



Questions About the Holy Spirit

A GotQuestions.org Bible Study



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How to Use This Bible Study

Welcome to the Got Questions Bible Study! We're so glad you're here!

In these studies you will find GotQuestions content, Bible search questions to dig deeper, and heartfelt questions to spark reflection and discussion. Whether you are a new or seasoned believer, using these Bible studies for personal study or as a small group/Sunday School resource, we hope you will increase in your understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ and that you will seek Him more passionately.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
– Jeremiah 29:13

These Bible studies are tools to help you grow in your knowledge of the topics at hand. However, knowing about God is not the same as actually knowing Him. God invites each of us to know Him personally and to have eternal life through Him.

Throughout this study, there will be information to read and questions to answer. Next to the questions will be icons. Here is your key to understanding them:



Content Qs



Engage Qs



Bible Qs



Reflection Qs

If we place our faith in Him, trusting in His death on the cross to pay for our sins, we will be forgiven and receive the promise of eternal life in heaven.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son so that anyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.
– John 3:16

If you have not yet trusted in Him for salvation or are unsure if you are saved, please visit: www.gotquestions.org/eternal-life.html.

May God richly bless you as you seek to study His Word and grow in your walk with Him (Joshua 1:8)!





Lesson 1:

Who is the Holy Spirit?

There are many misconceptions about the identity of the Holy Spirit. Some view the Holy Spirit as a mystical force. Others see the Holy Spirit as an impersonal power that God makes available to followers of Christ. What does the Bible say about the identity of the Holy Spirit?



What do you know about the Holy Spirit? What has informed your thinking about who He is and what He does?

Simply put, the Bible declares that the Holy Spirit is God. The Bible also tells us that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, a being with a mind, emotions, and a will.

The fact that the Holy Spirit is God is clearly seen in many Scriptures, including Acts 5:3-4. In these verses Peter confronts Ananias as to why he lied to the Holy Spirit and tells him that he had “not lied just to human beings but to God.” It is a clear declaration that lying to the Holy Spirit is lying to God. We can also know that the Holy Spirit is God because He

possesses the characteristics of God. For example, His omnipresence is seen in Psalm 139:7-8, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.” Then in 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, we see the characteristic of omniscience in the Holy Spirit. “These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”



Look up the verses below, and answer the following: what do these verses reveal about the Holy Spirit?

Nehemiah 9:20:

Job 33:4:

Psalm 139:7-10:

Ezekiel 11:5:

John 14:26:

John 16:13:

Romans 8:2, 9-11:

Romans 8:26-27:

1 Corinthians 2:10-11:

1 Corinthians 12:3:

2 Corinthians 3:17:

Ephesians 1:13-14:

Hebrews 9:14:

We can know that the Holy Spirit is indeed a divine person because He possesses a mind, emotions, and a will. The Holy Spirit thinks and knows (1 Corinthians 2:10). The Holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). The Spirit intercedes for us (Romans 8:26-27). He makes decisions according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The Holy Spirit is God, the third Person of the Trinity. As God, the Holy Spirit can truly function as the Comforter and Counselor that Jesus promised He would be (John 14:16, 26, 15:26).



Write down any questions you have about the Holy Spirit and what you would like to know more about regarding the Holy Spirit.



Lesson 2: **Is the Holy Spirit God?**

The short answer to this question is, yes, the Holy Spirit as described in the Bible is fully God. Along with God the Father and God the Son (Jesus Christ), God the Spirit is the third member of the Godhead or the Trinity.

Those who challenge the idea that the Holy Spirit is God suggest that the Holy Spirit may simply be an impersonal force of some kind, a source of power controlled by God but not fully a person Himself. Others suggest that perhaps the Holy Spirit is just another name for Jesus, in spirit form, apart from His body.

Neither of these ideas lines up with what the Bible actually says about the Holy Spirit, though. The Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a person who has been present with the Father and the Son since before time began. The Spirit is integral to all of the things that God is described as doing in the Bible.



A force is defined as an influence leading to change or a mystical or supernatural universal energy field which certain individuals can harness to gain special powers or abilities. What would it mean if the Holy Spirit were merely a force and not fully God?

The Spirit of God was present at and involved in creation (Genesis 1:2; Psalm 33:6). The Holy Spirit moved the prophets of God with the words of God (2 Peter 1:21). The bodies of those in Christ are described as temples of God because the Holy Spirit is in us (1 Corinthians 6:19). Jesus was clear that to be “born again,” to become a Christian, one must be born “of the Spirit” (John 3:5).

One of the most convincing statements in the Bible about the Holy Spirit being God is found in Acts 5. When Ananias lied about the price of a piece of property, Peter said that Satan had filled Ananias’s heart to “lie to the Holy Spirit” (Acts 5:3) and concluded by saying

that Ananias had “lied to God” (verse 4). Peter reveals that the Holy Spirit is God. Lying to the Holy Spirit was lying to God.

