

THE PARTING Gift

WEEK 1

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

This lesson focuses on the goodness of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Gospels remind us that Jesus lived by the power of the Spirit, and that he wants the same for us.

1 What is the primary message you received about the Holy Spirit in the past?

2 Jesus knew what a gift the Holy Spirit was. He was conceived by the Spirit (**Luke 1:35**); he did ministry in the power of the Spirit (**Acts 10:38**); he was full of joy through the Spirit (**Luke 10:21**); he offered his life through the Spirit (**Hebrews 9:14**); he was raised from the dead by the Spirit (**Romans 8:11**); he gave his final instructions through the Spirit (**Acts 1:2**). If the Holy Spirit is so important to Jesus, why hasn't he been as important to his church?

3 Read **John 16:5-7**. How could the presence of the indwelling Spirit be better for us than having Christ among us in the flesh?

4 In what ways was/is Jesus expecting the Holy Spirit to help his disciples?

5 Most Christians can live quite successfully without the Holy Spirit. Given our talents and resources, we do not need any help to achieve a fairly comfortable lifestyle. So we often settle for a tepid brand of discipleship that demands little more of us than to be good citizens and pleasant neighbors. With that in mind, why is the Holy Spirit essential to radical discipleship? Why do so many Christians get by without the fellowship of the Spirit?

6 What makes you most nervous about growing in a relationship with the Holy Spirit? What makes you most excited?

ACTION STEP *This week pray daily for God to lead you into a closer relationship with His Spirit. Ask for God to identify and remove any barriers keeping you from that.*

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WEEK 2

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

This lesson focuses on the radical idea that God personally indwells every believer through His Holy Spirit. It explores what that means for our lives, and how we can fully “open” this incredible gift.

1 Read **John 14:15-17, 20**. What makes the promise of “indwelling” so unique and special?

2 Read **Acts 2:1-4**. “Bethlehem means God is **WITH** us; Calvary means God is **FOR** us; Pentecost means God is **IN** us! Why has Pentecost not been as important to most Christians as the other significant dates in salvation history?

3 Read **1 Corinthians 12:13** and **Ephesians 5:17-18**. There is no command in the NT for Christians to get the Holy Spirit. But there is a command to let the Holy Spirit have the run of the house. It is possible for the Spirit to dwell in us but not fill us. What causes “Holy Spirit leaks”?

4 What substitute fillers do we turn to the most to supply what only the Spirit of God can give?

5 Read **Acts 4:31** and **6:3**. How do you recognize someone who is full of the Spirit?

6 We are to be filled (passive tense), so it is not something we do, but something God does to us. Still, Paul commands us to let this happen. You are either going to be full of God or yourself. So, how do we cooperate with God in the filling of the Spirit?

ACTION STEP *Many of us have rooms in the house where the Holy Spirit is locked out (areas in our lives we haven't fully surrendered). Identify one area of your life where it is hard to give over control to the Spirit. Pray this week about surrendering that “room” to God and commit to “follow the Spirit’s leading in every part” of your life (**Galatians 5:25**). If possible, share that area with one other person and ask them to pray for you too.*

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WEEK 3

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

Jesus said the ministry of the Spirit is also good news for the world. He convicts the lost of sin, righteousness, and judgment and this has huge implications for our own witness.

1 **John 16:7-8** reminds us that the Holy Spirit has something to prove to the world. Why is it necessary for the Holy Spirit to be active in convincing the world regarding the truth of Christ? (See **2 Corinthians 4:4**; **Ephesians 2:2**)

2 What are some ways that the Holy Spirit sheds light on the truth of Christ?

3 There is one sin at the root of all others—a refusal to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (“He’ll show them that their refusal to believe in me is their basic sin.” **John 16:9, MSG**). Why is unbelief the sin behind all sins?

4 The darkness of self-righteousness can only be illuminated by the Holy Spirit. (See **John 16:10**) What keeps the world in darkness regarding the worthlessness of self-righteousness?

5 Read **John 12:31-32** and **16:11**. Why is the condemnation of Satan good news, and how can we be sure it’s true?

6 Jesus is sending the Holy Spirit to you that he might bless the world through you. How does knowledge of the Holy Spirit’s work of conviction give us confidence in witnessing?

7 We cannot open hearts, but we can and we will open our mouths as we grow in confidence of the Holy Spirit’s gift of conviction. The Holy Spirit convicts us to speak **to the lost about God** and to speak **to God about the lost**. How should this knowledge change our prayer life?

8 Share a story with your group of a person whose conversion to Christ can only be attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit.

