

CAN I ASK THAT? | FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 19 | PENTECOST SUNDAY

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE: "HOW CAN I HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT?"

OPENING PRAYER

Abba Father, in the beginning you created the heavens and the earth. The Holy Spirit was present with you. He hovered over the waters in your creation (Genesis 1:1-2). Where can we go from your Spirit? Where can we flee from your presence? (Psalm 139:7). The answer is NOWHERE! You, your Son, and your Spirit hem us in behind and before (verse 5a). We praise and humbly thank you for the grace and faithfulness we receive from the Triune God. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

CONNECTING QUESTION

What comes to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit? When did you first learn about the Holy Spirit?

SCRIPTURE READING

Read Aloud & Meditate on God's Word: Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27, 16:4-15

WATCH VIDEO

Video Presenter: Nick Stevens

EXPLORE THE TEXT

Invite the Holy Spirit to lead as you work through the questions in this guide. Cover what your time allows and encourage everyone to finish the guide on his or her own.

1. How was the Holy Spirit's presence seen, heard, and sensed in Acts 2:1-13? How did Peter explain what was happening? Who did he say would be saved? (vs. 14-21; see also Romans 10:13)
2. Four passages in John's Gospel describe the work of the Holy Spirit in a more intimate way than Old Testament references to the Spirit. Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit dwelling in a believer. Read John 1:33, 7:38-39, 14:16-17, and 20:22. What are Jesus' key points? How can these four verses continue to grow your relationship with and dependence on the Spirit?
3. How would you paraphrase the Spirit's goals in John 16:7-15? Therefore, why was it good for Jesus to go away?
4. Jesus promised to send the Comforter in John 16:7. This word has been translated from the Greek text into six other names, each describing a different aspect of the Holy Spirit's ministry. They are counselor, helper, intercessor, advocate, strengthener, and standby. If you belong to Jesus, the Holy Spirit in all his roles is working in your life (Anne Graham Lotz). Look up the meanings of each role. For which of these are you most grateful? Which do you still need?

5. Galatians 5:22-25 (Fruit of the Spirit) and John 15:1-8 (the Vine and the branches) are familiar verses. Read them as if Jesus is telling one story about how to connect to him and to the Father. How do these verses help you understand more completely the Spirit's role in ensuring your never being separated from the Son or the Father?

6. A large group of believers gathered at the Feast of Pentecost for prayer. With the arrival of fire and wind, they "discovered that God deals with individuals, not masses...He comes to each one of us. You are a unique individual. You have a history and an emotional life all your own. And God operates in intimate relationship with you, just as you are" (Eugene Peterson). How does the Holy Spirit speak to you? When are you most aware of his presence? If you are willing, share your experiences of coming closer to the Spirit.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Please read 1 Corinthians 12:8-11. "The gifts of the Spirit are different from earthly gifts or talents. They are free, where no work, practice, or earning is necessary to receive them. And, they are equally important. The Holy Spirit at work within you allows the Spirit to pour out your gifts onto others just as he continually pours them out on you." (Max Lucado) Think about the gifts you have received from the Spirit. If you do not know, pray that he would reveal them to you. How can you see spiritual gifts being used in others' lives?

This week, explore more about the Holy Spirit's work in and through you in the ways he is described: Dove (John 1:32; Titus 3:4-7); Wind (John 3:8; Genesis 1:2); God (John 4:24,15:26); Words (John 6:63); Rivers of Living Water (John 4:10, 13-14); Helper (John 14:26); and Spirit of Truth (John 16:13) (The Lutheran Study Bible).

SCRIPTURES FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Bible has more than a hundred references to the Holy Spirit. Consequently, there is much to learn about the breadth and depth of the Holy Spirit's dwelling in you, even though you will never absorb it all. However, never doubt that his presence sustains and strengthens you in every step this side of heaven. He also will be with you when you do come into the presence of the Father and Jesus. See Nehemiah 9:19-20; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Romans 8:5-11, 15:13; Galatians 4:4-7 to continue finding out who the Spirit is.

CLOSING PRAYER

We believe that we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in you, our Lord, or come to you; but the Holy Spirit has called us by the Gospel, enlightened us with his gifts, sanctified and kept us in the true faith. He daily and richly forgives all our sins. On the Last Day the Spirit will raise us, giving us eternal life in you, Christ Jesus. (Martin Luther, "Small Catechism," The Third Article). Your gift of the Holy Spirit empowers us to turn from earthly ways to follow you in trust and obedience. It is in your Name Jesus that we come before you in prayer. Amen

Our Father ...

Scan to Access LG videos

