



NEW CREATION

Many believers know they're saved by Jesus Christ but struggle with guilt or the perception that their lives haven't changed, feeling far from being "made new." This doesn't have to be the case. By remembering who we are in Christ, we can fully embrace the transformative life God desires for us.

WEEK TWO

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Message Passage: John 15:26-27; John 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14

Small Group Passage: John 15:4-5; Galatians 5:16-18; Galatians 5:22-23

TEACHING AND VIDEO NOTES

If someone walked up to you and asked, "Who is God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?" That last one, you get less confident answering, right? Why is that? Well, the good news is that scripture is not silent on the Holy Spirit.

John 15:26 *When the Advocate comes, whom I (Jesus) will send to you from the Father (God) —the Spirit of truth (Holy Spirit) who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.*

The Trinity is a core Christian doctrine that describes God as one being who exists in three co-equal, co-eternal, and distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. While different, they are not three separate gods but one God.

One God: The Bible consistently teaches that there is only one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4 - "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."

The three persons of the Trinity are not separate deities. They share the exact same divine nature, will, and power.

Three Persons: While they are one in being, they are distinct in their personhood. This means they are not just different "modes" or "roles" of the same person. The

Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father. Their relationship is eternal and unique.

Matthew 3:16-17 *"And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'"*

- **The Son:** Jesus Christ is physically present, being baptized.
- **The Holy Spirit:** The Spirit is seen descending upon the Son "like a dove."
- **The Father:** The Father's voice is heard from heaven, speaking **about** the Son. This clearly shows that the Father is not the Son, nor is He the Spirit.

Co-equal: All three persons are entirely God and possess all the attributes of deity. They all share in power, glory, or authority.

- God did not create either Jesus or the Holy Spirit. They have all been present since the beginning of time.
- Some religions, such as Mormonism and Jehovah's Witnesses, believe that God created Jesus. This is heretical teaching. This is not Christian theology.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

THE HOLY SPIRIT: Essential Roles

SALVATION

Conviction and Regeneration: The Spirit works in the world to convict people of sin, righteousness, and judgment, preparing them for the Gospel. Through the Spirit, a person—dead in sin—is made alive and "born again" (John 3:5-8).

LIFE OF A BELIEVER

1. **Indwelling and Sealing:** He permanently indwells believers, sealing their eternal inheritance in Christ.
2. **Guidance and Teaching:** As the "Helper" and "Counselor," the Spirit guides us into all truth and helps us understand Scripture.
3. **Sanctification and Empowerment:** He is the source of sanctification, producing the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:22-23) in our lives. The Spirit also empowers believers with spiritual gifts to be Christ's witnesses.

THE HOLY SPIRIT TESTIFIES ABOUT JESUS

Jesus promises to send the "Advocate," the Holy Spirit, to His disciples after He leaves.

John 15:26-27 *"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. 27 And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.*

John 16:7-15 *But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. 8 When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 about sin, because people do not believe in me; 10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; 11 and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. 12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."*

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to be witnesses for Christ, as their personal experience of Jesus's ministry is now combined with the Spirit's power.

THE HOLY SPIRIT TEACHES US SPIRITUAL TRUTH

Paul explains that spiritual truths cannot be understood by human wisdom alone.

1 Corinthians 2:10-14 [...] *these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.*

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. 13 This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. 14 The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

Just as a person's thoughts can only be known by their own spirit, the "deep things of God" can only be known by the Spirit of God. As believers, we have received this Spirit, which enables us to understand what God has "freely given us." The Holy Spirit acts as a divine interpreter, revealing God's thoughts and making spiritual realities understandable to us, so that we can grasp the truth of our salvation and new life in Christ. Without the Spirit, God's truths are considered "foolishness."

Takeaway: We have everything we need to live a life as a New Creation by God's design, thanks to the Role of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not just a presence, but as the active, indwelling, and empowering presence of God who enables believers to live out their new identity and experience ongoing transformation..

