

YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 1 MAN'S BEST FRIEND - PT 1



Pastor Philip De Courcy

John 16:5-15

- We fail to understand all that we have when we have Christ.
- We try to do God's work for Him, when in reality God wants to do His work through us by the Holy Spirit.
- The life of God abides and presides in the life of a person who has been regenerated and redeemed in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The implication of the Gospel is the life of God in the life of man.
- Bethlehem was God dwelling among us in Christ, Pentecost is God dwelling in us.
- In the Old Testament, God had a temple for His people. In the New Testament, God has people for His temple.
- We cannot live the Christian life by sheer willpower... we need the power of God.
- Before Pentecost the disciples find easy things hard... but after Pentecost they find hard things easy.
- The sin of the church is ignoring the Holy Spirit.
- 5 REASONS WHY A STUDY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CRITICAL TO YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH AND HOLINESS
 - Living this side of Pentecost is a distinct privilege.
 - You will be able to better understand the spiritual inheritance that is yours in Christ.
 - We will be in a better position to assess the truthfulness of our salvation.
 - We will be better placed to make a judgment on what constitutes a genuine work of the Spirit.
 - To protect us from an overreaction to charismatic chaos.
- Seek His power Do not grieve Him Do not quench Him Pray, invite Him to take control of us

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The speaker said, "We try to do God's work for Him, when in reality God wants to do His work through us by the Holy Spirit." Have you considered that God has specific work He wants done through you? How could you know what that is? What if you don't want to do that work? How would you work that out with the Holy Spirit?
2. The speaker calls Pentecost a "game changer." What is meant by that? How is Christianity different from any other time in history? Do you think that this is evident in our world today – inside or outside the church? Why or why not?
3. The speaker says that we are saved in "three tenses." What are the tenses and what do each of them mean to you as a believer?
4. What are your thoughts about the quote, "You cannot be a Christian and not have the Holy Spirit."?



5. Consider putting the following verses "together" – John 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." And John 8:31 "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." How does the Holy Spirit "make you free"?

YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 2

MAN'S BEST FRIEND - PT 2



Pastor Philip De Courcy

John 16:7

- Through the Holy Spirit, God becomes man's best friend.
- Jesus tells His disciples that they will be better off with His departure and the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is of EQUAL IMPORTANCE to the church as Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is a real person. You can know and love and be known by Him and be loved by Him. He is to be worshiped and adored and honored!
- We associate personality with corporality. The Holy Spirit is a spirit, but He is no less a person. He feels, thinks and acts.
- The Holy Spirit is a distinct person. Evidence:
 - Both Jesus and the Apostles indicate that the Holy Spirit is a person.
 - He can replace the Lord, Jesus.
 - He is described with masculine pronouns. John 14:16 John 14:26
 - Like other people, He feels, He thinks, He acts. Romans 8:28 Ephesians 4:30 Acts 13:2
- The Holy Spirit is a divine person. Evidence: **He is NOT 1/3 of God nor a 3rd God.**
 - He is God in nature and essence.
 - He possesses all the attributes of deity and all the fullness of the nature of God.
 - Eternal Hebrews 9:14
 - Omnipresent Psalm 139:7
 - Omnipotent
 - Omniscient I Corinthians. 2:10
- The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift God could give us, because God can't give any more than Himself. If God is in you, His life and presence and power will be seen through you.
- The Holy Spirit is someone, not something, a person to be known, not a thing to be used. We can grieve Him by wanting what He has, while never taking the time to think about the glory of who He is.
- It is important that we receive Him as a person. We received ALL of Him the moment we were saved. While you cannot have more or less of the person, you can have more or less of His love or intimacy with Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The speaker says, "At Bethlehem God came to dwell among us, at Pentecost God came to dwell in us. That ought to revolutionize our lives." What does this statement mean to you? Could you say you daily experience the reality of the Holy Spirit living in your body?
2. Do you agree with the statement that, "The Holy Spirit is of equal importance to the church as Jesus Christ."? If yes, why? If no, why not? Would you say that the Holy Spirit is of equal importance to you personally? Again, why or why not?
3. Do you see and experience the Holy Spirit as a "real person" or something else? Discuss this with the group.
4. Discuss the statement, "We often associate personality with corporality." What does that mean? Do you believe that you will cease to be you when you die? If not, what will be "left" of you? How does this relate to the Holy Spirit?
5. We can grieve the Holy Spirit by wanting what He has, while never taking the time to think about the glory of who He is. Do you think about grieving the Holy Spirit in this way? What changes might you consider making?
6. Does the Holy Spirit have a "monopoly" on your life? Do you want Him to? What would have to happen to make that a reality in your life?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 3 MAN'S BEST FRIEND - PT 3



