

SMALL GROUP
FOR ADULTS

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?



ADULT SMALL GROUP 1
THE HOLY SPIRIT IN US

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN US

SESSION 1

Adult Small Group

Total time: 60 minutes

SESSION 1: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN US

Read Romans 8:9.

“You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ.”

Over the years the third person of the Trinity has been known by many names. He has been known as Comforter, Advocate, Counselor, and many more. Perhaps you have even heard the Holy Spirit referred to as It, but He is not a force or an inanimate object. As a part of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit is God, He has a personality, He is powerful, and He is personal.

The Holy Spirit is best understood when experienced. The Spirit will never be fully known by just reading about Him. Simply describing the Holy Spirit is never sufficient. The Spirit-filled life is meant to be exciting. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and our relationship with Him is a vital part of Christian living.

DISCUSSION

- ✦ If you were raised in a Pentecostal church, describe your experience with and understanding of the Holy Spirit. If you were not raised in a Pentecostal church, describe your experience with and understanding of the Holy Spirit. If you were not raised in church at all, describe your understanding of the Holy Spirit.
- ✦ How is the Holy Spirit both powerful and personal?
- ✦ Read Romans 8:9. What can you learn from this verse about the Holy Spirit?

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THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS FREEDOM

Read Romans 8:1–4.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

Freedom is essential to our Christian faith. Too many people live with guilt or condemnation. However, freedom starts with accepting Christ’s forgiveness. Sin then no longer has power over us. The same Holy Spirit who drew us to Christ lives in us to help us overcome the things that want to steal our freedom (Ephesians 6:18). Our freedom in Christ is sustained by the Holy Spirit.

Freedom is also strengthened by our daily experiences with the Holy Spirit. When we have a daily experience, we receive an enlightenment of the Scriptures (John 16:13) and access to understanding God’s mysteries (1 Corinthians 2:10).

DISCUSSION

Read Romans 8:1–4 (NLT) and answer the following.

“So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin’s control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that the

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just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.”

- What can you learn from these verses about a function of the Holy Spirit?
- When you read the word *condemnation* what comes to your mind?
- When you read the phrase “the life-giving Spirit has freed you” from the verse above, what comes to your mind?
- List some ways the Enemy tries to attack a believer and keep him or her from living in freedom.

THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS PEACE

Read Romans 8:6–8.

“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.”

Everybody seems to be looking for peace today. It is good news for us that the Holy Spirit can bring peace. Peace of mind comes from Him.

Several things can attempt to steal our peace. Cancer, a lost loved one, or any uncontrollable circumstance can affect us. Unchangeable people—those who are resistant to change—may disturb our peace. And we all face unanticipated problems that can rob us of peace.

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So how does the Holy Spirit bring peace? He helps us accept what we can't control (John 16:14–15). The Holy Spirit also helps us trust God's loving care (Isaiah 26:3). And He helps us surrender to God's control (Psalm 119:165).

DISCUSSION

Read the following verses and answer the following.

John 16:14–15, NLT

“He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, ‘The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.’”

Isaiah 26:3, NLT

“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!”

Psalm 119:165, NLT

“Those who love your instructions have great peace and do not stumble”

- ✦ From these verses, write out three attitudes that, through the Holy Spirit, bring peace into our lives.
- ✦ On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you walk in the peace the Holy Spirit brings. Discuss or write out ways you can improve.
- ✦ In the next seven days, spend fifteen minutes a day thinking and reflecting on who or what occupies your mind. Write down the things that attempt to steal your peace of mind.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS FELLOWSHIP

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Read Genesis 1:1–2 and 2 Corinthians 13:14.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

God makes himself known to us in the three persons of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Often in Scripture, we see the phrase “fellowship of the Spirit.” Let’s look at what that phrase means.

The Holy Spirit wants friendship. He is a catalyst for helping us understand that God is not a distant deity that we can’t connect with, but He has always wanted, and still wants, a personal, intimate friendship with us.

God has always worked at being involved in a relationship with us. He gave us His wonderful creation. He gave us His salvation through Jesus’ death on the cross. We know Jesus is preparing a place for us to be with Him forever. Even when we are not aware that God is working, He is making plans for us and working on our behalf.

Fellowship with the Holy Spirit involves sharing our lives in communion with Him. It means opening the deepest part of our personality to the influence and direction of God’s Spirit. We can give Him our thoughts, motives, feelings, attitudes, decisions, future, fears, and passions as we seek His counsel, His comfort, and His direction.