Jesus told His disciples that the Holy Spirit, the Helper, was different from Himself. The Father would send the Helper, the Spirit of truth, after Christ departed. The Spirit would speak through the disciples about Jesus (John 14:25–26; 15:26–27; 16:7–15). All three Persons Jesus mentions—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are God while being distinct from each other within the Trinity.



Look up Matthew 28:19, Luke 3:21-22, Romans 14:17-18, 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, and 2 Corinthians 13:14. What do these verses reveal about the Holy Spirit’s deity and role in the Trinity?

The three members of the Trinity show up, together yet distinct, at Jesus’ baptism. As Jesus comes up from the water, the Spirit descends on Him like a dove while the voice of the Father is heard from heaven saying that He is pleased with His beloved Son (Mark 1:10–11).

Finally, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a person, not a mere force. He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). He has a will (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). He uses His mind to search the deep things of God (1 Corinthians 2:10). And He has fellowship with believers (2 Corinthians 13:14). Clearly, the Spirit is a person, just as the Father and the Son are persons.



Since the Holy Spirit is God, that means He possesses all the same attributes and characteristics as God the Father and God the Son. What are these attributes and characteristics? (Here are some verses to get you started: Numbers 23:19; Psalms 7:11, 18:30, 90:2, 117:2, 139:1-13; Isaiah 6:3, 40:25-28; Malachi 3:6; and Romans 11:33)

Indeed, the Bible is unequivocal that the Holy Spirit is, in fact, God, just as Jesus Christ and the Father are God.



Reflect on what it means that the Holy Spirit is God, an equal person of the Trinity, and not simply a force that can be changed, altered, and influenced with no will or purpose in and of itself. Thank God that His Spirit is not an impersonal force but God Himself.



Lesson 3:

What does the Holy Spirit do?

The Bible is quite clear that the Holy Spirit is active in our world. The book of Acts, which sometimes goes by the longer title of “The Acts of the Apostles,” could just as accurately be called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles.” After the apostolic age, there have been some changes—the Spirit does not inspire further Scripture, for example—but He continues to do His work in the world.

First, the Holy Spirit does many things in the lives of believers. He is the believers’ Helper (John 14:26). He indwells believers and seals them until the day of redemption—this indicates that the Holy Spirit’s presence in the believer is irreversible. He guards and guarantees the salvation of the ones He indwells (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). The Holy Spirit assists believers in prayer (Jude 1:20) and “intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God” (Romans 8:26–27).

The Holy Spirit regenerates and renews the believer (Titus 3:5). At the moment of salvation, the Spirit baptizes the believer into the Body of Christ (Romans 6:3). Believers receive the new birth by the power of the Spirit (John 3:5–8). The Spirit comforts believers with fellowship and joy as they go through a hostile world (1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14). The Spirit, in His mighty power, fills believers with “all joy and peace” as they trust the Lord, causing believers to “overflow with hope” (Romans 15:13).



The Holy Spirit permanently indwells each believer at salvation. Look up Romans 8:1-17. How could taking these verses to heart impact your walk with the Lord, your battle against sin, and your witness to the world?



How have you seen the Holy Spirit transform your life since salvation?

Sanctification is another work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. The Spirit sets Himself against the desires of the flesh and leads the believer into righteousness (Galatians 5:16–18). The works of the flesh become less evident, and the fruit of the Spirit

becomes more evident (Galatians 5:19–26). Believers are commanded to “be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18), which means they are to yield themselves to the Spirit’s full control.



Look up Galatians 5:19-26. What are the signs of living in the flesh? What are the signs of living under the Spirit’s control?

The Holy Spirit is also a gift-giver. “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them” (1 Corinthians 12:4). The spiritual gifts that believers possess are given by the Holy Spirit as He determines in His wisdom (verse 11).

The Holy Spirit also does work among unbelievers. Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to

“convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8, ESV). The Spirit testifies of Christ (John 15:26), pointing people to the Lord. Currently, the Holy Spirit is also restraining sin and combatting “the secret power of lawlessness” in the world. This action keeps the rise of the Antichrist at bay (2 Thessalonians 2:6–10).



***How did you see the Holy Spirit at work in your life before you were a believer?
How do you see Him at work in the lives of unbelievers or the world as a whole?***

The Holy Spirit has one other important role, and that is to give believers wisdom by which we can understand God. “These are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit

of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:10–11). Since we have been given the amazing gift of God’s Spirit inside ourselves, we can comprehend the thoughts of God, as revealed in the Scripture. The Spirit helps us understand. This is wisdom from God, rather than wisdom from man. No amount of human knowledge can ever replace the Holy Spirit’s teaching (1 Corinthians 2:12–13).



Look up 1 Corinthians 2:12-13. How is the Holy Spirit different than the spirit of the world?



