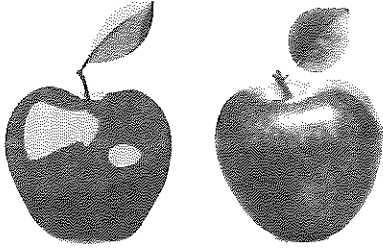


The Holy Spirit Empowers



Topic

The Holy Spirit

Theme

God gives us the Holy Spirit to empower us to live for Him.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will consider his devotion to God and his dependence on the Holy Spirit and will take steps to strengthen both.

Materials

- Resources 1, 2, and 7
- Video camera or camera phone

Scripture Focus

John 16:5–7; Rom. 8:9, 26, 27; 12:1, 2; 1 Cor. 6:17–20; 12:11; Gal. 5:16, 22–24; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; Phil. 4:7

Summary

Christ's return to Heaven made possible the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit indwells every believer and provides the opportunity for enabling as we devote ourselves to God and depend on the Spirit for power.

Outline

I. The Holy Spirit Is Real

- A. He is a person (Rom. 8:26, 27; 1 Cor. 12:11)
- B. He indwells every believer (Rom. 8:9; John 16:5–7)
- C. He motivates
 - 1. Negatively stated (Eph. 4:30)
 - 2. Positively stated (1 Cor. 6:17–20)

II. The Holy Spirit Offers Power

- A. He wants us to be devoted (Rom. 12:1, 2)
- B. He wants us to be dependent (Gal. 5:16, 24; Eph. 5:18)

III. The Holy Spirit Produces Fruit

- A. Godly character
 - 1. Love, joy, peace (Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:7)
 - 2. Longsuffering, gentleness, goodness (Gal. 5:22)
 - 3. Faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. 5:22, 23)
- B. Effective service (1 Cor. 12:11)

Memory Verse

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you"
(John 16:7).

GETTING STARTED

Excuse Me While I Ignore You

Before class, ask three people to participate in a short skit. Assign two people to engage in a conversation while the third person stands quietly between them. The people having the conversation should totally ignore the person in between them as if they are looking right through him. Have the students conduct their skit at the front of the room. Let the conversation go on for a one or two minutes before stopping it.

ASK: As the person in the middle, how did it feel to be ignored?

ASK: As the two having the conversation, how uncomfortable was it to blatantly ignore the person between you?

ASK: How might this skit relate to how we sometimes treat the Holy Spirit?

As believers we sometimes live as if the Holy Spirit doesn't exist even though He is with us and is completely aware of what we do, say, and even think.

This lesson will help us understand and rightly respond to the Biblical reality of the Holy Spirit.

Smile for the Camera!

Hold up a camera phone as you stand in front of your class. Don't turn it on, just pretend that it is. Pan the camera back and forth as if you are filming your class. Walk up to a couple of learners as if you are getting a close up of their hand or face. After a minute or so, close the camera and address your class.

ASK: Who felt uncomfortable with the camera? Why?

Most people don't feel comfortable in front of a camera, though some do and act like fourth graders when it is rolling. Those people are in the minority.
(Let the class know you didn't actually record them.)

ASK: How might being filmed all day be like having the Holy Spirit inside you? (Q2) *The Holy Spirit is aware of everywhere we go and everything we see and do. He even knows and records our thoughts!*

Though the Holy Spirit is with us as believers, we often completely ignore Him as if He doesn't really exist. This lesson will help us understand and rightly respond to the Biblical reality of the Holy Spirit.

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

Christ's redemption and high priestly ministry were the focuses of lessons four and five. Christ's redeeming death and resurrection paved the way for His high priestly ministry. This lesson focuses on God's ministry on earth in the person of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit is another benefit from Christ's

redemptive work. The Holy Spirit works in tandem with Jesus Christ to enable believers to serve God and to gain victory over temptation.

Perhaps the Holy Spirit is both the most ignored and most misunderstood member of the Trinity. This lesson will help spell out the reality of the Spirit and His vitality for the believer today.

