



God's Holy Spirit

Study Guide

The Promise of the Spirit

Session 1

Scripture References:

•Psalm 51:11; 139:7	•2 Chron. 15:1-9	•Isaiah 11:1-9	•Ezekiel 36:24-28
•Numbers 11:14-17	•Zech. 7:8-12	•Isaiah 61:1-2	•Joel 2:28-32
•Isaiah 63:11-14	•Micah 2-3	•Isaiah 32:9-18	•Jeremiah 31:31-34
•2 Peter 1:20-21	•Ezekiel 8-11	•Isaiah 44:1-5	

Main Ideas:

God Rules!!! To understand the concept of the holy Spirit it is imperative to keep in mind that the story of the Bible is about the creator-God's reign, or kingly rule, over his creation, which includes all things: visible and invisible.

The Spirit of God throughout the Old and New Testaments signifies the power and presence of God himself. The Spirit is the means by which God works through his people and in his creation to bring about his purposes.

Throughout the Old Testament God worked in and among his people by way of his Spirit to guide them toward the fulfillment of his ultimate purposes which are only fully revealed in Christ.

The leaders of God's Old-Covenant people and the prophets, or spokesmen for God, were empowered by the Spirit to effectively carry out their roles in God's plan.

It was God's presence, via the Spirit, among his people that gave them the confidence that they were truly those called out to be his special possession and the ones through whom he would bless the entire world and demonstrate his reign over it, but there was always something amiss during the Old Covenant that gave the Israelites the sense that there was something more to it.

Eventually, God revealed that his plan to rule benevolently over his creation in an ideal world would come to fulfillment through one especially endowed with the Spirit to carry out the program that God had designed before the creation of the world. This would be God's Messiah, or Anointed One, who would be anointed with the Spirit to accomplish God's work.

Alongside the promise of God's Spirit-endowed agent, came, through the prophets, a promise that God would create a new covenant with his people. One of the aspects of this covenant was the idea that God would pour out his Spirit on all of his people, so they could carry out his purposes for their lives.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does the term "kingdom of God" signify?
2. What is a testament?
3. What role did God's Spirit play in bringing about his purposes in the Old Testament?
4. What does "messiah" mean?
5. What are the key features of the New Covenant?

The Promise Is Fulfilled

Session 2

Scripture References:

•Luke 1:26-37	•Matthew 12:22-28	•Hebrew 2:14	•Titus 2:11-14
•Luke 3:1-23	•Acts 10:37-38	•Galatians 1:3-5	•Luke 24:36-49
•Luke 4:1-2, 14-22, 42-43	•Ephesians 2:1-5	•Colossians 1:13	•Acts 1:1-11
•Luke 7:18-23	•2 Corinthians 4:4	•1 Corinthians 10:11	•Acts 2:1-41

Main Ideas:

As we saw from the Old Testament, two key indicators of the longed-for rule of God were the installation of God's Spirit-filled Messiah and the outpouring of the Spirit on all of God's people.

Accompanying the fulfillment of these promises was the expectation that the old order of things would be abandoned and the new order of God's kingdom established on a world-wide scale.

When the realization of these promises was in process, a modification to the expected scheme was necessary, for there were issues to be dealt with that were not, up to that point, obvious. The real picture of what God's kingdom would be and how it would come to pass was not yet clear.

God, through the work of Jesus Christ and the revelation of the Spirit, made plain that the true impediments of the kingdom were also of a spiritual, not merely physical, nature. The real enemies: death, sin and Satan must be dealt with before the kingdom would be consummated.

A new "already" but "not yet" aspect to God's kingdom was made known; a reality that persists until Christ returns. Christ the Lord now rules as God's Messiah at God's right hand, yet a spiritual battle rages in this "overlap of the ages" where the old age and its powers are being brought to nothing and God's reign is being manifest on earth in his people through the power of the Spirit.

The Spirit has indeed been poured out on God's people with the result that they are empowered in this intervening time to be witnesses of all that God is doing in Christ.

Questions to Consider?

1. What is eschatology?
2. In what ways did Jesus Christ demonstrate that he was the fulfillment of the promise of a Spirit-endowed Messiah?
3. What new understanding concerning the establishment of God's reign did he bring to those waiting for him?
4. How is God's kingdom "already" and "not yet"?
5. What is the primary objective for God's people as they await Christ's return?

The Gift of Holy Spirit

Session 3

Scripture References:

•Ephesians 1:3-14	•Galatians 4:4-7	•Hebrews 9:15	•1 Corinthians 6:9-11
•Acts 16:31	•Romans 8:12-18	•2 Corinthians 2:12-3:6	•Ephesians 3:12
•1 John 5:1, 13	•2 Corinthians 1:18-22	•1 Corinthians 2:6-16	•Ephesians 2:18-22
•John 1:12-13	•2 Corinthians 5:5	•Romans 5:1-5	•I Corinthians 3:1-17
•John 3:1-8	•Ephesians 1:13-14	•Titus 3:3-7	•I Corinthians 6:18-20

Main Ideas:

God's purposes are now being fulfilled IN CHRIST. It is our inclusion in Christ through faith, marked by the reception of the Spirit, that defines our lives as God's people. By believing in Jesus Christ we are saved, born of God, and have eternal life, i.e., life of the age to come in God's kingdom.

