

Who Is the Holy Spirit?

Passages: Eph 4:4–6; Acts 1:8; 2:1–13; Jn 4:24; Gal 4:6; Col 2:9; Jn 12:16; 16:8–11, 13; Rom 8:13; 1 Jn 3:24

Memory Verse

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
God abides with us through the Holy Spirit.	God is Spirit.	Open ourselves to the teachings of the Spirit. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Spirit gives us wisdom and revelation from God.• The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- B. Characteristics of the Holy Spirit
- C. The Holy Spirit Convicts the World

Life Application

How Does the Holy Spirit Help Me?

Memory Verse

Conclusion: Do not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19), but let the Spirit of God help us grow in our walk of faith.

Spiritual Teachings

Introduction

Have you ever wondered what the Day of Pentecost is? The day was named *Pentecost* because it occurred fifty days after the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was also referred to as “the Feast of Weeks,” and was the second time within a fifty-day period that the Israelites would give a grain offering to the Lord (Lev 23:15). Thus, “the Day of Firstfruits” was also named “the fiftieth day,” or *pentecost* in Greek. It was on this day, when the Israelites were giving a new offering of the firstfruits of their harvest, that the Holy Spirit descended.

We have probably heard how precious the Holy Spirit is, and how we must continue to fill ourselves with the Spirit through the power of prayer. But what exactly is the Holy Spirit, other than our ticket into heaven? To many of us, the Holy Spirit is an abstract concept because it is not visible or tangible. In this lesson, we will be taking a closer look at who the Holy Spirit is.

A. Who Is the Holy Spirit?

The Bible often calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of God, indicating that they are one and the same. Since the Lord Jesus is also God Himself, the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ as well.

1. The Holy Spirit is the one true God

The following Bible verses teach us that the Holy Spirit is God Himself:

- “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezek 36:27)
- “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (Jn 4:24)
- “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit [...]? You have not lied to men but to God.” (Acts 5:3–4)
- “And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.” (1 Jn 3:24)

The Holy Spirit is God’s personal presence in our lives, who constantly dwells within us. We may not be able to see or touch the Lord with our physical senses, but the works of His Spirit who abides in us can be seen. Let us look at some of the more tangible works of the Spirit in the Bible.

- Created heaven and earth (Gen 1:1–2)
- Anointed His servants (Isa 61:1)
- Empowered His servants (Ex 31:1–3)
- Spoke through His prophets (2 Chr 24:20)
- Anointed Jesus and showed that He is Christ (Mt 3:16–17)

2. The Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ

Galatians 4:6 says, “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba! Father!’” The Holy Spirit within our hearts is the Spirit of God’s Son, Jesus Christ. The following verses further teach us that the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Lord Jesus are the same.

- “Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (2 Cor 3:17)
- “But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.” (Rom 8:9)

- “Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go near and overtake this chariot.’ Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.” (Acts 8:29, 39)
- “When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to.” (Acts 16:7 NIV)

From these passages, we understand that the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ refer to the same Spirit. Paul describes the Lord Jesus as the “image of the invisible God [...]. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth [...]. All things were created through Him and for Him” (Col 1:15–16). Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God who created all things (Job 33:4), is God Himself (Col 2:9), and thus is also the Spirit of God who dwells among us.

The Holy Spirit = God = Jesus Christ.

Do you understand the mystery behind this truth? It may seem simple to us, but theologians spent hundreds of years studying this mystery. For many, this is a very complicated and abstract concept. Some even try to rationalize it with human logic. For example, they may believe that the three beings are three separate entities. But for us, it is clear. The Holy Spirit is God Himself, as well as Jesus Christ.

B. Characteristics of the Holy Spirit

Just as names and titles often reflect something about a person, object, or position, the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit using many different names to illustrate the Spirit’s characteristics.

1. The Spirit of truth

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” (Jn 16:13)

The world around us is constantly changing—people lie, twist facts, or even choose to remember a different reality in order to suit their desires. Standards of morality change with each generation, and every country has its own laws that dictate what is just. But God is truth, and His truth is absolute and unchangeable. His Spirit will never change. Why is this important to us? Jesus Christ once said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (Jn 14:6). We need the unchangeable truth to be able to see God. But we were born into sin, making this impossible to obtain. This is where the Holy Spirit comes in.

Paul wrote, “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:11). The Spirit of truth is the only one who is able to understand God, because the Spirit is God Himself. So, for us to see God, we need the Holy Spirit within us to “guide [us] into all truth” (Jn 16:13), so that we can become sons of God (Rom 8:14). “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (Jn 14:26).

2. The Helper

“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.” (Jn 16:7)

During the last supper, the disciples were saddened, knowing that Jesus would soon depart from them. But Jesus reassured them, telling them that He would send them help (Jn 14:16). Sure enough, after He ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit descended, and the disciples received the power to boldly testify for the Lord (Acts 2:4, 14–36).

The title that Jesus used, “Helper,” or *paraklētos* in Greek, is also sometimes translated as comforter, advocate, or counselor. As a Helper, the Spirit comforts us when we are upset, intercedes for us as our advocate before God, and counsels us when we need guidance. This is why it is so important for us to have the Holy Spirit. Our spirits may be willing, but our flesh is weak (Mt 26:41).