Reflect on how the Holy Spirit works in our lives. Thank Him for what He has done and continues to do in your life. Make a list of unbelievers you are praying for. Ask the Holy Spirit to convict them of sin, draw them closer to Him, and bring them to salvation.



Lesson 4:

What was the role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?

The role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament is much like His role in the New Testament. When we speak of the role of the Holy Spirit, we can discern four general areas in which the Holy Spirit works: 1) regeneration, 2) indwelling (or filling), 3) restraint, and 4) empowerment for service. Evidence of these areas of the Holy Spirit's work is just as present in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament.



If someone were to ask you, “How were people saved in the Old Testament?” how would you respond? (if you’ve never thought of this question or need some extra help with answering it, see: www.gotquestions.org/Old-Testament-salvation.html). Although the Holy Spirit only permanently indwells believers since Pentecost, the way of salvation has always been the same: based on faith in the promise that God would do what He said He would do to provide the way of salvation.

The first area of the Spirit's work is in the process of regeneration. Another word for regeneration is "rebirth," from which we get the concept of being "born again." The classic proof text for this can be found in John's gospel: "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again" (John 3:3). This begs the question: what does this have to do with the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament? Later on in His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus has this to say to him: "You are Israel's teacher...and do you not understand these things?" (John 3:10). The point Jesus was making is that Nicodemus should have known the truth that the Holy Spirit is the source of new life because it is revealed in the Old Testament. For instance, Moses told the Israelites prior to entering the Promised Land that "The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love

him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live" (Deuteronomy 30:6). This circumcision of the heart is the work of God's Spirit and can be accomplished only by Him. We also see the theme of regeneration in Ezekiel 11:19-20 and Ezekiel 36:26-29.

The fruit of the Spirit's regenerating work is faith (Ephesians 2:8). Now we know that there were men of faith in the Old Testament because Hebrews 11 names many of them. If faith is produced by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, then this must be the case for Old Testament saints who looked ahead to the cross, believing that what God had promised in regard to their redemption would come to pass. They saw the promises and "welcomed them from a distance" (Hebrews 11:13), accepting by faith that what God had promised, He would also bring to pass.



***Which people from the Old Testament serve as examples to you in your faith?
In what ways do they encourage or motivate you in your faith?***

The second aspect of the Spirit's work in the Old Testament is indwelling, or filling. Here is where the major difference between the Spirit's roles in the Old and New Testaments is apparent. The New Testament teaches the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20). When we place our faith in Christ for salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. The apostle Paul calls this permanent indwelling the "guarantee of our inheritance" (Ephesians 1:13-14). In contrast to this work in the New Testament, the indwelling in the Old Testament was selective and temporary. The Spirit "came upon" such Old Testament people as Joshua (Numbers 27:18), David (1 Samuel 16:12-13) and even Saul (1 Samuel 10:10). In the book of Judges, we see

the Spirit "coming upon" the various judges whom God raised up to deliver Israel from their oppressors. The Holy Spirit came upon these individuals for specific tasks. The indwelling was a sign of God's favor upon that individual (in the case of David), and if God's favor left an individual, the Spirit would depart (e.g., in Saul's case in 1 Samuel 16:14). Finally, the Spirit "coming upon" an individual doesn't always indicate that person's spiritual condition (e.g., Saul, Samson, and many of the judges). So, while in the New Testament the Spirit only indwells believers and that indwelling is permanent, the Spirit came upon certain Old Testament individuals for a specific task, irrespective of their spiritual condition. Once the task was completed, the Spirit presumably departed from that person.



What differences are there between the Spirit permanently indwelling believers versus the Spirit merely coming upon people for a specific task?

The third aspect of the Spirit's work in the Old Testament is His restraint of sin. Genesis 6:3 would seem to indicate that the Holy Spirit restrains man's sinfulness, and that restraint can be removed when God's patience regarding sin reaches a "boiling point." This thought is echoed in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8, when in the end

times a growing apostasy will signal the coming of God's judgment. Until the preordained time when the "man of lawlessness" (v. 3) will be revealed, the Holy Spirit restrains the power of Satan and will release it only when it suits His purposes to do so.



How do you see the Holy Spirit restraining evil in our world?



Read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7. Why are you grateful that the Holy Spirit restrains evil until the end times? Note, the Holy Spirit will still be active in the end times, otherwise no one would be saved, and we know that a multitude will be saved (Revelation 7:9-14).

The fourth and final aspect of the Spirit's work in the Old Testament is the granting of ability for service. Much like the way the spiritual gifts operate in the New Testament, the Spirit would gift certain individuals for service. Consider the example of Bezalel in Exodus 31:2-5 who was gifted to do much of the artwork relating to the Tabernacle. Furthermore, recalling the selective and temporary indwelling of the Holy Spirit discussed above, we see that these individuals were gifted to

perform certain tasks, such as ruling over the people of Israel (e.g., Saul and David).