I. The Holy Spirit Is Real

A. He is a person (Rom. 8:26, 27; 1 Cor. 12:11)

ASK: How often do you consider the fact that the Holy Spirit is a person? What difference has that fact made in your life? (Q3)

The Scriptures leave no doubt that the Holy Spirit is a person. According to the Bible, He has an obvious intellect, emotion, and will. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he ascribed emotion to the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26). When we are not sure either what to pray or what more we could say to God, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us "with groanings which cannot be uttered." The "groanings" are inaudible sighs. The sighs convey the Holy Spirit's emotional response to our circumstances. He feels the weight of both our continuous state of feebleness and our times of suffering.

READ: Romans 8:26. **ASK:** How should we respond to Holy Spirit's emotional response to us? (Q4) *We should realize that our lives and decisions matter to Him. We should be aware of what the Holy Spirit feels about the decisions we make and the circumstances we face. We should be comforted to know the Spirit has a caring, emotional relationship with us.*

The apostle Paul then talked about "the mind of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:27). With a mind, the Spirit possesses intellect and is capable of knowing and thinking. God knows what the Spirit is thinking as the Spirit is groaning and interceding on behalf of believers.

The Holy Spirit is also able to make decisions because He has a will. In Paul's letter to the church at Corinth he wrote about the Holy Spirit distributing spiritual gifts "as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11).

Most believers would readily agree that the Holy Spirit is real. But many act as if He is not. That is a serious state to be in. An awareness of the Holy Spirit in our lives as a living person is vital to being who God wants us to be.

B. He indwells every believer (Rom. 8:9; John 16:5-7)

The importance of knowing the Spirit is a person grows when we consider He indwells every believer (Rom. 8:9). We all have the *person* of the Holy Spirit in us. That should cause us to want to know all we can about Him and His ministry on our behalf.

ASK: What thoughts go through your mind when you consider the person of the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you? (Q5)

In the hours before His arrest and eventual death, Christ told His disciples that

He would be leaving them (John 16:5). That sounded like bad news. The disciples even had sorrow fill their hearts as Christ talked to them (16:6).

READ: John 16:7. **ASK:** How did Jesus characterize His leaving? (Q6) *As something that was “expedient,” or an “advantage,” for His disciples.*

Christ’s departure was actually really good news for the disciples and for all believers in this current age. If Christ thought it was an advantage, then it certainly is!

Why is it such good news to have Christ in Heaven instead of on earth? Christ, God *with* us (Emmanuel), left so that the Holy Spirit, God *in* us, could come (16:7). Living *with* Christ must have been unbelievable for His disciples. But living with God *in* them should have been just as amazing, if not more so! The fact that Christ is now acting as our great high priest in Heaven makes the transition from “Christ with us” to the “Spirit in us” even more wonderful for all believers.

C. He motivates

1. Negatively stated (Eph. 4:30)

God intends for us to live with an awareness of the reality of the Spirit’s presence in us. In Paul’s letter to the church at Ephesus, he instructed the Ephesian believers to put away sins such as lying, sinful anger, stealing, speaking corruptly, and reacting bitterly (Eph. 4:25–29, 31). They had to put away the sins in order to “grieve not the holy Spirit of God” (4:30). This is more evidence that the Spirit is not simply an impersonal power or force. He “grieves” when we sin because He is emotionally sensitive to sin.

READ: Ephesians 4:30. **ASK:** How could our lives be affected by an awareness of the Spirit’s grieving every time we tell a lie, have a bitter thought, say a word in anger, or commit any other sin? (Q7) *We should at least think about how offensive and saddening our sins are to the Spirit. We should also realize that we need help to avoid grieving the Spirit.*

Knowing the Spirit is with us should motivate us to put off sin. He is God in us. He reads our thoughts like a book and peers through our eyes to see exactly what we see. He goes where we go and hears every word we say, even what we mutter under our breath. That is the reality of living with the Spirit in us.

2. Positively stated (1 Cor. 6:17–20)

Not “grieving” the Spirit is the negative motivation of the reality of the Spirit in us. Paul’s letter to Corinth gave the positive motivation. Knowing the Spirit is in us ought to motivate us to want to glorify God (1 Cor. 6:17–19). Our bodies are the “temple” of the Holy Spirit. So what we do with our bodies should bring glory to God (6:20). “Glorify” has the idea of making large or magnifying. In other words, people should be able to see God in us and learn about God from watching our lives. The Holy Spirit’s view from the life that glorifies God is a pleasant one. He enjoys living in those “temples.”