3. The Spirit of wisdom and revelation

“[That] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.” (Eph 1:17)

The Holy Spirit also gives us different gifts (1 Cor 12:4–11) and can direct the activities of God’s servants. For example, the apostles, once fearful followers of Jesus Christ, were filled with power on the Day of Pentecost and boldly preached the gospel. Let us look at some of the works of the Spirit in the Bible. Look up the following passages, and for each, explain what kind of wisdom or revelation the Spirit gave.

- a. Genesis 41:38–41 – *Gave Joseph the wisdom to rule.*
- b. Exodus 31:2–6 – *Gave craftsmen wisdom in all manner of workmanship.*
- c. Daniel 4:18 – *Gave Daniel the wisdom and revelation to interpret dreams.*
- d. Acts 16:6–10 – *Gave Paul revelation regarding where to preach the gospel.*
- e. Acts 15:24–28 – *Gave the members revelation regarding the conflict of circumcision.*
- f. 1 Cor 2:4–5 – *Gives us spiritual power and wisdom.*

From these examples, we can see that the Spirit offers so much more than just a way into heaven. God has promised that His Helper will guide us to follow His will, help us to see the truth, and give us spiritual power.

C. The Holy Spirit Convicts the World

There is another, crucial role of the Holy Spirit. Let us read John 16:8–11. Jesus stated that the Holy Spirit will convict the world. To “convict” means to admonish, to reprove, or to convince. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of its sin, of its need for righteousness, and of the judgment to come. Let us look at each of these in a bit more detail.

1. “...of sin, because they do not believe in Me”

The Spirit shows us what we have done wrong. This is important because there are many times in our lives when we do not even realize that we have sinned, especially when we do not believe in God. Let us read John 3:18. What does it say? “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” Therefore, the Holy Spirit helps us by pointing out our unbelief. Even someone who has already been baptized into Christ may need help with their unbelief (Mk 9:24).

Have you ever doubted the Lord’s presence, forgotten His love, or lost sight of His power? In times like these, the Holy Spirit reminds us of the Lord’s omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence. By being convicted of our sin and reminded of the powerful redemption that Jesus offers, we will be

able to turn away from the world and accept the Lord into our hearts.

2. *"...of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more"*

Because He was the perfect Lamb of God, death could not keep the Lord Jesus. His ascension into heaven proves His righteousness, and as a result of His perfect sacrifice, we are able to receive water baptism to wash our sins away. However, this is only the beginning of our journey of faith. We need to abide by the same standards of righteousness as the Lord. But we are weak, so it is impossible to live a fruitful life purely by human will alone. If this is the case, how can we ever measure up to Jesus Christ, who is God's standard of righteousness?

The Holy Spirit is not here to make us feel despair over our failures. The Holy Spirit reproves us when we fail to meet God's righteous requirements, shows us where we fall short, and helps us overcome our weaknesses. Paul wrote, "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Rom 8:13). The Holy Spirit helps us work harder to be even better Christians and to set an example as children of God. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to constantly transform us and help us overcome our sinful nature.

Have you ever compared yourselves to others? Or perhaps decided that you were smarter or better because you have better grades, are better dressed, or have the latest electronics? All of these standards – wealth, looks, or social status – are expectations formed by the society in which we live. By convicting us of God's righteousness, the Holy Spirit reminds us to be better children of God and to constantly reach for God's standards, not mankind's.

3. *"...of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged"*

The judgment that the Spirit convicts the world of refers to the judgment of Satan. With His resurrection, the Lord Jesus emerged victorious over death (Jn 19:30; Rom 6:9). As a result, Satan, who is the "ruler of this world," has already been condemned for his sins, and he will be judged when Jesus Christ returns.

According to the Book of Revelation, Satan will be convicted and cast into the lake of fire for eternity. Likewise, those who refuse to acknowledge God and allow Satan to be their ruler will suffer the same fate as the evil one. However, if we accept Jesus Christ as our King and Savior, we will be exempt from God's wrath (Rom 5:9). By convicting the world of the judgment that is to come, the Holy Spirit reminds us that we should not seek after the things of this world, which Satan rules over, but after God's heavenly kingdom and His righteousness.

Check for Understanding

1. Who is the Holy Spirit? List one verse for each answer.

- a. He is the one true God: Ezek 36:27; Jn 4:24; Acts 5:3–4; 1 Jn 3:24
- b. He is Jesus Christ: Gal 4:6; 2 Cor 3:17; Rom 8:9; Acts 8:29, 39; Acts 16:7 (NIV)

2. Name two of the works of the Holy Spirit. Created heaven and earth; anointed His servants; empowered His servants; spoke through His prophets; anointed Jesus and showed that He is Christ.

3. List four different characteristics of the Holy Spirit. Teaches, guides, strengthens, comforts, convicts, grieves, calls, intercedes, testifies, witnesses, helps, reveals.

4. Why do we need the Holy Spirit in our life? The Holy Spirit helps us see our sin, helps us understand that we fall short of God's standards, and helps people come to Jesus Christ.