We could also mention the Spirit's role in creation. Genesis 1:2 speaks of the Spirit "hovering over the waters" and superintending the work of creation. In a similar fashion, the Spirit is responsible for the work of the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17) as He is bringing people into the kingdom of God through regeneration.



Look up Genesis 1:2, 6:3; Numbers 27:18; Judges 3:10, 6:34, 14:6; 1 Samuel 16:13-14; 2 Samuel 23:2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:29-30; Isaiah 11:1-5; Ezekiel 36:27. What do these Scriptures say about the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament?

All in all, the Spirit performs much of the same functions in Old Testament times as He does in this current age. The major difference is the permanent indwelling of the Spirit in believers now. As Jesus said regarding this change in the Spirit's ministry, "But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:17).



Reflect on how your understanding of the Holy Spirit's role in the Old Testament has changed or deepened as a result of this lesson. Thank God for His restraint of evil in our world.



Lesson 5:

What is the role of the Holy Spirit today?

Of all the gifts given to mankind by God, there is none greater than the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has many functions, roles, and activities. First, He does a work in the hearts of all people everywhere. Jesus told the disciples that He would send the Spirit into the world to “will convict the world regarding sin, and righteousness, and judgment” (John 16:7-11, NASB). Everyone has a “God consciousness,” whether or not they admit it. The Spirit applies God’s truths to people’s minds to convince them by fair and sufficient arguments that they are sinners. Responding to that conviction brings us to salvation.

Once we are saved and belong to God, the Spirit takes up residence in our hearts forever, sealing us with the confirming, certifying, and assuring pledge of our eternal state as His children. Jesus said He would send the Spirit to us to be our Helper, Comforter, and Guide. “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever” (John 14:16). The Greek word translated here “Counselor” means “one

who is called alongside” and has the idea of someone who encourages and exhorts. The Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in the hearts of believers (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 12:13). Jesus gave the Spirit as a “compensation” for His absence, to perform the functions toward us which He would have done if He had remained personally with us.



How does the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit give you assurance when you go through periods of spiritual dryness or times of not feeling as close to God?

Among the functions of the Holy Spirit is that of revealer of truth. The Spirit's presence within us enables us to understand and interpret God's Word. Jesus told His disciples that "when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). He reveals to our minds the whole counsel of God as it relates to worship, doctrine, and Christian living. He is the ultimate guide, going before, leading the way, removing obstructions, opening the understanding, and making all things

plain and clear. He leads in the way we should go in all spiritual things. Without such a guide, we would be apt to fall into error. A crucial part of the truth He reveals is that Jesus is who He said He is (John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3). The Spirit convinces us of Christ's deity and incarnation, His being the Messiah, His suffering and death, His resurrection and ascension, His exaltation at the right hand of God, and His role as the judge of all. He gives glory to Christ in all things (John 16:14).



When you are confused about what is true or false, how do you allow the Holy Spirit to lead you into truth?

Another one of the Holy Spirit's roles is that of gift-giver. First Corinthians 12 describes the spiritual gifts given to believers in order that we may function as the body of Christ on earth. All these gifts, both great and small, are given by the Spirit so that we may be His ambassadors to the world, showing forth His grace and glorifying Him.

The Spirit also functions as fruit-producer in our lives. When He indwells us, He begins the work of harvesting His fruit in our lives—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). These are not works of our flesh, which is incapable of producing such fruit, but they are products of the Spirit's presence in our lives.



Why is producing fruit and exercising spiritual gifts more about the Giver and the Spirit working in us than the gift? See 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. How does focusing on the Giver and His work in us change our attitude towards giftings and our use of them in serving?

The knowledge that the Holy Spirit of God has taken up residence in our lives, that He performs all these miraculous functions, that He dwells with us forever, and that He will never leave or forsake us is cause for great joy and comfort. Thank God for this precious gift—the Holy Spirit and His work in our lives!



Praise God that faith is not a feeling. Thank Him for the assurance you have because His Holy Spirit lives within you. If you are going through a period of spiritual dryness, ask Him to reveal any sin or doubt that might be weighing you down. Seek Him, and ask Him to lead you into truth and revive you again.

Think through your gifts and areas where fruit is evident in your life. Thank God for the ways in which He has specifically equipped you with giftings and helps you grow. “For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose” (Philippians 2:13).



Lesson 6:

What is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the action by which God takes up permanent residence in the body of a believer in Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, the Spirit would come and go from the saints, empowering them for service but not necessarily remaining with them (see Judges 15:14; 1 Chronicles 12:18; Psalm 51:11; Ezekiel 11:5). Jesus revealed to His disciples the new role the Spirit of Truth would play in their lives: “He lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:17). The apostle Paul wrote, “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; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies” (1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

These verses are telling us that the believer in Jesus Christ has the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, living in him. When an individual accepts Christ as personal Savior, the Holy Spirit gives the believer the life of God, eternal life, which is really His very nature (Titus 3:5; 2 Peter 1:4), and the Holy Spirit comes to live within him spiritually. The fact that the believer’s body is likened to a temple where the Holy Spirit lives helps us understand what the indwelling of the Holy

Spirit is all about. The word temple is used to describe the Holy of Holies, the inner sanctum in the Old Testament tabernacle structure. There, God’s presence would appear in a cloud and meet the high priest, who came once a year into the Holy of Holies. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest brought the blood of a slain animal and sprinkled it on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. On this special day, God granted forgiveness to the priest and His people.