ASK: What do you suppose the Spirit is thinking when you are in the midst of a particularly demanding act of service for the Lord? (Q8) *The Spirit no doubt is rejoicing and enjoying the view!*

ASK: How should the Spirit's thoughts about your sacrificial service for God shape your attitude as you serve? (Q9) *We should be encouraged knowing that the Spirit is rejoicing in our bodies as we serve the Lord sacrificially. We should not think our labor is in vain or that nobody notices when we serve God sacrificially.*

Consider how the world would be different if believers grasped the reality of the Spirit in them and said, "I want to glorify God with my body and make the Holy Spirit glad to be in me!"

The Holy Spirit not only motivates change, but He also facilitates change. So He is not just along for the ride and the view, He is the engine that makes us go.

II. The Holy Spirit Offers Power

How do we make sure the power of the Holy Spirit is in gear in our lives and that we are not idling or trying to coast along under our own strength? It takes both devotion and dependence.

A. He wants us to be devoted (Rom. 12:1, 2)

Everyone is devoted to someone or something. Some are devoted to their careers or hobbies. Others are devoted to their families or even themselves. Romans 12:1 calls for devotion to God.

Paul's appeal for devotion is based on "the mercies of God." These mercies include our justification, redemption, victory over sin, no condemnation or separation, and eternal life—all topics Paul spelled out in Romans 1–11.

We are to present our "bodies" to God. That includes much more than just our physical bodies. The reference is to our entire lives—all our activities and ambitions. We "present" our lives to God by yielding to Him. Our will becomes subject to God's will. We live for Him.

ASK: Why is yielding ourselves to God a "reasonable" service (Rom. 12:1)?

Consider the Biblical realities you have learned about so far in this study.

(Q10) *God has provided eternal life to us based on the death of His Son. We are forever justified. We have Christ interceding for us in Heaven and the Holy Spirit living within us. We have a God Who is perfect and personal.*

Yielding ourselves to God is not a onetime decision. We must daily decide to devote ourselves to God and live in a state of "yieldedness." We must also have our minds transformed from a sinful, selfish mind-set to a selfless, godly mind-set.

Lesson one dealt with the transformation of the mind. That lesson presented mind transformation as related to putting on the "armor of light" (Rom. 13:12). The belt of truth and the sword of the Spirit are both vital in mind transformation (Eph. 6:14, 17). When we learn the truth of God's Word on a daily basis, it becomes our offensive weapon against living a self-absorbed life that is directed by our own will. Instead of this selfish life, we "prove," or learn by experience, that God's will is "good," "acceptable, and perfect" (Rom. 12:2). "Acceptable" means "pleasing." As we do God's will, we will find satisfaction and joy in life. "Perfect" refers to the fact that God's will encompasses all of life.

Our "yieldedness" engages the Spirit to be active in our lives. That is the first

ingredient in activating the Spirit. The second ingredient is our humble dependence on the Spirit.

B. He wants us to be dependent (Gal. 5:16, 24; Eph. 5:18)

Galatians 5:16 tells us to “walk in the Spirit.” Our “walk” refers to our lives—who we are and what we do. We are to live “in,” or “by,” the Spirit. Living by the Spirit means depending on Him.

READ: Galatians 5:16. **ASK:** What will happen to those who walk in the Spirit? (Q11) *They won't fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

We will get nowhere in our Christian walk if we depend on ourselves. We might have some superficial victories, but we will ultimately be defeated and discouraged.

Remember the discussion about our flesh back in lesson one. Our flesh wants us to live in dreamland. It demands control of our lives and will create false realities. Living in dependence on the Spirit is the way to render our flesh dead. Galatians 5:24 says, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” We don’t have to live according to a false reality. We can live victoriously by the Spirit.