DISCUSSION

Read 2 Corinthians 13:14 (NLT) and answer the following.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”

- ✦ How does fellowship with the Holy Spirit affect your life?



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- ✦ On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you fellowship with the Holy Spirit. Discuss or write out a plan to improve.
- ✦ In the next seven days, meet with a couple of friends and share what fellowship with the Holy Spirit means.

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CONCLUSION

Life in the Spirit brings many benefits and blessings. He brings us freedom when we forgive and when we interact with Him daily. The Holy Spirit brings us peace when we accept Him, trust Him, and surrender to Him. He longs for and brings us fellowship when we share our lives with Him. All these benefits are valuable to us on a personal level when the Holy Spirit lives in us.

Challenge Question: For the next seven days as you spend time in prayer, journal your thoughts on what the Holy Spirit gives to you. Then share your thoughts with your spouse or a trusted friend.

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for sending Your Holy Spirit to us to experience in a fresh, new, and personal way. Help us to understand Your Spirit more and live in freedom. Help us to know the peace You offer through Your Spirit. Guide us as we walk in fellowship with Your Spirit, as we share our lives with You. Amen.

FOR FURTHER READING

Genesis 1:1–2

Psalm 119:165

Isaiah 26:3

Isaiah 26:3

John 14:26; 16:13–15

Acts 19:1–2

Romans 7; 8:5, 9

Ephesians 1:17; 6:18

1 Corinthians 2:20; 14:2

2 Corinthians 13:14



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WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?



ADULT SMALL GROUP 2
THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH US

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SESSION 2

Adult Small Group

Total time: 60 minutes

SESSION 2: THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH US

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Read John 14:15–18.

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—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. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”

The blessing that comes from a life in the Spirit should never be taken for granted. In fact, we find a qualifying condition in Scripture. “If you love me, keep my commands” (John 14:15). Jesus wants us to have the Holy Spirit. He promised to send the Spirit, but obedience is the key. We don’t receive the Holy Spirit into our lives because of our works; it is through our obedience that we open our hearts to welcome Him in. Jesus further explained that when we receive the Holy Spirit, we have an Advocate, a divine reminder of what God teaches us, and a godly conviction regarding sin.

DISCUSSION

- ✦ Describe a time in your life when you needed comfort during a situation but you felt all alone.
- ✦ Do you think going through a difficult situation is easier or harder with someone walking with you through the situation? Why?
- ✦ Read John 15:26 and John 16:8 and answer the following.

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me.”



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“When he [the Advocate] comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment.”

- Based on these Scriptures, what does it mean to you that the Holy Spirit is your Advocate?

THE HOLY SPIRIT ENERGIZES US WITH POWER

Read Psalm 27:1.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?”

Many people are anxious about the future. When we are going through a difficult time, we often listen to ourselves rather than the truth of God’s Word. But the Holy Spirit brings hope, power, and confidence in the midst of uncertainty.

God speaks through the Holy Spirit by the revelation of His Word. He gives us thoughts, suggestions, impressions, or notions. When Satan, our enemy, speaks to us in our mind, we are tempted. But when God talks to us, we receive inspiration. The Holy Spirit reminds us of God’s truth to give us power. (See John 14:26.)

The Holy Spirit is our Teacher and Counselor. He’s like a personal coach! He speaks directly into our spirit which affects the way we think. He doesn’t need to speak in an audible voice. “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:16).

Since the Holy Spirit speaks directly to our spirit to bring God’s truth to light, we need to know what the Bible says. When we read, study, and fill our mind and spirit with God’s Word, we are storing truth for the Holy Spirit to bring to us at just the right moment. Sometimes, we read the Bible and think, *I didn’t get anything out of this reading today.* But God’s truth was planted in our spirit. With everything else our spirit and mind take in daily—every billboard, every commercial, every conversation, every movie—we need to balance it all with the truth of God’s Word. Then the Holy Spirit can bring God’s truth to the forefront of our spirit and mind to provide direction for our life.



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DISCUSSION

Read Psalm 27:1 (NLT) and answer the following.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation—so why should I be afraid? The LORD is my fortress, protecting me from danger, so why should I tremble?”

- ✦ What can you discover from this verse?

