

THE HOLY SPIRIT

As Jesus' time on the earth was approaching its end, He said to His disciples, "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 depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7).

Jesus knew that it was a scary thing for the disciples to think about life without Him. He was their Lord, the Son of God who was with them, who was teaching them, comforting them, healing those around them and doing miracles. He was the Rock, the Chief Cornerstone on whose life they stood. His departure would mean the most important person in their lives was leaving. They had to be wondering, who would lead them?

And yet Jesus said to them, "it is to your advantage that I go away." Just in case they wouldn't believe Him, he said, "I tell you the truth..." How could it be that Jesus leaving them would be to their advantage? Who is this Helper that Jesus said would come? How would this Helper help them?

In this study, we will adhere solely to Scripture as we learn about the Holy Spirit. We encourage you to look up each Bible verse and let God lead you into a deeper relationship with Him.

SECTION 1 - THE HELPER

1. Who is the Helper Jesus promised to send? What other names are used besides "Helper"? (John 14:16-17, John 14:26, John 15:26)
2. What are some of the things Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do? (John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:7-11, John 16:13, John 16:14)
3. From whom does the Holy Spirit proceed? (John 14:16, John 14:26, John 15:26, John 16:7, John 20:21-22, Acts 2:33)
4. What actions are associated with receiving the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:38-39, Acts 5:32, Acts

8:14-25, Acts 19:6)

5. How does receiving the Holy Spirit change and improve our relationship with God? (John 14:15-23, Romans 8:14-17)

6. What kind of changes in our character will be evident when we are led by God's Spirit? (Galatians 5:22-26, 2 Timothy 1:6-7)

7. By what criterion is a person considered one of Christ's own? (Romans 8:9)

8. What effect does receiving the Holy Spirit have on our eternal lives? (Romans 8:10-11, John 3:3-8)

9. How does being born of the Spirit ultimately change us from flesh to spirit? (Ephesians 1:11-14, 2 Corinthians 5:1-5, Romans 8:19-25, 1 Corinthians 15:42-53)

10. What relationship should we have with the Holy Spirit today? (2 Corinthians 13:14)

11. How do we individually have communion, or fellowship, with the Holy Spirit? (John 14:26, John 16:13)

Point to Ponder: In addition to the Holy Spirit, 1 John 1:3 says we are to have fellowship

with the Father and Jesus. Healthy relationships are essential to good fellowship!

12. On whose authority does the Holy Spirit speak? (John 16:13-14)

13. Of whose things will the Spirit teach and remind you? (John 16:14-15, John 15:26, John 14:26)

14. What are some of the things that the Holy Spirit spoke to the first believers who received the Holy Spirit?

Acts 8:29

Acts 10:17-20

Acts 13:1-5

Acts 16:6-7

Acts 20:18-25

Point to Ponder: The Spirit led the disciples both to go and preach and also forbade them to preach at different times. While we may always want to preach, God's timing for preaching may not always match our own. It is important that we are led by the Spirit and not by our own will or the will of another. In like manner, when the Spirit says to speak, we should also be ready to follow that lead instead of human fears or our own reasoning and will.

15. What role does the Holy Spirit have in our spiritual understanding? (1 Corinthians 2:9-16)

16. How does the Spirit minister to us and help us in our personal relationship with God? (Romans 8:26-27)

Point to Ponder: What a blessing it is that the Spirit of God searches the will of God in order to make intercession not only for us, but for all the saints. In prayer, you have the opportunity to pray for others in the Spirit as well.

17. We see in Luke 3:21-22 that when Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him. How did the Holy Spirit help Jesus to minister more effectively? (Luke 4:1, Luke 4:14, Luke 4:18-19)

Point to Ponder: Jesus ministry was dependent upon the receiving, leading and power of the Holy Spirit. How much more do *we* need God's Spirit?