The message of Ephesians 5:18 is one of dependence on the Holy Spirit too. It says to be “filled” with the Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit means to be controlled by the Spirit. The verb tense actually communicates an ongoing filling of the Spirit. We are filled by the Spirit as we lean on Him for power and direction.

ASK: Why would Paul couple the command to be filled with the Spirit with a command to not be drunk with wine? What is the connection between the two commands? (Q12) *Drinking alcoholic beverages results in being controlled by the alcohol. A drunk person is under the influence of the alcohol. Rather than being controlled by a substance, our lives ought to be controlled by the Spirit.*

III. The Holy Spirit Produces Fruit

Yielding to the Spirit and living dependent on Him unleashes the Spirit’s power in our lives. Once the Spirit’s power is unleashed, it begins to show in our lives in the form of “fruit.” That fruit is seen in godly character and effective service.

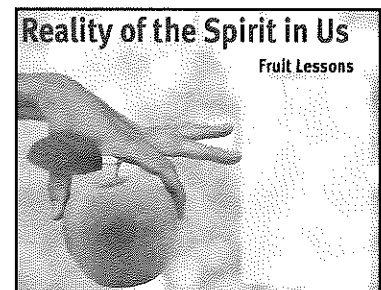
RESOURCE: Display resource 7. **ASK:** When we depend on the Spirit, we “bear fruit.” What do we learn from the fruit-bearing metaphor? (Record or reveal answers.) (Q13) *That depending on the Spirit is positive; that it benefits others; that it is seen outwardly in our lives; that it repeats over and over again.*

A. Godly character

Galatians 5:22 and 23 list the fruit of the Spirit. If we are living Spirit-controlled lives, then the fruit in the passage will be characteristic of our lives.

1. Love, joy, peace (Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:7)

Love, joy, and peace are the first three characteristics listed as evidence of a Spirit-filled life (Gal. 5:22). All of them have to do with our relationship with God.



“Love” is listed first because all of the other characteristics come from it. This type of love is divine and therefore pure. It is unadulterated with selfish motives or lust.

“Joy” is the inward satisfaction no matter what circumstances we face. It is more than happiness, which comes and goes depending on what happens to us. Joy does not make sense to those living in the flesh. It defies logic.

“Peace” is similar to joy. It, too, remains despite circumstances. It results in a settled heart and mind free from worry (Phil. 4:7).

READ: Philippians 4:7. **ASK:** When have you experienced the peace of God that “passes all understanding”? (Q14)

2. Longsuffering, gentleness, goodness (Gal. 5:22)

The next three characteristics are evident in our relationships with others (Gal. 5:22). A person who is “longsuffering” will not retaliate or seek revenge when wronged. Instead he will bear with a person and seek reconciliation and solutions. This does not mean he rolls over and lets people walk all over him. But it does mean he will not be motivated by a selfish desire to defend his rights at all costs.

ASK: How might longsuffering be evident in your life as you travel along a busy highway? (Q15)

Instead of seeking revenge, the Spirit-controlled person will show “gentleness” and “goodness” to others instead. That’s not natural! We need the Holy Spirit to respond to hateful or rude people with kindness and goodness.

ASK: How might a hateful person respond when we show him gentleness and goodness instead of revenge? (Q16) *Often our kindness defuses the situation. It also reveals Christ to the person and gives an opportunity to glorify God’s name.*

3. Faith, meekness, temperance (Gal. 5:22, 23)

The last three characteristics are inward fruit (5:22b, 23). “Faith” refers to “faithfulness.” We are dependable people when we are led by the Spirit. Some people think that being irresponsible is okay as long as we don’t mean to hurt anyone by it.

ASK: Why is God concerned about whether we are faithful and dependable? (Q17) *Being dependable shows love and concern for others. It sets aside our own wishes in order to meet the needs of others.*

A person showing “meekness” is not demanding. He uses his power with wisdom and grace. “Temperance” is “self-control.” A temperate person does not fly into a rage. Nor does he act based on lusts.

It is tempting to see a list of characteristics and use them as a means to prove we are controlled by the Spirit. But they are “fruit” of the Spirit, not “proof” of the Spirit. The fruit will be real when we learn to devote ourselves to God and depend on His Spirit. If we catch ourselves thinking about how spiritual we are, we are probably pretending to be Spirit led. Pride is a work of the flesh and evidence that the Spirit is not controlling our lives (James 4:6).

