lifelong quest to find his siblings, especially the sister his parents had named Irene. He searched in vain for almost sixty years. Then came a breakthrough. He learned the name of the

agency that had placed Irene and her siblings in foster homes. Not long thereafter came the day—April 3, 2010—when Irene Adkins discovered the wonderful brother she never knew. In the discovery the rootless orphan found a source of answers to questions she had carried around in her heart all her life.

I believe I know how Irene felt. Several decades ago, after many years of struggling to live the Christian life and even working “successfully” in full-time ministry, I finally discovered the God I never knew. And in the discovery I found not only the source of answers to every question I’ve ever had but a dear friend as well. One who has made my life richer, fuller, and more exciting than I ever dreamed possible.

I am referring, of course, to God—the Holy Spirit.

### AN AMAZING RELATIONSHIP

I grew up in church. However, this church was part of a denomination that avoided mentioning the Holy Spirit whenever possible. Our denominational leaders treated Him a bit like the crazy uncle who shows up at Thanksgiving once every few years and horrifies everyone with his inappropriate behavior. You can’t help being related to this uncle, but you hope that if you don’t mention his name or send him a Christmas card, he will stay away.

In fact, many years ago when I prepared to leave home to attend Bible college, my pastor had just one parting word of counsel for me. I had recently given my life to Christ, and I was burning with desire to serve Him. So I eagerly waited to hear what encouragement my pastor would deliver as I entered this season of learning and preparation for ministry.

His only advice to me was, “Watch out for people who talk about the Holy Spirit.”

At the time I didn’t know any better. So I simply nodded and filed his warning away in my mind. Now—after twenty-five years of discovering what a wonderful, kind, helpful, gentle, and wise person the Holy Spirit is; after developing an intimate friendship with Him that has made my life better and more fulfilling in countless ways; after watching the Holy Spirit help and bless people—I am grieved to think back on my pastor’s advice. To be honest, it offends me.

Of course, most of us feel offended when someone thinks badly of a person we love and respect, especially when the opinion is based on lies or misunderstandings. I'm sure you've had the experience of hearing bad things about someone through a third party and forming a negative impression, only to meet that individual later and discover that he isn't the bad person you envisioned at all.

If you're like most people, you've probably been misinformed about the Holy Spirit to some degree. After more than twenty-five years of experience in ministry, I've seen firsthand that most Christians hold a distorted, inaccurate, or incomplete view of the third member of the Trinity. In fact, many frustrated believers are just as Irene Adkins was for most of her life—utterly unaware that a loving and amazing person desires to know them and to fill their empty lives with good things. Too many have resigned themselves to perpetual defeat in their battles with temptation or to stumbling through life, making decisions with nothing more than their own flawed reason to guide them. Others live a dull, powerless brand of Christianity, completely at odds with the picture of the vibrant, overcoming, advancing church of the book of Acts.

The dynamic, full life Jesus promised to believers is a natural outgrowth of intimate friendship with God, the Holy Spirit. Today I have an amazing relationship with the Holy Spirit, though that wasn't always true. By the time we're finished exploring this topic, you'll realize what an amazing relationship you can have with Him too.

The **DYNAMIC**, full life Jesus **PROMISED** to believers is a **NATURAL OUTGROWTH** of intimate friendship with God, the **HOLY SPIRIT**.