Pastor Philip De Courcy

John 14:15-18

John 16:5-7

- Believers today have the advantage of enjoying the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit. "Oh God, the need of the hour is Holy Ghost power."
- You cannot be a Christian without the Spirit. You cannot live as a Christian without the Spirit.

THE TRUTH OF TWO COMINGS

FUTURE COMING – When Jesus returns for His church (John 14:3)

PRESENT COMING – The descent and coming of the Holy Spirit to the Church (John 14:18)

- In the Old Testament God had a temple for His people, but in the New Testament He has a people for His temple. The Holy Spirit personalizes the presence of God. This was made possible because of the redemptive work of the cross.

ADVANTAGES

1. New immediacy to God's presence within the believer
 2. New intimacy to what Jesus is going to do
- Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:19)
 - Greek NT words You are, to God, a Holy of Holies.
 - Hieron - a temple, either the whole building, or specifically the outer courts, open to worshipers.
 - Naos** - a temple, a shrine, that part of the temple where God himself resides, the Holy of Holies.
 - At the end of the Gospels, Peter is a "whipped dog." But at Pentecost, he is a bold lion preaching the Gospel.
 - "If the average Christian realized that they were inhabited, they would be less inhibited." -- Adrian Rogers
 - Christ in you, the hope of glory

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are your thoughts about the statements, "You cannot be a Christian without the Spirit. You cannot live as a Christian without the Spirit."? To what extent do you feel the Holy Spirit has influence on your daily activities and routine? Are you satisfied with that level?
2. It is likely that you have heard the Scriptures about a believer being the "temple of the Holy Spirit." What does that mean to you – in a practical sense. Does it make it more important to realize that the actual Greek word means "the Holy of Holies" – where God Himself resides?
3. If the Holy Spirit actually lives inside of you, it means that whatever you do, say or think He participates in. Does realizing this cause you to think a bit more about the things you do (movies, TV, music and other entertainment, places you go, people you routinely associate with)?
4. In what way do you think that having the Holy Spirit indwelling you could embolden you in your Christian walk? If He's been there "all along – since you became a believer" but you are still timid in expressing your Christianity to others, what might be the issue or problem?
5. What does the verse "Christ in you, the hope of glory" mean?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 4 BACK FROM THE DEAD - PT 1



