

Christian Basics

Session 5: The Holy Spirit

Facilitator's Guide

Ask:

How has the past week been for you?

Do you have any questions from what we chatted about last week?

Important - Please Note: During your meeting, only look up and read the Bible passages that are contained within the boxes. The Bible passage references contained within the body of the information or following the "See Also" text should not be covered during your meeting as it will make the meeting very long. Encourage the participant to look up the passages later and ask any questions they may have at a future catch-up.

Introduction

In the last session we learnt that on the Sunday following His death on the Friday, Jesus was resurrected bodily from the dead. He appeared to hundreds of people and ate food with His disciples and was physically touched by them. As a result of Jesus rising from the dead, we can be assured of His promise that He will raise all those who believe in Him from the dead.

We also learnt that after Jesus had appeared to many in His risen body over a period of forty days, He was taken up to heaven (ascended) while his disciples watched on.

1. Instruction to the disciples

Before He ascended into heaven, Jesus gave His disciples directions on what they were supposed to do immediately after He ascended.

Acts 1:3-5

³ After His suffering, He presented Himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that He was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while He was eating with them, He gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 1:8

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Ask: What do you notice about the Jesus’ instructions to his disciples?

Jesus promised the disciples that when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they would be empowered to share about Him with other people everywhere.

2. The coming of the Holy Spirit

The disciples obeyed Jesus’ command and stayed in Jerusalem. At that time there were many other disciples who had joined the initial twelve disciples. Ten days following the ascension of Jesus into Heaven, about 120 disciples were gathered together in a room when the gift that Jesus promised was delivered.

Acts 2:1-4

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

(See also: Acts 2:33)

Ask: What do you notice about the arrival of the Holy Spirit?

3. The empowering of the Holy Spirit

Before Jesus returned to Heaven, He promised that the gift of the Holy Spirit would empower the disciples to be His witness. We notice throughout the book of Acts that the Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to do this in a variety of ways.

Firstly, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to **proclaim the wonders of God (Acts 2:11) in languages they had never learnt or spoken before**, so that people from other nationalities could put their faith in Jesus.

Acts 2:5-8

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?

(See also: Acts 10:44-46; 19:4-6)

Secondly, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to **boldly share the truth about Jesus**.

Acts 4:8-13

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ Jesus is:

"the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone."

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

(See also: Acts 2:14-21; 3:11-24; 4:31; 6:10; 7:1-53, 13:13-52; 14:1; 16:16-34, 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Peter 1:12)

Ask: What do you notice about Peter's message?

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit enabled them to **perform amazing miracles, signs and wonders**.

Acts 5:12-16

¹² The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. ¹³ No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. ¹⁵ As a result,

people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. ¹⁶ Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

(See also: Acts 3:1-10; 5:27-32; 8:4-8; 10:32-43; 16:16-18; 19:11-12; 20:7-12; 28:1-5, Rom.15:19)

Ask: What was the result of the Holy Spirit enabling the disciples to perform such amazing signs and wonders?

Fourthly, the Holy Spirit gave the disciples **directions for ministry**.

Acts 13:1-4

¹ Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. ⁴ The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

(See also: Acts 8:26-40; 11:12; 15:28; 16:6-10; 20:22-23,28)

Ask: What do you notice about how the Holy Spirit gave the disciples direction and what they were doing when they received that direction?

Fifthly, the Holy Spirit gave the disciples **supernatural insight and foreknowledge**.

Acts 11:27-30

²⁷ During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) ²⁹ The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. ³⁰ This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

(See also: Acts 5:1-11; 13:6-12; 21:10-11)

Ask: What do you notice about the outcome of the prediction from the Holy Spirit?

Now that you have seen some of what the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to do, you may be asking who or what is the Holy Spirit?

4. Who is the Holy Spirit?

In our previous sessions we learnt that Jesus was referred to as the 'Son of God', which made him equal with God the Father. Jesus also said on one occasion that He and the Father are one (John 10:30). Jesus is God the Son, the second person with God the Father in what we call the Godhead. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead and is equal with God the Father and God the Son. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not separate gods but one God with different roles. This is what is commonly known as the Holy Trinity and can be challenging for us to fully grasp or understand.