What does it mean that believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit? What does it mean that He permanently dwells within believers? How does this truth convict, challenge, or motivate you?

Today, there is no Jewish temple in Jerusalem, and the animal sacrifices have ceased. The believer in Christ has become the inner sanctum of God the Holy Spirit, as the believer has been sanctified and forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:7). The believer in

Christ becomes the habitation of the Holy Spirit of God. In fact, Scripture also says that the believer is indwelt spiritually by Christ (Colossians 1:27) and by God the Father (1 John 4:15)—the Trinity is involved.

As the Holy Spirit lives in the believer, He brings about some life-changing results:

1) The indwelling Spirit comes to a soul dead in sin and creates new life (Titus 3:5). This is the new birth Jesus spoke of in John 3:1–8.

2) The indwelling Spirit confirms to the believer that he belongs to the Lord and is an heir of God and fellow-heir with Christ (Romans 8:15–17).



How does the indwelling of the Spirit assure you of your salvation?

3) The indwelling Spirit installs the new believer as a member of Christ's universal church. This is the baptism of the Spirit, according to 1 Corinthians 12:13.

4) The indwelling Spirit gives spiritual gifts (God-given abilities for service) to the believer to edify the church and serve the Lord effectively for His glory (1 Corinthians 12:11).



How does the truth of the Spirit's work in believers affect the way you see and treat other people in the Church or in your specific local church regarding your interactions with others, your commitment to truth and love, your service, and your response in conflict?

5) The indwelling Spirit helps the believer understand and apply the Scripture to his daily life (1 Corinthians 2:12).

6) The indwelling Spirit enriches the believer's prayer life and intercedes for him in prayer (Romans 8:26–27).

7) The indwelling Holy Spirit empowers the yielded believer to live for Christ to do His will (Galatians 5:16). The Spirit leads the believer in paths of righteousness (Romans 8:14).



Where in your personal devotional life do you long to see more of the Spirit's work? How would turning to Him in these areas change your heart, attitude, and mind as you seek Him more?

8) The indwelling Spirit gives evidence of new life by producing the fruit of the Spirit in the believer's life (Galatians 5:22–23).

9) The indwelling Spirit is grieved when the believer sins (Ephesians 4:30), and He convicts the believer to confess his sin to the Lord so that fellowship is restored (1 John 1:9).



Read John 3:19-21 and Ephesians 5:8-13 and reflect on the differences between light and darkness. Why are we, as believers, to live in the light? How do we do this?



Sinful things grow in our hearts, minds, and actions when we are in the darkness. When we come into the light, the Holy Spirit exposes and convicts those areas that we have convinced ourselves are not so bad because we look at them dimly instead of clearly with light. How are you allowing the Holy Spirit to expose and convict you of sin and to work in your life to produce fruit? Are there any things that are hindering this work?

10) The indwelling Spirit seals the believer unto the day of redemption so that the believer's arrival in the Lord's presence is guaranteed after this life (Ephesians 1:13-14).



Which work of the Spirit's indwelling fuels you to pursue God more wholeheartedly or anchors you in your faith as you seek to reflect Him to those around you?

When you accept Christ as your Savior (Romans 10:9-13), the Holy Spirit takes up residence in your heart, bringing with Him an entirely new life of love, relationship, and service to the Lord.



How will the truths of the Holy Spirit's indwelling fuel you this week in your personal devotional life and time with the Lord? How will they impact your interactions with other believers? How will they motivate you in your response to sin and your desire to grow into Christ-likeness?



Lesson 7:

Is a believer supposed to be able to feel the Holy Spirit?

While certain ministries of the Holy Spirit may involve a feeling, such as conviction of sin, comfort, and empowerment, Scripture does not instruct us to base our relationship with the Holy Spirit on how or what we feel. Every born-again believer has the indwelling Holy Spirit. Jesus told us that when the Comforter has come He will be with us and in us. “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:16-17). In other words, Jesus is sending one like Himself to be with us and in us.



In what ways have you experienced people gauging the Holy Spirit’s work or presence by an experience or a feeling? Why does equating faith or the work of the Holy Spirit to a feeling set us up for failure?