- ✦ On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being not very anxious and 4 being very anxious, rate yourself on how anxious you are about the future. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in a plan to walk in greater peace and not in anxiety. Write it down.

Read John 14:26 and Romans 8:16 and answer the following.

“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.”

- ✦ How has the Holy Spirit testified, taught, or reminded you of something you have read from God’s Word?

- ✦ Why do you think you need the Holy Spirit to remind you of things?

- ✦ On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being very important and 4 being not very important, rate how well your spirit is filled with the things of God. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in a plan to fill your spirit with the things of God. Write it down.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT ENRICHES US WITH LOVE

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–13.

“ If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

“ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

“ Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

“ And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

Love is a great force in overcoming fear. The difference between the two is that love looks for opportunities to give; fear is self-protecting. Love helps us to move toward other people; fear causes us to withdraw from others. Love is a sign of trust; fear is a sign of doubt.

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Love has lost some of its distinction and true definition in today's culture. How do you define love? Let's look at some definitions of love:

Affection—takes delight in affirming others.

Friendship—deeply felt togetherness; a sense of joy when with each other.

Eros—a Greek word; a romantic, passionate kind of love; a love between lovers.

Agape—the highest form of love; gives what is best unconditionally and regardless of the cost; selfless; seeking the highest good for the other person.

Agape love finds its fullest expression in God's love toward us. He desires that we love each other with that same *agape* love. How many people can you really say that you love in this way?

If we were to remove love from interpersonal relationships, we would remove the life from that relationship. Thankfully, God doesn't have that attitude toward us. He demonstrated His love toward us. "But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4–5).

Love unites rather than divides us. The substance of what is unifying about love is found in 1 Corinthians 13:5 (NLT). "[Love] does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged." The way we handle hurt and failure determines the strength of our unity, or the distance of our separation. If we keep a record of wrongs, we will be divided, separated, and distant.

A good strategy for loving others well is to accept them for who they are, not who we want them to be. We should be patient with people's progress, allowing for growth, development, and maturity in their lives. We can connect with others when they hurt, remembering how we would want to be comforted when we are hurting. We can desire what is best for others, remembering to give more than we get, and to love them the way that Paul loved the Philippians. "God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:8). Finally, we can erase all offenses, not keeping a list when someone offends us.

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DISCUSSION

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–13 from above and answer the following.

- From these verses, how can you apply these truths of love in your daily life?
- Of how many people can you say, “I really love _____?” Why do you love them?
- Read 1 Corinthians 13:5 again. What can you glean from this verse about love?
- On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being not often and 4 being very often, rate how often you demand your own way. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in a plan to improve in not demanding your own way. Write it down.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT ENLIGHTENS US WITH A PROPER PERSPECTIVE

Read Psalm 116:7–10, GNT.

“Be confident, my heart, because the LORD has been good to me. The LORD saved me from death; he stopped my tears and kept me from defeat. And so I walk in the presence of the LORD in the world of the living. I kept on believing, even when I said, ‘I am completely crushed.’”

The Holy Spirit helps our perspective because His job is to magnify Jesus. Perspective shapes how we see things. In many ways, perspective influences our actions, shapes our thinking, and ultimately impacts our life. We may have asked ourselves, “Where is God?” We know God is omnipresent, but we also need to know that He is right here, right now, with us.

Fellowship with the Holy Spirit involves sharing our lives in communion with Him. It means opening the deepest part of our personality to the influence



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and direction of God's Spirit. We can give Him our thoughts, motives, feelings, attitudes, decisions, future, fears, and passions as we seek His counsel, His comfort, and His direction.

The Holy Spirit helps us:

When we feel lonely, the Holy Spirit reminds us that God is with us.

“Because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5).

When we feel insecure, the Holy Spirit reminds us that God is our confidence.

“I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure” (Psalm 16:8-9).

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you” (Isaiah 43:2).

When we feel uncertain, the Holy Spirit reminds us that He is our Counselor.

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you” (Psalm 32:8).

When we feel depressed, the Holy Spirit reminds us that He is our Comforter.

“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit” (Psalm 34:18).

DISCUSSION

Read the Scriptures from the previous section, and answer the following.

- Write out or discuss how the Holy Spirit can help you change your current perspective to God's perspective on circumstances. What did you discover?

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CONCLUSION

Let's welcome the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives. He will energize us with power when we feel we have no strength left (Psalm 46:1). He will enrich us with love when it seems everyone around us is aggravating and annoying us (1 John 3:18–20). He will enlighten us with a proper perspective (Isaiah 41:10).