Pastor Philip De Courcy

John 3

- Many Christians settle for two-thirds of God. The Holy Spirit is often viewed as some kind of vague force or impersonal power they have heard about but do not know intimately.
- The Holy Spirit has come to bring the work of Christ to us and He has come to do the work of God through us. The work of regeneration bringing us to a state of life in Christ. Back from the Dead is every Christian's story.
- In the New Testament salvation is pictured as a rebirth, as a new creation, as coming out of a state of spiritual death into new life in Jesus Christ. The born-again Christian is not a certain brand of Christianity. You are either born-again or you are not a Christian at all.
- Many people believe that Christianity is an act of the will to "be better" – a modification of your behavior based upon the keeping of some rules. This is false. The Christian is not someone made better. The Christian is someone made new. The intent of Christ and the purpose of the Gospel is not to make bad people good or even good people better. It is to bring dead people back to life.
- **Redemption** is God's work for us in Christ through the cross. **Regeneration** is God's work in us by the Holy Spirit through new birth. Christ has done the work for us – our sins have been paid for. The Holy Spirit makes it "real" to us.
- Regeneration is God's greatest work, **GOD'S MASTERPIECE**. The world cost God His breath. The new creation (believers) cost God His son, His blood, Himself!
- There are those who profess to being born again but there's no change, no repentance, no fruit in their lives.
- Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a religious man. He studied the law and he taught the law. He was a ruler of the Jews, he belonged to the Sanhedrin. He comes to Jesus at night and asks, "Who are you?". Nicodemus' question is met with a question from Jesus. Jesus didn't allow Himself to be examined by Nicodemus. Rather, Nicodemus found himself being examined by Jesus.
- **You must be born again.** We must be born from above, if we expect to live in God's heaven above. Biblical term born again means born from above.
- There are many ways to get out of this world. But there is only one way to get into it. There's only one way to get into eternal life – that is new birth in the Lord, Jesus Christ. No alternative is available. You must be born again or you will not see or enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Why do we need to be saved? 1. Man's depravity 2. Man's destiny
- In the Bible, death is separation. In the first death experience our spirit separates from our body. In the second death, our spirit is separated from God and Jesus to hell and the lake of fire.
- Apart from Jesus, we are not "fit" for heaven. The problem is moral. In heaven all things center on God and by nature this is not man's inclination.
- No one is a Christian all their life. You can't always have been a Christian any more than you have always been alive.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We may have heard people say, "I've been a Christian all my life." Can this be true? How does this fit with the fact that some people may not remember the exact day or time they were saved/reborn but others can?
2. Pastor De Courcy says that regeneration is a singular, sovereign work and a supernatural work, that we don't control it. Do we decide WHEN we want to be saved? How might this differ from deciding IF we want to be saved?
3. The word DEATH in the Bible always means separation (not annihilation). How can understanding this help new/potential believers better understand how humans can be both alive (physically) and dead (spiritually)?
4. Read aloud Numbers 21:7-9. Discuss why Jesus would use this Old Testament story to help Nicodemus understand salvation. What parallels are there in the serpent on the pole story with Jesus work on the cross for salvation of mankind?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 5 BACK FROM THE DEAD - PT 2



Pastor Philip De Courcy

John 3:1-10

- Christians are indwelt by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit (batteries included).
- **REGENERATION** The doctrine of being born again (born from above).
- Christianity is not a matter of turning a new leaf. It's a matter of experiencing a new life. The Christian is not someone who has been made "better," it is someone who has been made "new."
- The born-again Christian is the only type the Bible knows. You must be born again.
- The only thing we contribute to our salvation is the thing that makes it necessary, our sin.
- Jesus makes it clear, if we are to be born again it will be as a result of the supernatural actions of the Holy Spirit. (John 3:5)
- Jesus said, "You must be born again and you must be born of water and spirit."
 - Four Views of This Passage
 1. Natural birth
 2. Baptism
 3. The Word - Scriptures
 4. The Spirit Himself (Titus 3:4-6)
- The Spirit of God is the fundamental cause and the Word of God and the Gospel is the instrumental cause that brings us to put our faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The Gospel is not for "good people," the Gospel is for "bad people."
- A new birth leads to new behavior. You can't have conversion without change. "If there's no change, there's something strange."
- By natural birth we inherit Adam's nature, and we act accordingly. In new birth we receive a new nature that makes us a new creature in Christ, and we act accordingly.
- We won't all of the sudden become full grown in Christ. Our obedience will be greater than our disobedience.
- If the evidences of life in Christ "are not there" there's only one thing to conclude... You're still dead in your sin and in your trespasses.
- Some conversions are true, but some conversions are false. John 6:66 *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.*
- True conversion has certain marks to it. Happy Born-again Day!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor De Courcy says, "The only thing that we contribute to our salvation is the thing that makes it necessary, our sin." What are your thoughts on this comment?
2. Do you recall the day that you were saved? If yes, tell the group about it. If no, share with the group what you can recall about your life in general that causes you to know that the day occurred without your specific memory.
3. The book of 1 John lists several ways to know you are saved. As a group, go through the book and see how many you can list. Then talk about the evidence they provide that you (personally) are saved. This may require a separate meeting – you are urged to do this before continuing in this series.
4. Pastor De Courcy says, "We won't all the sudden become full grown in Christ." "Our obedience will be greater than our disobedience." How long has it been since your conversion? Are you still "growing" or are you stagnant? What evidence do you have of this?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 6 UNDER THE INFLUENCE - PT 1