We know the Holy Spirit is with us because God’s Word tells us that it is so. Every born-again believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not every believer is controlled by the Holy Spirit, and there is a distinct difference. When we step out in our flesh, we are not under the control of the Holy Spirit even though we are still indwelt by Him. The apostle Paul comments on this truth, and he uses an illustration that helps us to understand. “Do not get

drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). Many people read this verse and interpret it to mean that the apostle Paul is speaking against wine. However, the context of this passage is the walk and the warfare of the Spirit-filled believer. Therefore, there is something more here than just a warning about drinking too much wine.

When people are drunk with too much wine, they exhibit certain characteristics: they become clumsy, their speech is slurred, and their judgment is impaired. The apostle Paul sets up a comparison here. Just as there are certain characteristics that identify someone who is controlled by too much wine, there should also

be certain characteristics that identify someone who is controlled by the Holy Spirit. We read in Galatians 5:22-24 about the “fruit” of the Spirit. This is the Holy Spirit’s fruit, and it is exhibited by the born-again believer who is under His control.



Read Galatians 5:19-26. How does living under the Spirit’s control impact the way you live and the fruit your life produces?



In what ways have you seen the Holy Spirit’s influence over your life?

The verb tense in Ephesians 5:18 indicates a continual process of “being filled” by the Holy Spirit. Since it is an exhortation, it follows that it is also possible to not be filled or controlled by the Spirit. The rest of Ephesians 5 gives us the characteristics of a Spirit-filled believer. “Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (Ephesians 5:19-21).

We are not filled with the Spirit because we feel we are, but because this is the privilege and possession of the Christian. Being filled or controlled by the Spirit is the result of walking in obedience to the Lord. This is a gift of grace and not an emotional feeling. Emotions can and will deceive us, and we can work ourselves up into an emotional frenzy that is purely from the flesh and not of the Holy Spirit. “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:16, 25).



When have you had moments or seasons where you feel really close to the Lord? When have you experienced moments or seasons where you feel really distant from the Lord? What circumstances led to your feelings changing?

We cannot deny that there are times when we can be overwhelmed by the presence and the power of the Spirit, and this is often an emotional experience. When that happens, it is a joy like no other. King David “danced with all his might” (2 Samuel 6:14) when they brought up the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.

Experiencing joy by the Spirit is the understanding that as children of God we are being blessed by His grace. So, absolutely, the ministries of the Holy Spirit can involve our feelings and emotions. At the same time, we are not to base the assurance of our possession of the Holy Spirit on how we feel.



In what ways can we view the feelings involved with our faith in a healthy way as opposed to making our faith about how we feel in the moment?



Thank God that the Holy Spirit is not based on a feeling and that our feelings will not make the Holy Spirit more or less active in our lives.



Lesson 8:

How can I recognize the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His disciples that He would send one who would teach and guide all those who believe in Him (Acts 1:5; John 14:26; 16:7). Jesus' promise was fulfilled less than two weeks later when the Holy Spirit came in power on the believers at Pentecost (Acts 2). Now, when a person believes in Christ, the Holy Spirit immediately becomes a permanent part of his life (Romans 8:14; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14).



What steps do you take when you have to make a big decision? What role does the Holy Spirit play in your decision-making process?

The Holy Spirit has many functions. Not only does He distribute spiritual gifts according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:7–11), but He also comforts us (John 14:16, KJV), teaches us (John 14:26), and remains in us as a seal of promise upon our hearts until the day of Jesus' return (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30). The Holy Spirit also takes on the role of Guide and Counselor, leading us in the way we should go and revealing God's truth (Luke 12:12; 1 Corinthians 2:6–10).

But how do we recognize the Spirit's guidance? How do we discern between our own thoughts and His leading? After all, the Holy Spirit does not usually speak with audible words. Rather, He guides us through our own consciences (Romans 9:1) and other quiet, subtle ways.

One of the most important ways to recognize the Holy Spirit's guidance is to be familiar with God's Word. The Bible is the ultimate source of wisdom about how we should live (2 Timothy 3:16), and believers are to search the Scriptures, meditate on them, and commit

them to memory (Joshua 1:8). The Word is the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17), and the Spirit will use it to speak to us (John 16:12–14) to reveal God's will for our lives; He will also bring specific Scriptures to mind at times when we need them most (John 14:26).



Have you ever witnessed God speaking to you through His Word? How did you know He was speaking to you personally as opposed to just generally revealing truth?

Knowledge of God's Word can help us to discern whether or not our desires come from the Holy Spirit. We must test our inclinations against Scripture—the

Holy Spirit will never prod us to do anything contrary to God's Word. If it conflicts with the Bible, then it is not from the Holy Spirit and should be ignored.



Think through recent situations where you did not know what to do or where you felt unsure of a decision you made. How does putting these things through the lens of Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit bring clarity?

It is also necessary for us to be in continual prayer with the Father (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Not only does this keep our hearts and minds open to the Holy Spirit's leading, but it also allows the Spirit to speak on our behalf: "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. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27).



How would your life look differently if you went to the Lord in prayer first when you had an issue, weakness, or sin struggle?

