



TARGETED SERIES
THE
HOLY
SPIRIT

A TARGETED DISCIPLESHIP SERIES FOR MEN



TARGETED SERIES

THE

HOLY

SPIRIT

DEVELOPED BY THE

Assemblies of God

National Men's Ministries



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START HERE

The lessons you're about to engage are meant to help strengthen your biblical knowledge, understanding, and application. In addition to what the Bible says, studying the culture, land, language, and other background information will produce a broader and deeper understanding of what Scripture is saying to you. These lessons are intended to help provide that for you.

The format of these lessons is built on the following five questions that will help you explore the biblical author's intent, your perspective as a modern reader, and how the Holy Spirit can apply it to you. In order to gain a fuller understanding of Scripture, you should ask:

- What did this Scripture mean to the original author and audience?
- What does this Scripture mean to me today?
- How can this Scripture apply to my life?
- How does this Scripture deepen my love for God?
- How can I demonstrate this Scripture to my family and those around me?

Every lesson contains four sections. The first section is called **SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target**, and it gives an overview to the subject being studied. The second section is called **CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target**, and it helps you to begin to bring the subject into a clearer focus. The third section is called **BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target**, and it brings the study into clear focus. The last section is called **TRIGGER PULL: Hit Your Target** which helps you to deepen your relationship with God and with others.

These lessons have been built using several resources to provide you with an in-depth study without having to purchase every single resource. But, there are a few recommended tools for purchase that will enhance your engagement with these lessons. They are:

- *FireBible®: English Standard Version®*
- Journal
- Colored Pencils
- Fine Point Pen

The ultimate goal of these lessons is to equip you to ascertain what the Holy Spirit and God's Word is saying to you. To do that, it's recommended that you work slowly and methodically through this deep dive into the Scripture.



Before you begin this targeted study on the Holy Spirit, a few things need to be stated and understood. First, your relationship with Jesus determines where you spend eternity. Second, your relationship with the Holy Spirit has everything to do with the quality of your walk with God here and now. The goal of this targeted study on the Holy Spirit is not just to gain more knowledge. The goal is that you gain a deeper relationship with God as you more deeply understand and open your life to the Holy Spirit. As you journey through this study on the Holy Spirit, the challenge is for you to present your life, theology, and experiences as a fresh slate before God.

A DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS STUDY:

Holy Spirit, I need you in my life. I want to know you better. Show me who You are. I need Your help in my home, my family, my relationships, and in my church. Please provide me the power and gifts that I need to live and serve as I should. Make me more like Jesus. Amen.



FOR GROUP LEADERS

As you plan to use this material in a group format, below are some tips to help you better utilize these lessons in that setting.

- Determine who will be the group leader. The leader will be responsible for making any copies needed, coordinating meeting times, and facilitating discussions.
- The group leader should select individuals to read aloud the **SIGHTLINE** and **CROSSHAIR** sections.
- Before a session begins, the group leader should read through the questions in the **BULLSEYE** and **TRIGGER PULL** sections. Many lessons have more content than can be covered in one session, so the leader may choose to only engage part of the questions or assign group members to work through part or all the questions before arrival.
- If your group is very large, dividing into groups of three to four people is the best way to work through selected questions from the **BULLSEYE** and **TRIGGER PULL** sections for thirty to forty minutes. These groups should also commit to work together throughout the week.
- If you've divided into smaller groups, rejoin the entire group together after that small group time. Discuss as a large group a few of the selected questions from the **BULLSEYE** section for ten to fifteen minutes.
- Finally, the leader is responsible to hold group members accountable for completing the Scripture reading before each session and ensuring that they are writing in their journals.

Doug Clay, in his resource *Asking for A Friend: Who is The Holy Spirit*, said, “As a kid growing up in a Pentecostal church, I saw a lot of things in the name of the ‘Holy Spirit’ that were quite interesting.” This quote speaks to the broad range of understanding regarding the work of the Spirit.

To gain a healthy understanding of the Holy Spirit for you and your group, you need to diligently study and ask God to help you learn and develop a theology that is grounded in the Bible. Doug Clay has helped develop a powerful resource called *Asking for a Friend: Who Is The Holy Spirit?* that can also be a blessing for your church. There are lessons for children, teens, and adults. Go



to <https://digital.myhealthychurch.com> to find this resource. Coupling Doug's resource with this one will lead to a tremendously profound understanding of the person, nature, and work of the Holy Spirit.

It's vital to develop a theology of the Holy Spirit based on Scripture. But it's also necessary to develop the fruitful relationship with Him that He desires. This study will empower you and your groups discover that relationship, one of the most significant, game-changing relationships you can have in this life.



LESSON BREAKDOWN

THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE THIRD PERSON OF THE TRINITY

- 1: Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- 2: The Mystery of the Trinity
- 3: What Is the Holy Spirit Like?
- 4: The Holy Spirit in 3-D
- 5: The Holy Spirit Is Naturally Supernatural

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 6: The Biblical Basis for Spiritual Language
- 7: The Benefits of Spiritual Language
- 8: The Trail of Tongues: Biblical Models of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit
- 9: Praying in Tongues and the Gift of Tongues
- 10: Luke, Paul, and the Holy Spirit
- 11: Objections, Misconceptions, and Excesses Regarding Spiritual Language

THE FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 12: The Fruit of the Spirit
- 13: Fruit of the Spirit: Love
- 14: Fruit of the Spirit: Joy
- 15: Fruit of the Spirit: Peace
- 16: Fruit of the Spirit: Patience
- 17: Fruit of the Spirit: Kindness
- 18: Fruit of the Spirit: Goodness
- 19: Fruit of the Spirit: Faithfulness

- 20: Fruit of the Spirit: Gentleness
- 21: Fruit of the Spirit: Self-Control

THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ME

- 22: The Holy Spirit Helps You Discover Real Life
- 23: The Holy Spirit Helps You Get Your Life Together
- 24: The Holy Spirit Helps You Experience Inner Power
- 25: The Holy Spirit Helps You Overcome Your Fears
- 26: The Holy Spirit Helps You Grow in Grace
- 27: The Holy Spirit Helps You Tell the Truth
- 28: The Holy Spirit Helps You Pray in Power
- 29: The Holy Spirit Helps You Live in Freedom
- 30: The Holy Spirit Helps You Live by Faith

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Six Common Hindrances to Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit
- Appendix B: The Holy Spirit, A Brief Biblical Survey
- Appendix C: Timeline of the Holy Spirit
- Appendix D: Subsequence Chart
- Appendix E: Ten Common Mistakes Regarding the Gifts of the Holy Spirit



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 1: WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Main Idea: For those who have been in Spirit-filled/Pentecostal circles for a long time, it is easy to think you know all there is to know about the Holy Spirit. The challenge of this targeted study is a deepened understanding and relationship with the Holy Spirit. For those of you who are new to serving Christ or young in your relationship with God, the challenge of this targeted study on the Holy Spirit is to grow in Christ and in your relationship with the Holy Spirit. For those of you who have had some confusing teaching regarding the Holy Spirit, this targeted study is to help provide a sure foundation to build a biblical theology of the Holy Spirit. This lesson examines what the Bible says about who the Holy Spirit is.

Scripture: John 14, 15, 16



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

When the subject of the Holy Spirit is discussed, theology is varied among believers. Often it is shaped by experiences, which may include things observed or stories heard. Often, these things have caused people to come to wrong conclusions about the Holy Spirit. Sadly, some have abused what it means to be filled with the Spirit or misrepresented His gifts, turning some off to having anything to do with Him. But the enemy would love nothing more than for you to ignore or undervalue the Holy Spirit in your life.

The Holy Spirit is not an attitude, atmosphere, or environment. He is a Person who talks, thinks, plans, and is incredibly brilliant and articulate. When the term “person” is used of the Holy Spirit, it is not used in the same vein as humanity. However, the Bible does use personal pronouns to describe the Holy Spirit (e.g., John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-14). The Holy Spirit seems to fill the role of activity or work in the Godhead which implies personhood. The Holy Spirit’s actions, teaching, praying, searching, giving, speaking, hurting, and grieving, all imply personhood. He is a voice of the Godhead to us. John 16:13 says,

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

A presence or atmosphere doesn’t talk. However, a person does. The Holy Spirit is much more the presence He can bring. His presence is proof of His Person. Some believers errantly think of the Holy Spirit as a silent cloud or wind receiving assignments for different places or people. Few people realize the personhood of the Holy Spirit, and perhaps that is why He is often not discussed. The history of the Church uncovers the tragedy that not much attention has been given to the Holy Spirit. However, in more recent years, the Church has exhibited a growing awareness of the reality of the Holy Spirit as a Person.

Old Testament prophets told of the time when the Messiah would be born of a virgin. From the time Jesus was conceived, the Holy Spirit was active in His life. Jesus placed such importance on the Holy Spirit that He warned that judgment would come on those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit. When Jesus left, He sent us the Holy Spirit to navigate through life.

This lesson focuses on John 14, 15, and 16. Jesus prepared His followers for His return to His Father by discussing with them what His departure would mean for their lives. In John 14, Jesus began His instruction on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. In the first of five discussions, Jesus assured His



followers that Someone would be with them as they continued to go forward. Jesus taught His followers that the Holy Spirit would work powerfully through them to expand the ministry Jesus began. Just as Jesus was relational and personal with His disciples, the Holy Spirit would also be intensely personal and relational with those who followed Him.

The personal nature of the Holy Spirit can be seen clearly in John 14, 15, and 16. In these three chapters, Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit to His disciples and discussed who the Holy Spirit is and what He would do. Jesus did this in a very personal setting. These chapters take place the night Jesus shared His last meal with His disciples. This event is known as the Last Supper. In John 13, Jesus washed the disciple's feet. Jesus then talked about what life would look like on the other side of the Cross. His primary topic that night was on the person of the Holy Spirit and His role in their lives after He was gone.

Pay close attention to how personal this conversation is. Jesus knew He was just a few hours away from being arrested and crucified. These were His last words to His disciples, not to the whole world but to His friends. Notice the personal tone:

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:15-18).

In this heart-to-heart discussion with His disciples, Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as a Helper. He lets the disciples know that He is getting ready to leave them, and this news troubles the disciples. Read what Jesus says to bring them comfort:

“But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you” (**John 16:4-7**).



Essentially, Jesus was telling them that their life will be better with Him gone because when He left, He would send the Holy Spirit to them. Although Jesus was God, He was also human. This means He was limited in His ministry to wherever He was physically. But Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be with believers in every place and circumstance, to help them. *Helper* seems to describe His purpose, mission, and function best.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

God has given Christians the power to walk in today's world. Perhaps you are not enjoying the fullest power from God because the Holy Spirit is not playing the role that He longs to play in your life. Know that the most important aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit is not His gifts, inspiration, enabling, manifestation, or miracles. The most important aspect of the Holy Spirit is found in His personality.

The following descriptors may help you get a clearer picture of who the Holy Spirit is. He is the facilitator of the Godhead, the Helper in our infirmities, the One who empowers our life, the Revealer of God's will, the power of our intercession, and the Spirit of regeneration. He is the One who gives us life, and in Him, there is a new faith, a new hope, a blessed hope. You can be born of the Spirit, and when He dwells in you, you are made a conqueror. There is nothing in this world you cannot handle because His Spirit in you is greater than any spirit in the world because you literally have God inside you.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TELL US ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is God

(1 John 5:7-8)

The Holy Spirit is part of what scholars call the Trinity. This means He is a member of the Triune Godhead; He is more than an attribute, an influence, an energy, a feeling, or an experience. The Holy Spirit is equal in His position with the Father and the Son. He is co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent with God, the Father and with Jesus Christ, the Son.

A quick view of two baptisms might prove helpful. The New Testament describes two baptisms for the believer: baptism in water and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Read the following Scriptures on these topics:



- “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Matthew 3:11).
- And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:4-5).
- And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

As you examine the following chart, spend some time comparing, contemplating, and evaluating these two baptisms.

Baptism By Immersion in Water	Baptism in the Holy Spirit
Candidate: The Penitent Believer (Matthew 28:19)	Candidate: The Believer (Acts 2:38; 8:14-17)
The Baptismal Element: Water (Acts 8:36-38)	The Baptismal Element: Holy Spirit (Mark 1:8)
The Baptizer: A Fellow Believer (Acts 8:38)	The Baptizer: Jesus Christ (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8)
The Purpose: A Witness to Conversion (Acts 22:16)	The Purpose: Power for the Christian (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49)
The Result: A sign of death, burial, and resurrection. Entry into Body of Christ	The Result: Holy Spirit empowerment with accompanying gifts and fruit (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Galatians 5:22-23).

This comparison provides you with a snapshot of the personhood of the Holy Spirit and allows you to see the Holy Spirit is very personal by nature. Though the Holy Spirit is God—powerful and holy—He is also personal.

There are some ways that Bible scholars communicate about God which also apply to the Holy Spirit. God is omnipresent (everywhere), omnipotent (all-powerful), and omniscient (all-knowing). You serve a God who can hold



galaxies in the palm of His hand, yet He is so personal He knows every detail of your life and gives you the Holy Spirit to be your Friend, your Advocate, your Comforter, your Teacher, and your Helper. The Holy Spirit is your opportunity to experience just how personal God is.

The Holy Spirit Is a Person

(2 Corinthians 13:14)

Some people get confused when they think of the Holy Spirit because they think of Him as a mysterious force, like in the movies, or as an impersonal *it*. The Holy Spirit is not an *it*. Neither is the Holy Spirit a bird just because He descended upon Jesus like a dove when Christ was baptized in water. The Holy Spirit is not fire. He is not going to come and burn the building down. Yet there are many symbols for the Holy Spirit in the Bible that help describe what He does, who He is, and His personhood.

A person is someone with whom you can have a conversation. If you communicate with a person, they can listen and even offer advice when you need it. Because the Holy Spirit speaks, it can be assumed He has a voice. One of the goals you should have as a follower of Jesus is to learn to listen to the Holy Spirit. You need to learn to recognize it when He is speaking to you. Because the Holy Spirit is a Person; you can have a relationship and a friendship with Him. You can have a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit than you have right now.

You came into a relationship with God through the amazing grace of Jesus Christ. He is the one who paid the price for your sins. You have access to God because of the price Jesus paid. You get to come into God's presence because of the grace extended to you from Jesus. Then because of the grace of Jesus, you experience the love of the Father. This is a great love that God has lavished on you through sacrificing His Son. For many of you, that is where you leave your Christian journey, which causes you to get stuck in an endless cycle. The endless cycle is to continue to come back to Jesus and again experience His grace. You get stuck in this endless cycle where you are neither growing nor changing. The reason God gave you the Holy Spirit is so that you can form an intimate friendship with Him that will radically change the way you live your daily life.

Because the Holy Spirit is a person, He has a name. Jesus gave the Holy Spirit several names in this conversation recorded in John. They include the following: **Advocate** (someone working on your behalf); **Counselor** (someone



to give you helpful counsel); **Comforter** (someone to be there for you in a time of need); **Spirit of Truth** (He is always guiding toward what is right); **Intercessor** (He is praying for you); **Spirit of Life** (the more you have of Him the more life you have); and **Breath of God**.

The Holy Spirit's Primary Role Is Helper

The Holy Spirit best reveals Himself to people by what He does. Well before Jesus came to earth, the Holy Spirit was active and the Old Testament gives you an indication of His activities. Look at the following activities of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

- He created and sustains all **life** (Job 34:14-15).
- He revealed God's truth to **prophets** (2 Chronicles 15:1-2).
- He **empowered** individuals for service:
 - » To enhance **skills** (Exodus 31:1-5)
 - » For **leadership** (Judges 3:10)
 - » With **supernatural ability** (Judges 14:6).

God did not send the Holy Spirit to make you weird. God sent the Holy Spirit to help you. What does the Holy Spirit help with in your life? Four things are listed below. Spend some time examining what the Holy Spirit helps you do.

The Holy Spirit Helps You Pray (Romans 8:26).

When you realize the Holy Spirit is a Person and a Friend, it is easier to understand prayer as a conversation. Prayer becomes much more personal. When you pray, you will begin to recognize the voice of God through His Holy Spirit. He wants to have a conversation with you. The good news is the Holy Spirit helps you know how to pray and He will pray through you.

The Holy Spirit Helps You Worship (John 4:24).

Worship is spirit-to-Spirit communication. Your spirit is communicating with the Holy Spirit. When you worship, it is more than just singing a song or singing certain words. Worship is spiritual fellowship with God. The Holy Spirit helps you worship God.



The Holy Spirit Helps You Live Holy (John 14:15-16; 16:8-10).

The Spirit helps you keep the commandments of God. The Spirit of God is usually identified as “Holy” for a reason. When you grow deeper in your relationship with the Holy Spirit and draw closer to Him, personal holiness will matter more to you than it ever has. When you cultivate a relationship with the Holy Spirit and learn to listen to Him and talk to Him, He will start talking to you about stuff that is going on in your life. He will talk to you about things like the words coming out of your mouth, what you let enter your ears, what you see with your eyes, or the way you treat people. This is called conviction. You have a choice when the Holy Spirit speaks to you. You can either listen to Him or ignore Him. The more you develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, the more you will reject sin and the habits of sin in your life.

The Holy Spirit Helps You Be A Witness (Acts 1:8)

The Holy Spirit provides gifts for you, empowers you, emboldens you, and anoints you to share the greatest message of all time with people who are lost. One purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to draw lost people to Jesus. If a gift of the Spirit is not being used to draw people to Jesus, it is being used in the wrong way. God sent you the Helper to assist you in reaching people in your sphere of influence. The more intimate relationship you have with the Holy Spirit, the more you will be concerned with reaching lost people.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- From the lesson, which name given to the Holy Spirit resonates with you most? Why?

- What thoughts come to your mind when you think about the primary role of the Holy Spirit as Helper?

- In John 15, Jesus talks about the benefits of being connected to the “true vine.” How does the Holy Spirit help you stay connected to the true vine?

In the following chart, summarize each of the four helper roles of the Holy Spirit.

Helper Role	Summary
Pray	
Worship	
Live Holy	
Witness	



USING MY FIREBIBLE

Read the *FireBible* article, “The Spirit in the Old Testament.” In the following chart, summarize the activities of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times:

Activity	Summary Concept
Creation	
Communicating	
Leadership	
Special Service	
Righteousness	
Power to Serve	



Read the *FireBible* article, “Jesus and the Holy Spirit.” Summarize the ten practical implications between Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Implication	Summary
OT Prophecy	
Birth	
Baptism	
Temptation	
Ministry	
Promise	
Resurrection	
Ascension	
Nearness	
Return	



Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- John 14:16. Which of the roles listed for the Holy Spirit most resonates with your life? Why?
- John 14:17. What are three influences of the Holy Spirit as the spirit of truth?
- John 14:26. How do you think the holiness of God applies to your life today?
- John 16:8. What are the three areas in which the Holy Spirit works to convict the world? Write down what each of the three areas mean.
- John 16:13. What are the three ways the Holy Spirit works in the believer's life to guide them into all truth? What happens to a believer if they reject the conviction of Holy Spirit?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 2: THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY

Main Idea: How may the mystery of the Trinity be best understood? What is the truth concerning the Godhead? Why is the Trinity a doctrine? What is so important about the Trinity? The Trinity is at the *core* of our Christian faith. On it hinges other essential doctrines such as: the Incarnation, the Deity of Christ, the work of the Spirit, etc. This lesson provides a framework for you to begin to grasp this concept that is central to understanding the role and work of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:26; 16:13-15; Romans 8:15-17; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 John 4:8, 16; 5:7-8



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

One question about the Trinity that must be asked is, “Where do we get the notion of God in three Persons?” The word *Trinity* is nowhere used in the text of Scripture. But that doesn’t mean it’s contrary to Scripture. While the idea of the Trinity is not explicitly stated in the Bible, it certainly is implicit. Take time to read the Scriptures listed above.

Certainly, one of the most telling passages to affirm the Trinity is Luke’s account of the Incarnation (see Luke 1:35): God sent the Holy Spirit upon Mary, and, after her acceptance, she conceives the divine Son of God.

Two other biblical passages that shed light on this plurality in unity are 1 John 4:8 and 16. They both declare, “God is love.” Love is not love without an object to love. For love to be God’s nature or essence, presupposes an object of love (even prior to Creation), hence, the love of the Father for the Son, the Son for the Father, the Father for the Spirit, the Spirit for the Father, the Son for the Spirit, and the Spirit for the Son. This is the love between the Members of the Trinity.

Jewish theology did not (and still does not) accept a Trinitarian concept of God (see Deuteronomy 6:4). However, the Christian understanding came from its Jewish roots.

- Genesis 1:26 says, “Let **us** make man in our image.” One explanation for this plural expression implies the Godhead speaking among themselves. How literally or figuratively it is to be taken is up for interpretation.
- Among the several plural names, the most common name in Hebrew for God throughout the Old Testament is “**Elohim.**” It’s a specific, **plural** form of the generic, semitic word for God, “El.”
- The ancient Jews believed that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was One. At the same time, however, many writers refer to some kind of plurality or distinction within the unity of God—a plurality or distinction that does not deny the unity. These distinctions are seen in two ways: (1) a presence of God, visible on earth, that is distinct but not separate from God’s eternal, invisible nature, and (2) a distinction within God’s own nature, labeled as Word or Wisdom, through which God creates the universe. To illustrate this, see Psalm 33:6 that says, “By the **word** of the **LORD** the heavens were made and by the **breath** of his mouth all their host.” The “word,” “LORD,” and “breath” can be seen as an expression of Jesus, Father, and Spirit, respectively. Jewish Scriptures also refer not just to God proper, but also to His Spirit (e.g., Gen. 1:2; Job 32:8; 33:4; Psalm 51:11; 104:30; Neh. 9:20, 30) and the Word or Wisdom (see Wisdom personified in Proverbs; compare with Col. 2:3; 1 Cor. 1:24).



The majority of the Christian faith has always recognized God as “triune” (three in one): The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Yet, if you ask your friends, you could get a variety of answers to the question, “What is your understanding of the Holy Trinity?” Ultimately, the Trinity may be better expressed as “Tri-Unity.” One God in three Persons, also known as the Godhead.

The Trinity is a mystery beyond human capacity to fully comprehend. By definition, it’s a paradox—something that seems contradictory or impossible, yet is true. God is one, yet somehow He is manifested as three. You may be thinking, *How can something be both one and three?* Many believers have tried to explain this complex idea of the trinitarian Godhead by using analogies or parallels in an attempt to wrap their head around it. But no analogy can provide a perfect understanding. Instead, the Trinity is a mystery that we take on faith because the Bible describes God in this manner, and we trust God’s Word.