Challenge Question: For seven days, track what fills your mind. Write down the minutes you spend reading, taking in media, conversing with others, etc. In your journal, beside the minutes spent filling your mind, indicate what content you are filling your mind with (for example: thirty minutes watching sports; thirty minutes on social media; thirty minutes reading the Gospel of John, etc.). Tally up your minutes for the seven days. What did you learn from this exercise?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for infusing us with Your power when we feel weak. We feel Your love surrounding us when we become irritated with others, and we are so grateful for Your love. Thank You for enlightening us, and giving us proper perspective for life. Amen.

FOR FURTHER READING

Job 13:27

Psalm 32:8

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SMALL GROUP
FOR ADULTS

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?



ADULT SMALL GROUP 3
**THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT:
THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US**

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

SESSION 3

Adult Small Group
Total time: 60 minutes

SESSION 3: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

Read Acts 2:17–18.

““In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.””

In 1906, the Apostolic Faith Mission on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California, erupted into a Spirit-filled revival, different in scope and fervor from previous revivals. People traveled as much as thousands of miles to experience this revival. Some people rejoiced, some were curious, skeptical, or critical—just as people were on the Day of Pentecost! But, the Azusa Street Revival became the foundational event for most modern-day Pentecostal fellowships.

As much as we want to celebrate our heritage, we don't want to stop with only celebrating. Every generation needs its own Pentecost. The Holy Spirit does not need to conform to the pattern seen at Azusa Street, but we do need a “shock and awe” experience in the context of today's culture. We can experience the presence of God in such a real way that people see their need for Him and are saved, where Christians recognize their need for power and are filled with the Holy Spirit, where hurting people are healed, and where people are overwhelmed with an urgency to tell others the good news!

The Azusa Street Revival began ten days before the great San Francisco earthquake of April 19, 1906. But the aftershocks of the Azusa spiritual quake are still being felt around the world. What can we learn from the Azusa Street Revival that might be helpful for us in experiencing our own Pentecost?

DISCUSSION

- Describe a significant event where the Holy Spirit directed you and you overcame adversity. How does that event impact you and your family today?

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THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

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LESSONS FROM AZUSA STREET

Read Acts 2:4.

“All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

The Azusa Street Revival held many good services and invited many good preachers to the pulpit, but ultimately the revival was driven by **an unquenchable hunger for God**—to know Him and to hear His voice. Hunger for God must start with the leadership of the church. Leaders must guard against burnout that causes loss of appetite for God, and they must respond to the Spirit. We can't let noise and busyness keep us from spiritual leadership. Responsiveness produces a sense of expectancy. We can respond to God, not in a peculiar way, but in the way He created us to respond.

The Azusa Street Revival was also driven by **a genuine love for others**. We can learn from Azusa Street's breakdown of barriers that often divide, including race, class, gender, wealth, language, education, church affiliation, and culture. Unfortunately, the initial multiracial, multicultural aspect of Azusa Street was not evident in our Pentecostal churches for many years, but we are now seeing improvements. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to break through the generational barrier, which is still present today.

A third aspect of Azusa Street is **the unwavering commitment to God's Word**. One leader of the famous revival stated, “We believe the Spirit does not go where the Word does not permit.” George Barna calls this perspective a “biblical worldview,” meaning that a person learns to interpret the realities of life through the filter of Scripture. Our culture places a higher value on tolerance than on determining truth. Spirit-filled people need strong biblical knowledge.

People who attended Azusa Street understood that **the baptism in the Spirit is not just for personal blessing—its central purpose is for empowerment**. Unfortunately, in many Pentecostal services, people seek for the experience of the Baptism, but not for its purpose. The Baptism is for speaking with clarity as a witness for Christ. The Pentecostal church should be a missions-minded church, with a missions lifestyle. The Holy Spirit intentionally dwells within us to empower us, so that people around the globe can know Christ.

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DISCUSSION

- ✦ How do you measure your hunger for God on a daily basis?
- ✦ Where did you recently release a genuine love for others?
- ✦ How do you express a genuine love for others you may not know or who may not be like you?
- ✦ How do you keep an unwavering commitment to Christ and the Holy Spirit in light of your current situation?
- ✦ How do you experience the Holy Spirit in your life daily?

