

# The Holy Spirit

## The Problem Many Face Today

The struggle many believers face is the inability to live the Christian life according to God's standard. Many try to imitate the life of Jesus, but find out quickly they cannot.

- We try to live according to God's Word, but we fail often.
- We believe we have the Holy Spirit, but we don't sense His reality in our lives.
- We have learned about the fruit of the spirit but we don't see the fruit in our lives.
- We have not learned how to submit to the Holy Spirit and we are trying to manage our own lives.

Without the Holy Spirit active and in control of our lives, we cannot live the standard Jesus set. Experiencing the Holy Spirit does not always happen at the time we pray to receive Jesus as Savior. Therefore we must understand who the Holy Spirit is and how we can walk in His presence.

## Lesson Truth

The Holy Spirit is given to us when we are born again of the Spirit by believing the gospel of Jesus Christ and receiving His salvation. Without the Holy Spirit active and in control of our lives, we cannot know God's will and we cannot live the life God expects.

## Lesson Goal

The goal of this lesson is for you to experience the reality of the Holy Spirit's presence in your life.

## Lesson Discussion

### Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is given to us by Jesus Christ when we are born again. The Spirit's presence in our lives is a sign we are saved and we are God's.



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Matthew 3:11 ESV "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."

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The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the trinity. "Trinity" is not a biblical word, but it is used to describe the existence of God in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Bible refers to the Holy Spirit by different names: Holy Spirit, the Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, Helper and Comforter.



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John 14:15-17 ESV "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

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Jesus told His disciples He was going to leave them so He could send another like Himself, the Holy Spirit to lead them into all truth. The Holy Spirit would be in them and empower them not only to be His witnesses, but to live godly lives and to make other disciples.

The first time the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples was on the day of Pentecost. Up to that time the Holy Spirit was *with* them but not *in* them.



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Acts 1:4-5 ESV “And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “You heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Acts 2:1-4 ESV “When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

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The Holy Spirit takes up residence within us when we are born again. He is the divine nature of God that comes into us and we are no longer the same. We are a new creation because we are now something we were not before.



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2 Corinthians 5:17 ESV “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

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This divine nature God puts in us through the Holy Spirit is what gives us the ability to live holy and godly lives—to be what God says we must be—holy.



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Ephesians 1:4 ESV “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

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Apart from having the Holy Spirit, we cannot live the holy life that God expects.

Trying to live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit is spiritually impossible.

### **Purpose of the Holy Spirit**

The primary purpose of the Holy Spirit is to empower us to be witnesses of Jesus Christ, take His message to the world, and make disciples. Since Jesus is no longer with us physically, we must learn to rely on the Holy Spirit to carry out His work through us.

The Holy Spirit is the power of God in us that regenerates us so our character and personality reflect His holiness.



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Acts 1:8 ESV “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

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The Holy Spirit has all the divine power of God to carry out God’s will on the earth. This power is often evidenced by miracles, signs, and wonders that operate through the lives of Christians.

Apart from the Holy Spirit we cannot understand the spiritual truths of the bible. These truths can only be understood when we have the Spirit of Truth living in us.



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1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

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As we follow the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are following Jesus Christ. Apart from the Holy Spirit we can never follow Jesus. Therefore it is

imperative we experience the reality of His presence in our lives.

As you surrender and submit your life to Jesus Christ and get self out of the way, you are allowing the Holy Spirit complete access to your life so He can do the work of God through you and empower you to live an obedient life.

### Gifts of the Spirit

The Holy Spirit is a wonderful influence who works through us to accomplish God's work. He does this by means of special gifts He gives to the church.



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1 Corinthians 12:7-11 ESV "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

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These gifts are given individually to each person as the Holy Spirit chooses. The purpose of these gifts is to equip the church for service to others.

What is important here is to understand that as you submit your life to the Holy Spirit, you will begin to notice the operation of some of these gifts in your life. The danger you must watch out for is not to let pride influence you as these gifts are evidenced in your life. Your focus must not

be on the gifts, but always on the giver of the gifts.