C.S. Lewis offers his well-thought-out understanding of the Godhead in his classic book *Mere Christianity*:

You know that in space you can move in three ways—to left or right, backwards or forwards, up or down. Every direction is either one of these three or a compromise between them. They are called the three Dimensions. Now notice this. If you are using only one dimension, you could draw only a straight line. If you are using two, you could draw a figure: say, a square. And a square is made up of four straight lines. Now a step further. If you have three dimensions, you can then build what we call a solid body: say, a cube—a thing like a dice or a lump of sugar. And a cube is made up of six squares.

Do you see the point? A world of one dimension would be a straight line. In a two-dimensional world, you still get straight lines, but many lines make one figure. In a three-dimensional world, you still get figures but many figures make one solid body. In other words, as you advance to more real and more complicated levels, you do not leave behind you the things you found on the simpler levels: you still have them, but combined in new ways—in ways you could not imagine if you knew only the simpler levels.

Now the Christian account of God involves just the same principle. The human level is a simple and rather empty level. On the human level one person is one being, and any two persons are two separate beings—just as, in two dimensions (say on a flat sheet



of paper) one square is one figure, and any two squares are two separate figures. On the Divine level you still find personalities; but up there you find them combined in new ways which we, who do not live on that level, cannot imagine. In God's dimension, so to speak, you find a being who is three Persons while remaining one Being, just as a cube is six squares while remaining one cube. Of course, we cannot fully conceive a Being like that: just as, if we were so made that we perceived only two dimensions in space we could never properly imagine a cube. But we can get a sort of faint notion of it. And when we do, we are then, for the first time in our lives, getting some positive idea, however faint, of something super-personal—something more than a person. It is something we could never have guessed, and yet, once we have been told, one almost feels one ought to have been able to guess it because it fits in so well with all the things we know already.¹

¹ Lewis, C.S. Mere Christianity. Scanned: 2002 <https://www.dacc.edu/assets/pdfs/PCM/merechristianitylewis.pdf> (Accessed March 26, 2019), 78–79.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE TRINITY?

The Trinity is One.

Christianity is unequivocally and undeniably monotheistic: there is only **one** God. He only has **one** nature. He is only **one** substance (albeit supernatural, eternal, transcendent). Yet He is manifest in three Persons. And each of the three Persons are wholly and entirely God.

The divine Persons are truly distinct from one another.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not simply identical or interchangeable expressions of the one God. They are true distinctions within God's nature. The traditional ancient expressions of these distinctions within God's nature are as follows: "persona" (Latin) and "hypostasis" (Greek, from *hypo*, meaning "under" or "sub-" and *-stasis*, meaning "place," "position," "standing," or "stance"). This does not mean three different substances, but three different positions within that substance.

The divine Persons are relative to one another.

While they are distinct from each other, they are not independent of each other while keeping their own distinctions. They necessarily keep their relationship to one another. As has been expressed for ages: "The Father who generates, the Son who is begotten, and the Holy Spirit who proceeds." The following image may help you understand.²



² New World Encyclopedia contributors, "Trinity," New World Encyclopedia, <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/p/index.php?title=Trinity&oldid=992858> (accessed May 14, 2019).

Over the first centuries of the Church, the doctrine of the Trinity had to be clearly defined due to some heretical and spurious teachings against it. By the fourth century, at the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), the doctrine had been fully developed and defined and adopted into the Nicene Creed. Here, the Son is described as having the same nature (Greek, *homoousios* - “one nature/substance”) with the Father and the Spirit. Here is the Nicene Creed :

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.³

³ The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Nicene Creed.” July 20, 1988, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Nicene-Creed> (accessed March 26, 2019).





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Summarize your thoughts on the analogies presented from the lesson. What is your understanding of the truths concerning the Godhead? What does this mean for you?

- How do John 14:26; John 16:13–15 help you identify how the Holy Spirit is distinct from both the Father and the Son?

- How do Matthew 28:19–20 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 help you understand that the Holy Spirit is on the same level as the Father and Son?

- How do 1 Corinthians 12:4–6 and Ephesians 4:4–6 draw attention to the Trinity being all equal?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Matthew 3:17. Summarize your thoughts on the three comments regarding the Trinity.

- John 14:26. What did Jesus say the most important thing about the Spirit would be? How does this impact your life?

- John 16:14. What does a Christian experience as a result of the Holy Spirit? How does that impact your life today?

- Romans 8:16. What are the benefits to a believer who follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit?



- 2 Corinthians 13:14. Describe in your own words what Paul prays the Corinthian Church would continue to experience. What do Paul's closing words testify to the New Testament church?

- Ephesians 4:5. What does Paul mean by "One Lord?" How does this meaning affect the relationship of the Holy Spirit in the Godhead?

- Read the *FireBible* article "The Attributes of God." Re-read point eight under the unique attributes of God. Summarize in your own words the correct teaching of the Godhead.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 3: WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT LIKE?

Main Idea: A relationship with the Holy Spirit is the biggest game changer you can have in your walk with God on this side of heaven. It is always possible to have a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit than you have right now. Remember from lesson one, you learned the Holy Spirit is a Person and not a thing or an it. In this lesson, you will discover what the Holy Spirit is like. You will look at three metaphors or symbols the Bible uses to describe the Holy Spirit. Open your heart and allow the Holy Spirit to teach you about Himself.

Scripture: Isaiah 44:3-4; Matthew 3:11; 5:8; John 7:37-39; 3:5, 8; Acts 2:3-4; 1:5-8



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

As a delicious aroma is not dinner, and the sound of a bark is not a dog, so the presence of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit. Rather, His presence is proof of His Person. It can be tempting to think of the Holy Spirit as a silent cloud or wind receiving assignments to different places or people. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit as a Person to His disciples. He said in John 14:26, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”

The Holy Spirit, perhaps, is the most misunderstood person of the Trinity. (For an overview of this word, *Trinity*, see Lesson 2.) God does not want believers to be afraid of the supernatural, so He gave measures to help us understand Him better and develop a relationship with Him—metaphors and symbols.

One way God does this is by drawing parallels between the physical world and the supernatural realm. Examples include descriptions of the Holy Spirit and His work as cloud, wind, fire, rain, and dove. However, the Holy Spirit is not an actual cloud, wind, fire, or rain, nor a white dove at a baptismal service. These descriptions are symbolic and metaphorical.

For instance, the Holy Spirit can enter your life like water and refresh you. Read about this refreshing in Isaiah 44:3-4:

“For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.”

Allow the Holy Spirit to teach you what He is like as you read and study the symbols that describe Him. However, remember that He is so much more than just the symbol you read. He is a Person of the Godhead.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

From the beginning, the Holy Spirit was active in the creation of the universe. In Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” That narrative culminates with humans as His final creation (verse 26). But the Spirit’s work didn’t end with humans being created. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Life within you that keeps you living and breathing every single moment. Read about this in Job 33:4: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.” The Holy Spirit also is the One who gives new life, which is the new spiritual birth believers experience when they receive Christ. Let’s explore more ways the Holy Spirit expresses himself.

The Holy Spirit is like FIRE.

Exodus 3:2; Matthew 3:11; Acts 2:3-4; Hebrews 12:29

Many references in the Bible compare the Holy Spirit to fire, or use fire as a symbol of God’s presence. Take a few moments to read and meditate on what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit being like fire in the verses listed above. When thinking about fire and how it relates to the Holy Spirit, several things come to mind. Read the following comparisons between fire and the Holy Spirit.

1. Like fire, the Holy Spirit is PASSIONATE.

When you think of passion, you might think of love, enthusiasm, fervor, eagerness, or even zeal. What are you passionate about? What fires you up? It is the same thing. In the same manner, the Holy Spirit does that for you. He stokes the passion for God, for holiness, and for people. He gets you fired up. Without the Holy Spirit, you have more of a formal religion than a relationship. The Holy Spirit gives you passion in your relationship with God and passion for other people. He will fill you with the fire of His passion and love.

2. Like fire, the Holy Spirit is PURIFYING. (Matthew 5:8; Revelation 3:18)



Chemists, metallurgists, and others use fire to purify metals. Lukewarm Christians need fire to purify them and rekindle passion. One of the primary roles of the Holy Spirit is to help believers live pure and holy lives. His fire burns out the sin or works of the flesh you do not need. He will do this if you allow Him into your life. The more you develop a relationship with the Holy Spirit, the more He will purify you and cleanse you.

3. Like Fire, the Holy Spirit Is POWERFUL. (Acts 1:8)

When the term fire and power are combined, the word firepower is produced. Fire and power go together. Fire is what powers a steam engine locomotive. Fire is what powers a furnace. Part of the power of fire is its ability to shape things. Those who make glass use fire to shape the glass. Iron workers use fire to shape or forge metal into tools. Likewise, the Holy Spirit shapes you into the image of Christ. Just as fire has the power to touch and consume everything, the Holy Spirit touches every part of your life, to burn away any sin or worldliness in your life and to stoke passion for God and His kingdom.

The Holy Spirit Is Like RAIN.

Acts 2:17

The visual imagery of the Holy Spirit being poured out is what we would associate with water or rain. Phrases like “it is pouring outside” or “it is getting ready to pour” help us visualize what is happening. This metaphor was used in the Old Testament by the prophet Joel to describe what would happen when the Holy Spirit arrived on the Day of Pentecost. It is apparent from Scripture that water is a very clear symbol of what the Holy Spirit is like. Read the following comparisons between water and the Holy Spirit.

1. Like Rain (or Water), the Holy Spirit Is REFRESHING.

(John 7:37-39)

When you are thirsty and dry, nothing is more refreshing than a cool drink of water. Sometimes, in your walk with God, you get dry and thirsty. There are times when you are tired. During these tired and dry times, the Holy Spirit is like a refreshing drink of water to your spirit. But Jesus did not describe the Holy Spirit as merely a drink of water; He described the Spirit as rivers of living water.



2. Like Rain (or Water), the Holy Spirit Is LIFE-GIVING. (John 3:5)

When there is no rain or water, living things die. Farmers depend on rain for a good harvest. When your lawn is brown and dry, a good rain can bring it back to life. There can be no life without rain. Likewise, without the Holy Spirit, you do not have the life of God. The closer you are to the Holy Spirit, the more of God's life you will have inside.

3. Like Rain (or Water), the Holy Spirit Is POWERFUL.

Power generated by water is called hydropower. Water was and still is used to create incredible energy. When you see a river running through a great canyon, you see evidence of its great power to cut through rock and flatten anything in its path. God wants you to develop a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit so that you can be refreshed, be filled with life, and be filled with power.

The Holy Spirit Is Like WIND.

Genesis 1:2, Acts 2:2

The Holy Spirit is also represented by wind in the Bible. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for "Spirit" can be translated as "wind." The wind that appeared on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 is reminiscent of the wind that blew over the waters at the beginning of Creation in Genesis 1:2. Consider the following two words for wind:

- *Ruach* is an Hebrew word in the Old Testament that can be translated as "spirit" and often refers to the Holy Spirit. In Genesis 1:2, the *ruach elohim* (Spirit of God) hovered over the waters. This word is used elsewhere to refer to breath and wind, for example, in Genesis 8:1 when the Lord brought a wind over the entire earth. The Holy Spirit is like a breath of fresh air into your life.
- *Pneuma* is the Greek word in the New Testament used for Spirit of God. It is a blast of breath. The study of the Holy Spirit is called Pneumatology. And in Acts 2:2, when the Holy Spirit comes, we see a manifestation of wind.

It is evident from Scripture that wind is a very clear symbol of the Holy Spirit. Read the following comparisons between wind and the Holy Spirit to discover how the Holy Spirit is like wind.



1. Like Wind, the Holy Spirit Is UNSEEN. (John 3:8; 20:29)

You cannot see wind, but you can feel its power against your face and body. The same is true of the Holy Spirit. You cannot see Him, but you can feel Him.

God wants you to experience His life and presence. You may have already. Perhaps during a church service, there was a moment you felt a sense of peace or you received a fresh perspective. Or perhaps after spending time in prayer, you felt renewed or refreshed, or you got an idea for a problem you were facing. These are likely experiences of the presence—the wind—of the Holy Spirit.

The problem is that you may not be comfortable with things you can feel but not see. Humans do not get to see everything God does. However, we are called to trust Him. Faith, by definition, is putting your trust into something without seeing it. Part of deepening your relationship with the Holy Spirit is learning to trust Him.

2. Like Wind, the Holy Spirit Is UNPREDICTABLE. (John 3:8)

People love predictability. Because we love predictability, some people choose to stay in bad relationships or dead-end jobs, rationalizing that at least they know what to expect. The fact that the Holy Spirit is not predictable makes some people uncomfortable. When the Holy Spirit is leading your life, it is often an unpredictable journey—an adventure. For some people, this can actually be scary. For others, it can be energizing. In either case, it is tempting to create doctrine around experiences that are comfortable to you, putting God in a predictable box. But God moves in many different and often unusual ways.

3. Like Wind, the Holy Spirit Is POWERFUL. (Acts 1:5–8)

If you ever get to watch a windmill at work, you know that when you see the windmill spinning, the wind is generating power for thousands of homes and businesses. Wind is very powerful. Likewise, the Holy Spirit wants to be very powerful in your life.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



Summarize in the following chart how the Holy Spirit is like fire:

Comparison	Summary
Passionate	
Purifying	
Powerful	

Summarize in the following chart how the Holy Spirit is like rain:

Comparison	Summary
Refreshing	
Life-Giving	
Powerful	

Summarize in the following chart how the Holy Spirit is like wind:

Comparison	Summary
Unseen	
Unpredictable	
Powerful	



Compare all three charts. Summarize the common attributes or traits you used to describe the Holy Spirit in two sentences.

- From the lesson, why do you think God gives parallels from the natural, physical world to help us understand the supernatural realm?

- From the lesson, what are two words used to describe wind?

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Isaiah 44:3. With what is the future of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit associated?

- Matthew 3:11. With what do many scholars refer to the Holy Spirit with fire? Do you agree? Why or why not?



- Acts 2:4. What are the six meanings listed for the first Holy Spirit outpouring? Does this have the same meaning for believers today? Why or why not?

- John 7:38. What happened as a result of Christ leaving the earth? What should happen through you, the believer, when living water flows out of you?

- Read the *FireBible* article, “Creation.” What do you learn about the role of the Holy Spirit in creation?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 4: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN 3-D

Main Idea: When it comes to understanding the Holy Spirit, particularly the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, people typically have questions. Maybe your question is, “Didn’t I receive the Holy Spirit when I gave my life to Christ?” Or it could be, “When I got baptized in water, was I also baptized in the Holy Spirit?” These are good questions. To help answer them, this lesson will examine the three dimensions of relationship with the Holy Spirit. The first dimension is how the Holy Spirit is with everyone, including unbelievers. The second dimension is how the Holy Spirit is in the believer. The final dimension is how the Holy Spirit is upon the believer.

Scripture: Luke 4:18-19; John 14:16-17; 16:7-11; Acts 19:1-7; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; Colossians 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:14; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 3:24;



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God’s Word.

When a discussion on the Holy Spirit ensues, it's often necessary to talk about Holy Spirit baptism. In this experience, which only takes place after salvation, the Christian receives the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit into their life. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is given for the purpose of equipping the Christian with God's power for life and service.

There were five-hundred people gathered together the day Jesus commanded them to go to Jerusalem and wait for this dimension of the Holy Spirit. Of that five-hundred, only one-hundred and twenty actually gathered in the Upper Room and later received this baptism in the Holy Spirit. You never hear about those three-hundred and eighty who did not obey the command of Jesus. But the one-hundred and twenty who experienced Holy Spirit baptism made an impact on their world and, in fact, people still talk about them two-thousand years later.

Your relationship with the Holy Spirit might be best illustrated with a cup. If you had an empty cup sitting in a sink with water around it, you could say that cup has water **with** it. However, if you took the same cup and put water in it, you could say the cup has water with it and **in** it. Moreover, if you took the same cup and put it in the sink with water in it but put it under the water faucet and turned it on full blast so that the water was splashing in it, over it, and around it, you could say that cup has water with it, in it, and **upon** it. In other words, the cup is being baptized.

The Greek word for baptize means to immerse, saturate, or submerge. That is what Jesus was speaking about when He told the disciples that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit. That is what Jesus wants for all of His followers. He wants you to have a deep relationship with the Holy Spirit as if you were totally immersed in Him.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Your relationship with Holy Spirit is a three-dimensional relationship. The first dimension examined is that the Holy Spirit is with everyone, including unbelievers. Secondly, the Holy Spirit is in the believer. The final dimension is the Holy Spirit is upon the Spirit-baptized believer.

THE FIRST DIMENSION OF RELATIONSHIP IS WITH.

(John 16:7-11).

The first relationship a person has with the Holy Spirit is the **with** relationship. The Holy Spirit is with all people, even people who have not yet given their lives to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the One who draws people to God. He is the Convictor—or even the Convincer. He convinces the unbeliever that he is lost and without hope.

The Holy Spirit is *with* the believer, but not yet *in* them. (John 14:16-17) Even the disciples did not have the Holy Spirit in them until after Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Notice in the John 14 passage that Jesus distinguishes between the Holy Spirit being with them, but He will later be in them. The Holy Spirit was initially **with** the disciples even as He is **with** every person today.

One of the Holy Spirit's primary roles is to draw people to Jesus. When you pray for people to come to a saving knowledge of Christ, you are asking the Holy Spirit to convict them. The Holy Spirit is **with** a person to convict them. But, the person must choose to come into right relationship with God. If the Holy Spirit had not been with you when you were being drawn to Christ, you would have never been saved. So, it would be proper to say that the Holy Spirit is **with** the wayward child, **with** the alcoholic, and **with** the sinner, working in them to convince them they need Jesus Christ.



THE SECOND DIMENSION OF RELATIONSHIP IS IN.

(Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 1 John 3:24; 2 Timothy 1:14)

The second relationship you can have with the Holy Spirit is the **in** relationship. The Holy Spirit is **in** all people who put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. When you pray to receive Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into you. You cannot be saved without the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the one who administers salvation to you.

During the *in* relationship, the Holy Spirit regenerates us. (Ezekiel 37:14; John 3:5–6; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:5). Regeneration means you have had a spiritual resuscitation and you have started the process of being made spiritually alive. The Holy Spirit leads you to the place where you are spiritually alive.

During the *in* relationship, the Holy Spirit provides us assurance. (Romans 8:16; 1 John 4:13; 5:6; 2 Corinthians 1:21–22; Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:30) The Holy Spirit's presence and His witness confirm spiritual realities in a believer's life. He nurtures the believer's conviction of the truth of God's Word. The Holy Spirit is the one who provides the necessary affirmation that you belong to God.

During the *in* relationship, the Holy Spirit sanctifies us. (Romans 1:4; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:1–2) The Holy Spirit works both within and on behalf of the believer to provide the holiness and sanctification that is required. Sanctification is a big theological word that means separated or set apart for a special purpose. When you begin your relationship with Christ, you need help to live in a manner Christ desires from you.

Do you have to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (with the evidence of speaking in tongues) to make it to heaven? The answer is, no. You cannot add anything to the work of the Cross. You are saved by grace through faith. When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you. But this does not necessarily mean that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is baptized in the Holy Spirit. All Christians are indwelt by the Spirit, but the degree to which they enjoy His presence in anointing and power greatly varies.



THE THIRD DIMENSION OF RELATIONSHIP IS UPON.

(John 20:22; Luke 4:18-19; Acts 1:4-5,8)

In the third dimension of relationship, the Holy Spirit is **upon** every Spirit-baptized believer. Jesus made a clear distinction between the Holy Spirit being in a believer and the Holy Spirit being **upon** a believer. Jesus is speaking to His disciples who were already believers. They had already put their faith in the risen Christ. The Holy Spirit was already in them.

The Holy Spirit was to come **upon** them for the purpose of being a witness for Jesus Christ. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told them there was more: a deeper, third dimension of relationship with the Holy Spirit. Jesus describes this dimension as the baptism in the Holy Spirit, telling His disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they had been imbued with this power, until the Holy Spirit had come **upon** them (Luke 24:49). Why was this so important? Why is it still important today?

The **upon** relationship gives you the power to do the works of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself needed the **upon** relationship with the Holy Spirit to do what God had called Him to do. Likewise, Jesus told the disciples they needed this **upon** relationship to do what He had called them to do.

When you step into this third dimension, consider what the Holy Spirit will be able to do through you: preach the gospel to the poor; heal broken hearts; tell those who are captive they are free; tell those who are blind that they can see again; set at liberty those that have been oppressed and treated cruelly; and proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord—the favor of God. Like the disciples, you need this **upon** relationship to do what God has called you to do.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Based on the lesson, describe in your own words the **with** dimension of relationship with the Holy Spirit.

- Based on the lesson, describe in your own words the **in** dimension of relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Look at the chart below and summarize in your own words the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation:

Role	Summary
Regenerate	

Assurance

Sanctify	
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- Based on the lesson, do you have to be baptized in the Holy Spirit in order to make it to heaven? Describe in your own words how a person is saved. Describe your salvation experience.

- Based on the lesson, describe in your own words the **upon** dimension of relationship with the Holy Spirit.

- Based on the lesson, what is the definition of regeneration?

- Based on the lesson, what does the word sanctification mean?

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- John 14:17. How does the Holy Spirit enlighten the minds of people?



- John 16:8. What does the word convict mean? What are three areas the Holy Spirit operates in conviction?

- Acts 2:4. Summarize in your own words the six meanings of “filled with the Holy Spirit.”

- Acts 19:2. What is the literal translation of Paul’s question? Why is this question important?

- Acts 19:6. Why is the recording of this event important for you today?



Read the *FireBible* article “Regeneration: Spiritual Birth and Renewal.”
Summarize the important aspects of spiritual birth in the chart below.

Activity	Summary Concept
Inward Recreation	
Necessary	
Repentance	
Complete Change	
Walk	
Conduct	
Loss	
Receive New Birth	



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 5: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS NATURALLY SUPERNATURAL

Main Idea: Everyone needs to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can help you pray, worship, and live a holy life. You also need the baptism in the Holy Spirit so that the kingdom of God can show up in the lives of other people. This all happens through the gifts of the Spirit.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12-14



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Every believer has spiritual gifts, natural talents, and skills. While this lesson focuses on spiritual gifts, an inspection of the following chart may be helpful to understand the differences between the three.

