

Confidently Walking 3 in the Spirit

Central Truth:

Upon faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit indwells the life of the believer. The Spirit gives you power for living the Christian life and gives you confidence in your relationship with God.

INTRODUCTION:

In the first session, you learned that it is impossible to be “good” in God’s eyes without the righteousness of Christ in you. In session 2, you saw that every benefit in your salvation and life are gifts of God’s grace rather than anything you earned through your own merit. As you continue to grow as a follower of Jesus Christ seeking to do the will of your Father in Heaven, it is crucial to understand the role of the Holy Spirit in your life. Just as you are completely dependent upon the righteousness of Christ to make you good enough to earn God’s favor and upon the grace of God for any benefit in life and salvation, so you are dependent upon the Holy Spirit for power to live a victorious Christian life and persevere in faith until the day you see Him face to face.

1 GETTING TO KNOW THE HOLY SPIRIT

What have you heard or understood in the past regarding the Holy Spirit?

Many people believe that the Holy Spirit is a cosmic force similar to the “force” in *Star Wars*. Scripture teaches some very different things, though...

The Holy Spirit is a person.

Read John 14:16-17.

What language does Jesus use in depicting the personhood of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is God.

Read Acts 5:1-4.

After lying to the Holy Spirit, Peter says Ananias did not lie to men, but to whom?

The Holy Spirit is not some cosmic inanimate force. He is the third member of the Trinity. The Apostle Peter refers to Him as God. Just as God, the Father, sends Jesus Christ to testify to His name and perform His works, Jesus Christ sends the Holy Spirit to glorify Him and be the agent of Christ on earth—particularly in the hearts of believers.

Another...It denotes a person, and a remarkable person too. A *Comforter*...The thoughts of encouragement, support, assistance, care, the shouldering of responsibility for another’s welfare, are all conveyed by this word. *Another Comforter*—yes, because Jesus was their original Comforter, and the newcomer’s task was to continue this side of his ministry. It follows, therefore, that we can only appreciate all that our Lord meant when he spoke of “another Comforter” as we look back over all that he himself had done in the way of love, and care, and patient instruction, and provision for the disciples’ well-being, during his own three years of personal ministry to them. “He will care for you,” Christ was saying in effect, “in the way that I have cared for you.” Truly a remarkable person!

—J.I. Packer

The Holy Spirit has specific works...

Read John 16:5-15

Jesus lays out for His disciples the very reasons for which the Holy Spirit comes...

1. To convict the world about sin, righteousness, and justice. (v. 8)
2. To guide believers in the truth. (v. 13)
3. To glorify Christ. (v. 14)

After the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit is sent to indwell the hearts of His believers in order to convict you of your sin and lead you into righteousness. He is your internal accountability system. He also guides you into areas of truth. Specifically, He gives you understanding in the truth of God's Word—the Bible. ***It is very important to understand that the Holy Spirit will never lead you to anything contrary to Jesus Christ or The Bible.*** The end to which all of this points is the glory of Jesus Christ. If the ultimate reason for existence is to glorify God with your life, then as a believer, the Holy Spirit enables you to do just that.

2 YOUR NEW IDENTITY THROUGH THE SPIRIT

The Bible gives several truths regarding the Holy Spirit and every follower of Jesus Christ. Here are several of those truths...

The Holy Spirit gives you a new life.

Read Ezekiel 36:25-27.

In this passage, the prophet Ezekiel records the words of God speaking of the coming Spirit of Life. What specific works does God say the Holy Spirit does in God's people? (vv. 25-27)

As a result of these works, what will be the effect in believers' lives? (v. 27)

Read John 3:1-8.

What does Jesus give as the prerequisite of entering the Kingdom of God? (v. 3)

From this passage, describe the two ways in which a person can be born. (vv. 5-6)

From these teachings, what can be concluded about the Holy Spirit's role in your salvation?

Your confession of Christ came through the Holy Spirit.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:3.

Jesus sees all of humanity divided into two parts: those who are merely born once—"born of the flesh," "the (spiritually) dead"—and those who are "born again" by the Spirit of God—those who are alive to God and see his kingdom as true and supremely desirable.*

—John Piper

The Holy Spirit lives within you.

Read 1 Corinthians 3:16.

The Spirit enables you to know God’s heart.