### The Fruit of the Spirit



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Galatians 5:22-23 ESV "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

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The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit will produce fruit in our lives. These fruits are remarkable manifestations of the Holy Spirit that emerge in our lives when we are rightly aligned with God's will and purpose through obedience.

There is some confusion about how we experience the fruit of the Spirit. In the natural, when conditions are right and a tree has the right nutrients, fruit just appears. The tree does not will the fruit to appear; it just grows as a natural outcome of the fruit bearing process.

The fruit of the Spirit develops in the Christian in the same way. It is not created by our will or by trying to develop it in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit appears naturally after we have received the Holy Spirit and our lives are submitted completely to Him.

For instance, we do not get patience by praying for patience. Patience can be a dangerous thing to pray for. In God's answer to your prayer, you will be frustrated by the number of things that will challenge your patience or lack thereof. You cannot get patience by willing yourself to be more patient. You may have some limited success, but until the Holy Spirit has complete access to your life, patience will elude you.

When you have submitted your will to the Holy Spirit, His fruit will appear as a natural outcome of that relationship. As fruit naturally appears on a tree, so will the fruit of the spirit appear in your life naturally.

### Experiencing the Holy Spirit



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Acts 2:38 ESV “And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

1 Thessalonians 4:8 “Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.” ESV

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The Holy Spirit is a gift from God we receive when we are born again of the Spirit. Not everyone experiences the Holy Spirit in the same way. Jesus likened the Spirit to the wind. You hear the wind and see evidence of it, but you cannot see it coming and going.



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John 3:8 ESV “The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

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It is dangerous to try and confine the Spirit’s work to a particular approach or to say He works in each person a particular way. This only gets us off track. He does what He wills and often in ways opposite our expectations.

The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit that we are the children of God. As a result, we will not doubt our salvation or the fact that we are God’s, as long as we remain faithful to Him.



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1 John 4:13 ESV “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”

Ephesians 1:13-14 ESV “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

1 John 3:24 ESV “Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”

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Some who are saved may experience the reality of the Holy Spirit immediately after praying. Others may experience it when they are baptized. Still others experience it sometime later.

When you have been born again of the Spirit and have become a new creation in Jesus Christ, it is only a matter of time before the Holy Spirit’s presence in your life will be evident. One day you may find yourself speaking in tongues, or you pray for someone and they are healed, or you have a burning desire in your spirit to preach the gospel or to disciple others.

If you have not experienced the reality of the Holy Spirit you must find out why. It does not mean you are not saved. Sometimes just asking God is all that is needed. Sometimes it is just waiting as God begins working out wrong beliefs in your life.



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Luke 11:13 ESV “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly

Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

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A common reason why the Holy Spirit isn't evident in some people is because of things in their lives that stand in the way of their relationship with God. It could be something you are holding onto that you know God does not approve of. The Holy Spirit will convict your conscience of these things, and unless you get rid of them you most likely will not experience His presence.



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Acts 5:32 ESV And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

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Ephesians 4:30 "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

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Once the way is clear and there is nothing standing between you and God, you will experience the Spirit in a real way and you will have the confidence that you are truly God's. Then God will begin to work mightily through you as you follow Jesus Christ.



### **One Step for Living This Truth**

You only have to do this one step to master this lesson. Your focus and effort should be to make sure you consistently and persistently do the one step as directed. The goal of this lesson is for you to experience the reality of the Holy Spirit in your life.

### **ACTION STEP**

**Take at least ten minutes a day to stop everything you are doing and stop everything you are thinking. Concentrate on God and ask Him for the Holy Spirit if you have not yet experienced the Spirit.**

**Review this lesson frequently and focus on the included Scriptures. If you will do this one simple step each day, it won't be long before you will experience the reality of the Holy Spirit in your life.**

**If you are honest and submit your life to God completely, He will show you if there is something that is not right in your relationship with Him. It does not matter how big or small the thing might be; if God shows it to you, you must rid your life of that thing. The voice of the Holy Spirit is gentle and easy to miss if our minds and hearts are not tune to Him.**

**Keep repeating the step in this lesson until you have experienced the reality of the Holy Spirit. You must know beyond a shadow of a doubt you are God's because you have the witness of the Holy Spirit in your life.**

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As you spend time with God, talk to Him as you would a friend for whom you have a lot of respect and reverence.