Spiritual Gifts	Natural Talents	Skills
Given by the Holy Spirit	Natural abilities	Learned abilities
Discovered after spiritual birth	Naturally present from birth	Acquired with training
God-given to all members of the body of Christ	God-given to all people	Developed by people

As you work through this lesson, think about the following questions. First, is the culture you live in afraid of the supernatural? The answer is, no. A large number of movies and TV shows these days are filled with supernatural themes. Consider that this trend shows you are living in a culture that is not afraid of the supernatural but is actually hungry for it. Second, does the Holy Spirit use natural people like you to do supernatural things? The answer is, yes.

This lesson does not examine the two gift classifications known as **ministry gifts** and **motivation gifts**. However, it would be good to know where these gifts are discussed within your Bible. Ministry gifts include apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors (or shepherds), and teachers. These are found in Ephesians 4:11-12. Motivation gifts include serving, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading (administration, leading, organizing), and mercy. These are found in Romans 12:6-8. All of the gifts in these two classifications offer opportunities for Christian service which are open to you for the exercise of the gifts discussed in this lesson.

Keep in mind that the gifts of the Spirit are different than the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 speaks about the fruit of the Spirit, which are behavior patterns that result from the presence of the Holy Spirit within a believer. In contrast, the Scriptures about spiritual gifts refer to capacities given for service for Christ. The fruit of the Spirit deal with attitude, whereas the gifts of the Spirit deal with action in service. Both are indications that the Holy Spirit is present in a believer's life. The following chart might help you distinguish between the gifts and fruit of the Spirit.



Gifts	Fruit
Related primarily to collective body	Related to individual believers
Related to ministry	Related to character
Classified in order of importance	All are essential
Can be misused	Can never be misused
No one typically receives all the gifts	Everyone may bear fruit all the time
No gift can be demanded of all	All are commanded to manifest fruit





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Two-hundred years ago, if someone had told you that there are frequencies in the air which, with the right radio receiver, would allow you to hear someone speaking in a city miles away, would you have believed it? Two-hundred years ago, one might have described this technological advance as supernatural. Today, we understand the science. While radio waves are invisible, a receiver helps us access their power.

The same principle is true in the Spirit-filled life. You cannot see the Holy Spirit, but He is there, and His power is available. His gifts are offered to you. You just have to raise your receiver, so to speak, and begin to access them. That is why Paul calls you to walk in the Spirit. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a one-time experience. It is the beginning of a lifestyle of walking in the power of the Spirit, which continually deepens our relationship with Him.

The apostle Paul in his first letter to the church in Corinth gives instructions about spiritual gifts. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1: “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.” Being uninformed could be the reason some are afraid of spiritual gifts. People tend to be afraid of things they do not understand.”

This is why Paul takes some time to discuss what the gifts are. Read what Paul has to say in 1 Corinthians 12:7-12:

“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. For just as the body is one and has



many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.”

These are gifts of the Spirit. As such, it is really not appropriate to tell people you have the gift of the word of knowledge or the gift of healing. You do not possess any of them. Rather, it is the Holy Spirit who has them all. And it is the Holy Spirit who distributes to **each one** for the **common good**. It is more accurate to say you can minister in any gift at any time the Holy Spirit allows.

These nine gifts of the Spirit are nine different ways the kingdom of God can show up through you. Any believer can move in any of these. They are available through the *pneumatikos* (Gk.), the wind of the Holy Spirit. They are naturally supernatural. The following from Howard Ervin provides a good foundation on the gifts of the Holy Spirit:

The Greek word here for gift or spiritual gift is the word *charisma* (where we get the term charismatic). Oftentimes, people who are Spirit filled are referred to as charismatic. The definition of *charisma* is the instantaneous enablement of the Holy Spirit in the life of any believer to exercise a gift for the edification of others.

Charis is the Greek word for grace. When you put the “*ma*” on the end—its means gift. *Charisma* means grace gift. Use the term charismatic to describe a gifted individual. “Spiritual”—Greek word *pneumatikos*—empowered by breath or wind.¹

Look at the first part of the Greek word *pneumatikos*. It is the word *pneumatic*. Perhaps you have heard of a pneumatic drill that is powered by air. When Paul says, “concerning spiritual gifts,” he is talking about gifts empowered by the Holy Spirit, empowered by the breath of God. These are gifts you can only move in if you allow the Holy Spirit to breathe in you.

Let’s look at how each gift is naturally supernatural. The gifts can be placed into three categories: discerning, declarative, and dynamic.

DISCERNING GIFTS

Word of Knowledge: “*to know something specific without having learned it by natural means.*”²

1 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

2 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.



This is the gift Jesus operated in during His conversation with the woman at the well.

Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” The woman answered him, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband;’ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband” (John 4:16–18).

How did Jesus know that? Some might say it’s because He is Jesus, and Jesus knows everything. In reality, when Jesus was on earth, He ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “The Spirit of the Lord is **upon** Me” (Luke 4:18). This is the same thing Jesus told His disciples when He said, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come **upon** you” (Acts 1:8). If Jesus operated in the gifts of the Spirit, you can too.

Many times, this gifts come to people during prayer. For example, while you’re praying for someone, you might get a sense about a particular issue they are facing or feel an urge to pray about a specific area in their life. A good way to handle this situation may be to say to the person, “This is what I sense God showing me. Does this mean anything to you?”

Word of Wisdom: *“a divine answer or solution for a particular event.”³*

Perhaps you are facing an overwhelming situation and you need a solution. Another gift of the Spirit is called is the word of wisdom. God can use somebody to speak to you about a solution for the problem you are facing. When you a pray about a particular project or situation at home, work, or school the Holy Spirit can give you a divine solution to it. This is a word of wisdom.

Discerning of Spirits: *“to be made aware of the presence of a demonic spirit.”⁴*

In Acts 16, a girl who was a fortune teller kept following the apostle Paul and calling out, “These men are servants of the Most High” (Acts 16:17). Paul knew a demon was speaking through her. He cast it out. This gift is called the gift of discerning of spirits. It is not to be confused with discernment between right and wrong, which is expected of all Christ followers.

3 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

4 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.



DECLARATIVE GIFTS

Prophecy: *“message of encouragement from God through a person.”*⁵

One who prophesies speaks edification, exhortation, and comfort. This gift is not to be used for correction but rather for encouragement. Some people say, “I have the gift of prophecy,” and they think they can correct other people with this gift and validate the prophecy with the phrase, “Thus saith the Lord.” Read what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:31: “For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be **encouraged**.”

Not all prophecies are of God. A word of prophecy is not the same as Scripture. You should always validate what is being said with Scripture. For example, if someone says you should divorce your wife because you have fallen in love someone else, that would not be from God because it violates His Word. The Bible admonishes us to test every prophecy (verse 29).

Tongues: *“a message from God in a language unknown to the person through whom the message comes.”*⁶

Paul talks about tongues as a gift of the Spirit that is intended to be a manifestation of God’s kingdom to others. Remember, these gifts are for the profit of all. This means that a message in tongues is different than speaking in tongues as part of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which some call a prayer language. A prayer language is for your edification—it builds you up. A message in tongues is for others. In fact, it is designed to get people’s attention.

Interpretation of Tongues: *“understanding and expressing the thought or the intent of the message in tongues.”*⁷

This gift always goes with the previous gift. When a utterance in tongues is given, the interpretation of tongues follows. Paul instructs believers not to give a message in tongues if they are not ready to give the interpretation. Notice Paul says the interpretation of tongues, not the translation. What is the difference?

Translation is word for word. For example, the United Nations does not

5 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

6 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

7 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.



have interpreters; they have translators because they need to know every word is being translated exactly as it is being said. An interpreter's job is different. Interpretation expresses the overall thought or intent of what was said.

First Corinthians 14:5 reads,

“Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.”

Do you believe the entire Bible is God-breathed? If you do, then you understand that Paul's hand may have scribed these words but God is the one who actually wrote them. When Paul says, “I want you all to speak in tongues,” he makes a pretty strong statement about the importance of tongues in the life of a believer. No matter what your religious background is, you are going to have to come to grips with this verse.

DYNAMIC GIFTS

Faith: *“a supernatural impartation of belief and confidence for a specific situation.”*⁸

Every believer has faith. This gift is not referring to faith in general but rather special faith for a specific situation.

Healings: *“a supernatural endowments of divine health.”*⁹

Some have negative feelings about this gift. Perhaps they know someone who prayed for healing but continued to be sick or even died. While God does heal today, it does not mean everyone you pray for will get healed. However, some will. You have to conclude, as with all of the spiritual gifts, that He is God and you are not. Your responsibility is to do the natural and leave the supernatural to God.

Miracles: *“a divine intervention that alters our natural circumstances.”*¹⁰

8 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

9 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.

10 Ervin, Howard, “Pneumatology,” Class Lecture, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK, March 1995.



In light of what the Bible teaches, how could someone believe that God has quit doing miracles? God cannot stop doing miracles because He cannot stop being God. If you have been saved, you have experienced a miracle.

There are two parts to every miracle: your part and God's part. God does the supernatural; you do the natural. The miraculous always involves both the natural and the supernatural. But what is your part? How can you operate in the power of the Spirit?

ASK IN FAITH

Luke 11:11-13; 1 Corinthians 14:1

There is no supernatural without the natural. You must first act in faith for the kingdom of God to show up. The woman at the well did not accept Jesus until Jesus began a conversation with her and then said, "You have had five husbands." No one gets baptized in the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues until they open their mouth and begin to speak. No one hears a word of prophesy until someone has the courage to walk across the room and say, "When I was praying, God spoke to me about you. This is what He said. Does that mean anything to you?" The kingdom of God does not show up until someone takes a risk to put it on display in everyday situations.

The Holy Spirit will not do anything in your life without your cooperation and obedience. People seem to be afraid of the Holy Spirit because they think He will make them do something embarrassing or weird. The power of Holy Spirit is real but He is not weird. This could be why some people struggle to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit and pray in the Spirit for the first time. They ask for the Holy Spirit but then they just sit and wait for God to do everything.

Because this experience is naturally supernatural, it involves you. You have to speak and open your mouth. So, you could say your part is opening your mouth, and God's part is filling it. Your part is speaking, and God's part is to make what you are speaking a language.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- From the lesson, what does the word “*charisma*” mean?

Look at the gifts in this chart and describe a time in your life when you either personally experienced or witnessed the gift in operation. Which gifts (if any), did you experience more than others? Why do you think that is the

Helper Role	Summary
Word of Knowledge	
Word of Wisdom	
Discerning of Spirits	
Prophecy	
Tongues	
Interpretation of Tongues	
Faith	
Healings	
Miracles	



- From the lesson, what is the difference between the interpretation of tongues and translation?

- Describe any thoughts you might have about the gift of healings.

- How well do you operate in the power of the Holy Spirit daily? How can you improve?

- Describe the difference between the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. How do these integrate with each other?

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- 1 Corinthians 12:1. With which of the four purposes of gifts do you most resonate? Why?



- 1 Corinthians 12:1-6. Provide your insights in regard to spiritual gifts.

- 1 Corinthians 13:13. What are the two reasons God honors Christlike character more than the use of spiritual gifts? Why do you think this is so?

- 1 Corinthians 14:39. How do verses 37-39 apply to you?

- Read the *FireBible* chart “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.” What thoughts come to your mind?

- Read the *FireBible* article “Spiritual Gifts for Believers.” Summarize the four general perspectives on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Then in the chart on the following page, summarize in your own words the individual gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Individual Gifts	Summary
Message of Wisdom	
Message of Knowledge	
Faith	
Gifts of Healing	
Miraculous Powers	
Prophecy	
Distinguishing between Spirits	
Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues	
Interpretation of Tongues	



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 6: THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

Main Idea: One of the major roadblocks to people receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit is the issue of speaking in tongues. People have legitimate questions such as: What are the tongues saying? Who understands what is being said? Is your prayer language forced or is it led by the Spirit? How do I know that it is really me who is being led by the Spirit to speak in tongues or if it is just my imagination at work? What is the difference between a prayer language and speaking in tongues? How can a believer genuinely speak in tongues and not have the love of Christ, the fruit and gifts of the Spirit operating in their life? The most common question is whether or not all people who are baptized in the Holy Spirit speak in tongues. This lesson will help you gain a biblical basis for understanding spiritual language from the Old Testament through the New Testament.

Scripture: Leviticus 23:15-22; Isaiah 28:11; Mark 16:17; Acts 2:3-4, 11; 8-12; 10:45-46; 19:6; Romans 8:26-27, 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:2, 4-6, 14-15, 18-19, 21-23, 39; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20;





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

When the subject of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is discussed, people understand it in a variety of ways. These varied understandings can cause people to be unsure of Spirit baptism. Often, just the discussion itself can cause people to feel uncomfortable. It's not uncommon to hear statements like, "I have been baptized in water, but I really do not know what it means to be baptized in the Holy Spirit." Even worse, some religious organizations have contributed to a wrong understanding of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, going so far as to tell people they will go to hell if they do not receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. As a result of much negativity around this topic, many people are no longer interested in the Baptism or anything else associated with the Holy Spirit.

Many Christians, when they hear "baptism in the Holy Spirit," associate this experience with speaking in tongues. Many sincere Christians are against the practice of speaking in tongues, usually for one or more of the following reasons: They have an off-putting mental image of tongues as uncontrolled speech or incoherent babbling ecstasy, or the result of a hypnotic trance. Or they may have been incorrectly taught or impressed upon by others that without spiritual language, they are somehow spiritually inferior or a second-class Christian. Sadly, some have even experienced the abuse and/or misuse of spiritual gifts within a worship service or by a church leader.

To provide a good framework for understanding the concept of speaking in tongues, we need to define the New Testament Greek word, "*glossolalia*." This word has two parts. The first is *glossa*, which means "tongue." The second is *lalia*, which means "to speak." So "*glossolalia*" means to speak in an unacquired tongue, language, or ecstatic utterance.

To help you get a grasp on this term, here are a few additional facts and definitions (some of which have nothing to do with the New Testament term):



- “Glossolalia occurred among adherents of various ancient religions.”¹
- Glossolalia can indicate “fabricated and non-meaningful speech, especially speech associated with a trance state or certain schizophrenic syndromes.”²
- Glossolalia has also been defined “as incomprehensible speech in an imaginary language, sometimes occurring in a trance state, an episode of religious ecstasy, or schizophrenia.”³
- One study indicated that “glossolalia is a learned behavior.”⁴

For the purpose of this study, we will examine a few selected passages of Scripture from the Old Testament focusing on the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). The word, “Pentecost,” which means “fiftieth,” is not used in the Old Testament, but it is used three times in the New Testament. This feast took place fifty days after the waving of the sheaf of firstfruits (Leviticus 23:15-16). It would have been the third month after the Exodus from Egypt. This feast is a foreshadowing of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which Luke describes in Acts. Comparing Old Testament Pentecost and New Testament Pentecost may help you see this foreshadowing more clearly.

Old Testament Pentecost	New Testament Pentecost
Fiftieth Day after Passover	Fiftieth Day after the Resurrection
Writing of Ten Commandments on two tablets (Exodus 31:18)	Writing of Commandments on tablets of heart and mind (Matthew 22:34-40; Romans 13:8-10)
The Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God	This was written by the Spirit of God (Luke 11:20; Matthew 12:28)
Three thousand people were slain (Exodus 32:28)	Three thousand people live (Acts 2:41)
A ministration of death	A ministration of life
The Law	The Spirit
Glory on the face of Moses	Glory on the face of Jesus

1 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/glossolalia> (accessed October 8, 2018)

2 <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/glossolalia> (accessed October 8, 2018)

3 <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/glossolalia> (accessed October 8, 2018)

4 <https://www.gotquestions.org/glossolalia.html> (accessed October 8, 2018)



Moses' face was veiled so people could not see the glory

Unveiled face so we can be changed into same glory

Old Testament Pentecost

New Testament Pentecost

Glory was temporary

Glory that remains

Ministers of the Old Covenant

Ministers of New Covenant

Took place on Mount Sinai

Takes place on Mount Zion
(Hebrews 12:22-24)

The following references help set a biblical framework for this feast:

- **The Feast of Weeks in the third month:** Exodus 19:1-2
- **The Feast of Weeks:** Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15-22; Deuteronomy 16:10
- **Supernatural Manifestations at Mt. Sinai:** Exodus 19:16-24; Deuteronomy 4:32-40

While these verses do not detail all the events, they are meant to help you connect the dots between what took place in the Old Testament and how those events connect with the New Testament outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the Feast of Pentecost in Acts 2:1.

In the Old Testament, we see the Holy Spirit involved in the lives of chosen people. In Genesis 41:38, the Holy Spirit was active in the life of Joseph to give him supernatural wisdom. In Judges 15:14-15, the Spirit was active in the life of Samson to give him physical power. In Exodus 31:2-5, the Holy Spirit was active in the life of Bezalel to give him craftsmanship and artistic ability. In 1 Samuel 16:13, He was active in the life of David to empower him to lead a nation.

These are not the only places we can see a correlation of the Holy Spirit's activity between the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, the Spirit's outpouring was only for a select few, such as prophets. God used these men to foretell what would take place in the New Testament. In Joel 2:28-30, Joel prophesies that the Holy Spirit will break down all barriers for all persons. The prophet Micah was from a small village near Gath which was close to Philistine territory. In Micah 3:8, Micah tells of being filled with power, with the Spirit, and with courageous strength. From Micah 2:1-13, it seems clear the purpose for Micah being filled with the Spirit was to proclaim God's judgment on the sin taking place in Israel. A contemporary of Micah, Isaiah was from



Jerusalem and, according to tradition, from a royal family. In an attempt to persuade the people to follow after God, Isaiah preached truths to cause them to seek rest and refreshment in the Lord. However, the people continued in their sinful ways. He prophesies in Isaiah 28:11 “For by people of **strange lips** and with a foreign tongue the LORD will speak to this people.” Paul actually quotes this verse from Isaiah in 1 Corinthians 14:21 to describe an aspect of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Everything the Holy Spirit did in the lives of Old Testament people was not just for their own benefit. Instead, it was to empower that particular individual to influence their community. There were four major types of leaders in the Old Testament: judges (they judged sin and righteousness); prophets (they spoke to man about God); priests (they spoke to God about man); and kings (they governed). All of these leaders were empowered by the Holy Spirit with unique gifts for the purpose of bringing the community back into fellowship and worship of Jehovah God.

The message of the New Testament writers presumes the ministry of the Holy Spirit to be so essential, foundational, and necessary for the Christian life that little time is taken to expand on it. To them, it is a given that the Holy Spirit is active in the New Testament like He was in the Old. Additionally, these writers assume as fundamental the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Jesus’ life.

The first statement Matthew makes about Jesus is about His miraculous conception Matthew 1:18–20. Matthew, without explanation, simply states two times that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. From this time forward, Jesus’ entire life is enmeshed with the Spirit.

While this is not a study about Jesus, perhaps a pause to give a little explanation of Jesus’ deity and humanity is needed. What is absolutely fundamental is the point that Jesus was both fully God and fully man at the same time. If one goes too far either way it destroys the work of Jesus. If you take Him as fully God and do not allow for His humanity, then we cannot be saved because the price for sin would not have been paid and we would still be under the Old Testament sacrificial system. On the other hand, if you take Jesus as fully man and do not allow for His divinity, we cannot be saved because Jesus Himself would have needed salvation. Thus, Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man which is a paradoxical mystery. Jesus was a real person, born at a real time, in a real place, to real parents. He grew as a real child, obeyed real parents, had real brothers and sisters, and learned a real occupational skill. Jesus was shaped and affected by the culture, politics, geography, family, society, and friends in the day He lived. But He was unique



in three ways. First, He was sinless. Second, He had a unique purpose in his life—redeeming sinful humanity. And third, He was fully God.

It's important to understand that Jesus was not the Son of God because of His miraculous birth; Jesus' miraculous birth was because He was the Son of God. John explains this in John 1:1-2, 14. Jesus was the Son of God prior to His birth. Jesus' birth allowed us to see God's Son in human form. Second, the role of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' birth resulted in Him being holy. In Luke 1:35, Jesus is described as a holy child. Holiness means three things: First, something holy is set apart from the arena of the mundane for the use of God. Jesus was set apart for God's purpose. Second, someone who is considered holy is one who bears the Holy Spirit. Jesus was a carrier of the Holy Spirit from conception. The third aspect of holiness is moral. Jesus was born free from all sin. He was pure, clean, undefiled, and uncorrupted. The activity of the Holy Spirit resulted in Jesus living full of the Holy Spirit. Luke 11:13-14 reveals that living full of the Holy Spirit results in a high-impact life.

Jesus is our Savior and Lord, and He is also our model for living. If Jesus, fully God, was filled with and relied on the Holy Spirit in His humanity, how much more must we rely on the Holy Spirit in our own lives?

The Gospel of John has the most to say about Jesus' teaching on the Holy Spirit. If you would like to explore what Jesus taught, you can find a great resource at <https://digital.myhealthychurch.com/Digital-Items/Mens-Ministries/Journey-through-John>.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The Bible provides guidance for every area of your life and has much to say about the Holy Spirit. As you walk through the pages of the Bible, the Holy Spirit will open your eyes to better understand who He is and the gifts He gives.

- Spiritual language is described as praying in the Spirit. (Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20)
- Spiritual language is described as speaking in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:39; Acts 2:4; 2:11; 10:46; 19:6; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:6)
- Spiritual language is described as strange lips. (Isaiah 28:11)
- The Holy Spirit was influential in the maturing process of Jesus. (Luke 2:40-52)
- The Holy Spirit was active in the Early Church. (Acts 2:3-4, 8-12, 38; 10:45-46; 19:2-6)
- Guidelines for proper use of spiritual gifts are provided. (1 Corinthians 12:1 through 14:40)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- In Acts 2:38, what are three things Peter told the people they should do?

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Isaiah 28:11—How does this verse connect with Ephesians 6:18?

- Joel 2:28-30—What is the primary result of the Holy Spirit being poured out?
 - » On a scale of one to four, with one being often and four being not often, how often do you exercise these gifts in your life? How can you improve?

- Micah 3:8—What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of Micah? How does this apply to your life today?



- Acts 2:17-18—With what did Peter associate speaking in tongues? What does that mean?
 - » Describe the five instances of the Holy Spirit being poured out in Acts.
 - » What does the phrase “in those days” mean? How long are the power and benefits of the Holy Spirit available?

- Ephesians 6:18—Describe the importance of praying in the Spirit.

Read the *FireBible* article “Speaking in Tongues.”

- Summarize in your own words the three truths of speaking in tongues.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 7: THE BENEFITS OF SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

Main Idea: It's not uncommon to wonder why God chose tongues as a sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And should every Christian speak with tongues? If so, why? What are the benefits? This lesson is designed to help you begin a journey to answer these questions.