Another way to tell if we are following the Spirit's leading is to look for signs of His fruit in our lives (Galatians 5:22-23). If we walk in the Spirit, we will continue to see these qualities grow and mature in us, and they will become evident to others as well.

It is important to note that we have the choice whether or not to accept the Holy Spirit's guidance. When we know the will of God but do not follow it, we are resisting

the Spirit's work in our lives (Acts 7:51; 1 Thessalonians 5:19), and a desire to follow our own way grieves Him (Ephesians 4:30). The Spirit will never lead us into sin. Habitual sin will cause us to miss what the Holy Spirit wants to say to us through the Word. Being in tune with God's will, turning from and confessing sin, and making a habit of prayer and the study of God's Word will allow us to recognize—and follow—the Spirit's leading.



Pray and ask God to reveal if you are being hesitant or resistant to the Holy Spirit's guidance in your life. List out any areas or circumstances in your life where you need the Holy Spirit's guidance and commit to seeking Scripture for wisdom as well as the Holy Spirit's guidance through prayer on these things.



Lesson 9:

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

Believers have the indwelling Spirit of Christ, the Comforter who proceeds from the Father (John 15:26). The Holy Spirit assists believers in prayer (Jude 1:20) and “intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God” (Romans 8:27). He also leads the believer into righteousness (Galatians 5:16–18) and produces His fruit in those yielded to Him (Galatians 5:22–23). Believers are to submit to the will of God and walk in the Spirit.



What does it mean to submit to the will of God? What is God’s will?



Look up the following verses and note what God’s will is for us: Luke 9:23; Ephesians 5:15-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 5:16-18; and 1 Timothy 2:1-4.

A “walk” in the Bible is often a metaphor for practical daily living. The Christian life is a journey, and we are to walk it—we are to make consistent forward progress. The biblical norm for all believers is that they walk in the Spirit: “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25, KJV; cf. Romans 8:14). In other words, the Spirit gave us life in the new birth (John 3:6),

and we must continue to live, day by day, in the Spirit.

To walk in the Spirit means that we yield to His control, we follow His lead, and we allow Him to exert His influence over us. To walk in the Spirit is the opposite of resisting Him or grieving Him (Ephesians 4:30).



How is the life of faith like a walk and not a sprint? What parts of the walk are encouraging to you, and what parts are challenging? How does factoring in the Holy Spirit’s presence in your walk change your perspective?

Galatians 5 examines the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. The context is freedom from the Law of Moses (Galatians 5:1). Those who walk in the Spirit “eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope” (verse 5) and are free from the Law (verse 18). Also, those who walk in the Spirit “will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (verse 16). The flesh—our fallen nature under the power of sin—is in direct conflict with the Spirit (verse 17). When the flesh is in charge, the results are obvious (verses 19–21). But when the Spirit is in control, He produces godly qualities within us, apart from the strictures of the Law (verses 22–23). Believers “have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires” (verse 24), and now we walk in the Spirit (verse 25).

Those who walk in the Spirit are united with Him and are the bearers of the fruit the Spirit produces. Thus, those who walk in the Spirit walk in love—they live in

love for God and for their fellow man. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in joy—they exhibit gladness in what God has done, is doing, and will do. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in peace—their lives are not defined by worry or anxiety (Philippians 4:6). Those who walk in the Spirit walk in patience—they are known for having a “long fuse” and do not lose their temper. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in kindness—they show tender concern for the needs of others. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in goodness—their actions reflect virtue and holiness. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in faithfulness—they are steadfast in their trust of God and His Word. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in gentleness—their lives are characterized by humility, grace, and thankfulness to God. Those who walk in the Spirit walk in self-control—they display moderation, constraint, and the ability to say “no” to the flesh.



In which of the areas mentioned in the previous section have you seen the Holy Spirit produce fruit in your life? In which of these areas are you praying for the Holy Spirit to continue working?

Those who walk in the Spirit rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them in thought, word, and deed (Romans 6:11–14). They show forth daily, moment-by-moment holiness, just as Jesus did when, “full of the Holy Spirit, [He] left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” to be tempted (Luke 4:1).

To walk in the Spirit is to be filled with the Spirit, and some results of the Spirit’s filling are thankfulness, singing, and joy (Ephesians 5:18–20; Colossians 3:16).

Those who walk in the Spirit follow the Spirit’s lead. They “let the word of Christ dwell in [them] richly” (Colossians 3:16, ESV), and the Spirit uses the Word of God “for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). Their whole way of life is lived according to the rule of the gospel, as the Spirit moves them toward obedience. When we walk in the Spirit, we find that the sinful appetites of the flesh have no more dominion over us.



Just because the life of faith is called a “walk” does not mean that life will be easy. The Luke 4:1 passage above tells us that Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted. That’s not easy! But, the Holy Spirit will never leave us and He always produces fruit in accordance with God’s Word and Christ’s likeness.