One of the things the Azusa Street Revival saw was a breakdown of barriers. Consider the following story about the Azusa Street Revival:

Of the 13 issues of The Apostolic Faith, the only publications from the Azusa Mission that survive, none list the publisher or editor, preferring instead that the Lord get the credit. But most of the issues contain a small inset setting forth some of the important principles Azusa stood for. Several of the insets contain this statement: "We are not fighting men or churches, but seeking to displace dead forms and creeds or wild fanaticisms with living, practical Christianity. 'Love, faith, unity' is our watchword, and 'Victory through the Atoning Blood' our battle cry."¹

- ✦ From this excerpt, what did the outpouring of the Holy Spirit provide to and in the Azusa Street believers?

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¹ George O. Wood, "The Pentecostal River: Azusa the Originating Effluence," *The Enrichment Journal*, http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200602/200602_128_penteriver.cfm (Accessed October 11, 2017).



THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

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- ✦ How does the Holy Spirit lead you to break down any barriers you may face in your life?
- ✦ How does the Holy Spirit refill you so you can continually break down barriers that arise in your life?
- ✦ Identify any barriers in your life that prevent you from loving others better. What can you do to begin removing these barriers?
- ✦ A potentially damaging barrier in the U.S. Pentecostal church today is the generational barrier. Discuss the differences between the generations, often referred to as Builders, Baby Boomers, Millennials, and so on. Why do you think we see barriers between generations? How can you help create a God-encountering environment that is free of generational divide?

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is a spiritual experience following salvation, where a follower of Jesus is immersed in, or filled, with the Holy Spirit. In the New Testament, this was a natural experience for those who desired all God had for them. Even though the Holy Spirit is involved at salvation (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19), we need the experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit. The Early Church considered the Baptism to be critical, and sent spiritual leadership to pray for new converts to receive (Acts 8:14–17).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is initially evidenced by a sign called *speaking in tongues*. When people are baptized in the Holy Spirit, they begin to worship God in a heavenly language. As believers grow in their daily walk with the Lord, they can use that heavenly language in their prayer time. Praying in the Spirit is a privilege.

Although we aren't sure why God chose a new language as a sign of being baptized, possibly it is because the tongue is considered in Scripture to be the



THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

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most unruly member of our body. It's logical, then, that even the most unruly member of our body shows total surrender to Christ when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

We should be seeking to be filled with the Holy Spirit every day. Too often, we reduce the experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit to a one-time "got it" experience, but the apostle Paul taught believers to keep on being filled (Ephesians 5:18).

Finally, being baptized in the Holy Spirit is a command, not a suggestion (Acts 1:4). Why? Because God knew that to effectively accomplish the Great Commission, we would need supernatural assistance. He gave us the Holy Spirit.

HOW CAN I EXPERIENCE THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Create an atmosphere of expectation by praising and expressing love to Jesus audibly (Luke 24:52–53). When first-century believers spoke in tongues, other people heard them (Acts 2:6). From a practical standpoint, it is easier to speak in tongues if we are praising the Lord out loud!

Expect to experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. (See Luke 11:13.) Be willing to not only seek, but to ask the Father for this precious gift. It is His promise to us (Acts 1:4).

Be willing to stop speaking in your normal language. You cannot speak two languages at the same time. We have to leave the known to receive the unknown.

Receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit just as you receive any other gift. Reach out and take the baptism in the Holy Spirit; don't beg for it. Then thank God for this gift.

When you hear expressions, words, or syllables forming in your mind, speak them. The pattern of Acts 2:4 is important today, "All of them were filled . . . and began to speak." The Holy Spirit will not speak for us or force us to speak. We must speak the words ourselves. In the book, *Be Filled with the Spirit*, author Doyle Jones said, "You will never speak if you keep waiting for the Spirit to put you into some kind of trance and do it all for you. It will be your mouth, your tongue, your voice, but His words."

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THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

SESSION 3

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You may not hear the words in your mind, but when you speak they will be in your mouth.

Speak, even if it is only a few syllables. Those words are very likely words of praise to God, so go ahead and speak them. Fluency will come as you continue to pray in the Spirit. Your vocabulary will grow in this new language.

Speak, even if it doesn't sound like a language to you. Many languages and dialects don't sound like languages to us. Remember, it's possible we can speak in languages "of men or of angels" (1 Corinthians 13:1). Being filled with the Spirit is not based on your ability to understand the language.