Scripture: Isaiah 28:11-12; Acts 6:5; 10:45-46; Romans 8:26-27; 10:17; 1 Corinthians 2:9-11; 14:2, 14-17; Ephesians 6:16; 1 Timothy 4:1; James 3:8; Jude 20



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Pentecostals have long held that the baptism in the Holy Spirit provides power to help us walk our everyday life. But if you do not need the baptism in the Holy Spirit to make it to heaven, why is it worth asking for?

Being a Spirit-filled believer has benefits beyond the spiritual because your relationship with God effects every area of your life. Bobby Conway quoted D.L. Moody as saying, “You may as well try to see without eyes, hear without ears, or breathe without lungs as to try to live the Christian life without being filled with the Spirit.”¹

This lesson will help you discover the benefits of spiritual language, the primary sign of Holy Spirit baptism. And they are many. Consider the thoughts of psychiatrist Carl R. Peterson who researched the effects of praying in the Spirit on the human brain:

I have had a number of inquiries concerning the efficacy of praying in the spirit (speaking in tongues) and its benefit to the human immune system, i.e., immunity enhanced by chemicals released from a part of the brain. I am attempting to clarify some information I have shared with a number of ministers. This is information that may be deduced from what we know about the way the brain functions. We do know the part of the brain affected most noticeably by extended prayer represents a significant portion of the brain and its metabolic activity. Therefore, voluntary speech during extended vocal prayer causes a major stimulation in these parts of the brain (mainly the hypothalamus).

The hypothalamus has direct regulation of four major systems of the body, mainly:

- a) the pituitary gland and all target endocrine glands;
- b) the total immune system;
- c) the entire autonomic system; and
- d) the production of brain hormones called endorphins and enkephalons, which are chemicals the body produces and are 100–200 times more powerful than morphine.

In summary, a very significant percentage of the central nervous system is directly and indirectly activated in the process of extended verbal and musical prayer over a period of time. This results in a significant release of brain hormones

¹ Bobby Conway. The One Minute Apologist. <https://oneminuteapologist.com/blog/whatistheroleoftheholyspirit/> (Accessed January 21, 2020).



which, in turn, increases the body's general immunity. It is further enhanced through joyful laughter with increased respirations and oxygen intake to the brain, diaphragm and other muscles. This same phenomenon is seen in physical activity in general, i.e., running, etc.²

While speaking in tongues is not the baptism in the Holy Spirit, it is the initial sign or physical evidence that the Baptism has occurred. A person should not seek to speak in tongues; they should seek the Holy Spirit himself. You'll know you've received Him when you speak with tongues. The purpose of the Holy Spirit's coming to you is not to speak, but the speaking announces His presence in you. And because speaking in tongues is the evidence, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a definite, deliberate, and certain event.

Why would God choose tongues as evidence for Spirit baptism? Why would God not choose some other sign? Carl Brumback provides seven reasons why God chose tongues as an evidence for baptism in the Holy Spirit:

1. It is an external evidence constituting a visible symbol of a spiritual reality.
2. It is a uniform evidence, for tongues are recognized by all cultures.
3. It appropriately recognizes the personality of the Holy Spirit.
4. It is a symbol of the Spirit's complete control of the believer.
5. It stresses that the Holy Spirit is the believer's source of truth and expression.
6. It signifies the honor that God has placed on human speech.
7. It is a foretaste of heavenly speech.³

2 Carl Peterson, Medical Facts about Speaking in Tongues, <https://beingunderthenewcovenant.wordpress.com/2011/06/14/medical-facts-about-speaking-in-tongues-%E2%80%93-carl-r-peterson-m-d/> (accessed October 9, 2018)

3 Carl Brumback, *What Meaneth This?*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1947) 235.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The Bible is not silent in regard to the Holy Spirit. A search of the Scriptures will help you see the blessings and benefits that come to your life through appropriating the power of the Holy Spirit. Start by considering these ten:

- Praying in tongues helps you pray according to the perfect will of God. (Romans 8:26-27)
- Praying in tongues stimulates your faith. (Jude 20)
- There is a relationship between faith and the Holy Spirit. (Acts 6:5)
- Praying in tongues helps you pray divine secrets. (1 Corinthians 14:2)
- Praying in tongues gives you greater spiritual revelation. (1 Corinthians 2:9-11)
- Praying in tongues enables you to pray for yourself concerning the unknown. (Romans 8:26-27)
- Praying in tongues gives you the privilege of praying about things for which no one is even aware. (Romans 8:26-27)
- Praying in tongues gives you spiritual refreshment and strength. (1 Corinthians 14:4)
- Speaking in tongues helps you submit your tongue to God. (James 3:8)
- Speaking in tongues provides you with a great way to give thanks and praise to God. (1 Corinthians 14:14-17)
- Speaking in tongues is a sign that you have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 10:45-46)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- 1 Corinthians 14:15. Describe in your own words what praying with my spirit and praying with my mind mean.

- Read the *FireBible* article “Testing for Genuine baptism in the Holy Spirit.” Describe in your own words the nine biblical principles listed to determine if a person truly has been baptized in the Holy Spirit.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 8: THE TRAIL OF TONGUES: BIBLICAL MODELS OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Main Idea: The Book of Acts records at least **163** people who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, although there were likely more. The Book of Acts records men and women receiving the Holy Spirit **five** times. This lesson investigates the five instances, examining each one to see what the baptism in the Holy Spirit looked like and how the people knew they had received the Baptism.

Scripture: Acts 2:1-13; 8:4-19; 9:10-20; 10:44-47; 19:1-7





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

There is a principle of hermeneutics (the study of interpreting Scripture) which states Scripture interprets Scripture. This means that if you do not understand a particular Scripture, you can use other parts of Scripture to help you understand it. Though receiving guidance from wise counsel and godly leadership can be very helpful, it's far from mandatory to take what God breathed and go to someone else in order to understand what the Scripture means. You can go to all of Scripture and allow the Scripture to speak to you and paint a picture of the Scripture you are studying.

So, before we take a look at Acts, it would be beneficial to pause and read John 14-16. In these three chapters, Jesus essentially instructed the disciples on what to do in the upper room. He explained the role of the Holy Spirit, talking about who the Spirit was and what He would do. If you would like a more in-depth study on these chapters, you may go to <https://digital.myhealthychurch.com/Digital-Items/Mens-Ministries/Journey-through-John>

With Jesus' words in John as the background, we can proceed to Acts. Based on five instances of Holy Spirit baptism in Acts, and using the hermeneutical principle of Scripture interpreting Scripture, you learn at least two things.

First, **those who received were already believers in all cases.** This means receiving the Holy Spirit is a separate and subsequent experience to being saved. In some cases, it took place immediately after conversion. In other cases, it happened months or years later. But no matter when it happens, Spirit baptism is something all believers should expect and seek.

The second thing we learn is **what to expect as an outward sign when you receive the Holy Spirit.** In three of the five cases in Acts, the author Luke reveals that the believers spoke in tongues. Furthermore, in the two cases where tongues is not specifically mentioned, it is clearly implied. From the preponderance of evidence, you can safely conclude that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

As you read the Scripture, and let Scripture interpret Scripture, you will discover the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a requirement but a gift. Do you have to speak in tongues? Absolutely not; you get to speak in tongues.

Additional signs that may accompany Holy Spirit baptism include prophesying, magnifying God, and even miracles. Read the following five passages in Acts:

- The fulfillment of Jesus' promise at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13)
- The Holy Spirit's outpouring in Samaria (Acts 8:4-19)
- The Holy Spirit's outpouring on Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:10-20)
- The Holy Spirit's outpouring in Caesarea (Acts 10:44-47)
- The Holy Spirit's outpouring on the Ephesians (Acts 19:1-7)

For more info on each of these moves of the Holy Spirit, see Appendix D in the Appendix document for this product.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Describe your understanding of the hermeneutic principle that Scripture interprets Scripture. Why is this important as you study the Bible?

Re-read Acts 2:1-13; 8:4-19; 9:10-20; 10:44-47; and 19:1-7 and answer the following four questions:

- In each of the passages of Scripture, were the people who received Spirit baptism already believers? How do you know?

- In each of the passages of Scripture, how did those who received Spirit baptism know they had?

- In each of the passages of Scripture, how was the Holy Spirit received?



- In each of the passages of Scripture, what effect did receiving Spirit baptism have on their daily lives?

- Describe your Spirit baptism journey thus far.

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Acts 2:2-3. What two things might the fire represent?

- Acts 2:4. Summarize in your own words the six meanings of the first Spirit outpouring.



- Acts 8:6. Describe the reasons Christ promised He would use miraculous signs to confirm His Word.

- Acts 8:17–18. Why is the baptism in the Holy Spirit vital for your life? What do outward signs provide for the people around you?

- Acts 9:17. Describe the eight reasons why it is safe to assume Paul spoke in tongues.

- Acts 10:44. Describe the three reasons why the Holy Spirit brought Cornelius' house into a new and personal relationship with God.



- Acts 19:2. Describe in your own words the three facts about the question Paul asked.

- Acts 19:6. How many years after the first outpouring in Acts 2 did this event occur? Why is this time lapse significant?

- Read the *FireBible* chart “The Work of the Holy Spirit” and write out five to seven observations regarding Holy Spirit and His role throughout history.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 9: PRAYING IN TONGUES AND THE GIFT OF TONGUES

Main Idea: The Holy Spirit is a **person**, not a doctrine or a debate. The Holy Spirit is a person with whom you need to develop a relationship. Some people's relationship is hindered because they believe the issue of spiritual language is confusing. The reason for the confusion is usually due to fear and/or church traditions. But Scripture declares, "God is not a God of confusion" (1 Corinthians 14:33) What that means is that if there is any confusion about the subject, it is not of God. This lesson looks at what Scripture says about the Baptism in Holy Spirit. As you study, ask God to help you understand what His Word is saying to you.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12-14





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

An often-debated passage of Scripture regarding prayer language is 1 Corinthians 12-14. The debate is between praying in tongues as a sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gifts of tongues which is for public use in a worship service.

Before we explore the debate further, it's essential to be aware of the danger of **proof texting**—using a single line of Scripture to prove an argument without considering the context or full meaning. However, this study is built on the hermeneutical principle that Scripture interprets Scripture. If you're going to understand a Scripture, doctrine, or issue, more than one passage of Scripture is needed to define your understanding. In fact, the whole of Scripture defines your understanding because all Scripture is given to you to help you understand who God is and what He wants you to do. This means you have to be a diligent Bible student to have an accurate understanding of the Holy Spirit.

Here's some background context to this passage in 1 Corinthians. The church at Corinth was being undermined by immorality and spiritual immaturity. In fact, Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to correct the church's many errors. Some were **abusing the Lord's supper** (like it was dinner, no reverence, no confession of sin); some were involved in **sexual immorality** in the church (even leaders in the church); and some were **abusing the spiritual gifts** in public services.

At Corinth, instead of the gifts building up and unifying the church, they were splitting it. Today, when gifts are abused in the church, it can cause similar trouble. This may be why so many churches avoid the gifts altogether. But in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul provides specific information and rules for the **gift of tongues in corporate worship**.

For the most part, these chapters do **not** address tongues as a prayer language, which everybody receives as part of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Paul addresses private prayer language only once in 1 Corinthians 12-14. To



teach otherwise, one would have to totally ignore the context of what Paul is saying. Furthermore, the book of Acts clearly shows speaking in tongues as the sign for those receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. These chapters primarily deal with the spiritual gift of tongues (public use of tongues). In Paul's day, spiritual gifts had become symbols of spiritual power. People believed that if they had these gifts, they were more spiritual than those who did not.

The church at Corinth was spiritually immature, and Paul sharply corrected them. You see, when we do not understand what the Word of God teaches, we tend to do what we **feel** is correct. But your relationship with the Holy Spirit should go beyond what you **feel**. This is why Paul addresses the believer's right attitude and right method of the public use of tongues.

Paul describes the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:1, 8-11. Take a moment to read these verses. From the verses you just read, one can deduce that Paul was referring to the public use of tongues. The moment it requires interpretation at a gathering of believers, tongues has ceased to be a private prayer language and crossed into the realm of the spiritual gifts. Paul quickly adds that not all receive this gift of public speaking in tongues with interpretation, telling the church in verse 11, "All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually **as he wills.**" Paul is saying the believer does not get to pick which gift they want because that decision is up to the Holy Spirit.

Paul is clear in 1 Corinthians 12:28-31:

And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Remember, that tongues in this passage is referring to the spiritual gift. As a believer, you should earnestly seek all of the gifts, but ultimately the Holy Spirit decides which gift is needed at the moment.

Unfortunately, the verses above have been used as a proof text to argue that not every believer has to speak with tongues when they are Spirit filled. But honest students of the Bible will ask, "Was Paul speaking about tongues as a gift in a public service or as a personal prayer language?" Based on the



context of the entire chapter, Paul is addressing the spiritual gift of speaking in tongues in a public service. Paul's notion is clear that not everyone who speaks in tongues in a prayer language has the spiritual gift of speaking out in a public service.

In the Corinthian church, errors and abuses were taking place. Some taught that everyone had the public gift of speaking in tongues. As a result of this teaching, there was confusion. Paul's point was that in the same way not everyone is an apostle or worker of miracles, not everyone will have the privilege of being used to speak out in tongues in a public service for the purpose of interpretation.

Another passage some have used to teach that the gifts have ceased is 1 Corinthians 13:1 and 8 that says,

“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal . . . Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.”

Again, one needs to look at the context to determine whether Paul was referencing praying in tongues or the gift of tongues. It appears the context is about the gift of tongues because the passage also mentions prophecy, another public gift.

1 Corinthians 13, also known as “the love chapter,” may be one of the most common Bible passages to be taken out of context, often at weddings. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Here, Paul is not actually talking about romantic love. He is speaking about the *agape* type of love, out of which the other types of love, including romantic love, should come. The problem with the church of Corinth is they did not practice *agape* love. Instead, the church was measuring their spirituality by the spiritual gifts that flowed in the church and out of their life. The people were being prideful, haughty, selfish, and cutting each other off to be heard in the public service. Paul admonished them that their expressions really do not amount to much. In other words, if you do not have a 1 Corinthians 13 love, your Acts 2 experience is worthless. It is not one or the other, it is both. God wanted the Corinthian church to have the gifts of the Spirit, but more importantly, He wanted them to walk in love.

If God is the source of all the gifts of the Spirit, then love is the source. In fact, the first word Paul uses when he discusses the fruit of the spirit is love. It would probably be safe to assume he placed more importance on the fruit of



the Spirit than the gifts. It stands to reason that love should be the motivation for the use of all of these gifts. A spiritual gift is a tool from God; it is up to you to decide how you will use it.

God loves you enough to heal you, to give you a prophetic word, or to give you a word of wisdom when needed. To remove the love of God from these gifts causes confusion, chaos, and trouble. Often, Pentecostal churches measure themselves by how many messages in tongues are given in their services. But Paul gives a different measurement—love.

The only time Paul spoke about praying in tongues for private devotions in these chapters is in 1 Corinthians 14:18–19 where he wrote, “I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue.” You can know this is true because in verse 19, Paul says “in the church.” This would imply that in verse 18, Paul is at least implying the inclusion of tongues in private prayer.

Another question to ask is, “How many of the believers in the Corinthian church spoke in tongues in private prayer? From verse 18, the implication is that every one of them had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

The problem in the Corinthian church was not that they were speaking in tongues. The problem was that they were abusing spiritual language and spiritual gifts in the church. Paul made the shift between verse 18 and 19 from devotional tongues to the gift of tongues in the church. Remember, the context of these verses was the Corinthians’ pride in their ability to speak with tongues, to the point of loudly interrupting the pastor, bishop, or overseer as they preached God’s Word. In fact, this spiritual gift dominated the whole service.

The public gift of tongues has a purpose: to be a sign to unbelievers. The only reason for speaking out in tongues in a public service is to be a sign to people who do not believe in Christ, to grab their attention. Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 14:21–23:

“In the Law it is written, ‘By people of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people, and even then they will not listen to me, says the Lord.’ Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers. If, therefore, the whole church comes together and all speak in tongues, and outsiders or unbelievers



enter, will they not say that you are out of your minds?”

Here Paul is once again referencing the **spiritual gift** of tongues. From these texts, some people teach that the believer today should not speak in tongues at all in church because doing so would confuse unbelievers. However, that is opposite of what Paul taught. Paul taught that the gift of tongues was to grab the attention of unbelievers. So, if God put this gift in the church to be a sign to unbelievers, why would you hide it from them? In the Old Testament, when the people heard the sound of a foreign tongue, it was a sign to the people that you better pay attention because judgment is coming. Could this be the same in the church today that when someone speaks in a foreign tongue, God is trying to get someone’s attention?

The Scriptures are clear that while there is a similarity between the two manifestations of *glossalalia*—same Greek word is used to describe both the public gift and the prayer language—there is a difference in purpose and use. When individuals were baptized in the Holy Spirit, tongues were always present as the initial physical evidence to both the individual being baptized and others present. No interpretation was given in those instances because the primary purpose of the tongues had been accomplished—as the sign the Holy Spirit had been received. There is no indication that the Early Church leaders involved in these outpourings expected interpretation, or that they saw this as the imparting of the public gift of tongues.

Remember from Acts, on the Day of Pentecost, all one-hundred and twenty from the Upper Room spoke with tongues when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. At the outpouring in Caesarea (Acts 10:46), people spoke in tongues simultaneously. At the outpouring in Ephesus (Acts 19:6), twelve received the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues. Carl Brumback adds,

If all speaking with tongues is the gift of the Holy Spirit, then all these believers, apostles included, were out of order. How are we to explain this contradiction between apostolic instruction in 1 Corinthians and the practices of the book of Acts unless we make a distinction between speaking in tongues as a sign of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the public speaking in tongues with interpretation as a spiritual gift. Certainly, the Holy Spirit would not inspire and give utterance in Acts and then inspire Paul to condemn it in 1 Corinthians.¹

Upon examination of the entirety of Scripture, one discovers to speak

¹ Carl Brumback, *Tongues, Rescinded or Rejected? A Scholarly and Biblical Exposition* (Ravenhill Publishing, 2013).



in tongues in a public service is indeed permitted. Remember, Scripture interprets Scripture. A decision has to be made whether or not Paul is teaching about devotional tongues or the spiritual gift of tongues. Still, in the context of the public meeting, one must conclude that Paul is talking about the **spiritual gift** of tongues. Read what Paul asserts about this spiritual gift of tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:24–28:

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is no one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in church and speak to himself and to God.

Paul provided 1 Corinthians 12–14 to the Corinthian church to keep things in order and prevent chaos in the church. If someone speaks in tongues as a gift of the Spirit in church, Paul admonishes that there should be two or three at most. However, if there is no interpreter, the one who has the gift of tongues should keep quiet and pray in the Spirit to themselves. Paul says to remain silent if there is no interpreter because it does no good for someone to interrupt a service with a tongue if there is no interpretation.

Unfortunately, we tend to throw the baby out with the bathwater. If today's church has problems with the gifts of the Spirit, some contend that there should not be any gifts that operate in the church. But Paul warned the Corinthian church not to go to extremes and stop people from speaking in tongues. This admonition from Paul also references the gift of tongues. 1 Corinthians 14:39–40 says, "So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But all things should be done decently and in order." None of these instructions have to do with private prayer language but rather with the public display of spiritual gifts. Paul taught **do not forbid to speak with tongues**. Sadly, many of today's churches have done exactly what Paul warned the Corinthian church not to do.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

In 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul deals almost exclusively with information and rules about governing tongues as a **gift of the Spirit and its use in public services**. Consider this table for a quick, helpful look at the difference between the initial physical evidence and the gift of tongues.

Praying in tongues (The initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit)	Summary Concept (One of nine gifts)
It serves as a sign to believers that they have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.	It serves as a sign to unbelievers.
It is praise from the individual to God.	It's a gift from God to the Church.
It builds up the believer.	Not all receive this gift.
Does not require interpretation	It edifies those who hear.
It's a personal prayer language to God.	It is a message from God to the Church.
All who receive the Baptism speak in these tongues.	It requires interpretation.
	It is to be used in corporate worship according to Scriptural guidelines.



BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- What are three problems Paul addressed in the Corinthian church? What can you learn about problems in the church?

- Describe in your own words your understanding between praying in tongues and tongues as a gift of the Spirit.

- On a scale of one to four, with one being often and four being never/rarely, how often do you see the gifts of the Holy Spirit operating in your life? How can you improve their operation in your life?

- What makes tongues a spiritual gift?

- Why do you think walking in the love Paul described in 1 Corinthians 13 is essential as the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate through you and other believers?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- 1 Corinthians 12:1. Describe in your own words the four purposes of spiritual gifts.

- 1 Corinthians 12:1-6. How do the five terms the Bible uses for spiritual gifts help you gain insight about their nature and purpose?

- 1 Corinthians 12:25. Describe why spiritual gifts should be considered in the church.

- 1 Corinthians 13:1. What is the main motivation for spiritual gifts? Why do you think Paul described this as the “more excellent way?”



- 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. On a scale of one to four, with one being very often and four being rarely, rate yourself on how often you display love as an activity and behavior. Why do you think you do this? Write out a plan to improve in this area.

- 1 Corinthians 13:13. Why does God honor Christlike character more than spiritual gifts?

- 1 Corinthians 14:2. Why did Paul write this chapter? Write down in your own words your outline for chapter 14.

- 1 Corinthians 14:15. Describe your Spirit baptism journey. How does praying in tongues devotionally impact your spiritual development? How can you improve in this area?



- 1 Corinthians 14:27. What are the guiding principles for the use of spiritual gifts in the church?

- Read the *FireBible* article “Spiritual Gifts for Believers.” Write in your own words the four general perspectives on the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to believers.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 10: LUKE, PAUL, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Main Idea: Attacks have been thrown against the message of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, which is God's answer to the needs of people to walk in His power. For every call to repentance and every Scripture that points out the plan of salvation, the epistles have an equal portion of Scripture admonishing every believer to be filled with the Spirit and to walk with the Spirit in a life of fruitful service. If the purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to empower men to carry on God's work, then this power is essential in your life. While there are many perspectives available for understanding the Baptism in Holy Spirit, this study focuses on the Pentecostal view and why its interpretation of Scripture regarding the Baptism is the correct one.

