



Mentoring In Christ

Discussion #4: The Holy Spirit

GOAL: To help a person understand the role of the Holy Spirit in our relationship with God and how to learn to discern his work and voice.

For The Mentor

What do we mean by this concept?

A person who has a relationship with Christ has the Holy Spirit in his/her life. It is the Holy Spirit who draws us to faith in Christ and it is the Holy Spirit who works in us to transform our hearts. We develop the character of Christ not simply by trying to be a better person but instead by learning to walk in step with the Holy Spirit. We exalt Jesus and share the gospel not out of obligation or creativity on our own part but through the empowering and gifting work of the Holy Spirit. As we read the scriptures, we learn that a relationship with God is a relationship with the Holy Spirit and to follow Christ is to learn to listen to and submit to the Holy Spirit's work in our lives. In this discussion we want to help people understand:

- 1) Who the Holy Spirit is (The 3rd member of the Trinity, God's presence in our lives)
- 2) What the Holy Spirit does in the lives who follow Christ
- 3) How do you discern the voice of the Holy Spirit above different messages/voices in our lives

Helpful passages?

- **1 Corinthians 2:6-16** – Paul really emphasizes the importance of the Holy Spirit and his role in helping us see and understand the things of God. Jesus taught about how the Holy Spirit would bring conviction of sin and help his disciples remember the things Jesus taught (**John 14:26, John 16:7-14**). Paul is simply clarifying that even more and highlight a person's need to have the Holy Spirit in his/her life to be able to understand what God is saying and doing. Those without the Holy Spirit have a hard heart and are blinded, unable to see what God is doing. The Spirit gives insight and understanding to the things God has revealed to us and how they impact our lives.
- **Galatians 5:13-26** – This is probably the key passage for discussion when it comes to the Holy Spirit. In this passage, we see that we have a choice to listen to (or walk with) the Holy Spirit or listen to our flesh. To follow Christ is to walk with the Holy Spirit who will produce a loving character in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit is most clearly seen in our relationships with people and how through the Spirit we begin to serve and bless others rather than take for ourselves.
- **Romans 8:1-17** – This is another passage, which highlights the tension between the flesh and the Holy Spirit in our lives. To follow Christ is to be controlled or led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in us speaks directly to our soul and confirms the relationship with have with God. Its through the Spirit where we begin to grasp the deep and perfect fatherly love God has for each one of us.
- **1 Corinthians 12:1-13** – The Holy Spirit empowers us for ministry that shares the gospel and builds up the church. If we have the Holy Spirit, then we have something productive to offer God's people for the good of others. This gifting is different for different people, but helpful for the whole.
- **Ephesians 1:13-14** – This is a short passage, but confirms for us the important role of the Holy Spirit in confirming our salvation. It's the Holy Spirit and the evidence of his work in our lives that gives a great confidence about having a relationship with God.

Why this matters?

People often try to follow Christ on their own. They view a relationship with God as a list of things they should do for their own good and out of obedience to God. So we obey God on our own, we share the gospel with others on our own because we should, and we make decisions through the prompting of what 'feels' right at the time. And yet God paints a different picture about following him. God is amazing in his help for us in follow Christ. He draws us to God and then through his Holy Spirit teaches us to follow

God and helps us proclaim his boldly to the world. We follow Christ now through our own power but through the power of the Holy Spirit. Which, by the way, is how Jesus followed his heavenly father and ministered to people while he was on earth (*Luke 4:14-15 is a glimpse into this*).

An approach for discussion:

Most people come to a discussion about the Holy Spirit with confusions and false ideas of who the Holy Spirit is and his role in our lives. We have just watched to many movies about mystical things and have had too many wrong ideas cast by spiritual movements that are not fully grounded in the scriptures. It is often helpful to draw out those confusions and false ideas before you get too far into what it really means to be controlled and led by the Holy Spirit.

The discussion below is designed to draw out a person's beliefs & ideas about the Holy Spirit and then let the scriptures give a more accurate picture of the Holy Spirit. The practical application of the discussion centers on learning to discern the Spirit's voice in your life through the help of the scriptures, godly people, and knowing what kinds of things he's going to be focused on prompting.