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 5:15-21 NKJV

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

- Christ has sent us a comforter, a coach and a counselor in the person of the Holy Spirit. His work is to lead us into all truth and to conform us to the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- There is a price to be paid for trying to do something that you are evidently not equipped to do or meant to do. The high price is what many Christians are paying in defeat and discouragement because they are trying to do God's work for Him.
- Despite their best attempts, many Christians find their prayer lives are short of breath, their worship is dry, their time in the Word unproductive, their love of the lost a mere shadow and their lives are marked by an unbroken cycle of discouragement and disobedience. They have been working at being a Christian, but it's not working.
- The Christian life is not difficult, it's impossible, apart from God's help through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit as comforter is to come along side us and supply us the strength necessary to do the work of God and the will of God on earth. Jesus Christ has ascended, the Spirit of God has descended, so we, through the supply of the Spirit, might live the life God intended.
- The Christian life is not us doing God's work for Him, it is God doing His work through us. One can be a Christian apart from the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.
- Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, is a command. (Imperative mood = command; Present tense verb = constantly filled)
- A Christian does not grow toward Spirit-fullness, but from Spirit-fullness.
- The filling of the Spirit is not a blessing to be sought, rather it is a command to be obeyed. We either live in the Spirit, or we live in sin.
- The command to be filled with the Holy Spirit is equally important to the command not to get drunk. It is just as sinful not to be filled by the Spirit as it is to be drunk. One is a sin of omission, the other a sin of commission.
- According to Ephesians 5:15, Christians are to watch their step, use their head, be alert to every chance to leverage things for Gospel advantage for the days are "evil."
- Apart from being filled and led by the Spirit of God, we are a liability to God's work and a dead loss to a dying world.
- Spirit-filled Christians are also Spirit-spilled Christians for the good of others and the glory of God.
- We have all of the Spirit, but does He have all of us?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain your belief and understanding of the purpose of the Holy Spirit in your life. How does this align with the teaching in this session?
2. In the beginning of this session, Pastor De Courcy says, "Despite their best attempts, many Christians find their prayer lives are short of breath, their worship is dry, their time in the Word unproductive, their love of the lost a mere shadow and their lives are marked by an unbroken cycle of discouragement and disobedience." Do any of the parts of the description apply to your life? If so, why? If not, why not?
3. What is your understanding of the statements, "The filling of the Holy Spirit is not a blessing to be sought, it is a command to be obeyed." and "We either live in the Spirit, or we live in sin."?

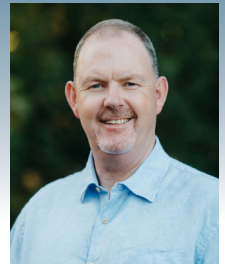


3. Discuss Billy Graham's statement to the pastor, "How long has it been since you put someone out of the church for not being filled with the Spirit?" At what level do you think your pastor understands the command to be filled with the Spirit? Is this something you feel comfortable speaking with him about?

YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 7

UNDER THE INFLUENCE - PT 2



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 5:15-21

- **The Christian life is not difficult, it's impossible.**

- The Christian life is not a matter of imitation, but incarnation. God has come to live in me so that I might live for Him.
- That which God asks us to do for Him, He is willing to do for us.
- The Spirit-filled life is normative for all Christians.
- The Spirit-filled life is important and imperative.
- What does it mean to be filled by the Spirit? It means to be controlled by the Spirit, come under His influence on a daily basis.
- **COMMAND:** Be being filled, again and again.
- The experience of being filled will vary to greater and lesser degrees from time-to-time. Some days we "drink" more of the Spirit than other days.
- HOW? How might we be filled with the Holy Spirit?
- BE FILLED = Greek - passive voice - this means that the person being spoken to will be acted upon. Allow yourself to be filled and remain filled.
- There are hints within the Scriptures to tell us how.
- **The Analogy of Faith** = to view one verse in light of other verses (Scripture should interpret Scripture). Never isolate a text, view it in context and comparison.

Jesus said, "Without Me you can do nothing."