To help you understand the Trinity, it may be beneficial to think about the various forms that the element water can take. When water is transformed from liquid into steam or ice, the form and activity that the water takes is different, but the basic element of water remains the same. In the same way, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are all one God, but take different forms and perform different tasks. For example, Jesus took the human form of God and did the work of dying for our sins, while the Holy Spirit, fills believers to empower them for ministry. They are the same person manifesting in different ways and performing different roles.

The Holy Spirit is the **active presence of God in the world**. We see in the Bible that the Holy Spirit was active in the creation of the world and gives life to all living creatures.

Genesis 1:2

²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

Psalms 104:30

³⁰When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.

We also see in the Old Testament of the Bible that the Holy Spirit **empowered some people for special service**.

Deuteronomy 34:9

⁹ Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

(See also: Numbers 27:18; Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19, 15:14; 1 Sam 11:16)

Following the ascension of Jesus to Heaven, **the Holy Spirit is given to everyone who puts their faith in Jesus**. Every believer in Jesus has the **Holy Spirit** living inside of them.

John 7:37-39

³⁷On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to Me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in Me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."³⁹ By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1 Cor 6:19-20

¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your bodies

(See also: Acts 3:38; 5:32; 1 Cor 3:16)

You may be wondering, if the Holy Spirit is able to do in and through you what He did in those first believers.

5. Can the Holy Spirit empower me for ministry?

The answer to that question is a resounding 'YES'. In fact, without the Holy Spirit helping you, you would not have been able to **put your faith in Jesus**.

1 Cor 12:3

³Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

Once you have put your faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit will continue to **convict and remind you that you are a child of God**.

Romans 8:16

¹⁶ The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Just like the first believers, the Holy Spirit **gives each believer one or more gifts** to be able to bear witness to Jesus.

1 Cor 12:4-11

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He distributes them to each one, just as He determines.

(See Also: Romans 12:4-8)

As Jesus wants all believers to work together to grow His kingdom, no one person will have all the gifts. We all will be given some gifts to use in combination with the gifts of others.

Apart from putting the gifts of God to use for the kingdom, one of the most powerful witnesses of Jesus to others, is when we are like Jesus. The Holy Spirit **grows spiritual fruit** in us that **makes us more like Jesus** and speaks loudly to those who don't yet know Him.

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

(See also: Rom 5:5)

The way that God works in our world is through the prayers of believers in Jesus. The Holy Spirit also **helps believers to pray**.

Romans 8:26

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

Looking Forward

In this session we have learnt that every believer has the Holy Spirit living in them to enable them to both be more like Jesus and do His work to help others to come into His kingdom. While we cannot grow in the likeness of Jesus or do ministry without the Holy Spirit, there are ways in which we can posture ourselves to grow in our relationship with God and be used more powerfully by Him for the growth of His kingdom every day. We will learn more about that in the next session.

Questions

1. What stood out most for you in our discussion today?
2. What will you do as a result of our time today?
3. Who in your life do you think would be interested in hearing about what you have discovered today?
4. How can I be praying for you this week?

Prayer of Salvation

If the person has not yet put their faith in Jesus, you can ask them if they would like to do that today. If they would like to do that, tell them that you are going to lead them in a prayer but that you would like to discuss with them what the words of the prayer will be. Discuss the following prayer with them before leading them through it line by line.

Prayer to Make Jesus Lord of Your Life

Jesus, I believe that You are the Son of God and that You died on the cross to rescue me from sin and eternal separation from God.

I ask for Your forgiveness for all of my sins and I choose to turn from them and make You the Lord of my life.

I receive Your forgiveness and ask You to come and live in me and help me to love in the same way that you do.

Thank-You for the free gift of salvation and for making me a child of God.

Thank-You that You will never leave for forsake me and that I can be assured of

spending all eternity in heaven with You, only because of what You did on the cross for me.

May Your will be done in my life.

Amen.

Prayer to Be Filled with Holy Spirit

As we have discussed in this session, we cannot come to faith in Jesus apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. When we place our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. While the Holy Spirit lives within us, we can always ask to be filled with more of His presence and power. In Luke 11:13, Jesus teaches that the Father will always give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. You can pray to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day.

Prayer to be filled with the Holy Spirit

Dear God,

Thank-You that the Holy Spirit already lives in me.

Please fill me now to overflowing with more of the Holy Spirit to be empowered in following Jesus and helping others to know Him.

Amen