Reflect and thank God for what He’s done in your life so far. What has been challenging? How has having the Holy Spirit live within you been encouraging even in challenging times?



Lesson 10:

What does it mean to yield to the Spirit?

Although there is no specific verse in the Bible about “yielding to the Spirit,” the idea is present. Romans 6:13 speaks of being yielded to God, and Romans 6:19 of yielding our bodies as “servants to righteousness unto holiness” (KJV). This is in contrast to yielding to sin and the flesh.

To yield is to give something up or to give way to a demand of some sort. A person yielded to the Spirit will accede to the Spirit’s will and submit to His authority. Scripture mentions walking in the Spirit—following His lead and living in cooperation with His plan. Scripture

also mentions being filled with the Spirit—being fully surrendered to Him and functioning in His power and freedom. Both walking in and being filled with the Spirit necessitates yielding to His control.



Have you ever had to yield to someone else? What do your responses when you have to yield to someone else reflect about you? How is yielding to another person different than yielding to the Holy Spirit?

Yielding to the Spirit finds its opposite in grieving Him (Ephesians 4:30), quenching Him (1 Thessalonians 5:19), or resisting Him (Acts 7:51). Those who are

yielded to the Holy Spirit will not be doing that which offends Him, they will not dampen His influence in their hearts, and they will not oppose His will.



***Look up Isaiah 63:10, Acts 7:51, Galatians 5:16-26, and Ephesians 4:29-32.
What sorts of things grieve, quench, or cause us to resist the Holy Spirit?***

Some good examples of believers yielding to the Holy Spirit are found in the book of Acts. The believers gathered in a house in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost were there in obedience to the risen Lord's command to "stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). That power came in the Person of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4, when "all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them." These disciples, yielded to the Spirit, proclaimed the gospel to the multitudes, and the church began.

The first foray into foreign missions began when the church in Syrian Antioch was "worshiping the Lord and fasting, [and] the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (Acts 13:2). Yielding to the Spirit, the church

"fasted and prayed, . . . placed their hands on them and sent them off" (Acts 13:3).

On the second missionary journey, Paul and his companions, Silas and Timothy, were traveling through Asia Minor preaching the gospel. But then the Spirit began to redirect them: "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas" (Acts 16:6-8). That night in Troas, Paul had a vision that guided the missionaries to Macedonia. The gospel was brought to Europe because Paul and his companions were yielded to the Spirit.



In what situations have you seen the Holy Spirit leading and guiding you? How did you know it was the Holy Spirit and not your own desires?

The Holy Spirit would have us “give thanks in all circumstances” (1 Thessalonians 5:18), do good works (1 Peter 2:15), and “be sanctified,” avoiding sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3). The Spirit desires that we count ourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ (Romans 6:11). He desires us to know the love of Christ (Ephesians 3:18–19) and be conformed to the

image of Christ (Romans 8:29). He wants those who trust in Christ to be assured that they are God’s own children (Romans 8:16). As we yield to the Spirit, allowing Him full control of our lives, we will see the fruit of the Spirit being produced in us (Galatians 5:22–23), and we can look forward to “a harvest of righteousness and peace” (Hebrews 12:11).



What area of your life do you want to see God produce “a harvest of righteousness and peace” (Hebrews 12:11)? How would surrendering to God’s Spirit in these areas impact your mission, callings, and people in your life?



God has clearly shown us the difference between a life of the flesh and a life yielded to the Spirit. Reflect on what a surrendered life looks like, practically speaking. How are you currently yielding to the Holy Spirit? Pray for forgiveness where you are not yielded to Him, and ask Him to help you walk a life fully surrendered to Him.



Wrap Up

Now that you have studied ten lessons on questions about the Holy Spirit, take some time to reflect on what you've learned and how you will put what you've learned into practice.



How has your understanding of the Holy Spirit changed or expanded as a result of what you've learned through this study?



What will you change in your life as a result of this study?



Who in your life would you like to see grow in their understanding of the Holy Spirit? Commit to praying for them. What will you share with them about what you have learned?



Reference List

- Lesson 1: www.gotquestions.org/who-Holy-Spirit.html
- Lesson 2: www.gotquestions.org/is-the-Holy-Spirit-God.html
- Lesson 3: www.gotquestions.org/what-does-the-Holy-Spirit-do.html
- Lesson 4: www.gotquestions.org/Spirit-Old-Testament.html
- Lesson 5: www.gotquestions.org/Spirit-today.html
- Lesson 6: www.gotquestions.org/indwelling-of-the-Holy-Spirit.html
- Lesson 7: www.gotquestions.org/feel-Holy-Spirit.html
- Lesson 8: www.gotquestions.org/guidance-Holy-Spirit.html
- Lesson 9: www.gotquestions.org/Spirit-walk.html
- Lesson 10: www.gotquestions.org/yield-to-the-Spirit.html

All Bible references are quoted from the NIV unless otherwise stated.