ACTION STEP *Reflect on your own conversion to Christ. How did the Holy Spirit play a role in your coming to the light? Share that story with one person this week.*

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WEEK 4

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

The Spirit of truth will guide us into all truth about the way of Jesus. Believing this should fill us with boldness as we testify about Christ. The very essence of the Spirit-filled life is to declare Christ.

1 What is the significance of Jesus primarily referring to the Advocate as “the Spirit of truth”?

2 How does the Spirit reveal to us the thoughts of God?

3 How do we encounter and take advantage of the ministry of the Holy Spirit when we read the Bible?

4 Share an experience when the inner witness of the Holy Spirit protected you from an un-truth.

5 Share a time when the Holy Spirit was at work in a community of believers to shed light on the truth.

6 Why is Holy Spirit power necessary for witnessing? And why are actions without words not enough?

7 What are the chief reasons we are often timid about witnessing? What does this say about our confidence in the ministry of the Spirit?

8 Jesus declared himself to be “the truth.” Why is the person and ministry of Jesus the one truth that trumps all others?

ACTION STEP Read the following four chapters (One a day for the next four days), Acts 2, 3, 4, and 7. You’ll notice that being filled with the Spirit always results in the proclamation of Christ. Identify one place and opportunity where you will intentionally turn the conversation towards Jesus.

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WEEK 5

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

Holiness never comes from the outside in; it comes from the inside out. The Spirit does what the law could never do, because He produces in us the love that motivates obedience.

1 Even though union with Christ paid sin's penalty, we still wrestle with sin's power. How would you explain to a new Christian why the struggle to obey is so strong even after they have received salvation?

2 **Read John 14:15-16; 15:5.** The key to obedience is not to try more intently in your own power; it is to submit more completely to the helping power of the Holy Spirit (**Galatians 5:16**). Jesus said we can do nothing unless we "remain" in him. What does that mean, and how do we do that?

3 Most approaches to holiness and obedience are outside-in attempts that only result in temporary behavior modifications. Why are external attempts to produce holiness popular? Why do they ultimately fail?

4 **Read Ephesians 3:16.** Obedience will always be a struggle when the focus is on getting something out of my life instead of filling my life with something better. Jesus helps us not by setting holiness aside but by placing holiness inside. How does the Holy Spirit produce holiness in us from the inside-out?

5 *"Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness."* (**Galatians 5:16, MSG**) Scripture refers to the virtues that the Holy Spirit produces in us as fruit (**Galatians 5:22-23**). What are some insights into his work in our lives implied by that metaphor?

6 **Read John 15:12, 17.** This is the Spirit's greatest gift to us: the capacity for Christ-like love. The problem is not the desire to love; the problem is the lack of power to love when it's not "natural." Why is love the ultimate proof of the Spirit's work in our lives?

ACTION STEP *Reflect on your own spiritual formation in Christ this week. Where have you seen supernatural character transformation through the empowering of the Spirit in your life and in others? Share that story and examples with one person this week and ask them to share their story with you.*

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WEEK 6

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family, and/or with a small group or Bible class.

Jesus knew He was sending His disciples on a hard mission into an evil world. But He also knew the Spirit would provide the assurance they would need to find peace and confidence to finish the race.

1 Jesus tells us not to have a troubled heart in a world full of trouble. (See **John 14:1, 16:33**) Do we really have control over the emotions of our hearts?

2 Jesus prepared his disciples to live as a minority community in a hostile world. Is that counsel valid for us today? How does the Holy Spirit help us live as the “visiting team”?

3 Read **Ephesians 1:13-14**. Paul says our redemption has been marked by the seal of the Spirit. How does this give us peace, and how does the Spirit affirm this reality in our hearts?

4 Read **Galatians 4:6-7** and **Romans 8:14-16**. What is the significance of the Spirit affirming our sonship? Consider the significance of Jesus’ own baptism as you discuss.

5 Read **2 Corinthians 5:5** and **Romans 8:18-27**. One of the reasons the Holy Spirit is present is to remind us of the future. How does the Holy Spirit help us wait in hope in the midst of a difficult world?

6 Read **2 Corinthians 3:17-18** and **Romans 8:28-30**. Trouble coming cannot prevent our becoming more like Jesus. How does the Holy Spirit work in our lives to conform us to the image of Christ? How does this give us peace?

7 Jesus closes his discourse with the promise that he has overcome the world. How does the Holy Spirit bring this to bear in your life to increase your peace?

ACTION STEP *Identify one area of your life where you need more supernatural peace. Ask the Spirit of Christ to bring the promise of Christ to bear in that area, then share what Jesus does for you with someone else.*