18. What did Jesus encourage us to do in order to receive the Holy Spirit? (Luke 11:9-13)

19. What did Paul encourage us to do in regard to the Holy Spirit? (Ephesians 5:15-21)

20. How will God's Spirit help us to confess Christ and know how to answer? (Luke 12:11-12, Mark 13:9-11)

21. What role does the Holy Spirit have in the raising of leaders in the church? (Acts 20:28, Acts 13:1-4)

22. How does the Holy Spirit help us to serve others? (1 Corinthians 12:1-10)

23. Who decides what gift or gifts of the Spirit you receive? (1 Corinthians 12:11)

24. Provide Biblical examples for any of the following gifts:

Word of Wisdom

Word of Knowledge

Faith

Healings

Working of Miracles

Prophecy

Discerning of spirits

Tongues

Interpretation of Tongues

25. Do all people have every gift of the Spirit? Do all have the same gifts of the Spirit? (1 Corinthians 12:29-30, 1 Corinthians 12:11)

Point to Ponder: Some have put forth that you must speak in tongues or perform miracles in order to prove you have the Holy Spirit. However, Paul makes clear that not all have the same gift or role within the body of Christ. Gifts of the Spirit are given according to the will of the Spirit and they are gifts, not something that a person works up of their own will.

26. Does the Bible give any examples of those who had God's Spirit, but did not show any signs or wonders of the Spirit? (Luke 1:5-16, John 10:40-42)

27. What is the reason God gives gifts to believers? (1 Corinthians 14:1-5, 12)

Point to Ponder: Do you desire spiritual gifts? How are you earnestly seeking them (1 Corinthians 14:1)?

28. What are some of the lessons God wants us to learn by the teaching Paul gives about using gifts in the church? (1 Corinthians 14:1-40)

29. Is having gifts, such as speaking in tongues or even healing people, the way that is best in the church? (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13)

Point to Ponder: Though you have all gifts, if you have not love, you have nothing and you are nothing. Love is what matters.

SECTION 2 - THE SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

While Jesus specifically referred to the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John as the “Helper,” we see that the Holy Spirit is mentioned numerous times throughout the Old Testament. In this section, we will explore a few important references to the Spirit of God.

30. When is the Spirit of God first introduced in Scripture? (Genesis 1:2)

Points to Ponder: John 1:1 tell us that both the Father and Jesus Christ were present “in the beginning.” Here we see the Father, Son and Spirit present at creation.

31. Did God give the Holy Spirit to people prior to the time of Jesus? (Genesis 41:37-40, Numbers 11:16-17, Numbers 27:18, 1 Samuel 16:13)

Point to Ponder: These and other scriptures tell us that the Holy Spirit was given to select people in the Old Testament. In fact, Hebrews 11 gives a long list of people who demonstrated living faith, and indicates they will be in the better resurrection (verse 35) and who will not be glorified apart from us (verse 40). The implication is that all those in Hebrews 11 had God's Holy Spirit and therefore will be in the first resurrection.

SECTION 3 - WARNINGS

Because the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians is so important, God issues several warnings in His Word about those who are in opposition to the Spirit of God.

32. How important is it that we do not reject and blaspheme the Holy Spirit? (Matthew 12:22-32, Mark 3:28-30, Luke 12:8-10)

33. What happened to those who lied to and tested the Holy Spirit? (Acts 5:1-11)
34. Is it possible for the Holy Spirit to depart from us, or us from the Holy Spirit, once we have received the promised gift? (Hebrews 10:26-31, Hebrews 6:4-8, Acts 5:1-11, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 1 Samuel 16:14 - referring to King Saul - see also 1 Samuel 10:10, Psalm 51:11 - referring to King David - see also 1 Samuel 16:13)
35. In order that we do not resist or grieve the Holy Spirit, how should we live? (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22, Ephesians 4:25-32)

SUMMARY:

As we come to the conclusion of this Bible study, let us consider again the words of Jesus, that it is to our advantage that He left that the Helper would come. As hard as it is to consider life without Jesus, what would our lives be today without the Holy Spirit? We are children of God because of the Holy Spirit. We have the guarantee of eternal life because of the Holy Spirit. We have God's leading, guiding and teaching – all by the Holy Spirit. We are convicted of our sins when we are wrong and we are convicted of the righteousness in which to walk by the Holy Spirit. The gifts of God are present in our lives by the Holy Spirit. The fruit of God springs forth by the Holy Spirit and every bit of transformation in our lives takes place by the Holy Spirit. We are truly nothing without the Spirit of God doing a wonderful and marvelous work within us. How desperately we need the day by day, moment by moment fellowship with the Helper, our Comforter, the Holy Spirit of God.