MATURITY
OBEDIENCE
KNOWLEDGE
DESIRE



5 Ways to Receive the Infilling of the Holy Spirit

1. **Seek** - look to Jesus [John 16:14, John 7:37-39]
2. **Study** - read the Bible and let it read you [Colossians 3:16] - there is a correlation between obedience to the Word of God and the fullness of the Spirit. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you [Colossians 3:36] = Be filled with the Holy Spirit [Ephesians 5:18-19]
3. **Surrender** - let the Holy Spirit fill you. It can't be a perfect surrender, but it can be an honest one.
4. **Separate** - cleansed of any and all defilement [2 Timothy 2:21] The HOLY Spirit is not just a title, it is Who He is (Holy). Be done with conscious sin Stop Grieving the Holy Spirit
5. **Serve** - the way to be filled is to be emptied.
The Spirit-filled Christian is a Spirit-spilled Christian. SECRET: When we pour out, God pours in. Lazy Christians know nothing of the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor De Courcy says, "The Christian life is not difficult, it's impossible." Have you experienced that in your life? What advice would you give a young believer based on your life experience? Have you "found the secret"?
2. He says that, "Some days we drink more than on other days." Why do you think this is so? What has been your experience in this truth? Is the amount of filling dependent on you in some way? Do you know how to "control" it? Do you want to "control" it?
3. According to the principle of interpretation known as the Analogy of Faith, we are instructed to view one verse in light of other verses (Scripture should interpret Scripture), and further never to isolate a text lest we take it out of context and, thus, change it's meaning. Yet this is done (often from the pulpit) all the time. Why would people/pastors do this and what should we do about it?



4. Do you believe there is a correlation between obedience to God's Word and the fullness of the Spirit in a person? Why or why not?
5. Is there such thing as a perfectly surrendered life? Discuss this possibility.

YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 8

UNDER THE INFLUENCE - PT 3



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 5:15-21

- Every Christian has the Holy Spirit [Romans 8:9], but the Spirit does not “have” every Christian.
- Indwelled Vs. Empowered by the Holy Spirit
- The church has suffered more from Christians not being filled with the Spirit than from Christians being drunk with wine.
- The ramification or repercussion You cannot be filled with the Spirit of God and not realize it. There’s always an “and” to the work of the Holy Spirit.
- Compelling evidence of the fullness of the Holy Spirit:
How it all fleshes out --- the person who is filled with the Spirit will:

Speak in song v.19

Give thanks v. 20

Submit v.21

Gladness

Gratefulness

Graciousness



You can
sing in
God’s choir.

1. **GLADNESS** [Ephesians 5:19; Acts 2:46-47; 1 Corinthians 14:26]

Psalms Hymns Spiritual Songs

2. **GRATEFULNESS** Giving Thanks for all things to God, the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gratitude not grumbling should mark the Christian. [James 1:16; Psalm 100:1-4]

What do you have that you have not been given? Giving thanks is the right thing to do.

BUT - for ALL things? [1 Thessalonians 5:17] How? You must interpret this verse in light of God’s character. Praise God for being God.

3. **GRACIOUSNESS:** submitting to one another in the fear of God. The Spirit-filled life will be marked by a willingness to crown others king. We will be the first to help others. We should be unpretentious, humble, gracious and flexible asking “How can I help you? and What can I do?”.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between being indwelled by the Holy Spirit and being empowered by the Holy Spirit? Do you have evidence of either of these two things in your life?
2. Pastor De Courcy says that according to Eph 5:19-21 a Spirit-filled person will be glad, grateful and gracious. Consider these 3 words and rate yourself (on a day-to-day basis) from 1-10 in each topic. Consider not only what you feel but what others might believe about you based on your conduct. Would others describe you as glad, grateful, gracious? Talk this over with the group.



3. What are your thoughts about the subtle difference in the verses 1 Thessalonians 5:18 and Ephesians 5:20 (giving thanks “in everything” and “for all things”)? How does Romans 8:28 fit into this? How would gaining a solid grasp on the meaning of these verses help you when talking with unbelievers or young believers about difficult times they may be going through? Could it help in any way with the sharing of the Gospel?

YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 9 LOSS FOR WORDS



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Romans 8:26-27

- As a Christian, sometimes prayer can seem like a foreign language. We ask, “How should I pray?” and “What should I pray?”
- Our “prayer partner” speaks and understands the language of heaven. We need to understand the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Christian’s prayer life.
- It is the Spirit of God that enables us to pray and convinces us that prayer is something more than talking to oneself.
- The Spirit of God enables the Christian to pray. ... and the Spirit, through His own intercession for us, shapes our uninformed and unformed prayers, making them conformable to the will of God.
- It is the Spirit of God that makes the Christian: active in prayer and effective in prayer
- We know we ought to pray. We live in a world: Wrapped in mystery, shrouded in darkness, deceived by Satan, mismanaged by man, of flawed/fallen people
- What is the particular will of God in this situation? It’s not easy to pray for the right thing in a world gone wrong. We don’t know what to pray because we are weak. Our minds are finite; Our perspectives are limited; We are sometimes blinded by our own self-interest. **WE NEED HIS HELP ALL THE TIME.**
- Prayer and weakness are joined at the hip. God already understands that we are going to need help in our prayer lives. We have two advocates. Jesus and the Holy Spirit
- We all pray in a state of perceived weakness. REMEMBER: God is attracted to your weakness. Prayer = Our helplessness + faith in God but the Spirit’s help in praying is not an excuse to replace our praying with His praying.
- **The Perfect Prayer** Our weak prayers are triggered by His strong prayers:
 1. The Spirit’s intercession: He takes up our case and, through Christ, presents it to God.
 2. The Spirit’s interpretation: He prays for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- The Spirit of God knows us. The Holy Spirit is the clearing house for our prayers.
- **TONGUES** - (1) The gift of tongues is expressed in words that are then interpreted. (2) The gift of tongues is only given to some, while what is given here is for all Christians. (3) The two previous uses of the word groan in Romans 8 gave no hint of some mysterious prayer language, just the sigh of the human heart.

DON’T TRY TO IMPRESS GOD IN YOUR PRAYING, IT WON’T WORK.

- We do not have to say everything right, and we do not have to do everything right for things to turn out right, because the prayers get fixed on the way up.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** God answers all of our prayers, **but not as we prayed them.**
- **The Holy Spirit speaks our language and God’s language. Praise God!**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Pastor De Courcy says, “and the Spirit, through His own intercession for us, shapes our unformed and uninformed prayers, making them conformable to the will of God.” How important is it for us that our prayers conform to the will of God? Could this be a reason why it often seems that our prayers aren’t being answered – because we don’t get what we want? Talk with the group about a few prayers you have made that it seemed that nothing happened as a result and you wondered why.
2. Does the thought that “our minds are finite, our perspectives are limited and we are sometimes blinded by our own self-interest” offer some much needed clarity to question #1 above? Try to think (from God’s perspective) about a few prayers that weren’t answered or the answer was no or not yet. After sometime passed, did you see it differently? Have you heard the song, Thank God for Unanswered Prayers? Have you had that experience? Could that help you think this through?
3. Have you thought about praising and thanking the Holy Spirit for this great work in our behalf? Ponder this a bit and consider doing this as a group.



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 10

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 1:13-4 NKJV

- In this dispensation (age), we live at an advantage over the OT believer because of Pentecost.
- The Holy Spirit has come to indwell us, enable us to accomplish God's will for His glory.
- Biblically speaking, a man's or woman's sense of security or significance doesn't come from knowing who they are... but whose they are.
- We have to know who God is to know who we are. In order to be myself, I've got to lose myself in God.
- We belong to God. Through Him we get our security, significance and true identity.
- The six major ways the Holy Spirit ministers to a believer at new birth:

Regenerates us	Confirms our adoption	Baptizes us into the body of Christ
Bestows gifts for service	Indwells us	Acts as the seal of God upon our salvation
- We have been: Chosen by the Father Redeemed by the Son Sealed by the Spirit
- The coming of the Spirit was the grand promise of the New Testament, just as the coming of Christ was the grand promise of the Old Testament.
- Christians are living in exciting times, in the age of the Spirit. The New Testament believer is better off than the Old Testament Israelite.
- God keeps His promises. God is faithful to Himself first, that He might be faithful to us second.
- Three stages a person goes through in order to be included in Christ: Hearing Believing Sealing
They heard the word of truth, the Gospel of their salvation. They believed it, embraced it, gave themselves to it.
They were sealed, marked immediately by the Holy Spirit.
- The seal is a means of validation, a sign of protection, and the final transaction. The Father gives to the Lord Jesus those whom He purchased by the shedding of His blood.
- The Doctrine of Propitiation. Paid in full - God is satisfied!
- We are not our own, understanding and acceptance of this should produce more obedience, greater submission and less anxiety.
- Guarantee - i.e., earnest money, an engagement ring.