Read 1 Corinthians 2:12.

The Spirit gives you a new identity.

Read Galatians 4:6 and Romans 8:15.

Based on these two passages, how are you now considered in relationship with God through the power of the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit seals your relationship with God.

Read Ephesians 1:13-14 and 1 John 3:24.

According to Paul and John, how can you know that your relationship with God is secure?

Based on all of the passages read thus far, what role does the Holy Spirit play in your relationship with God?

SUMMARY: The Holy Spirit literally gives you a new life when you confess Jesus Christ as Lord of your life. Jesus calls this being “born again”. The Holy Spirit is the source of your confession of Jesus as Lord having placed your faith in Him for salvation. At that moment, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of you so that you may discern the heart of God for your life (which, again, never contradicts the teachings of Jesus nor His written Word, The Bible). In addition, the Holy Spirit gives you a new identity in relationship with God—you are now His child! Finally, the Holy Spirit seals your heart before God as a guarantee of your salvation for all of eternity. As a result, you can be confident as you continue to grow as a follower of Jesus Christ.

How does knowing these truths about the Holy Spirit affect the way you see your relationship with God?

3 THE HOLY SPIRIT’S WORK INSIDE OF YOU

God does not desire for you to simply confess Jesus Christ as Lord and then move on with life with little or no thought of Him. Instead, His desire is to see you grow more and more in the likeness of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Read 1 Peter 1:14-15.

Describe the two different lifestyles the Apostle Peter presents in these verses.

According to Peter, what should be your primary motivation for being holy?

The following chart contrasts the life of the believer before and after following Christ.

Life Before Christ	Life After Christ
walking in darkness (Ephesians 5:8)	walking in light
slaves of sin (Romans 6:17-18)	slaves of Christ
enemies of God (Colossians 1:21)	children of God (Romans 8:14-17)
walking in the flesh (sin) (Romans 8:9)	walking in the Spirit
can't understand God's heart (1 Cor. 2:14)	can understand God's heart (1 Cor. 2:12)

God desires for His followers to be holy—set apart from sin. He does not desire this so that mankind may boast in their holiness or achieve great spiritual accomplishments for the sake of achieving them. Rather, God desires His followers to be holy because He wants them to be like Him.

The Holy Spirit sanctifies you (or makes you holy).

Read 1 Corinthians 6:11.

In this passage, you learn that your sanctification began when?

Read Philippians 1:6.

In this passage, you learn that your sanctification will be completed when?

Justification declares you right in God's sight—it is a once for all-time declaration. *Sanctification*, on the other hand, is a life-long process of conforming your heart more and more in the likeness of Jesus Christ. This process begins at the moment of your conversion and will continue until you meet the Lord face to face.

The Holy Spirit produces fruit in your life.

Read Galatians 5:16-26.

What are the two opposing natures within you?

What are the fruits of the flesh?

What are the fruits of the Spirit?

According to Paul, how can you stay away from following the fruits of the flesh (or the way in which you used to live before following Christ)? (v. 16 and 24).

When the Holy Spirit takes residence in your life, He gives you new life and produces new fruit (or results) within you. This fruit manifests itself in your attitudes, your thoughts, and your actions. It is important to realize, though, that it is not the fruit that makes you more holy before God; rather it is a heart within you being conformed more and more into the likeness of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit..

NEXT TIME...

“Communication From God—The Bible”...The Bible is God's communication of Himself and His demands to mankind. Through it, the follower of Christ will know the heart of God and will be changed by His words.

Sanctification

The word *sanctify* comes from Hebrew and Greek words that mean “set apart”. To be sanctified is to be set apart from sin. At conversion, all believers are released from sin's penalty and set apart unto God. Yet the process of separation from the power of sin in your life has just begun. As you grow in Christ, you become further separated from the influence of sin and more consecrated to God. The sanctification that takes place at conversion initiates a lifelong process of distancing yourself further and further from sin and coming gradually and steadily more into conformity with Christlike righteousness.

The more you become like Christ, the more sensitive you are to the remaining corruptions of the flesh. As you mature in godliness, your sins become both more painful and more obvious. The more you put away sin, the more you will notice sinful tendencies you need to eliminate. That is the paradox of sanctification: the holier you become, the more frustrated you will be by the stubborn remains of your sin.*

—John MacArthur