Realize that you control the flow of the Spirit through you (see 1 Corinthians 14:32).

Continue to pray in the Spirit every day. We are built up in our faith when we pray in the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 14:4; Jude 1:20). Paul the apostle testified that he prayed in the Spirit more than others (see 1 Corinthians 14:18).

THE LATTER RAIN

Read Joel 2:23.

“Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.”

Through the prophet Joel and quoted by the apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17), God promised to pour out His Spirit. We can compare this “pouring out” to a rain from heaven.

The rains God sent to the land of Canaan were both early and latter rains. The autumn (early) rains of October and November were sent to soften the parched ground so seed could be sown. Then heavy rains of winter came in December through February. Finally, the critical latter rain of April came to ripen the fruit for harvest.

What is our spiritual water source in the last days? It's not our own effort, smart strategies, or church growth methodology. A better spiritual water source is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all people.



THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US

SESSION 3

DISCUSSION

- ✦ If you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, write out your own experience, remembering the steps you took which were similar to the above points. Share your experience with someone who has not yet received the Baptism.

CONCLUSION

From the Upper Room to Azusa Street, and from Azusa Street to your life, the Holy Spirit desires to have fellowship with you, to fill you daily with His power and release you from your past through Jesus Christ. Continue to be strengthened and develop your faith in Christ. Seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit if you haven't received, spend daily time praying in the Spirit, and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in sharing your faith with friends, coworkers, and anyone the Holy Spirit prompts you to talk to. We are a part of the endtime family of God, and we will be instrumental in seeing the greatest harvest yet. Every believer needs the experience of being baptized in the Spirit.

Challenge Question: For the next seven days, pray and prepare yourself to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. If you are already baptized in the Holy Spirit, spend time during these seven days praying in the Spirit.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for the Spirit-empowered heritage we enjoy because of the committed believers of Azusa Street. Help us to be driven by hunger for more of You, to genuinely love others, to be unwavering in our commitment to God's Word, and to be drawn to the mission of being a witness for You. Guide us in being continually filled with Your Spirit. Amen.

Take extended time to pray for those who are seeking for the baptism in the Holy Spirit, either in this group, or in your church as a whole.

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**THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT:
THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH US
SESSION 3**

FOR FURTHER READING

Deuteronomy 11:10–11

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SMALL GROUP
FOR ADULTS

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?



ADULT SMALL GROUP 4
THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

SESSION 4

Adult Small Group

Total time: 60 minutes

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SESSION 4: THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

Read Acts 1:8.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”

The Holy Spirit not only wants to be with us and work in us, but He also wants to live through us. Sometimes we short-circuit His power and ability to work through our lives. We short-circuit His power by our unforgiveness, by our lack of submission, by being unloving and selfish, and by our sin. Let's not miss out on what the Holy Spirit can do through us when we are open to Him and allow Him to empower us.

DISCUSSION

- What do you think the role or function of the Holy Spirit is?
- What are some things that can short-circuit the power and ability of the Holy Spirit working through our lives?
- On a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being full force and 4 being a trickle, rate yourself on how well the Holy Spirit is working through your life. Write out or share a plan to improve.

THE HOLY SPIRIT EXALTS JESUS

Read John 16:14.

“He [the Holy Spirit] will glorify me.”

It's always been the mission of the Spirit to exalt Jesus. The Spirit comes to impress us deeply about Jesus and make us excited about His work. The Holy Spirit was sent by God to make Christ real to people and to show us who He really is.



THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

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The Holy Spirit working through us should do the same: draw people's attention to Jesus, inviting them to love Him, trust Him, and obey Him. How do we draw people's attention to Jesus? First, we show them courtesy (see Titus 3:1–2). We can also offer mercy (2 Corinthians 2:5–7), express sympathy (Colossians 3:12–13), and speak honestly (Proverbs 24:26; 28:23).

DISCUSSION

Read 1 Peter 2:17, (NLT); Colossians 3:12–13, NLT; and Proverbs 24:26.

Answer the following.

“ Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king. ”

“ Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ”

“ An honest answer is like a kiss of friendship. ”

- ✦ From these verses, what are four ways you draw people's attention to Christ?

- ✦ In which of these four ways do you need to improve? Ask the Holy Spirit for a plan to help you improve, and write it down.

THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS US

Read John 16:8, NLT.