B. Effective service (1 Cor. 12:11)

The fruit of the Spirit is valuable as we strive to serve the Lord. It helps our service be effective. Imagine how ineffective our service would be if we didn't have the fruit of the Spirit.

ASK: What would be the results of our service for God if we conducted it as loveless, sad, nervous, defensive, mean, undependable, and undisciplined people? (Q18) *The results of our service would be disastrous! We would be better off not to tell people we are saved.*

The Holy Spirit oversees the distribution of spiritual gifts to believers as mentioned in the discussion about His personality (1 Cor. 12:11). He is also the One Who works, or energizes, the gifts. So the Spirit directly influences our service and brings results from our efforts. Without the Spirit, our service for the Lord would be superficial and temporary.

Lesson 10 covers in more detail the Spirit's work in enabling service.

MAKING IT PERSONAL

Self-evaluation

ASK: How much thought have you given to the role of the Holy Spirit in your life? (Q19)

ASK: Describe your level of devotion to God. What evidence from your life supports your description? (Q20)

ASK: On whom are you depending for strength and direction in life? (Q21)

Whether the fruit of the Spirit is evident in your life is a clue to your dependence. If there is no fruit in your life, then you aren't depending on the Spirit.

God's Expectations


ASK: Write a statement describing God's expectations of your devotion to Him and your dependence on the Spirit. (Q22)

RESOURCE: Display resource 2 from lesson 1. Review the list of action steps for living in the real. Many of these same steps are important in our devotion to God. Record three of those steps you need to take. (Q23)

Summary and Memory Verse

RESOURCE: Display resource 1. Add a summary statement for lesson 6 or use the following: Live in the power of the Spirit.


Encourage learners to memorize John 16:7. Give them an opportunity to say the verse in class next week.



Awake to Righteousness

- Be honest with God about your life.
- Take your sin seriously.
- Block out time for prayer and renewal of your relationship with God.
- Put on the belt of truth by studying God's Word daily.
- Strap on the sword of the Spirit by memorizing verses.
- Study the Biblical realities in this course faithfully and thoughtfully.
- Seek godly counseling from your pastor or a trusted fellow believer.
- Find an accountability partner.

Back to Reality

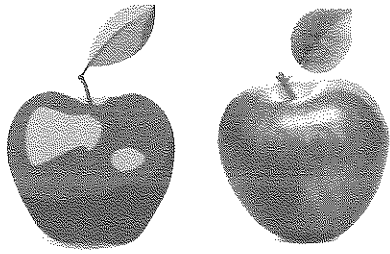


Walk in the Light

Living in the Real

1. Wake up to reality!	8.
2. Live in response to Who God is.	9.
3. Live in response to God's person.	10.
4. Walk in newness of life as God's redeemed.	11.
5. Boldly approach the throne of grace.	12.
6. Live in the power of the Spirit.	13.
7.	

God Speaks, Part 1



Topic

The Bible

Theme

God speaks to humanity through the Bible.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will value God's Word and study it concertedly and consistently as a result.

Materials

- Resources 1 and 8
- Cell phone (optional)

Scripture Focus

Gen. 3:15; Prov. 2:6–15; Rom. 5:8; Phil. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Heb. 4:12, 13; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21

Summary

The Bible is more than a book we are supposed to read in order to be a good Christian. It really is the Word of God. As such, it is living and powerful. As we read it, we will find it is sufficient for us.

Outline

I. The Bible Really Is God's Word

- A. The Bible is inspired (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21)
- B. The Bible is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12, 13)

II. The Bible Is God's Message to Humanity

- A. The Bible is a loving message (Gen. 3:15; Rom. 5:8)
- B. The Bible is a sufficient message
 1. It provides doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16)
 2. It reproves us (2 Tim. 3:16)
 3. It corrects us (Prov. 2:6–15; Phil. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:16)
 4. It gives us instruction in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)

Memory Verse

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"
(Hebrews 4:12).