Discussion with Mentee

Before you read

- If someone asked you to explain who the Holy Spirit is, how you would answer him/her? What would you say? How confident would you be of that answer?
- What questions do you have about the Holy Spirit?
- How sure are you that you have the Holy Spirit in your life?

Passage(s): Read & Discuss

(It is difficult to pick one or two passages to cover everything on the Holy Spirit because while the Holy Spirit is all over the Bible, he's not often a focal point in the discussion so there are very few passages that are solely focused on him. You may want to choose one of the other above passages rather than the one listed here)

Read: Romans 8:1-17

- What does this passage tell us about the Holy Spirit?
- According to this passage, where does the Holy Spirit dwell?
- When does a person receive the Holy Spirit according to this passage?
- What does this passage mean by the sinful nature (or flesh as other versions use)?
- What does this passage tell us that Holy Spirit is doing in us?

Read: Galatians 5:13-26

- What sticks out to you in this passage about the Holy Spirit?
- What is different about the Holy Spirit and the sinful nature (or flesh)?
- What does the idea of 'keeping in step' with the Spirit teach us about our relationship with the Holy Spirit?
- What does it look like to keep in step with the Spirit? What helps a person know what the Holy Spirit is telling him or hear to do?

The concept to get across

There are so many things to try to get across about the Holy Spirit that it might be overwhelming to a student who knows very little about the Holy Spirit. There are just three simple things I always want to make sure someone understands about the Holy Spirit:

- The Holy Spirit is God who lives in you
- The Holy Spirit is busy in my life as I work with him (*bringing me to God, giving me understanding, producing spiritual fruit*)
- To follow Christ is to learn to listen to and obey the Holy Spirit.
 - **Hints to listening:**
 - 1) The Holy Spirit is going to confirm what the Bible is saying, he's not going to contradict what he has already said in the scriptures. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

- 2) Godly people in my life who know more how to listen to the Holy Spirit will confirm his leading in my life. The Holy Spirit leads consistently in the community of believers.
- 3) The Holy Spirit is going to be prompting me to do things that are loving to others and that exalt Jesus. This is what he does (Think of the fruit of the Spirit...its relational and for the interest of others, not just me!)

Why this matters

- From Galatians 5, it appears that working with the Spirit or working in your flesh (or sinful nature) will have dramatically different results in a person's life. How does a person know he/she is working with the Holy Spirit instead of following the flesh?
- Where do you tend to find yourself trying to follow God and live for him in your own power rather than with his help and power? How can you notice a difference?
- What do you think are some of the ways the Holy Spirit has gifted you or uses you in the lives of other people for their good and blessing?

Encouraged Response

A few responses that might make sense for a person:

- Wanting to read the Bible more to have a greater sense of what the Holy Spirit has already said about life
- Learning to talk regularly to the Holy Spirit. I want to wake up each more seeking to live a life that is empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Wanting to evaluate and look for the fruit of the Holy Spirit in his/her life.
- Begin to try out some different opportunities in ministry to help him/her discover more what his/her giftings might be and how the Holy Spirit works through you to bless others.

More Bible To Read On Your Own:

- 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
- 1 Corinthians 12:1-13
- John 14 & 16 – Look for what Jesus is saying about the Holy Spirit and what he is going to do in the lives of his disciples

Evidence of Integration

The goal of these discussions is not to get information across as much as helping someone integrate this into their lives. A few things you could look for over time with a person as evidences of the fact that he/she is translating this topic into his/her relationship with Christ:

- Any evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in his/her life and relationships.
- A greater boldness in sharing the gospel and us.
- A great desire to discover his/her gifting in the Holy Spirit through wanting to serve others and share the gospel more regularly and trying new things.
- A greater assurance of his/her faith in Christ as they see evidence of the Holy Spirit working through them in ministry
- A greater commitment to reading the scriptures and seeking out godly leadership in his/her life. They are often asking the question of 'What is the Holy Spirit telling me to do about _____ in my life?'