Small Group: Now that we understand who the Holy Spirit is and His work in our lives. Let's take time in our groups to identify the change the Holy Spirit is producing in us. What exactly are the fruits of the Spirit? How are they a byproduct of the work of the Holy Spirit that's necessary to grow in our faith?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. The Baptism of Jesus (Matt 3:16-17) shows the Father speaking, the Son being baptized, and the Spirit descending—three distinct actors. Why is it so important that we know and believe that the Holy Spirit is a who, not a what?

Leader Notes: John 15:26 shows the Son (Jesus) sending the Spirit from the Father, proving they are not the same person or mode. This is such good news because the Holy Spirit is God himself with us. We are never left alone (John 14:18). God himself indwells within us as our bodies are the temple of God (1 Cor 6:19). We miss this good news if we wrongly think of the Holy Spirit as a what or a force.

2. Jesus said, *"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away."* Jesus firmly believed and taught his disciples that the ministry of the Holy Spirit was good news and absolutely essential for accomplishing the mission laid out before them (Matt 28:19-20 & Acts 1:8). Why then is it that the Holy Spirit is the neglected and at times forgotten member of the Trinity?
3. 1 Corinthians 2:14 says the person without the Spirit "does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness." The Spirit makes God's truths understandable (the "deep things of God"). When was a time in your life when scripture "came alive," and you began to understand it in a way you had not before?

Read: Galatians 5:16-26

4. The Apostle Paul contrasted the "works of the flesh" with the "fruit of the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16-18). When we give in and satisfy what our flesh (sin nature) desires, the outcomes are both terrible and obvious (vs 19-21). But

when we walk with the spirit and keep in step with the spirit, the outcome, or fruit, is a righteous life (vs 22). So, what then does it look like to submit to and “walk by the spirit” in our everyday lives?

Leader Note: “The phrase conveys the meaning of the literal translation 'by the Spirit keep on walking.' Walking means “living” in this context, and it emphasizes the moment-by-moment contact with and guidance by the Holy Spirit for daily decisions and activities. Living “according to the Spirit” should be a daily, continuous action by Christians. He is always present, but we must be in touch with him and stay open to his guidance and correction.”¹ We should also note that walking by the spirit is not the same as willpower and self-effort, our typical go-tos for comparing sin and producing good works.

5. Have you personally experienced trying to produce Christian behavior through your own "works" (willpower or self-effort), and what was the result compared to when you truly relied on the Holy Spirit?

6. Galatians 5:22-23 lists the nine qualities of the fruit. Which of these virtues (love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) do you find to be the most challenging to exhibit consistently, and what might that reveal about an area where you're resisting the Spirit's control?

Leader Notes: It is important to know that the fruit listed in verse 22 is singular. It is not the fruits of the spirit. Meaning if we walk in step with the Spirit, we should see all of this spiritual fruit growing in our lives. You don't pick and choose the ones we think are important or value one to the detriment of another. It is also important to remember that verses 22-23 do not hold us to the expectation of perfection. We should be growing constantly as we submit to the Spirit's lead. But we are never a finished product this side of glory.

7. Jesus said we will "recognize them (followers of Jesus) by their fruit" (Matthew 7:20). *What specific fruit is your greatest witness to unbelievers? When did you notice a Spirit-led response this week that you wouldn't have had before Christ?*

8. The lesson concluded that the Holy Spirit empowers us to live out our identity as a New Creation. Which of the Holy Spirit's roles (Conviction, Indwelling,

¹ Bruce Barton et al., Life Application New Testament Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 789.

Sealing, Guidance, Sanctification, Empowerment) gives you the most confidence that God is at work in your life? How have you seen the spirit work in your life lately?

Leader Notes: The sealing brings assurance; sanctification brings change; empowerment brings ability. Focus on actionable steps they can take to cooperate with the Spirit's work.

PRAYER TIME

DISMISS