“ And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. ”

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THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

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The Holy Spirit convicts us in three areas:

- **The Sin of Unbelief**—The Holy Spirit gives us an awakened sense of sin, particularly the sin of unbelief in Jesus.
- **The Righteousness of Jesus**—The Holy Spirit reminds that it is Christ alone who forgives our sins and provides righteousness for us.
- **Satan Is Defeated**—The judgment or defeat has already been pronounced on Satan.

The Holy Spirit working through us should help us to respond to sin quickly and live a more victorious life.

We can be people of conviction. Conviction is not simply a guilty conscience, which is a natural feeling experienced by most people. It is not a sense of trepidation, or merely a knowledge of right and wrong. If we only experience a ping to our conscience, or some anxiety concerning being judged, and only have an academic awareness of hell, then we have never truly known the conviction of sin.

Conviction means, “to convince someone of truth; to reprove; to accuse, refute, or cross-examine a witness.” When we are convicted, we feel the loathsomeness of sin, as Isaiah did when he said, “I am doomed, for I am a sinful man” (Isaiah 6:5, NLT). We experience an utter dreadfulness of sin, such as Joseph did when tempted by Potiphar’s wife, and said, “How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God” (Genesis 39:9, NLT). When we are convicted, we understand how our sin dishonors God, as David did when he said, “Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight” (Psalm 51:4, NLT).

DISCUSSION

Read Psalm 38:1–4, 8, 18, 21–22 and answer the following.

“*LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath. Your arrows have pierced me, and your hand has come down on me. Because of your wrath there is no health*



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in my body; there is no soundness in my bones because of my sin.”

“ My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear.”

“ I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart.”

“ I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.”

“ LORD, do not forsake me; do not be far from me, my God. Come quickly to help me, my Lord and my Savior.”

- What is the Psalmist disturbed about in this passage?
- Have you ever been disturbed by your sin as the Psalmist expresses?
- Take some personal time to write out the sins you are being convicted of, and then confess them to God.
- What were your feelings and thoughts as you were writing and confessing?

THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES IN US

Read Ephesians 5:18.

“ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”

When we receive Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit takes up residency in our life. Our body becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit. The moment we are baptized in the Spirit, we willingly yield ourselves to the Spirit's control. We are encouraged to stay filled with the Spirit. We should pray in the Spirit regularly, so that we give the Spirit free access to every part of our lives.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

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Praying in the Spirit gives us so many benefits. We need to remain spiritually charged by praying in the Spirit (Jude 1:20). We can worship God in this dimension (1 Corinthians 14:15).

THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES US

Read John 16:13, NLT.

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.”

We are often helpless in getting accurate guidance and direction for our lives. The Spirit is especially present at every crossroads of our lives, when we are making vital decisions. His guidance regarding our future is best, because He is already in our future. We should give the Holy Spirit a greater capacity to influence our decisions for the future.

God uses three primary means to guide us:

1. His primary guidance is the Word (Psalm 119:105).
2. His secondary guidance is the Spirit (John 10:27).
3. His confirming guidance is life's circumstances (Psalm 37:23).

Some people say, “Let your conscience be your guide.” But our conscience alone is not trustworthy. And some people confuse their conscience with the voice of the Holy Spirit, which are not the same. The witness of our conscience alone is not always sufficient for the guidance we need. We need the whisper of the Spirit!

After all, the Holy Spirit lives in us to “bear witness” with our spirit. How can we distinguish our own thoughts, feelings, and impressions, from the “whisper of the Spirit”?

1. The Holy Spirit's whisper will always agree with Scripture. Any inner

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impression that conflicts with the Bible needs to be rejected.

2. The Holy Spirit's whisper becomes clear when our will is surrendered to God's will. Our own desires can mislead us. God won't mislead us!
3. The Holy Spirit's whisper distinguishes itself in times of prayer. We will find that prayer sorts out all the other voices of expectation we might hear.

DISCUSSION

Read and answer the following.

Read John 16:13, NLT.

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.”

- ✦ From this verse, what is one function of the Holy Spirit?

Read Psalm 37:23, NLT.

“The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.”

Read Psalm 119:105, NLT.

“Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.”

Read John 10:27, NLT.

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”

- ✦ From these verses, what are three ways God uses to guide us?