We are saved.	We are being saved.	We will be saved
---------------	---------------------	------------------

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain why the Holy Spirit has come (indwelled believers)? How many reasons were given in this teaching. Talk through the reasons given.
2. Why does Pastor De Courcy say, "We have to know who God is to know who we are." Can you think of examples from your life or the lives of others that might explain this to non-believers?
3. Discuss the statement, "The New Testament believer is better off than the Old Testament Israelite." Why does he say this? How does it apply in your life (provide practical, visible examples)?
4. If you were called upon to explain the Sealing of the Holy Spirit to a new believer, what would you say? Practice this with the group.
5. It is common for believers to say that Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins. How does today's teaching fit with that phrase? Is it entirely accurate? How does it fit with the Doctrine of Propitiation? Explain your answer.



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 11 THAT HURTS - PART 1



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 4:25-32 NKJV

GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

- The Christian life is impossible and implausible apart from the indwelling, infilling ministry of the blessed Holy Spirit.
- “You might as well try to hear with ears and breathe without lungs as try to live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit in your heart.” D.L. Moody
- Ignorance of, indifference toward the Holy Spirit is a Spiritual death wish.
- The Holy Spirit is GOD.
 - The Breath of Life The Spirit of Christ The Comforter The Power of the Most High God
 - He regenerates He convicts He baptizes He indwells He gifts He seals He instructs
 - He prays for every child of God
- Christianity is not turning a new leaf... It’s taking a new life.
- Five “birthmarks” of those who have received new life in the Lord Jesus: They [1] Don’t tell lies (V.25) [2] Don’t display fits of unrighteous anger (V.26) [3] Don’t steal (V.28) [4] Don’t speak ungraciously (V.29) [5] Don’t display or harbor bitterness (V.31)
- The Holy Spirit is a person.,he can be grieved. He is a person who feels, acts, reacts. He is not a human being, but He is a person. Because of who He is and what He does, we cannot afford to grieve Him and we wouldn’t want to.
- When we sin we are not only breaking a commandment, we are breaking a heart. Grieve = causing sorrow, pain or distress
- We need to feel our sin more than we do. The deeper the love the greater the grief. When we sin, we not only sin against the law of God, we sin against the love of God.
- The grieving of the Holy Spirit is not the leaving of the Holy Spirit. We can cause the loss of the Spirit’s power in our life, but we cannot cause the loss of the Spirit’s presence.
- “The Spirit is grieved by definite sins, not by the presence of the sin nature.”
- The Holy Spirit is grieved by (V.25) Lying and Falsehood Nothing characterizes the Christian life like truth.
- The Holy Spirit is grieved by (V.26-27) Unrighteous anger (self-defensive and/or self-serving anger).
- Anger can be a positive force. You can be justly and justifiably angry.“He who is not angry when he has cause to be, sins.” -John Chrysostom
- The devil loves to exploit our anger. Anger leads to other sins. Anger leads others to sin - they react to our unrighteous anger with unrighteous anger.
- A believer cannot be “possessed” by the devil, but, a believer can be oppressed by the devil. We can invite demonic attack, make it easier by unrighteous anger.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you recall the 5 sins that grieve the Holy Spirit listed in Ephesians? Discuss which one(s) you have the most difficulty controlling and why you think that is so.
2. Discuss the idea that sinning not only breaks a commandment of God, but also breaks the heart of God. Does this explanation help you in any way? If so, how?
3. How does the statement, “We need to feel our sins more than we do.” fit into your daily life and actions? Are there known sins in your life that you easily dismiss? How might you address this?
4. Many believers fear the loss of their salvation when they commit sins. Does this teaching help you more fully understand that this is not possible? Discuss the statement, “The grieving of the Holy Spirit is not the leaving of the Holy Spirit.”
5. Discuss the quote about righteous anger, “He who is not angry when he has cause to be, sins.” How does righteous anger turn in to unrighteous anger? What are practical ways to prevent this?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