Through our incorporation into Christ we are born again of God's Spirit. The very Spirit that was in Christ is now in us and makes us sons and daughters in God's family.

As children of God, we are heirs of God and coheirs with Christ. The Spirit is understood to be: the down-payment on our inheritance, the firstfruits of God's kingly reign, and the seal of God's ownership.

Now we live out our lives in Christ under the new covenant of the Spirit. Christ has become the mediator of this covenant. The different aspects of this covenant agreement include: God's instructions for life are written on our hearts, God is our God and we his people, all his people KNOW him, and he forgives our wickedness and remembers our sins no more.

God now lives in his people by way of his Spirit, and his people have been set apart as his temple on earth, the place he has chosen to dwell.

Questions to Consider?

1. What is the focal point of God's will?
2. What does the adjective "eternal" mean?
3. What three images are used to show the "already" and "not yet" aspect of life in the Spirit?
4. What does sanctification mean?
5. How did the concept of the Spirit influence the biblical writers' ideas of God's temple, God's church and God's house?

The Gift Made Manifest

Session 4

Scripture References:

•Acts 10:1-48
•Acts 11:1-18
•Acts 8:9-25

•Acts 19:1-7
•Galatians 3:1-5
•1 Corinthians 12-14

•Romans 8:26-27
•Jude 1:20-21
•Luke 11:5-13

Main Ideas:

The first-century believers experienced life in the Spirit in a very dynamic and tangible manner. In fact, it was the very obvious nature of God's work in the believers' lives through powerful manifestations of the Spirit that served as the undeniable proof of the veracity of the early Christians' claims to be accepted by God.

The New Testament perspective is that God's Spirit is powerfully present among his people and is manifested in outward evidences on a regular basis. Where the powerful reign of God is already at work among his people, anyone can recognize it.

All Christians are members of Christ's body and are endowed with the Spirit to enable them to carry out their calling to be witnesses for him.

God has given us his Spirit, and various evidences of his Spirit, to assist us as we live in the "already" but "not yet" time of salvation. These manifestations and gifts are to be used for the common good of God's people or as means of making known God's power to the world.

Prophecy and speaking in tongues with interpretation are known from the New Testament to be among the manifestations that accompany the body of Christ gathered for worship.

Speaking in tongues is the one manifestation of the Spirit that an individual believer can perform at will for his/her own edification and private prayer life.

It should be our expectation that God continues to work in his people through powerful demonstrations of his presence to build up the body of Christ and to testify to the truth of the gospel. It is the powerful presence of God that sets the church apart from the world as God's own. We live in the same era on God's timetable as the original New Testament believers. What was true for them is true for us, today.

Questions to Consider?

1. What served as the clincher to the argument of whether or not God had accepted the Gentiles? Why was this such a big deal?
2. What was the proof that the Galatians had been justified by faith?
3. What are manifestations of the Spirit?
4. Who potentially possesses the ability to speak in tongues, prophesy, or heal in the name of Jesus Christ?
5. What is speaking in tongues?
6. What unique aspect of speaking in tongues sets it apart as a manifestation of the Spirit that can be performed at will by individual believers?

Living by the Spirit

Session 5

Scripture References:

John 4:24-25	1 Peter 1:13-16	Ephesians 4:17-5:2	1 John 1:5-9
Romans 8	Philippians 2:12-16	Ephesians 6:10-24	2 Corinthians 5:14-21
Romans 12:1-2	Galatians 5-6	2 Corinthians 10:3-5	Ephesians 3:14-21

Main Ideas:

God desires for his people to worship him in the Spirit and in truth. No matter their surroundings in time or place, God's Spirit-filled children can live in intimate fellowship with him throughout their daily lives, pleasing and glorifying him in everything they do.

Knowing and understanding our spiritual position in Christ is foundational for every born-again believer in order for them to grow and mature as a child in God's family.

The single most important key to living life by the Spirit is learning to live with a renewed mind. This is accomplished through a continual process of choosing to think as Christ would think, live as Christ would live, and reach out and love as Christ would love. As we endeavor to accomplish this, God empowers us through his Spirit to live this Christ-like life.

The fruit of the Spirit being produced in our lives is the product of our choice to keep in step with the Spirit as we live day by day. Again, selecting to view the world with a renewed attitude will lead us along this path, making us imitators of our loving God.

An awareness of the spiritual forces arrayed against us in this "end time" in which we live is necessary if we are to prepare ourselves for battle. Though our means for defense and weapons for offense are Spiritual by nature, they are taken up and wielded in a very practical manner.

Making our minds a repository of relevant scriptural examples of how to live a godly life will afford us many ready-at-hand models to imitate, and knowing by heart God's great and precious promises will allow us to pierce the web of darkness and deceit that entangles many in life's worries, riches and pleasures.

Viewing all of life from the proper Spiritual perspective allows believers to achieve God's purpose for their lives.

God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us. God Rules!!!

Questions to Consider?

1. What do people need in order to be able to properly worship God?
2. How are men and women released from the condemnation of sin and failure?
3. How does our mindset affect our walk with God?
4. What weapon are believers supplied with for the spiritual battle we face, and how do we make use of it?
5. What is the ministry of reconciliation, and what role do you play in it?