It is helpful to quote the Scriptures verbally in this lesson and concentrate on them. Continue to read one chapter in the Gospels every day. This will help you learn the teachings of your Master and grow in your faith.

The key to mastering this step is to be persistent and not let anything rob you of this time with God. God loves you and

desires to have time with you each day to show you how much He wants to be a part of your life. When thoughts that are not God-focused try to press in, thrust them out of your mind immediately.



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2 Corinthians 10:5 ESV “We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,”

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If you suddenly remember something you need to do later in the day, have pen and paper handy to write it down. Then immediately let it go and get back to concentrating on God.

The step in this lesson may not seem like much from a human standpoint, but spiritually it is a giant step. Learning to live this truth is the next important step in a wonderful journey. Step by step you will learn how to know God and how to build a satisfying, life-changing relationship with Him.

### **Bumper Sticker Summary**

God has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit who is received by believing in Jesus Christ. We must then learn to live by the Spirit, walk by the Spirit and be led by the Spirit.



### **Illustration for Living this Truth**

Ron had prayed to receive Christ seven years ago at a camp retreat. The camp counselor who prayed with him told him he would need to find a church when he arrived back home. The counselor also encouraged him to pray and read his Bible regularly.

Ron was unsure as to what denomination he should join, so he went to a church in his neighborhood. He attended this particular church for several weeks, but did not feel like it was the right church for him. He did not feel he was growing spiritually and was frustrated and impatient with his inability to live the life the Bible teaches.

Ron was talking to a coworker one day and the discussion came around to religion. They soon realized they were both Christians, and they talked about different denominations and how to pick the right church. The coworker invited Ron to attend a home Bible study with him. The night Ron went to the Bible study, the leader taught on the Holy Spirit. Ron did not really know anything about the Holy Spirit and was intrigued.

He began his own study of the Holy Spirit in the Bible and soon realized the important role the Spirit plays in the life of Jesus' followers. He started to understand that it is only as we submit to the Holy Spirit that we are able to live holy and godly lives.

Ron began asking God to make the Holy Spirit real to him. He surrendered his life completely to the lordship of Jesus Christ and began to give the Holy Spirit complete access to His life. It was not long before he experienced the reality of the Holy Spirit and his spiritual life blossomed rapidly. Others noticed a difference in Ron's life as he exhibited fruits of the spirit. He found through the power of the Spirit that he was able to live the holy and godly life he had longed for.



### **Other Scripture Verses**

Mark 13:11 ESV “We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,”

2 Corinthians 3:17 ESV “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

Acts 8:15-17 ESV “who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 11:15-16 ESV “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’”

Acts 13:2 ESV “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”

Acts 19:6 ESV “And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.”

Romans 5:3-5 ESV “And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.”

Romans 15:13 ESV “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

2 Timothy 1:14 ESV “By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.”

Hebrews 6:4-6 ESV “For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the goodness of the

word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.”

John 15:26 ESV “But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”

John 16:13 ESV “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

2 Thessalonians 2:13 ESV “But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.”

Ephesians 5:18 ESV “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”

Ephesians 3:16 ESV “That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, may dwell in your hearts through faith.”

Ephesians 2:22 ESV “In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”

Galatians 6:8 ESV “For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.”

Galatians 5:16-18 ESV “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires

of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Galatians 3:14 ESV “so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit<sup>[a]</sup> through faith.”

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 ESV “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”

1 Corinthians 2:14 ESV “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

Romans 8:26-27 ESV “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

Romans 8:13-16 ESV “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons<sup>[a]</sup> of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,”

Romans 8:9-11 ESV “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you,

although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus<sup>[a]</sup> from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”