Session 12

THAT HURTS - PART 2



Pastor Philip De Courcy

Ephesians 4:25-32 NKJV

- Grieving the Holy Spirit is the spiritual equivalent of shooting yourself in the foot. It is a self-inflicted wound.
- Five “birthmarks” of those who have received new life in the Lord Jesus: They [1] Don’t tell lies (V.25) [2] Don’t display fits of unrighteous anger (V.26) [3] Don’t steal (V.28) [4] Don’t speak ungraciously (V.29) [5] Don’t display or harbor bitterness (V.31)
- SINS V25 Wounds the body of Christ, V26 Invites the devil into our midst, and V30 Grieves the Holy Spirit
- V30 is an imperative command. To disobey this command is to sin grievously and gravely. There are forgivable sins (Ephesians 4:30) and the unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31) Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit - which is attributing the work of the Spirit of God to the work of the evil one himself. It is the deliberate rejection of what we know to be of God.
- There comes a time when rejection of God’s word is fixed, willful, slanderous, repeated and extreme.
“God, you leave me alone, and I’ll leave you alone.” -Aaron Burr
- The Holy Spirit is grieved by stealing. (V28) There are all kinds of ways to steal. Instead of stealing we should work quietly with our hands so that we have something to share with others in need.
- The Holy Spirit is grieved by unwholesome speech. (V29) The tongue may be a small part of the body, but it can make or break a person’s day.
- Say that which is good in edification that ministers to the grace of the hearer. ?? Am I going to improve on the silence? What is my motive in saying this? Is it the right time? Are these the right words? What impact would this have on me if the situation was reversed? What would Jesus say? Will these words come back to haunt me on the day of judgement?
- The Holy Spirit is grieved by bitterness between people (V31-32) Forgiven people ought to be forgiving people. The Christian life is lived in the context of “one another’s.” There ought to be no bitterness between believers.
- Believers are not to be reservoirs but channels of God’s love. It is not easy to forgive. “Forgiveness is a beautiful word until you have something to forgive.” -- CS Lewis Matthew 18_21-35 The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant
- “Forgiveness is the decision to live with the painful consequences of another’s sin.” -- Sam Storms REPENTANCE NOT PENANCE Jesus paid penance for believers. Forgiveness is a determination to do those who have wronged us good rather than evil. We have then to work on reconciliation. The Holy Spirit is there to help us do it – we can’t do it ourselves.
- The setback of grieving the Holy Spirit (doing that which He does not want us to do) causes Him to postpone in us that which He wants to do.
- Justification = being saved from the penalty of sin --- Justification – at one time Sanctification – over time
- We are saved from the penalty of sin, the power of sin and the presence of sin.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the Aaron Burr quote, “God, you leave me alone and I’ll leave you alone.” Do you know people who feel this way? Have they told you so? What did you do or say? If you heard that today, would you do anything differently?
2. Discuss the various ways that we “steal” – Can you honestly say that you have never committed this sin? Do you do it even now in one way or another? What can be done to stop this behavior?
3. Our speech probably provides the greatest (at least easiest) way to grieve the Holy Spirit. Discuss with the group ways that you have committed this grievance in the past few weeks (or even days). What can be done to slow and stop this from happening?
4. We are reminded that forgiveness is difficult yet required of believers. Talk about someone that you need to forgive (or at least did in the past.) How successful have you been in this area? How do you determine your success level? Does it measure up to Jesus?



YOU HAVE THE ADVANTAGE

APPLICATION & COMMITMENT

James 1:22-25 NIV *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it-- he will be blessed in what he does.”*

John 15:5 NIV *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”*

Don't try to do this alone ...

Prayerfully consider what was taught in this series how you could best be used for God's purposes as you apply what you have learned. Select one change in your behavior as a result of your prayer time.

Date Series Began: _____

Date Series Ended: _____

Participant's Name: _____

A Biblical truth (principle) I learned from the lessons was: _____

I intend to apply this truth (principle): _____

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I will begin applying this truth immediately. I ask and expect my group to hold me accountable for this and to check with me periodically to determine if I am doing so. Please ask me: _____

Signature

Date