Scripture: Luke 1:1-4; 11:13; 12:11-12; 21:14-15; 24:49; Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-4; 19:1-7 Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:16-17;





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Every fundamental church recognizes the day of Pentecost as the birthday of the Church. Therefore, it is no surprise that the enemy would try to frighten people with the very name **Pentecost**, which may sound foreign or strange to some. However, Pentecost is simply the name of the Jewish feast which came fifty days after Passover. It was during this feast that God poured out His Spirit on the Early Church. Churches cease to be effective and eventually may even close their doors when they cease to honor the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Could a reason why many men do not seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit be that they do not feel like they are good enough? The truth is, God does not give you His Holy Spirit because you are good enough. God gives you His Holy Spirit so you can become what you could **never** become without the Holy Spirit.

Author Robert Menzies said, "The Pentecostal movement is facing an identity crisis."¹ Without a strong theological base, enthusiastic movements tend to dissipate. Thus, the future of the Pentecostal movement remains uncertain in the eyes of some. If Spirit-filled believers do not pursue finding out the **why** of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, then the **what** and **how** of their ministry will once again fade into history. If we are going to continue to **experience** the ministry of the Holy Spirit then we must **understand** that ministry as it is taught in the Bible. It is **both** the Scriptures and the Spirit that help us grow.

In Luke 24, Jesus had previously died and been resurrected, and is now talking with His disciples right before His ascension into heaven. For three-and-a-half years, Jesus taught His disciples the truth about the Kingdom of God. Yet, even when He hung on the Cross, the disciples did not understand what Jesus had taught. They could not comprehend the fact Jesus was not going to overthrow the Roman government and establish His kingdom by force. The disciples never could capture the idea that Jesus would establish His kingdom

¹ Robert P. Menzies. Evidential Tongues: An Essay on Theological Method. <https://www.aptspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/98-2-menzies.pdf> (accessed January 21, 2020).



in the hearts of men. Then, just before Jesus ascends to heaven, He does an incredible miracle in Luke 24:45: “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”

Jesus gave His disciples a powerful tool—the Word. You would think this was all they would need to establish the church. But four verses later, Jesus promised them a second tool—the Spirit. Luke 24:49 records, “And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” If the church is going to effectively impact today’s world, it must be emphasize both the Bible and the Holy Spirit at work in the life of the follower of Christ.

The fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit takes place in Acts 1:4–5 that says,

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Some believers incorrectly argue that a spiritual language is not needed today. Their argument articulates that only the apostle Paul’s writings can be used to establish the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Since Paul wrote to teach, they surmise that his writings are the only ones viable for establishing theology. They argue that believers can exclusively take what Paul wrote and build doctrines and theologies, thus discounting the words of Jesus found in the Gospels. In contrast, authors like Luke wrote for narrative and historical purposes. Their conclusion is that what Luke wrote cannot be used to establish doctrines. This means that only from Paul can one embrace and build a doctrine on the Holy Spirit, whereas since Luke just provides accounts, his work is not viable for doctrine. This argument excludes all the writings about the Day of Pentecost in an attempt to force everything Paul and Luke said to mean the same thing.

However, you do not have to force Luke and Paul’s writings to mean the same thing just because they use similar terms. Like Paul, Luke writes as an independent person. This means if you consider what Luke wrote to be as important as what Paul wrote, then each passage becomes clear.

In fact, Paul teaches that everything that has been written in Scripture has been written as an example for you in order to warn, instruct, and teach you the truths of God. Paul himself said about Scripture:



- 1 Corinthians 10:11: Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.
- Romans 15:4: For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

In addition, the manner, style, method, and format of Luke and Acts are similar to other biblical writings that are considered viable for establishing theology. For example, if you take the works of Luke and Paul and lay them side by side, you discover they have very similar styles.

Furthermore, Luke himself states that he wrote for **both** narrative and instructional purposes. Read what he says in Luke 1:1-4:

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a **narrative** of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been **taught**.

Even the scholars who do not believe in spiritual language, believe that Luke and Acts are actually one work in two volumes. Therefore, a person can conclude that history and theology are not separate but affirm one another. Luke provides careful detail about each of the incidents of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This helps readers not only know what historically happened, but to also learn by seeing the pattern that accompanies the baptism in the Holy Spirit.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Remember the hermeneutical principle from the previous lesson that **Scripture** interprets **Scripture**? This principle also helps us understand that we shouldn't pull out one section of Scripture to build your doctrine or theology without understanding it in light of the rest of the Bible. Since Paul admonishes that all Scripture can be used for doctrine, an examination of what Luke wrote about the baptism in the Holy Spirit in his Gospel and Acts is not only acceptable, but vital.

- Jesus' promise that the disciples will be baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5)
- Fulfillment of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)
- Pattern of the baptism in the Holy Spirit described (Acts 10:44-45)
- Confirmation of those who continue to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7)
- Luke's record of promises of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13; 12:11-12; 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Describe a time in your life where you encountered someone who did not agree with Spirit baptism. Include their arguments against Spirit baptism and your response.

- Do you agree with Menzies' statement, "The Pentecostal movement is facing an identity crisis . . . largely due to the fact that theology gives direction to our experience without a strong theological base.. enthusiastic movements dissipate . . . thus, the future of the Pentecostal movement remains uncertain"? Why or why not?

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not well, how well do you use the two tools (Word and Spirit) Jesus gave you? Write out a plan to improve.



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Luke 11:13. Which Holy Spirit experience does this verse reference?
- Matthew 12:31. What is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? Describe the four-step process that leads to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.
- Luke 24:49. Where can you find the promise of Spirit baptism recorded in the Old Testament and the New Testament? Read each of those verses and write down your observations.
- Read the *FireBible* article “Jesus and the Holy Spirit.” Write in your own words the relationship Jesus had with the Holy Spirit and the practical implications this relationship had on Jesus. How can this apply to you?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 11: OBJECTIONS, MISCONCEPTIONS, AND EXCESSES REGARDING SPIRITUAL LANGUAGE

Main Idea: One reason for confusion about spiritual language is because God's people often do not understand what the Bible teaches about it. Scripture is the answer for everything, but sometimes it is hard to push past traditions and previous teaching to learn what the Bible actually says. As a result, people have been robbed of the blessing, benefits, and power that comes with spiritual language. This lesson will address four common objections, five misconceptions, and four excesses regarding spiritual language.

Scripture: Matthew 6:6; Mark 16:17-18; Luke 11:11-13; John 3:6; 14:17; Acts 8:14-17; 1 Corinthians 13:8-12; 14:2, 5, 14-19, 26, 32





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Spiritual language is something many churches address, all believing they have a correct view. Here is what one non-denominational mega-church states on their website:

Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God provides His followers with spiritual gifts which empower them to serve according to His will for their lives. These gifts are uniquely given so that each member can serve effectively in an area of God's choosing, consistent with his calling upon the believer's life, and in manner that builds up the body of Christ and edifies other believers. At the same time, few areas of teaching within the church have caused more division than the subject of spiritual gifts such as **speaking in tongues, healings, and performing miracles**. While we believe in the supernatural power of our God to communicate beyond our limitations, to heal us of all infirmities, and to humble us with demonstrations of His power over heaven and earth; we also recognize the nature of man to allow divisions to arise in the church. Therefore, as this is a non-salvation area of contention between believers, **we will not encourage tongues in any gatherings of the church body**. We will not tolerate discussions of this non-salvation issue which come up in a divisive way or in a manner which would hinder the Lord's work or cause His name to be slandered. All spiritual gifts must be used to edify Christ and his church, not the individual members.¹

If you are going to walk down the path of Spirit baptism, you must be willing to look at the Scriptures with a set of lenses that is free from your traditions. The writers of the Bible assumed readers would understand the land, the language, and the culture of what was written. To understand Scripture properly, we need to examine it through the eyes of the intended audience. Then, we can apply the knowledge to the spiritual journey.

¹ <https://www.thecreek.org/about-us#about-our-beliefs> (Accessed April 4, 2019)





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

There are four common objections and no fewer than five common misconceptions about spiritual language. In addition, there are at least three common excesses regarding speaking in tongues. Let's take a look at each of these.

OBJECTIONS

(And the misused verses that go with them.)

- The first objection is, "If Jesus did not speak in tongues, I do not have to either." (Mark 16:17-18)
- The second objection is that, "speaking in tongues is of the devil." (Luke 11:11-13)
- The third objection to speaking in tongues is, "tongues have ceased." (1 Corinthians 13:8-10)
- The fourth objection is, "only the apostles could pray for people to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit." (Acts 8:14-17)

MISCONCEPTIONS

(And the misused verses that go with them.)

- The first misconception is you are not saved unless you are baptized in the Holy spirit and speak with tongues. (John 14:17)
- The second misconception is tongues are not for everyone. (1 Corinthians 12:29-30; 14:5)
- The third misconception is that you cannot pray in tongues at will. The idea is that you have to wait for some spirit of ecstasy to come upon you. (1 Corinthians 14:14-15; 32)
- The fourth misconception is that all tongues are prayer.
- The fifth misconception is that tongues are just the ability to speak in

a foreign language. The primary reason God gives you your spiritual language is a devotional gift for you to add life to your prayer sessions. (1 Corinthians 14:2; 14)

EXCESSES

- The first excess is the idea that when you speak in tongues loudly it brings more power. God hears faith, not noise. (Matthew 6:6)
- The second excess is manifestations in the flesh. (John 3:6)
- The third excess is doing what does not edify God in the presence of the unlearned. Explanation? Example? This excess is a maturity issue. (1 Corinthians 14:15–19, 26)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Which of the four common objections to speaking in tongues have you frequently heard or experienced? What has been or would be your response?

- Which of the five common misconceptions about speaking in tongues have you frequently heard or experienced? What has been or would be your response?

- Which of the three common excesses regarding speaking in tongues have you heard or experienced? What has been or would be your response?

- On a scale of one to four, with one being regularly and four being not regularly, rate yourself on how often you pray in the Spirit. Write out a plan to improve.



USING MY FIREBIBLE

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Matthew 6:6. Why do Christians need a secret place to pray? How many times a week do you go to your secret place to pray? How can you improve?
- Luke 10:19. What do serpents and scorpions represent? How can believers have power over evil spirits?
- 1 Corinthians 14:2. Which of the two ways for understanding the phrase “speak not to man but to God” do you embrace? Why?
- 1 Corinthians 14:15. What happens to a believer when they pray on a consistent, regular basis in their spiritual language?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 12: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Main Idea: This lesson compares and contrasts the gifts and fruit of the Spirit, showing why cultivating the fruit does more to empower believers' walk with God than the seeking of spiritual gifts. You'll learn how abiding in Christ is the key to bearing the fruit of the Spirit in your own life.

Scripture: Matthew 7:15-20; 12:31-37; Luke 6:43-45; John 15:1-17; Galatians 5:22-26; Ephesians 5:8-12; Philippians 1:9-11; Hebrews 12:8-11



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Whatever type of fruit you desire, you must plant the right seed. If you desire apples you must plant an apple seed. The truth is whatever is planted is what

grows. The fruit of the Spirit is something that grows in your life as the Holy Spirit dwells in you. The phrase “fruit of the Spirit” is best understood to mean that the Holy Spirit is the source of the fruit.

The fruit of the Spirit and gifts of the Spirit have some similarities. First, the source of both is the Holy Spirit. Second, the purpose of both is to bring edification to those around them. Read what Paul wrote about the gifts and fruit in 1 Corinthians 8:1; 12:7; and 14:26. Both are perfectible. This means you should always be growing in them. Read how Paul sums it up in 2 Corinthians 3:18.

However, the fruit and gifts differ in several important ways. Fruit results from the Spirit’s indwelling, whereas gifts result from the Spirit’s empowering. All Christians are to manifest all the fruit, but not all Christians will manifest all the gifts. In addition, fruit is to be manifested continually, whereas gifts are to be manifested as the Spirit desires (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Though both are important and Scriptural, God seems to select being over doing, quality over quantity, looking for fruit brought forth from the essence of a person’s being. These are personal characteristics coming from the nature of the whole tree (Luke 6:43). The characteristics that please God in a mature life, also, are paradoxically the same characteristics that make our lives redemptive in the eyes of sinners (John 15:1-8).

This is why there is primacy to the fruit of the Spirit over the gifts of the Spirit. This in no way diminishes the importance of the gifts. They are like tools given to work in the fields to produce fruit. The Holy Spirit is manifested through both the gifts He bestows on a believer and the fruit that is growing in the life of a believer. Maturity in Christ neglects neither gifts nor fruit, but balances both of them.

The fruit produced in your life—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23)—is for the coworker, friend, or family member who is in need. As such, the fruit of the Spirit is one of the most dynamic evangelical tools God has ever created. The world is sick with sin. People around you are bogged down in debauchery, faithlessness, cynicism, and defeat. They are alienated from God, often believing the church is full of hypocrites. Nevertheless, they are searching. The fruit of the Spirit expressed in your personal character can disarm and attract those in your sphere of influence who are searching for life. The true sweetness found in the fruit of service, care, genuine love, giving, and sacrifice blows people away. When you are full of meekness, joy, peace, faith, and love,



people will ask, “Where did you get that and where can I get some?” In fact, the fruit of the Spirit may be the only way many in your life will ever get near enough to the gospel message to find out about their own sin and need for a Savior.

God teaches the paradox of fruit-bearing. American culture’s emphasis on performance and easily measured success leaves us unprepared to think about fruit properly. You do not do fruit—you are fruit. The paradox is here. The attractiveness of fruit will draw those in your sphere of influence to the place of repentance and discipleship with Jesus. When you demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit, you exemplify that you belong to Him. Read what Jesus said in John 15:13. Here is an upside down reality in the kingdom of God. Jesus does not ask you to lay down your life for heaven but for your brother. It is when you lay down your life for your brother that the heathen will be convinced they need a Savior. The proof that your life is being transformed is by the fruit you produce (1 John 3:14). When you display that fruit, your life becomes redemptive (John 13:15; 1 Thessalonians 1:7, 8).





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

If you are not careful, you could fall into the trap of neglecting the fruit of the Spirit and give priority to visible gifts of the Spirit. Closely evaluating the Scriptures will help you bring balance between the gifts and fruit of the Spirit. As you walk in balance between the two, you will develop into a fully mature believer.

The gifts of the Spirit are highly visible. They tend to be easily seen and are sometimes even noisy (1 Corinthians 13:1). God's Word teaches the need for both gifts and fruit. Public gifts are to be judged and evaluated for their meaning and appropriateness (1 Corinthians 14:29, 32) by people who are used in the operation of the gifts. While Scripture does not encourage believers to inspect people's characteristics by their gifts, it does admonish us to evaluate them by their fruit.

Consider the following thoughts and passages:

- God instructs you to be a fruit inspector. (Matthew 7:16)
- Gifts are tools like rakes and shovels that God has given the Body to help get the work done in the garden to produce fruit. (Matthew 7:16-20)
- Gifts are given to a believer and are not a sign of holiness.
- Gifts are given but fruit is grown. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Fruit bearing is nothing but hard work and God still expects you to abide in Him and bring forth fruit. (John 15:1-17)
- Fruit is not what you do. Fruit is what you are.
- Fruit is a byproduct of obedience. (John 15:4-5, 10)



BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- On a scale of one to four, with one being very good and four being not very good, how well do you consistently display the fruit of the Spirit in your life? Write out a plan to improve.

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Matthew 7:16. Which of the five traits listed have you seen in the lives of people? What was your response?

- John 15:4. With which of the four conditions to keep you connected with God do you most resonate? Why? With which do you least resonate? Why? How can you improve?

- John 15:9-10. Why must obedience and love always go together in your relationship with God?



- Read the *FireBible* article “The Acts of the Sinful Nature and the Fruit of the Spirit.” On a scale of one to four with one being very well and four being not very well, rate yourself on how well you live a lifestyle of the fruit of the Spirit. Write out a plan to improve.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 13: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LOVE

Main Idea: Love is one of the most often used, misapplied, and misunderstood words in the English language. People say they love everything from a close relative to a pair of shoes. When a word is used to mean almost anything, it means almost nothing. So how can we understand what love means as a fruit of the Spirit? Love is foundational to understanding the Bible. This lesson will help you grasp what Paul meant when he identified love as a fruit of the Spirit.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; 1 John 4:16-21



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The Greek word Paul used for love in Galatians 5:22 is *agape*. The idea of this type of love is one of action. This love is a divine attribute. Read what John wrote about love in 1 John 4:8: “Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

Love is best understood as the motivation behind the redemptive process (John 3:16). John explains love in action through the person and work of Jesus Christ. To help you understand how this type of love is best expressed in the body of Christ, read what John wrote in 1 John 3:16 and John 13:35. In addition, love defines your relationship to yourself (1 John 3:2), to God (Matthew 22:37), to your neighbor (Matthew 22:39), and to believers (John 13:35).

In fact, love for other believers is a defining aspect of the Christian experience. Read what John wrote in 1 John 4:7–8. This dimension of love is covenant love. It is a love born in the heart of God for lost humanity, revealed in His redemptive acts throughout history, and culminating in the sending of Jesus into the world as an offering for sin. It is a love incarnated in His Son Jesus, the Christ (John 14:8), which continues to be incarnated in the lives of His disciples.

INTIMACY

The concept of intimacy becomes distorted when the term *love* is abused. All too often, when the word *intimacy* is used, thoughts immediately go to sex. Today, what is missing from this word is its relational dimension.

Intimacy involves close personal interaction resulting in commitment, emotional bonding, and mutual care and concern. Such interaction requires a significant investment of time to really know a person. This is why Jesus spent nearly three years with His disciples. They ate, drank, slept, worked, and ministered together. Their lives were interwoven and inextricably linked. Intimacy involves personal feelings. While you may discuss surface topics at a social gathering, it is only when you share your feelings that intimacy grows. Through an authentic, intimate relationship, values are communicated and you begin to know a person at a deeper level.

Intimacy also involves personal care. This includes concern for a person’s physical and emotional needs. However, intimate love finds its highest expression in caring for another’s spiritual health.

In fact, nowhere is intimate love more practically expressed than in the confrontation of sin. Such confrontation is not an intrusion into the life of a



brother or sister; rather it is a responsibility that comes with being a believer in Christ.

STAYING POWER

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for God's covenant love is *chesed*. *Chesed* is God's steadfast and enduring love for His covenant people. This love pursued Israel throughout her endless cycles of rebellion. And it was this enduring love that sent Jesus to the cross. If you desire the fruit of the Spirit, especially love, to be evident in your life, you must ask yourself: What is the staying power of my love? How far am I willing to go in loving, forbearing, and restoring another? To what extent will I go to reach the lost for Christ?

As with all goals that appear far beyond reach, it is easy to become disheartened and not even try. But remember, this type of love is a fruit. Fruit is cultivated and grown. You cannot manufacture fruit. It is the natural result of a healthy fruit-bearing vine, tree, or plant. Second, this love comes from the Holy Spirit. This means He is the only one who can produce it.

So then, what is your role? Your part is to cultivate the work of the Spirit in your life by abiding in Christ (John 15:1-10).





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

As a believer, you are called to imitate the love of Christ. But what is Christ's love like? In the life and ministry of Jesus we possess the clearest revelation of God's love (John 1:18). An examination of the life of Christ can help you see the love of God as it is expressed through Jesus. This foundation provides a framework for the fruit of the Spirit that you are to express in your daily life.

- God's love is a self-giving love. (John 3:16; 15:13; 1 John 3:16).
- God's love is an intimate love. (Galatians 6:1)
- God's love as a fruit of the Spirit is an unconditional love. (Luke 23:34)
- God took the initiative to love you first. (1 John 4:19; Romans 5:8; 15:7)
- God's love involves a total or unlimited forgiveness such as we have experienced from Christ. (Colossians 3:13)
- True forgiveness sets no numerical limits. (Matthew 18:22)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 14: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: JOY

Main Idea: Joy is a vital dimension of the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of Christians. Joy has both cognitive and affective aspects. It rests on knowledge, faith, and hope. It is something to be expected and experienced. In this lesson, you will glean why it is important to have the joy of the Spirit in your life.

Scripture: Matthew 13:44; Luke 2:10; John 16:22; Romans 14:17; 8:31-39; 15:13; Galatians 5:22-23; Philippians 4:4



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The New Testament church had plenty of problems, yet the Christians were joyous. They learned that an eternal perspective is more than nice—it

is necessary. When tested and tried throughout history, Christians have triumphed as the fruit of inward joy has grown and manifested itself outwardly for other people to see. Some of their persecutors have been so affected that they were later saved.

The apostle Paul listed nine dimensions of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22–23. Joy was placed second in the qualities that comprise this growth through the Spirit, following love and preceding peace. William Morrice says, “The fact that joy (Gk. *chara*) comes second in the list shows the prominent place that it had in the thought of the Apostle Paul with regard to the Christian personality.”¹

First Corinthians 13 makes it clear that love (Gk. *agape*) is essential for the gifts of the Spirit to function properly. And in Galatians 5, love comes first among the aspects of the fruit of the Spirit. Fruit is a product of growth. Love grows. Joy grows. Peace grows. The Holy Spirit energizes and oversees this growth process in the lives of Christians.

The word for joy (Gk. *chara*) also means gladness or happiness. A similar word is rejoice (Gk. *chairō*), which also means be glad and is an expression used commonly in Greek salutations. The word *joy* now has the meaning of “intense happiness or great delight, that which gives rise to this emotion or on which the emotion centers, the outward expression of the emotion.”²

The theme of Galatians is Christian freedom. Regardless of the circumstances of life, believers should be able to rejoice or have joy in the freedom that can only be found in Jesus Christ. This joy is a fruit which needs careful cultivation in both the cognitive and affective dimensions. Joy is “feeling what you believe.”³

This means that even when everything around you in this world today seems to be falling apart, you can still grow in joy. God is in control and He is guiding the future. The realities and rewards of heaven are true. What joyous assurance!

1 William Morrice, *Joy in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1934), 114.

2 *The New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Lexicon Publications, 1989).

3 Arthur H. DeKruyter, *Journey into Joy* (Carmel, New York: Guideposts/Fleming H. Revell Co., 1985), 135.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Jesus Christ is your primary role model. In both life and death, He had joy. Working for God is joyous when you walk with God. However, even non-Christians have moments of joy. But three things make the joy of a Christian unique:

- Your place in Christ
- Your purpose in life
- Your perspective of eternity

You can grow in what you know and how you feel in these three areas because joy is both cognitive and affective. It is feeling what you know,” pairing knowledge with emotion, facts with feelings. It is a joy produced by cooperating with the Holy Spirit.