Life Application

How Does the Holy Spirit Help Me?

1. The Holy Spirit teaches us the truth

Let us read the following verses.

- Jesus told His disciples, “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come” (Jn 16:12–13).
- “The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (Jn 14:17)
- Jesus said, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (Jn 14:26).

Jesus’ disciples could not understand the gospel until they received the Holy Spirit. In the same way, before we receive the Holy Spirit, we also may not understand the truth. But when we do receive the Holy Spirit, we have a “Helper” (Jn 14:16), whose role it is to teach us the truth. This is wonderful news to us! When we read the Bible, we cannot understand God’s words on our own, but the Holy Spirit will illuminate the truth so that we might understand it and put it into practice.

1 Corinthians 2:10 says, “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.” The Holy Spirit wants to reveal and teach us the ways of God. The question is: are you willing to open your heart and mind, and wholeheartedly follow the teachings that you receive? The word of God can impact our lives and serve as a manual for living a godly and abundant life, free of the bonds and burdens of this world, but only if we allow it to, and only if we open our hearts to the Spirit’s teachings.

2. The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom and revelation

“[That] the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.” (Eph 1:17)

After we have received the Holy Spirit, we need to ask God for wisdom and revelation. Why? Because the wisdom from God is very different from the wisdom of the world. The Bible tells us that the wisdom of this world is “foolishness with God” (1 Cor 3:19). If we only want to live in the flesh, we cannot understand the wisdom of God, so we continue to live in darkness. But God wants to equip us so that we can discern right from wrong. He wants to give us His spirit of wisdom and revelation. All we have to do is be willing to seek after it. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him” (Jas 1:5).

When God reveals His wisdom to us, we are able to see the truth in many things—not only in church, but also in our family or at school. We begin making decisions with “the wisdom that is from above [that] is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (Jas 3:17). When others see God’s wisdom in the decisions that we make, we become the light of this world!

3. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins

The word “convict” means to convince someone of their errors or sins. That is one of the roles of the Holy Spirit, like an internal alarm that reveals our wrongdoings or evil thoughts. When we do not have

the fullness of the Holy Spirit, it is easier for us to sin against God. Isaiah stood in the presence of God and said, "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa 6:5). If the Spirit convicts us of our sins, there is a sense of utter dread. We realize how much we have dishonored God.

But the Holy Spirit can also convict us even before we know God. Remember the jailer whom Paul stopped from killing himself? He fell at the disciples' feet and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). The jailer was filled with dread upon realizing his sins, and was immediately convinced that he needed a Savior. The Holy Spirit has the power to bring us back to God, and to be reconciled with God, by opening our hearts and eyes to see the wrongs that we have done (Acts 17:30).

There is a beauty when the Holy Spirit convicts us; we are transformed, and our spiritual lives are regenerated and renewed. When we are slaves to sinful pleasures, led astray by our desires, and are disobedient, the Holy Spirit convicts of our sins. This is not to punish us, but is because of His great love and mercy. The Spirit gives us spiritual eyes to see, spiritual ears to hear, and a spiritual sense in our heart to know that God loves us, just like the prodigal son who "came to himself" (Lk 15:17). Therefore, when the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins, it is to change, mold, and return us to God.

Discussion

- Share a time when you were convicted by the Holy Spirit. What lesson(s) did you learn?
- Share a time when you truly felt the Holy Spirit was your Helper in teaching you the truth.
- Share a time when you needed wisdom from God. How did God respond?

Memory Verse

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Meanings

As Jesus Christ promised us, He will send the Holy Spirit to us and abide with us forever. When we rely on His Spirit, we will witness His power working in us, with us, and through us. No matter where we go, we will be able to bear witness for God and glorify His name. People of the world will be able to witness God in our actions and speech.

Conclusion

There are many characteristics of the Holy Spirit, but the most important work of the Holy Spirit is to help us draw even closer to God in our daily lives. Therefore, let us strive to live a life where God's Spirit can work in us. Do not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19), but let the Spirit of God help us grow in our walk of faith.

Lesson 1 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What happens when the Holy Spirit abides in us and we rely on His Spirit?
We will witness His power working in us, with us, and through us.
2. "I will put My _____ within you and _____ you to _____ in My _____, and you will _____ My _____ and do them." (Ezekiel 36:27)
Spirit, cause, walk, statutes, keep, judgments
3. How does the Holy Spirit convict the world of sin?
The Spirit shows us what we have done wrong. By being convinced of our sin and reminded of Jesus' redemption, we will be able to turn away from the world and accept the Lord into our hearts.
4. Why is it important that the Holy Spirit convicts us of God's righteousness?
By convicting us of His righteousness, the Spirit reminds us to be better children of God and to constantly reach for God's standards, not mankind's.
5. Why do we need wisdom and revelation from the Spirit?
Because the wisdom from God is very different from the wisdom of the world. We need God's wisdom to fight our spiritual battles every day and to be a shining light for Him.
6. Have you ever needed wisdom from God? How did He respond to your need?
Personal answers.