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THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

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- Some people say, “Let your conscience be your guide.” How can this be a dangerous practice to follow? How can you distinguish your own thoughts, feelings, and impressions from the “whisper of the Spirit”?

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THE HOLY SPIRIT MANAGES OUR MOODS

Read Romans 8:6, NLT.

“ So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. ”

People’s moods are contagious—whether good or bad. It might be more convenient if people were like the fictional Mr. Spock on the *Star Trek* television and movie series. The character always responded to situations from a purely logical perspective, and was never emotional. But, God did not create us in the image of Mr. Spock. He created us in His own image—including emotions, with the ability to feel love, joy, happiness, guilt, anger, and disappointments. We are emotional people!

The real issue (and what can get us into trouble) is: How do you handle your emotions? We can either learn to manage our emotions or let our emotions manage us. Although this may sound overly simplistic, the way to manage your emotions is to grow in your relationship with God (see Romans 12:1–2).

Let’s consider these four truths for managing our emotions daily:

1. Give your emotions to the control of the Holy Spirit every day. “Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God” (Romans 6:13, NLT).
2. Don’t let anger get out of control. “Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires” (James 1:20, NLT).



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3. Let other people (good friends) help you manage your emotions. “Be careful then, dear brothers and sisters. Make sure that your own hearts are not evil and unbelieving, turning you away from the living God. You must warn each other every day, while it is still ‘today,’ so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ (Hebrews 3:12–14, NLT).
4. Stay focused on the things you can control, not on the things you can’t control. “But when I am afraid, I will put my trust in you” (Psalm 56:3, NLT).

Our emotions are wired into our fallen nature as well as into our redeemed nature. So sin and Satan have access to them, to use them to manipulate us to hurt ourselves and others. But remember, “To be controlled by human nature results in death; to be controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace” (Romans 8:6, GNT).

DISCUSSION

Read the Scriptures above and answer the following.

- ✦ From these verses, write out at least four truths for managing your emotions.
- ✦ Which of these truths do you do well, and which truth do you need to strengthen? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you write out a plan to strengthen this truth.

One way we can continue to strengthen and develop our Christian walk is to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We have referenced the following Scriptures throughout the session, but now we will target them.

Read Acts 1:8, NLT.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me

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everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Read Jude 1:20, NLT.

“But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Read 1 Corinthians 14:15, NLT.

“Well then, what shall I do? I will pray in the spirit, and I will also pray in words I understand. I will sing in the spirit, and I will also sing in words I understand.”

- From these verses, what are three benefits of the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

CONCLUSION

The Holy Spirit will give us power to live out the Christian faith in boldness. We see this in the New Testament. Prior to the Day of Pentecost, the disciples were locked in fear, but when the Holy Spirit came, the disciples were filled with courage and boldness. We will have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 14:2). Finally, the Holy Spirit will give us perspective when we are dealing with change.

God uses three primary means to guide us:

1. His primary guidance is the Word (Psalm 119:105).
2. His secondary guidance is the Spirit (John 10:27).
3. His confirming guidance is life's circumstances (Psalm 37:23).

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THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS US

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Challenge Question: We each need to strengthen our understanding and experience of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. In the next thirty days, pray for God to direct you to three people you could meet with and discuss:

- ✦ What does it mean to be baptized in the Holy Spirit?
- ✦ What is the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit?
- ✦ How can you experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit?
- ✦ What should you do to maintain the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life?

What happened as a result of these discussions?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for exalting Jesus in our lives through the Holy Spirit. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to convict us of sin, live in us, guide us, and help us manage our emotions and moods. We receive the power of the Holy Spirit to live our lives in boldness for Your glory. Amen.

FOR FURTHER READING

Colossians 3:13

1 Peter 2:17

1 John 1:9

- ✦ To deepen your biblical knowledge of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, for the next ninety days, commit yourself to reading and studying the Books of Luke and Acts. Write down at least three truths every day from your reading. What did you learn from your study?

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For additional resources about the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Pentecost, or living in the Spirit, visit www.MyHealthyChurch.com for incredible resources to help facilitate your understanding of and experience with the Holy Spirit.

Living in the Spirit: Drawing Us to God, Sending Us to the World
by George O. Wood

Living in the Spirit Kit

Power for Life: Why Every Believer Needs to Be Baptized in the Holy Spirit by Jeff Leake

A Spirit-Empowered Life: Discover the World-Changing Journey God Has Designed for You by Mike Clarensau

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