Consider the following statements from God’s Word and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you can cooperate with Him to grow in joy:

- Christians have joy because of their place in Christ. (Luke 2:10; Ephesians 2:8)
- An inward state of joy is present when a right relationship with God has begun by grace through faith. (Matthew 13:44)
- The believer in Christ is graciously given these precious qualities and needs to cultivate a continued lifestyle of growth. (John 16:22; Romans 14:17)
- A Christian has security in the love of God found in Christ; joy is a by-product. (Romans 8:31-39)
- Christians have joy because of their purpose in life. (John 15:11; 16:24)
- Joy does not stand alone. (Romans 15:13).
- Even in the midst of pain and suffering, Paul knew well that a believer can have joy. (2 Corinthians 6:10; 7:4)



- Paul learned to be content in every circumstance. (Acts 16:23-25; Philippians 4:4, 11)
- The Christian can learn to feel joy too, along with pain, suffering, and grief. (James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:8; 4:18)
- Joy is tied to hope, and hope always relates to the future. (Romans 12:12; Hebrews 12:2)
- A calculated, Christlike perspective of joy is essential. It brings into focus and into feeling part of what is yet to be fully experienced in eternity. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 15: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PEACE

Main Idea: Jesus knew the nature of the peace that the world would give. He knew the liberties His disciples enjoyed would soon be taken from them. He knew trouble and fearful times lay ahead. So, He gave them His peace to prepare them for the day when the world's peace would be gone. In this lesson, you will deepen your understanding of the peace aspect of the fruit of the Spirit.

Scripture: Isaiah 57:20-21; Matthew 5:11-12, 39-41; John 14:27; Romans 12:20; 14:21; 1 Corinthians 6:7; 2 Corinthians 10:6; 5:19-20; Ephesians 2:14-15; 6:15; James 3:18



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The peace that Jesus gives is needed when things are good, because of a human tendency toward inner restlessness and discontentment. Also, the peace Jesus gives is a calm and quietness of heart in the midst of a storm. It is a peace the world cannot give. History has proven that the peace the world gives only lasts as long as the resolve of the worldly men who make it. Peace in our time always seems to be a thing of tomorrow, and tomorrow never comes.

The peace Jesus gives is the result of a relationship with the Prince of Peace. As such, it is inward and personal. Like the fear of the Lord that initiates wisdom, this peace starts with God and cannot be received apart from a personal relationship with Him. It is as lasting as your willingness to abide in Christ and draw peace from His limitless supply. It is a personal peace that passes all understanding.

The peace the world gives fails because it leaves out the Prince of Peace. There can be no permanent peace between men until men make peace with God.

Some people mistakenly seek out noncontroversial work assignments or peaceful environments where they hope to avoid all conflict. However, this is not a peaceful world. Personalities clash and differences of opinion make for strife and division. So how can peace be achieved?

Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matthew 5:9). A peacemaker claims no rights. He refuses to become part of the problem. He refuses to think of himself. His whole concern is the reconciliation of others, and he is willing to suffer to see it done. Jesus did no wrong, yet took the blame for the wrong we had done, thus making peace. He is the first and greatest peacemaker, and He has passed on to you the work of peacemaking (2 Corinthians 5:19–20).

This means that the believer’s role as an ambassador for Christ is that of peacemaker. Today’s world is troubled with many questions and no real answers. But think of this: God has cast His church into this world with the answer to its unrest. That answer is Jesus. There is no other. You are commissioned to go into all the world with the answer.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Everybody wants peace but each on his own terms. Self-interest has stolen peace from the earth, and many will do anything to get it back. However, only two kinds of peace can be had. One is the peace Jesus gives. The other is the peace the world gives, which falls woefully short by comparison. Jesus' peace is a fruit of the Spirit and results from a relationship with Him.

Consider the following dimensions of His peace:

- It is promised. (John 14:27)
- It is personal. (Ephesians 2:14)
- It enables rejoicing under persecution. (Matthew 5:11-12)
- It enables believers to love their enemies. (Romans 12:20)
- It goes the second mile and turns the other cheek. (Matthew 5:39-41)
- It refuses to go to court with a brother when wronged. (1 Corinthians 6:7)
- It places no stumbling block before a brother. (Romans 14:21)
- It soothes. (Ephesians 2:14-15; James 3:18)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 16: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PATIENCE

Main Idea: Patience is needed most when Christians feel least like exercising it. In fact, it would be fair to say a believer's greatest need for patience is at the low point of their spiritual life when they cling to God, yet do not feel the assurance that God is near. In this lesson, you will discover what it means to have patience as a fruit of the Spirit and how you can cooperate with the Spirit's work in you to produce patience.

Scripture: Exodus 34:6; Psalms 86:15; 103:8; 145:82 Peter 3:15



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

What is patience in the mind of the apostle Paul as he tells the Galatians and us: "The fruit of the Spirit is . . . patience" (Galatians 5:22)? The Greek



word used here is *makrothumia*. Translated as patience, long-suffering, or forbearance, it is a compound word consisting of *makros* (long or big) and *thumia* (temper). Thus, it basically means having a long fuse as opposed to being short-tempered.

When used in reference to God, *makrothumia* is often translated “longsuffering” or “slow to anger.” William Barclay explained that the greatest fact about this word is that it “describes the character of God himself. It is an attribute of Yahweh.”¹

It’s important to understand that the biblical use of the word *makrothumia* does not mean passivity or resignation. In other words, patience is more than simply gritting one’s teeth and enduring pain or suffering.

In the Scriptures, *makrothumia* is often used in reference to people, that is, being patient with people rather than with things or events. Barclay also explained that patience is the grace of a person who could revenge a wrong but does not. It is long-suffering which endures injuries and evil deeds without being provoked to anger or revenge. It’s a steadfastness of soul under provocation to right a wrong or even the score with someone, but choosing not to do so.

Patience is also the tenacity with which a Christian’s faith holds to the promises of God even though he may feel much more like the conquered, instead of the conqueror.²

This kind of patience does not come easily. You develop it by walking closely with Him. It comes from trusting in Him even when the sunshine of His love and blessing seems obscured by a dark cloud of problems and difficulties hanging over your head. The Christian is patient when in the darker events of life, he does not lose control but remains firm in the conviction that obedience to God is required at all times and in all circumstances.³

Patience continues to trust when that trust does not seem to be yielding the desired results. It continues in obedience to a loving God whether signs of that love are discernible or not.

1 William Barclay, *The Letters to Galatians and Ephesians*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976), 51.

2 W. Hermann, “Patience” in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 8, ed. Samuel M. Jackson, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 381.

3 W. Hermann, “Patience” in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, vol. 8, ed. Samuel M. Jackson, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), 382.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Patience means different things to different people. What is patience for a three-year-old waiting for his birthday or Christmas? In a time of war, what is patience for a family waiting for the return of a loved one from battle? What is patience for a pastor who has a vision for what a church can be and do in their community? Yet, he must wait patiently praying, explaining, encouraging, challenging, and building a consensus until others commit to that vision and help realize it.

Throughout history, God has always been ready to grant forgiveness and bestow grace on His people. To this day, the majestic, omnipotent God graciously restrains His righteous wrath and offers pardon and forgiveness to whoever will come through repentance and accept His grace.

God is infinitely patient (slow to anger); how can we possibly hope to obtain even a small measure of that kind of patience in our own hearts? We can because He grants it. You develop patience through trust and obedience to Him. It is the fruit of His Spirit working within you.

Consider the following aspects of God's patience, and ask the Holy Spirit how He wants to help you grow in patience:

- God's patience is full of compassion. (Exodus 34:6)
- God's patience is full of love. (Psalms 86:15, 103:8; 145:8)
- God's patience is an opportunity for people to trust and repent. (2 Peter 3:15)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Exodus 34:6. What are three things that are united with truth, holiness, and justice?

- Psalm 145:8. When God sees misery, what does it bring out of Him? What is God's response when you offend Him and request His forgiveness?

- James 5:7. What are some things patience gives you the ability to accomplish?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 17: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: KINDNESS

Main Idea: This lesson enables you to learn how to show kindness in all your relationships as you sincerely seek His assistance. You will explore the enabling power of the Holy Spirit's work in the area of kindness.

Scripture: Proverbs 11:17; 15:1; Ezekiel 36:26; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:12, 13; Titus 3:5



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The man clutched his dying son and ran through the hot dust for two miles until he reached Africa's Baragwanath Hospital. But by that time, he knew it was too late. He sadly turned homeward with the cold baby in his arms. The child had died of gastroenteritis. Vusamazulu Mutwa, a Bantu native, tearfully built

a crude coffin and prepared his tiny son's body for burial. To the Bantu, proper burial is vital. To be buried in an unknown grave is the deepest disgrace that can befall him. But a Bantu has no access to any cemetery unless he belongs to a recognized church and the funeral is conducted by a minister. A well-known authority has said, "Determination to have a proper burial is a strong reason why natives turn to Christianity."¹

The grief-stricken parents went to their Christian pastor, whose church the wife had attended for many years; the father had never accepted the faith. When they asked for a funeral, the pastor refused without explanation. Later Mutwa wrote, "Strangely, the priest knew exactly what he was doing to me when he refused to bury my son. For over the years, I had explained to him all the laws and customs of the Bantu. He refused simply because I was not, with the rest of my family, a member of his church."

Mutwa later wrote an essay called "Why Christianity Has Failed in Africa." It is part of his book, *Africa Is My Witness*, which charges, "The culprits are those petty dictators and sadists who wear their white collars the wrong way round."²

This abridged story from Charles Hembree's book, *Fruits of the Spirit*, vividly illustrates the cruelty Christians, often unintentionally, inflict on others. By contrast, the Bible emphasizes kindness. It is to be a major Christian virtue, so important that Paul labeled it a fruit of the Spirit.

The Greek term for kindness (*chrestotes*) appears ten times in the New Testament. Like the word love (*agape*), kindness is closely related to the Hebrew word, *chesed*, in the Old Testament, which stands for God's covenant love. Commenting on *chesed*, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament states, "loving-kindness—is not far from the fullness of the meaning of the word."³

The Bible's emphasis on kindness sounds good in theory, but with so many instances of church-driven cruelty throughout history, what does it look like for Christians to be kind in practice? Does the Holy Spirit actually help you to develop kindness? What if you're not a person who is naturally kind?

Peter Ainslie, in his book, *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*, says, "No influence is so powerful in human society as practicing kindness," and illustrates with the following story:

1 Charles Hembree, *Fruits of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), 65.

2 Charles Hembree, *Fruits of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), 65-66.

3 R. Laird Harris, "hsd," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltkl (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 305.



A rail fence between two Virginia farms had settled and needed repair. The cattle from one farm wandered into the cornfield of the other, doing considerable damage. The farmer who suffered the loss wrote a severe threatening letter to his neighbor who owned the cattle. The neighbor responded by letter, expressing deep regrets, offering to pay the damages and reminding the farmer that through the years his cattle, too, had made like depredations on him. He had never notified him, however, but had simply repaired the fence, knowing that those situations sometimes occur despite precautions. The next morning, the offended farmer begged his neighbor's forgiveness, and from that time on they were the best of friends.⁴

⁴ Peter Ainslie, *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit*, (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1968), 47.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

It is impossible to produce genuine, Christ-like kindness as described in Galatians 5:22 by yourself; it requires a new heart. Next, a growth process will follow which can only take place as you submit to and obey the Holy Spirit. He nurtures those positive character changes that are reflected in your relationships. Kindness, or the lack of it, makes a difference in your life.

You, like the Bantu father who was denied a Christian funeral for his son, may also experience cruelty in the church. When that happens, you need the powerful ministry of the Holy Spirit to walk through those hurts without becoming bitter in the end. If you are willing, He enables you to respond in love and kindness. He gives the strength to forgive, and heals painful memories.

You must purpose in your heart not to be part of the cruelty in your church and world. Rather, you must be sensitive to people's needs, showing kindness to those you serve, friends and enemies alike.

May you resolve, in your cultivation of the fruit of kindness, to seek the inexhaustible resources of the gentle, yet dynamic Holy Spirit whom God has so graciously poured out on us to manifest kindness.

Consider the following aspects of kindness:

- Kindness begins in the heart. (Ezekiel 36:26; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:12-13 Titus 3:5)
- Kindness is produced through a growth process that results in changed behavior. (Ephesians 5:18, 21, 25, 6:1,4-5)
- Abiding in Christ through the Spirit empowers us to live in obedience to all His commandments. (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:12-13)
- Kindness produces results. (Proverbs 11:17; 15:1)
- Kindness opens doors for service. (Acts 4:37)
- Kindness demonstrates Christ to the world.



BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Describe kindness in your own words.

- Under the Crosshair section, with which point do you most resonate? Why?

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not very well, how well do you show kindness? Write out a plan to improve.

USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Ezekiel 36:26. What type of heart does God want to give you?



- Ephesians 5:18. What should Christians live their life under? Why?

- Proverbs 15:1. What does a gracious and kind response encourage? Why do you think it works that way?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 18: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GOODNESS

Main Idea: What do you think of when you hear the word “goodness” or the phrases “good sermon” or “good job”? Something good meets a certain standard, someone’s expectations. And generally, a good deed benefits someone in some way.

The meaning of goodness often depends on the context. A good book for scholarly research is quite different from a good book for bedtime reading. What is good recreation for one may not be for another. And when it comes to characterizing a person’s goodness, the meaning can feel even harder to pin down. In this lesson, you will explore biblical goodness—a fruit the Holy Spirit wants to produce in you.

Scripture: Genesis 50:20; Exodus 33:19; Deuteronomy 30:15; Psalm 86:5; Amos 5:4-15; Matthew 25:21; Luke 8:15, 18-19; Acts 11:24; Romans 5:7; 7:18-21; 15:14; Ephesians 4:25; 5:5-12; 3 John 11





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The Greek word for goodness in Galatians 5:22 is *agathosune*. Besides being used in this passage, it occurs about a dozen times in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Old Testament from around 200 BC. The idea of goodness was not new to Israel's culture. However, secular Greek writers did not know the depths of God's definition of moral goodness.

The root adjective of this word, *agathos*, was used in the Greek culture for practical goodness in the sense of a good result, a benefit, or what is called a blessing; for moral goodness; and for something pleasing to the gods. There is another word for good, *kalos*, which some say emphasizes the aesthetic angle; but it can be used interchangeably with *agathos* in Paul's letters and in the Gospels.

The Hebrew word for good is *tov* and has about the same range of meaning as has been discussed for the English and Greek words. The first place in the Old Testament where something is called good is Genesis 1. As God spoke into existence each part of creation, He saw that it was good. What does this mean? How could something God made have been bad or evil? The meaning of goodness here involves expected function. God's creation did what He intended it to do. It accomplished its purpose. It met His expectations. And that is one of the basic ideas of the goodness the Spirit wants to manifest in your life.

A demonstration of God's kind of goodness is called for in Galatians 6 where Paul appeals for gentle and humble ministry to others who are stumbling. You are to carry each other's burdens and care enough to get involved with one another to prevent moral and spiritual ruin.

In Galatians 6:7-10, Paul writes,

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will



from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

You must keep sowing to the Spirit, which means you must keep seeking God and letting His qualities be developed in you and flow through you by the Spirit. When you do, you will benefit others; you will reach out beyond your own selfish needs and be self-giving, or generous as some translations refer to this fruit. God’s goodness goes beyond what is legally right, goes the extra mile, and gives what is needed and what will benefit, build up, and bless others.

The fruit of the Spirit must continually be cultivated. You do not produce them once for all time. You need to sow to the Spirit continually so goodness will be expressed in your life instead of selfish qualities. When you sow to the Spirit by meditating on God’s qualities through the Word, you will bear fruit that is seen in kind, generous, beneficial acts toward others. You will help others experience God’s forgiving, restoring love in Christ through faith. You will also live a morally pure life according to God’s holiness. Bearing goodness means God can depend on you to be honest, repent of sin, and turn away from evil. You need to continually seek to express this goodness in your responses and actions toward others.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

In Galatians 5, Paul clarifies that the gospel message of salvation is received by grace through faith, and not by keeping the law. He shows that the gospel means freedom from bondage to the law, freedom from condemnation, and freedom from bondage to our sinful nature. In Galatians 5:6, Paul says that what matters is faith working through love. This freedom does not mean license to do as you please, he says in Galatians 5:13, but to serve one another in love. You are exhorted in Galatians 5:16–25 to walk in the Spirit, or live by the Spirit, and bear good fruit. This is the opposite of living by the sinful nature, which expresses itself through things like sexual immorality, hurting other people with strife, and wild, destructive behavior from drunkenness.

Paul's list of the fruit of the Spirit, like his list of the works of the sinful nature, seems to have a lot of overlap. Goodness following right after kindness implies a close association. To understand goodness, you must understand all the fruit.

Consider the following:

- God's good purpose in every situation is ultimately to save lives. (Genesis 50:20)
- God calls His people to choose His way, which will be of great benefit to them rather than great harm. (Deuteronomy 30:15)
- The character of God defines moral goodness. (Exodus 33:19)
- There is an overlapping of goodness with other fruit of the Spirit such as kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and, of course, love. (Psalm 86:5)
- Goodness describes God's acts on behalf of His people, the benefits of His salvation. (Psalm 23; Nehemiah 9:25, 35)
- Seeking good meant seeking to benefit rather than harm the needy, thus demonstrating the kind of saving, redemptive purpose God has. (Amos 5:4–15)
- Goodness involves going beyond the mere requirements. (Matthew 25:21)



- Goodness involves honestly receiving God's Word repentantly, then responding in faith and obedience, and accomplishing His purpose for one's life. (Luke 8:15)
- True goodness can only flow out of a life right with God and yielded to Him. (Luke 18:18-19; 3 John 11; Acts 11:24)
- Goodness goes beyond righteousness. (Romans 5:7)
- In our sinful, selfish human nature, there is no motivation to live God's way and accomplish His purposes. (Romans 7:18-21)
- Goodness is to be expressed in your life in specific ways. (Romans 15:14; Ephesians 4:25, 29; 5:5-12)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 19: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: FAITHFULNESS

Main Idea: Faithfulness is both an attitude and an action shown toward God and toward others. In this lesson, you will ascertain what faithfulness means as a fruit of the Spirit.

Scripture: Psalm 126:5-6; Luke 19:11-17; 16:1-17; 1 Corinthians 4:1; 2 Timothy 2:2



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Faith, as it appears in Galatians 5:22, includes the concepts of faithfulness and obedience. In this particular instance, it is contrasted with works of the flesh (acts of sinful nature). The nine fruit of the Spirit can be divided into three groups for ease of study and consideration. Love, joy, and peace reflect our

relation to God. Patience, kindness, and goodness can be seen more in our relation to others. Faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control have more to do with the regulation and conduct of your individual Christian life.

The Greek word for faithfulness is *pistis*, translated primarily as “a form of persuasion.”¹ In this passage, the focus is on the concept of trustworthiness, trustfulness, and reliability.² Paul would not agree with the Greek philosopher Plato that virtue comes by recalling innate ideas; nor would he affirm the position of Aristotle that a virtuous life is the result of good habits alone. Remember, we cannot produce the fruit of the Spirit in our own power. However, this Christian grace of faithfulness certainly can be cultivated by cooperating with the Holy Spirit in obedience and trust.

If you were not required to account for your actions, responsibility would be meaningless. You must give an account of your time, talents, homes, bodies, speech, and possessions. You must be accountable for everything God has entrusted to you. True leadership is achieved in selfless service to others and is wrapped in humility. You can have selfish ambition to control others, to enjoy power for power’s sake, and to be unscrupulous or manipulative in control of other people. Jesus gave a different standard to His followers which was the one who would be the greatest shall be the servant of all.

1 W.E. Vine, M.F. Unger, and W. White, *Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1985), 222.

2 R. Bultmann, in George Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1985), 853.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The full extent of your influence through faithfulness may not always be known. The story is told of the time Lyman Beecher was engaged to preach on a wintry day, and there happened to be only one hearer. He went through the service as if he had a large audience. About twenty years later, a stranger in Ohio reminded him of that wintry day, saying, "I am the one person who was in that service. Your sermon saved my soul, and I too became a minister. The converts of your sermon, sir, are scattered all over the state of Ohio."

Consider the following:

- Trustworthiness of our example. (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:2)
- Trustworthiness of our stewardship. (Luke 19:11-17; 1 Corinthians 4:1)
- Trustworthiness of our reliability. (Luke 16:1-13)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Describe faithfulness in your own words.

- Under the Crosshair section, with which point do you most resonate? Why?

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not very well, how well do you show faithfulness? Write out a plan to improve.

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not very well, rate yourself on each level of being faithful in training believers. Write out a plan to improve.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 20: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GENTLENESS

Main Idea: Number eight in the list of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) is gentleness or meekness. What exactly does this quality look like? Certainly, in the biblical sense it is not weakness, nor is it self-debasing or a belittling of oneself. Gentleness includes true humility that does not consider itself too good or too exalted for humble tasks. In this lesson, you will begin to understand what gentleness or meekness is.

Scripture: Psalm 45:4; 1 Corinthians 4:21; 2 Corinthians 10:1; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; 2 Timothy 2:25; Titus 3:2; James 3:13; 1 Peter 3:15–16; 2 Peter 1:5–11



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The eighth fruit of the Spirit is translated “meekness” or “gentleness” depending on your Bible translation. The Greek word for gentleness is *prautēs*. However, because the English language has changed so much since the days of King James and Shakespeare, today’s translations fail to capture the intended meaning of this word. The common dictionary definition of meekness as it is used today is “deficient in spirit and courage.” That is a far cry from the meaning of *prautes*.

Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary offers an older meaning for “meek” as “enduring injury with patience and without resentment.”¹ This is closer to the meaning of the biblical word, but the Greek is much more positive. Gentleness is never self-important but is considerate, courteous, and modest, yet willing to try when a job needs to be done. Aristotle gave its classic definition as halfway between excessive anger and indifference.² That is, he felt a gentle person could be angry at the right time and submissive at the right time. Classical Greek also used it of animals that were powerful, yet tamed and under control. *The Interpreter’s Bible* says it is the opposite of *hubris*, the Greek word for haughty, boastful insolence.³

Myer Pearlman, quoting Donald Gee, gives a good illustration for gentleness:

A guide was taking a group of visitors through a factory. One of the things he showed them was a giant steam hammer capable of flattening an automobile. Then the guide put down a walnut and had the hammer break the shell without hurting the meat of the nut. What a great example of gentleness as power under perfect control!⁴

1 <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/meek> (Accessed January 21, 2020).

2 Arndt Bauer, Danker Gingrich, *A Greek Lexicon to the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 699.

3 Raymond T. Stann, *The Interpreters Bible*, “Galatians, Exegesis,” (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1953, Vol. 10), 569.

4 Myer Pearlman, *How to Speak Effectively* (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1949), 51.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Gentleness is never a false modesty, a self-depreciation, or a spineless refusal to stand for anything. Gentleness is never a cowardly retreat from reality, which substitutes a passive selfishness for real meekness, avoiding trouble in ways that allow even greater trouble to develop. Neither is it a false humility that refuses to recognize God has given us talents and abilities or that refuses to use them for His glory.

The Bible says Moses excelled in the meekness that is gentleness (Numbers 12:3), and as a result, God gave him a high position. It is hard for to be gentle toward those who attack you. But, Moses did not try to defend himself. He was gentle toward Miriam and Aaron and let God take care of the situation. Gentleness includes the idea that we do not care about what happens to our honor as much as what happens to God's honor and what happens to others.

Jesus showed true gentleness both in the midst of conflict and in the midst of popularity. His healings and miracles often brought the crowds to a high pitch of enthusiasm. But He refused to let them make Him the kind of king they wanted. In Matthew 12:16–21, He quoted to them Isaiah 42:1–4 that says,

Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law.

Jesus knew who He was, but He was gentle and humble, which is in stark contrast to those who today exalt themselves and think themselves above the requirements of holiness and justice. Jesus' awareness of His power enabled Him to be gentle with those in need. The bruised reed He would not crush but would fully restore. The flickering wick of a lamp He would not put out but would cause it to burn brightly again. His gentleness works. It brings forth



righteousness, and it will bring forth justice in the earth as He gently takes each sinner and makes them whole.

Consider the following aspects of gentleness and ask the Holy Spirit to grow this fruit in your life:

- Gentleness is not weakness. (Psalm 45:4; 1 Corinthians 4:21)
- With the gentleness of Christ, you can triumph powerfully. (2 Corinthians 10:1)
- Gentleness should be used in restoration of a person who has stumbled. (Galatians 6:1)
- Gentleness causes you to be able to fully submit to the will of God in your relation to Him and others. (Ephesians 4:2-3)
- Gentleness needs our cooperation for its development. (Colossians 3:12)
- You have to take to yourself the fruit of the Spirit and exercise your faith to develop them. (2 Peter 1:5-11)
- Gentleness causes you to rush toward those in need while keeping your own feelings under control. (Titus 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:25; James 1:21; 3:13; 1 Peter 3:15-16)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Ephesians 4:3. How should you maintain unity? What is spiritual unity?

- 2 Peter 1:5. What does the phrase “make every effort” mean? How can this play out in your daily life?

- 1 Peter 3:15. Why is it imperative that you speak about spiritual things with gentleness and respect?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 21: FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: SELF-CONTROL

Main Idea: By listing self-control last in Galatians 5:22-23, the apostle Paul is deliberately emphasizing it as the capstone of all the graces of the Spirit. While the fruit of the Spirit reflects the Holy Spirit's maturing work in an individual's life, they also reflect maturity in a person's relationships with others. In this lesson, you will begin to understand what the fruit of self-control fully entails.

Scripture: Galatians 5:13-26; 2 Timothy 1:7



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

In this life, no one produces all the fruit of the Spirit in equal measure. Some speculate that Paul might have lost control of his temper when he had a sharp disagreement with Barnabas over whether to invite John Mark to join them for

another missionary journey (Acts 15:36–41). In regard to becoming perfect in this life, he wrote to the Philippian believers, “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own” (Philippians 3:12).

The Spirit of Christ who works in your heart to help you live above sinful practices, enables the fruit of self-control to grow for God’s glory. As a result, you can model God’s values, demonstrate in your behavior His power to aid you daily, and more effectively share His love for others. No wonder human relationships become the battleground for demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit, particularly self-control. After all, Jesus himself said: “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).

Self-control, or temperance, can be simply defined as the mastery of oneself, the capacity of individuals to so restrain their own emotions, desires, and impulses that they can serve others. The lack of such control in today’s culture, be it related to chemical abuse, overeating, or a host of other unhealthy behaviors, should concern every Christian, indeed every congregation of believers who wish to be a lighthouse of God’s grace to those who are out of control.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The biblical understanding of the term, self-control, requires crucifixion of the sinful or lower nature by divine grace as you surrender yourself to the Lord. In Galatians 5:19–21, Paul contrasts the sanctified life with characteristics of the old life: “sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.” All these behaviors reflect a life not controlled by the Holy Spirit and were common in New Testament times.

Living a Christian life was no small problem for many in the congregations to whom Paul wrote. Yielding to sinful passions was the order of the day. Believers who did not come from a Jewish background, where the precepts of the Old Testament were rigorously followed probably found the level of personal restraint required of a Christian especially difficult to sustain. And it is in one’s own power.

But consider these crucial things Paul taught about self-control:

- Self-control is undergirded by the power of God as believers yield themselves to the Lord in obedience to His will. (Galatians 5:16, 19–21; Philippians 2:13; Romans 8:9; 12:2).
- Self-control enables the believer to overcome sinful and destructive habits, focus on ministering to others, build up the Body of Christ, and live in mutual submission to others. (Galatians 5:13–14; Ephesians 4:28; 5:21).
- A Christian should not assume maintaining self-control to be a purely individual matter. (Galatians 6:1, 10; 1 Corinthians 12:26; Ephesians 4:15–16; Philippians 4:2–3)
- The Body of Christ builds itself up in love as each person becomes more mature in character and behavior. (Ephesians 4:16)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
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- What verse stood out to you? Why?



- Describe self-control in your own words.

- Under the Crosshair section, with which point do you most resonate? Why?

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not very well, how well do you show self-control? Write out a plan to improve.

- On a scale of one to four, with one being very well and four being not very well, rate yourself on how well you submit to others. Write out a plan to improve.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 22: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU DISCOVER REAL LIFE

Main Idea: Life is so vast that it seems hard to describe in a single sentence. Look at how some have tried to define life. One definition describes life as what distinguishes living things from dead things. The mortal philosopher, Samuel Butler, said, “Life is one long process of getting tired.”¹ The noted poet, John Masfield, said, “Life is a long headache in a noisy street.”² While perhaps humorous, none of these definitions are exactly edifying. This lesson will help you understand that the Holy Spirit helps you discover real life.

Scripture: Romans 8:1-14

1 The Quotations Page. <http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/41486.html> (Accessed January 21, 2020).

2 QuoteFancy. <https://quotefancy.com/quote/1314619/John-Masfield-Life-is-a-long-headache-in-a-noisy-street> (Accessed January 21, 2020).





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Paul defines life when he says in Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." For Paul, his definition of life was one word, Christ. Paul's secret of life within him was the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life.

You are a steward of the life that God has given to you, and you are to be a conduit for God to use in the life of others. God is the Creator of life and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life. This life is meant to be without condemnation or guilt. In Romans 8:2, Paul mentions two laws: the law of the Spirit of life and the law of sin and death. The law of the Spirit of life is the principle of grace which is freely received from God.

Humans lived in innocence until they violated God's law and instruction. God's moral law operates in your life to reveal sin. The Law was given to you to reveal sin in your life. Also, the Law was given to you to reveal your need for a Savior. God revealed the Law to humans, and they soon discovered they were not able to keep this Law. In fact, God clearly stated that if you are guilty of breaking the Law in one point then you are guilty of breaking the whole Law. Jesus Christ came as the fulfillment of God's Law. Jesus came as the divine personification of the Law so in the fulfilling of the Law you have only the responsibility of receiving Him into your life. When you do so, His grace covers your sinful condition. This is called salvation.

The enemy attacks you in your areas of weakness. Your old, sinful nature does not accept the demands of the Law, so you do not want to do what God wants you to do. Your old nature is a Law breaker. When you allow the Holy Spirit to help you in your life, He does not need a Law, but He does need your surrender. As you walk with the Holy Spirit, there is no obligation to the Law because the Holy Spirit has set you free from the demands of the Law. Your obedience to the Law is not because you force yourself to do the Law but because you now have a recreated spirit within you.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The Holy Spirit is practical in His work and ministry in your life. Listed below are a few aspects of how the Holy Spirit helps you in practical ways. As you study the Scriptures, allow the Holy Spirit to assist you in your daily living.

But consider these crucial things Paul taught about self-control:

- The Holy Spirit helps you discover eternal life free from guilt. (Romans 8:1)
- The Holy Spirit helps you to break free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 6:23)
- The Holy Spirit helps you discover what a victorious life is.
- The Holy Spirit helps you discover resurrection life. (Romans 8:11)
- The Holy Spirit helps you not to dread death. (Philippians 1:21)
- The Holy Spirit helps you look forward to the day when the shackles of death are broken. (Romans 6:8)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 23: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU GET YOUR LIFE TOGETHER

Main Idea: In recent years, the word integrity has come to the forefront. The world is looking for people with integrity in every area: government, media, relationships, and religion. The word *integrity* comes from a Latin word that means wholeness, entirety, or complete. A related word in mathematics, *integer*, is a whole number, not a fraction.

In morality, a person with integrity is a whole person who is not a fractionized, disjointed, or disconnected. A person with integrity is not split, nor double-minded, nor doublehearted. A person with integrity is one whose life is together. In this lesson, you will learn how the Holy Spirit helps you get your life together, bringing all disintegrating parts into wholeness.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10-12





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Many people live fragmented, broken, disconnected, and disjointed lives. They apply an emotional band-aid to their emotional disorder. They have assorted substitutes that they use for a crutch or prop as they search for wholeness in their life. Many have a hard time getting their life together and maintaining emotional, moral, and spiritual integrity. Integrity is often longed for, yet so seldom attained because of sin's controlling grip.

If you sin without confessing it to God and allowing Christ's blood to cover it, you will be stricken with guilt, and God will bring conviction into your life. Adam and Eve were one with God until sin came into the garden. Once Adam and Eve disobeyed God, wholeness disappeared. They were separated from God. Adam and Eve hid themselves from God and felt convicted. Likewise, when you become separated from God because of sin, it is not long before you lose your integrity. You could easily find yourself becoming fragmented, disintegrated, and disconnected from God, then with others, and finally with yourself. This is often when a person turns to some type of God-substitute, or crutch, to avoid facing the truth. How can this be prevented?

Whether or not people fall apart, come unglued, or lose their integrity is determined by who is in control of their life. It's important to understand that although you may sin with your body, your body is not sinful but is neutral. So the question is who is control of your body? Is it your flesh or the Holy Spirit? Is it your old nature or your new nature? Is it you or is it God?

The Holy Spirit wants to get involved in every area of your life, your whole being. His involvement would include the areas of your life that are disintegrated as the result of someone else. The Holy Spirit wants access to the fractioned parts of you that are there through no fault of your own, to heal and shine His light into every hurt and every dark place of fear and anger, and integrate every difficult part of your story into His story for your life. There is a tendency to compartmentalize the Holy Spirit's role in our lives. You may let the Holy Spirit come into your life on Sunday at church, but in every other area, He is not allowed. But God has one life for you to live, and it is a life of wholeness, integrity, inner character, and commitment to Him in every aspect of your life.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The Holy Spirit gives you new desires, passions, and appetites. He does not help you overcome sin by removing your ability to sin. He removes sin from your life by giving you a new appetite. If you can ever get a glimpse of sin in its raunchy condition, it will help you on your way to wholeness for your life. The Holy Spirit does two things for you to help you have the right appetite. First, He reveals the incarnation of Jesus Christ to you. Second, He reveals the inspiration of God's Word to you. In these ways, the Holy Spirit keeps you from sin and conforms you to the nature of Jesus.

- The Holy Spirit's name tells us that He is holy. (1 Peter 1:16)
- When God's people are set apart, they are not likely to fall apart. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
- Your flesh is the enemy of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:5; John 6:63)
- Sin causes you to live a disintegrated life. (James 4:1-4)
- Your life should not be controlled by your emotions and fleshly desires (pride of life, etc.).
- The Holy Spirit will transform your life so you might be conformed. (Romans 12:1-2)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
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- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 24: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU EXPERIENCE INNER POWER

Main Idea: When you receive the Holy Spirit, you get all of Him. That includes God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, when people were ordained into the priesthood, they went through a ceremony. The blood of the paschal lamb would be applied to their right ear, thumb, and big toe followed by anointing oil applied to the same ear, thumb, and toe.

Today this symbolizes that whatever Jesus cleanses, the Holy Spirit will anoint. And along with His anointing comes His power. In this lesson, you will begin to understand how the Holy Spirit helps you experience inner power in your life.

Scripture: John 14:15-18, 25-26; 15:26-27; 16:7-11





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

When Jesus told His disciples that He would send them another Helper, Jesus was saying that He was going to send someone to their side. Just as Jesus walked by the side of the disciples, He has sent a Helper to you who will stand by your side.

The English word “comforter,” in this context, means “with strength.” This word comes from two Latin words. The first is the word “come.” The second word is “fort,” which means “strength.” Because the Comforter comes with strength, He does more than pamper you. The Holy Spirit fortifies, enables, and strengthens you.

When Jesus said He would send another Comforter, He was saying, “As I was there helping you, the Holy Spirit will now be in my place.” Jesus sent someone who would be exactly to you what Jesus was to the disciples. The Holy Spirit will do for you what Jesus did for His disciples during His earthly ministry: lead, guide, instruct, protect, and provide.

One important role of the Holy Spirit is to convict you of the sin of unbelief—failing to believe in Jesus. He chips away at a heart's hardness that causes people to reject Jesus as Savior. He also reveals the danger of judgment that will come upon the earth. Satan, the prince of this world, is already judged. But there is another judgment coming, when everyone who does not follow Jesus will be judged.

This is why the Holy Spirit continuously testifies about Jesus. And it is why your focus should not be only on His gifts. He did not come to talk about Himself. Instead, the Holy Spirit wants to draw your attention to Jesus, giving you a greater love for Him than you have ever had before.

Another role of the Holy Spirit is to bring to your remembrance the things you have learned. This does not mean the Holy Spirit is a substitute for learning and preparation, but rather that when you learn something, the Holy Spirit will



bring it to your remembrance and give insight into it. In other words, He will give you a new comprehension and outlook on the things you have learned.

Finally, the role of the Holy Spirit is to empower believers for service and ministry. He is not a luxury you just keep to yourself. He came to help you have courage to witness to unbelievers—not to shame them for their sins but to tell them how good Jesus is in your life.

For all these reasons, the Holy Spirit is essential for every believer. With Him, you will receive inner power.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The word “comforter” is greatly misunderstood. It brings to mind someone who offers comfort and consolation, or helps alleviate pain during times of great stress and loss. While this is true of the Holy Spirit, it does not go far enough. The word actually is better understood as helper.

As our Comforter, the Holy Spirit helps us make some significant discoveries:

- You are God’s prepared, enabled, strengthened, fortified, and empowered people.
- The Holy Spirit is a divine enabler.
- The Holy Spirit and Jesus are inseparable.
- The Holy Spirit points people to Jesus.
- The Holy Spirit teaches you the Word of God.
- The Holy Spirit brings to your remembrance the things you have learned.
- The Holy Spirit helps you witness to unbelievers.
- The Holy Spirit warns you of judgment to come.



BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
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- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 25: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU OVERCOME YOUR FEARS

Main Idea: One of the great ministries of the Holy Spirit is to help you overcome your fears. Fear is one of Satan's most deadly devices. The fears that imprison people number in the hundreds.¹ Many people are slaves to constant fear, living in torment. Paul spoke about a fear that dominated the life of a young man named Timothy. His fear manifested itself in timidity and cowardliness. In this lesson, you will see what Paul said to Timothy and begin to discover how the Holy Spirit helps you overcome your own fears.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:6-7

¹ Kendra Cherry, "A to Z list of Phobias, from the Strange to the Common," March 6, 2019, <https://www.verywellmind.com/list-of-phobias-2795453>, (Accessed May 3, 2019).





SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

The Holy Spirit is a personal Helper, working on the inner person. He is a personal Friend, Counselor, and Guide to every believer. Remember, the Holy Spirit is not an abstraction, force, or electrical charge. He is your *paraclete* who simultaneously lives inside you and walks by your side.

Paul had given Timothy an assignment, but Timothy was timidly approaching the responsibility that had been entrusted to him. He had some huge shoes to fill following after Paul, who had demonstrated the Spirit and power of God. But Paul reminded Timothy that it is only the power of the Spirit that enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things.

We can understand 2 Timothy 1:7 to mean the Holy Spirit comes in power to take care of the circumstances of your life. He also comes in love to take care of the people in your life. And on top of those two things, He gives you a sound mind to take care of yourself.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Fear can be a torment that people live with for a lifetime unless they overcome it. With the power of the Holy Spirit, you can overcome the fear inherent in every negative circumstance. He gives you the equipment you need walk through circumstances you cannot control. God will never lead you to a hard place without giving you the essential equipment needed for peace (freedom from fear) that comes from knowing God is with you. And with that, comes the opportunity to discover for yourself that He alone is all you need.

Take a look at how the Holy Spirit tenderly addresses human fear:

- The Holy Spirit helps you overcome your fears.
- The Holy Spirit helps you overcome your fears with His power.
- The Holy Spirit takes care of people with His love.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
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- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 26: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU GROW IN GRACE

Main Idea: Two times in Scripture, the phrase “spirit of grace” is used. When this phrase is used, it has to do with showing kindness and favor to undeserving people. There is a difference between mercy and grace. Mercy is not receiving what we deserve, whereas, grace is receiving what we do not deserve. In this lesson, you will begin to understand what it means to grow in grace.

Scripture: Zechariah 12:10; 1 Corinthians 15:9-10; 2 Corinthians 8:1-2, 9; 9:8; 12:7-10; Ephesians 2:8-9; 4:7-8, 11-13; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:29;



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God’s Word.

To grow in grace, it helps to understand the difference between the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the grace of Holy Spirit, and the government of the Holy Spirit.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to believers for the purpose of ministry. God gives these gifts to believers by faith and empowers you with tools that will enable you to fulfill His mission and purpose for your life. Remember from earlier lessons, the fruit of the Holy Spirit has to do with Christian character. God come to you and imparts to you His fruit.

Moreover, the government of the Holy Spirit has to do with ministry. The Holy Spirit empowers believers for the fulfillment of ministry for specific offices. The government of the Holy Spirit gives you a confidence to do things that He has empowered you to do. When the Holy Spirit anoints you, you have a feeling of ability that comes from God. It is when you are anointed that you believe anything is possible with God.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Through the Holy Spirit, God makes available to you various kinds of grace. Grace is not a commodity to count, weigh, or measure. Grace is an experience. It is a confidence, ability, and strength that comes to you as you walk through life. None of these are easy to do in your own strength. In the middle of suffering, one does not necessarily feel full of grace, but know that He offers it to you. Perhaps it is a kind of grace that enables you to be able to suffer well, to walk through the situation, rather than meaning that the suffering is made easier or alleviated by the grace.

- The Holy Spirit gives grace to save.
- The Holy Spirit gives grace to serve.
- The Holy Spirit gives graces in the midst of suffering.
- The Holy Spirit gives grace to sacrifice.
- The Holy Spirit gives grace to sing authentic praises to God.





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Hebrews 10:29. What are three results that happen when you deliberately sin after you received knowledge of the Son of God?

- Ephesians 4:13. How is unity of the Spirit and unity of the faith experienced and perfected?

- 1 Corinthians 15:10. What is God's grace? How does one receive His grace?

- 2 Corinthians 9:8. What happens when you give to those in need?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 27: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU TELL THE TRUTH

Main Idea: There is a crisis of confidence today. People are uncertain what actually constitutes truth. Many ask, “Whom can I trust—the preacher, politician, producer, psychiatrist, promoter, or philosopher?” In contrast to the all-too-common temptation to cloud and cover the truth, this lesson challenges you to allow the Holy Spirit to help you tell the truth.

Scripture: John 14:15-17; 15:26-27



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God’s Word.

It is often possible to know the truth and yet hesitate to share it because of the price and pain that may come with sharing. It may seem as if the easy way out is either to distort or refuse to tell the truth. But Jesus said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31–32).

The fact is, being a disciple of Jesus brings truth, and that truth brings freedom. But dishonesty brings bondage. Distorting the truth may seem like an easy—even kind—way out of a tough situation at the moment. However, it is actually the hard way. The Bible declares, “The way of the transgressor is hard.” There is no easy way to sin. If you live life from a place of personal dishonesty, you are actually forced to face at least six questions: Who is going to find out? Does anybody already know? How much do they know? How many know anything about the situation and who did they tell? What are the ultimate consequences of failing to be truthful?

The Holy Spirit helps you with your focus and ability to recognize the truth and tell it. Because you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, you can have a right relationship with truth through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can give you a correct relationship to the truth. So, when you find yourself having to decide between total truth or partial truth, you can call on God and rely on the Holy Spirit to help you choose the former.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

The Holy Spirit helps you develop a lifestyle of truthfulness through three important ways. First, the Holy Spirit gives you truth. Second, the Holy Spirit teaches you truth. Finally, the Holy Spirit helps you live truth.

- The Holy Spirit gives you truth in Jesus Christ. (John 14:16-17)
- The Holy Spirit gives you truth in the Word of God. (John 17:17; 2 Peter 1:21)
- The Holy Spirit gives you truth in himself. (1 John 5:6-7)
- God deposited truth within His church. (1 Timothy 3:14-15; 2 Timothy 3:16)
- The Holy Spirit teaches you truth. (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:13)
- The Holy Spirit helps you live the truth by giving you a heart with which to love. (Psalm 51:6)
- The Holy Spirit helps you live the truth by giving you a mind with which to think. (Philippians 2:3-8; 4:8)
- The Holy Spirit helps you live the truth by giving you a will with which to decide. (3 John 4)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 28: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU PRAY IN POWER

Main Idea: This lesson helps you answer three questions. First, who can pray? Second, how can we pray? Third, for what can we pray?

Scripture: Romans 8:26-27



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

When you read the writings of Paul, particularly the book of Romans, you soon discover Paul has much to say about a believer's prayer life. He offered basic truths explaining how the Holy Spirit will help you pray in power.

It is apparent that Paul had a devoted prayer life. In Romans 1:10, he prayed for guidance. In Romans 10:1, he prayed for lost souls. In Romans 12:12, he prayed for the church. In Romans 15:30–31, he prayed that God would guide and bless his ministry.

At the very heart of Paul's prayer life was the Holy Spirit. Paul never prayed apart from the Spirit's power. He demonstrated that a believer can have an effective and powerful prayer life when the Holy Spirit is involved in your praying. In fact, when you pray, the entire Trinity is involved in your prayer. You pray **to** God the Father, **in** the authority of the name of Jesus, and **through** the power of the Holy Spirit.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

Prayer is a spiritual discipline that is vital in your spiritual growth pattern. There are times when you are training that you just simply do not know how to continue. However, when you do not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit comes along side you and teaches you how to pray effectively. Consider the following way in which the Holy Spirit can help you during your times of prayer.

- The Holy Spirit helps you pray in power to the Father.
- The Holy Spirit helps you pray in power with intercession in spite of infirmities and weaknesses. (Romans 8:26)
- The Holy Spirit helps you pray in power for the will of God for their life. (1 John 5:14-15)
- The Holy Spirit searches your heart and reveals your need. (Romans 8:27; Jude 20-21; Ephesians 6:18)
- The Holy Spirit helps you groan in prayer when you do not know what to say. (Romans 8:26)
- The Holy Spirit pleads your case to the throne of God through you. (Romans 8:26-27)



BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



USING MY *FIREBIBLE*

Read the study notes for the following verses in the *FireBible* and answer the accompanying questions:

- Romans 8:26. What are three observations about the Holy Spirit when He helps you pray?

- 1 John 5:14. When you pray, what happens when you focus on who God is?

- Jude 1:20. Summarize the four ways you can defend your Christian faith against false teachers.

- Read the *FireBible* article “Intercession.” List five purposes for intercession. How do you think the Holy Spirit can help you in each of these?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 29: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU LIVE IN FREEDOM

Main Idea: In this lesson, you will discover how being adopted into the family of God is similar to traditional adoption. It is private in the sense that we have been born again and our name is now in the family album in heaven. The Holy Spirit helps you then live out this adopted life in freedom until your adoption will be completed when God goes public with the adoption process. This will happen when Jesus comes back to earth. At that point you will know the public dimension of your adoption.

Scripture: Romans 8:15



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

When Paul wrote his letter to the church at Rome, adoption was a two-step process. There was a private step and a public step. The private step dealt with the legal aspect of the adoption process. The adoption documents were signed, sealed, and stamped. Once this occurred, the adoption was legal. The second step was the public step. This step was a celebration time when the family made the adoption announcement to extended family and friends. In Romans 8:15, Paul mentions the spirit of slavery and the Spirit of adoption in the same sentence. The spirit of slavery works against the spirit of adoption. The Spirit of adoption overcomes the spirit of slavery.

Freedom always comes with a price. The demands of freedom and the expectations of freedom are frequently obtained after struggle and conflict. God has given to you the power of the Holy Spirit to enable you to escape the torments of slavery.

The moment you are born again, you are adopted by the Heavenly Father. You get into God's family by regeneration, and the moment you are regenerated (born again), your adoption occurs. The Law was given as a tutor or school master to teach you that you need Christ and a relationship with Him. But keeping the Law does not redeem you. It is your regeneration by the power of God through the Spirit of adoption that redeems you.

You are not living under the demands of the Law today because the Law of God has been internalized in your spirit as you grow and mature in Jesus. To understand this, you need to understand the difference between a servant and a son. A son has all the privileges and blessings of a family. A son has the nature of the father. A son obeys his father because he loves him. A servant does not have benefits. A servant does not have the nature of the father. A servant is an outside employee who obeys from a posture of fear. As adopted children of God, believers enjoy all the rights and privileges of sonship, whereby we can walk in freedom from fear through the Holy Spirit.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

When you are young, you obey your father because there may be pain involved if you do not obey. However, when you begin to mature, you obey your father because you realize your actions may bring pain to him otherwise. Whereas a servant gets paid, a son gets the blessings and benefits of being a member of the family. By the spirit of adoption given to you by the Holy Spirit, you can live in freedom.

Let's consider what this means:

- The Holy Spirit helps you live in freedom from slavery to fear. (Romans 5:15)
- The Holy Spirit helps you live in freedom from the slavery to the law. (Galatians 4:1-7; Luke 15:11-32)
- The Holy Spirit helps you live in freedom from the slavery to corruption. (Romans 8:18-23)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?

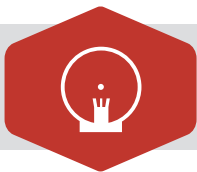


THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON 30: THE HOLY SPIRIT HELPS YOU LIVE BY FAITH

Main Idea: The Holy Spirit is not a single-dimensional minister. He ministers in a multi-dimensional fashion. In this lesson, you will discover how the Holy Spirit helps you to live by faith.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:6-11; 4:13-15



SIGHTLINE: Acquire Your Target

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

Paul shared his heart and spirit in 2 Corinthians. What Paul was going through, and his feelings as he went through these things, were revealed. The Corinthian church had misunderstood Paul's motives and plans. Paul had promised to visit them a couple of times, and thus far he had only come once.

Paul had been hurt when he dealt with some of their issues. You can feel his pain and distress as you read 2 Corinthians 1:5-11. He was not tempted to strike back, retaliate, get even, become hostile, or become bitter. But he did come face-to-face with the temptation to give up and quit.

In the end, Paul believed that he went through these experiences so he could learn not to trust in himself. He was willing to suffer agony and pain because the trouble reminded him that his trust must be in God (2 Corinthians 1:9).

Paul was a mighty man of faith, courage, and an incurable optimist. And it was the Holy Spirit who helped him walk by faith in God. Paul stood by faith (2 Corinthians 1:24). He lived by faith (2 Corinthians 4:13). He walked by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7), in spite of the trouble, difficulty, pain, and criticism that came from within the church.





CROSSHAIR: Focus on Your Target

What does this study say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in this study below, you will better understand what God is saying to you today.

How did Paul walk by faith? The only way he could walk by faith was by the power of the Holy Spirit. Read 2 Corinthians 4, and consider the following ways the Holy Spirit assists your faith walk:

- The Holy Spirit deposits a treasure inside you. (2 Corinthians 4:7)
- The Holy Spirit allows trouble to come to you. (2 Corinthians 4:8)
- The Holy Spirit allows trouble to come to you for Jesus' sake. (2 Corinthians 4:11)
- The Holy Spirit helps you develop trust in Him. (2 Corinthians 4:13)
- The Holy Spirit teaches you the difference between faith and belief.
- The Holy Spirit teaches you to focus your attention on the eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:18; 5:7)
- The Holy Spirit develops your personal testimony. (2 Corinthians 4:13)





BULLSEYE: Zero in on Your Target

How can this study apply to your life? By listening to the Holy Spirit's leading as you answer this series of questions, you can gain useful insights that will help you apply the truth of God's Word to your daily life.

Write down your answer to the following questions here or in your journal:

- Who appears in the passages you read?
- Where are these passages taking place?
- When are these passages occurring?
- Why are these passages important?
- What is happening in these passages?
- What verse stood out to you? Why?



THE HOLY SPIRIT

APPENDIX A SIX COMMON HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. FEAR OF EMBARRASSMENT

Some are fearful of how they might physically respond when they receive the Baptism. It's important to remember that regardless of one's fears, believers should aim to overcome human responses that get in the way of submitting to the Holy Spirit. This is part of crucifying the flesh. Paul addressed this when in Galatians 5:24-25 he wrote,

And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

While a believer may be fearful of sounding silly while speaking in tongues, he should take heart that the community of believers should be ready to encourage and celebrate this, not mock it.

2. FEAR OF RECEIVING SOMETHING EVIL

Luke 11:11-13 records what Jesus had to say on this topic:

“What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

Believers who ask of the Father can trust Him to supply good gifts.



3. DOUBT AND UNBELIEF

If someone is convinced the Holy Spirit is for him it will be very difficult to receive. Faith is the prerequisite for receiving anything from God. It's important to remember that receiving the Holy Spirit is simply receiving what God has already promised. Some mistakenly think that God doesn't want them to be filled just because they ask and don't receive immediately. They should consider the following verses:

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself" (Acts 2:38-39).

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways (James 1:6-8).

So that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith (Galatians 3:14).

Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith (Galatians 3:5)?

4. INCORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR POSITION IN CHRIST

This promise of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is for you and for your children. Are you a child of God? Consider John 7:37-39.

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Stop going by feelings and start walking by faith. By putting your faith in Jesus, you have positioned yourself to receive the benefits. The Holy Spirit is a gift for you.



5. SIN OR LACK OF REPENTANCE

Sin in one's life can be a road block to receiving Holy Spirit baptism. Consider Acts 2:38:

And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is subsequent to salvation; repentance comes first. The Holy Spirit doesn't dwell in unrepentant vessels. There is no way around repentance.

6. EXPECTING GOD TO DO YOUR PART IN THE BAPTIZING

Jesus is the one who baptizes you in the Holy Spirit. But you are the one who speaks. The believer cannot do it without the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit will not do it without the believer willingly participating. Consider the following passages.

And he preached, saying, "After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:7-8).

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:4).

For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God (Acts 10:46).

And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying (Acts 19:6).

I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you (1 Corinthians 14:18).

I am the LORD your God . . . Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it (Psalm 81:10).

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THE HOLY SPIRIT

APPENDIX B RECEIVING THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

It is possible not to receive something that belongs to you until it has been activated. For example, salvation has been provided to everyone, but each individual must activate it through reception.

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).

Likewise, Satan's power has already been overcome, but individuals must activate their spiritual authority in God.

The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved (Luke 8:12).

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7).

In a similar fashion, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a gift to all believers but must be activated by the individual.

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

- Become a believer.
 - » And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit" (Acts 19:2).



- Desire the Holy Spirit.
 - » Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied (Matthew 5:6).
 - » There must be a hunger and desire for spiritual growth.

- Ask for the Holy Spirit.
 - » “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him” (Luke 11:13)!
 - » The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience that brings a change.
 - » The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a manifestation; it is an experience.
 - » Tongues is the evidence or proof of the experience.

- Yield to the Holy Spirit.
 - » You will receive the evidence of the experience when you ask and the Lord provides.
 - » A new tongue is the language you receive that will confirm that you have received this gift.
 - » “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13:14).
 - » “For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit” (1 Corinthians 14:2).

- Enjoy the blessings of Holy Spirit baptism.
 - » Enjoy the empowerment to carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 16:19)
 - » Enjoy the ability to exercise spiritual authority. (Acts 1:8)
 - » Enjoy the ability to walk in complete obedience to God’s will for your life. (Luke 3:21-23)

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THE HOLY SPIRIT

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE ACTIVITIES AND PROPHECIES REGARDING THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE BIBLE.

He was present and active in Creation.

Genesis 1:2
The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

He moved upon key people for special purposes.

Noah
Moses
Joshua
Elijah
Elisha
Samson
Deborah
Gideon
Isaiah
Joel

God promises a new covenant is coming.

Jeremiah 31:31-34
“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Joel prophesies of a future outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Joel 2:28-29
“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit.”

Joel 2:32
And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

John the Baptist prophesies regarding the Spirit.

Matthew 3:11
“I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE ACTIVITIES AND PROPHECIES REGARDING THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE BIBLE.

Jesus gave commands and teachings about the Holy Spirit.

John 16:7
“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”

John 20:22
And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

Luke 24:48-50
“You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.

The Holy Spirit is outpoured on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4
When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Peter uses Joel 2:28-29 to explain the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:16-18
But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.”

The consistent pattern of the apostles’ prayer for new converts was to receive the Holy Spirit after conversion.

Acts 8:17
Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 9:17
So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 19:6
And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

We are the ones “whom the Lord our God calls” today!

Acts 2:39
“For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”

SUBSEQUENCE CHART

A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT
INFLUENCED AND INTERACTED WITH THE EARLY CHURCH.

	CONVERSION	BAPTISM IN HOLY SPIRIT 2ND WORK	POST-CONVERSION	EVIDENCE	CONCLUSION
DISCIPLES	<p>John 20:19-22</p> <p>On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."</p>	<p>Acts 2:1-4</p> <p>When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.</p>	<p>Acts 2:14, 41</p> <p>But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you" So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.</p>	<p>Speaking in tongues</p>	<p>Separate event; evidence is tongues</p>
SAMARIA	<p>Acts 8:14</p> <p>Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John</p>	<p>Acts 8:14-17</p> <p>Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Acts 8:18-19</p> <p>Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."</p>	<p>Observable change in Samaritan believers</p>	<p>Clearly separate; with physical evidence that something had happened</p>

SUBSEQUENCE CHART

	CONVERSION	BAPTISM IN HOLY SPIRIT (2ND WORK)	POST-CONVERSION	EVIDENCE	CONCLUSION
CORNELIUS' HOUSE	<p>Acts 10:1-2</p> <p>At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.</p>	<p>Acts 10:44-48</p> <p>While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.</p>		<p>Speaking in tongues</p>	<p>Conversion and Spirit-filling seems to be at same time. Evidence is speaking in tongues.</p>
APOSTLE PAUL	<p>Acts 9:3-6</p> <p>Now as he [Paul] went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."</p>	<p>Acts 9:17-18</p> <p>So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and was baptized.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 14:18</p> <p>I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.</p>	<p>Miracle of healing</p>	<p>Separate baptism</p>
EPHESUS	<p>Acts 19:1-5</p> <p>And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.</p>	<p>Acts 19:6-7</p> <p>And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all.</p>		<p>Speaking in tongues</p>	<p>Separate Baptism with speaking in tongues as evidence.</p>

THE HOLY SPIRIT

APPENDIX E TEN COMMON MISTAKES REGARDING THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In understanding and operating in the gifts of the Spirit, careful instruction is essential to encourage joyful participation and address mistaken beliefs. This appendix helps answer ten of the most common mistakes made by well-intentioned believers.

MISTAKE: The gifts of the Spirit are not for today.

Some Christian teachers say that God does not give miraculous gifts to Christians today. They believe such gifts belonged only to the Old Testament, Jesus, and the apostles. Interestingly, they tend to affirm some gifts, like administration, helps, or martyrdom. But gifts like healing or tongues and interpretation they tend to say have stopped or are no longer available. Those who believe the miraculous gifts have ceased usually adopt one of two following problematic arguments:

First Incorrect Argument:

The miraculous gifts were only for the time of the apostles to prove the truthfulness of the apostle's message. The Bible teaches that this was the purpose of the miraculous gifts, according to Hebrews 2:3-4. Once the gospel was firmly established in the Roman empire and the apostles died, these gifts ceased because they were no longer necessary.



Problems with this Argument:

Authentication of the gospel message was definitely a purpose of the miraculous gifts, but it is only one of the purposes. In other Scriptures, spiritual gifts are given to serve the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7; 14:26), to equip people to share the gospel (Matthew 10:19–20; Luke 4:18; 1 Corinthians 2:13), and to show God’s compassion and concern for His people (Matthew 14:13–14; 20:29–34; Mark 1:40–42). Surely these needs still exist.

In addition, the miraculous gifts were not just the possession of the apostles in the Bible. Non-apostles were also given miraculous gifts by the Spirit (e.g., Luke 9:49–50 and Acts 8:6–7, 13). The Scriptures do not seem to make a distinction between what we call the miraculous gifts and other seemingly less miraculous gifts. In fact, they appear mixed together in Romans 12:6–8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28. If one denies the operation of miraculous gifts in this day, then logically all the gifts of the Spirit mentioned in these passages would be denied.

Second Incorrect Argument:

The Bible states miraculous gifts will cease in 1 Corinthians 13:8–10, predicting that the gifts of prophecy and tongues will not continue. In verse ten, Paul says that once the perfect comes, tongues will cease. Therefore, when the last New Testament book was written, the need for supernatural revelation ended. At that time prophecy, tongues, and the other miraculous gifts ceased.

Problems with this Argument:

Defining “perfect” as the Bible itself seems to read something into verse ten that is not there and ignoring context. A completely reasonable interpretation for “perfect” can be found in verse twelve. Here, the “perfect” is not the completion of the Bible but the time when believers will see God and have fullness of knowledge. This will happen upon death or at the time of Christ’s second coming. This is when the imperfect will be done away with. At this point, there won’t be any need for spiritual gifts in the face-to-face presence of the Lord.

In addition, if tongues and prophecy ended when the Bible was completed (as proponents of this argument say verse eight teaches), then so did knowledge according to the same verse. Since knowledge has not yet passed away, it is therefore logical to believe that neither has tongues. Furthermore, nowhere does the Bible teach that miraculous gifts will cease in a later age. In fact, the Bible seems to be totally open on the question. Paul himself told the Thessalonians not to quench prophecies,



a miraculous gift (1 Thessalonians 5:19–22). He wrote to the Corinthians to “earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues” (1 Corinthians 14:39). His only caution was that things should be tested rather than just accepted (v.29), and that “all things should be done decently and in order” (v.40). That still seems to be good advice for the believer.

MISTAKE: Gifts of the Spirit only occur in the context of church services.

The gifts of the Spirit should be in operation in every part of a believer’s life. Words of wisdom, discernment, words of knowledge, even the prophetic can and should occur during ministry planning times. Throughout your day, you can and should have the power of the Spirit in operation. In everyday life, the gifts can be in operation. Confining them to one place or one expression is not God’s plan. Paul gives instruction for their use in services, but the gifts of the Spirit are available for operation at all times in a believer’s life.

MISTAKE: Silence in a church service means God wants to use the gifts of the Spirit.

Much of today’s church culture does not value contemplative silence. Perhaps they expect Spirit-empowered people to be always on the move and in a hurry. Some may feel it is necessary to fill quiet times with something other than silence. But there is something powerful and beautiful about sitting in God’s presence—no words from another person, no music, and no singing—just sitting and listening to God. Silence is a powerful practice that believers need to recapture in church.

MISTAKE: The gifts of the Spirit are above critique.

Unfortunately, people react negatively to correction and guidance in relation to the gifts of the Spirit. People may leave a church or cause problems when a pastor or leader tries to guide the use and expression of the Holy Spirit’s gifts. One great test of authentic, godly spirituality is whether or not a person can receive correction.



Believers ought to test their use of the gifts with the following questions:

1. Does it glorify Jesus?
2. Is the content in alignment with Scripture?
3. Does it edify the church?
4. Is it a good witness to unbelievers?

If a particular gift expression answers “no” to any of the four questions, it is probably out of order.

MISTAKE: The use of the gifts of the Spirit indicates whether or not a service or meeting was successful or spiritual.

At one end of the spectrum are those who do not believe the gifts of the Spirit are for today. At the other end are those who believe the gifts should be taking place in every service. And usually what both parties are referring to are the vocal gifts: tongues, interpretation, and prophesy. Some judge a service’s merit and value by whether or not such gifts have been in use. A broader perspective should be called for.

Whether or not these particular gifts take place in a particular service is not as relevant to whether or not the ultimate goal of the service has been achieved—people coming to Jesus Christ and knowing Him more deeply. When you seek the gift, rather than the result, difficult problems are created. Healthy expressions of the gifts of the Spirit come through earnestly seeking to become closer and more open to the gift Giver.

MISTAKE: Some people can’t be used in the gifts of the Spirit.

Paul taught that all believers are part of the body of Christ and are needed to make their unique contributions. Nonetheless, some Pentecostal circles errantly elevate those used in the publicly displayed gifts of the Spirit into a sort of spiritual elite group that are more necessary than other members of the Body. However, if you are follower of Jesus Christ, God desires for you to be used in the gifts of the Spirit and your contribution is vital to the health of your church. God uses imperfect vessels to carry His message. The truth of the matter is that God uses imperfect people. Have faith that God can and will use you to accomplish His purpose and His plan.



MISTAKE: The vocal gifts of the Spirit should be elevated over the other gifts.

Some incorrectly value the vocal gifts over other gifts of the Spirit, wrongly believing them to be the most important gifts and a true sign that God has moved. This is often the result of two reasons, one positive and one negative. The positive reason is that vocal gifts of the Holy Spirit are visible and have a supernatural effect. They feel spiritual and special. After all, they are defined as God speaking to people in the middle of corporate worship. Additionally, Pentecostals value speaking in tongues as an important part of their DNA.

The negative reason why some people sway toward vocal gifts has to do with ego. There is a certain amount of pride that can come with being publicly used by the Holy Spirit. After all, God is speaking to others through you. Unfortunately, because of this pride, some people have exploited the gifts of the Spirit to advance their own ideas and even their own position in the church. They may claim, “It was not me; it was God speaking. And you can’t argue with God, right?” People hijack church so they can pass off their agenda as God’s.

Unfortunately, this kind of abuse causes many believers and churches to lower the importance of gifts of the Spirit in operation.

MISTAKE: A person being used in a gift of the Spirit cannot control themselves.

Paul, in writing to the Corinthian church about the use of spiritual gifts in a worship gathering, stated, “the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets” (1 Corinthians 14:32). In other words, while the Holy Spirit gives you the ability to speak in tongues, to interpret tongues, and to prophesy, He does not force you to blurt out the words. Instead, He expects His gifts to be exercised with discretion and maturity.

This means that when God gives a person a gift, they have the ability to use, delay, modify, or hold back the gift. It is subject to the one speaking for God (i.e., the prophet). The Spirit speaks through you, and you are a part of the process. People who say they cannot control themselves are either unaware of what Scripture say or are ignoring it. Some people become erratic, unnecessarily loud, or distracting when they are used in the gifts. Their behavior can cause more harm than good, and it is completely controllable.



MISTAKE: What God speaks to someone is always meant to be shared with the whole congregation.

God speaks to His people through the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, what God says to an individual is meant for them alone. Some people become confused and feel that everything the Lord says to them should be shared publicly with their church. One must be wise in discerning whether what God said was intended to be shared or if it's a personal word. Sharing a word that was only meant for your life with your church could cause confusion and detract from God's direction for that local body. It is always a good practice to check with your pastor when you begin to move in a gift to be publicly shared.

MISTAKE: Spontaneous gifts of the Spirit are of higher value than Spirit-inspired planning of a service.

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul explained that believers should desire the prophetic to be in operation. Prophecy, from Scripture, is not just about predicting future events. It also includes declaring what should be through encouragement, correction, and imparting hope. Anointed preaching is also prophetic in nature. Consider the Old Testament prophets: They predicted future events far less often than they exhorted people to be in relationship with God.

If you only accept as prophecy extemporaneous speech that is unplanned or interrupts a service, you are missing out on the full capacity of the prophetic gifts. When believers gather together, they ought to expect and value the ministry of the spontaneously prophetic. But the supernatural dimension of a gift of prophecy or tongues and interpretation is not diminished if someone has to use a microphone to be heard. Likewise, the spirituality of the gifts are not lowered if they are imparted after preparation. And their importance is not diminished for being carefully prayed over and placed in the service at the appropriate time.

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