

LESSON 4: EMPOWERMENT

You have begun an exciting new life in relationship with God, our Father, through the work accomplished by Jesus, God's Son. In this lesson, we will learn about God's Holy Spirit, who empowers us to live an abundant and victorious Christian life. This is the inhaling part of spiritual breathing.

Review from our last lesson:

- How can we experience God's love and forgiveness?
- What is the role of confessing sin in our lives? Why is it important for us to confess our sins?
- Describe how we practice "spiritual breathing" that we discussed in our last lesson.

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Read **John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7**

Before Jesus left this world, He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers. The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force like electricity; He is personal. He is God's Spirit, Christ's Spirit, dwelling in believers to lead us, to teach us, and to empower us as we follow Jesus.

Read **Acts 5:3-5**

- Who did Peter say Ananias was lying to, first in verse 3, then in verse 4?
- Who does Peter say the Holy Spirit is?

Read **2 Timothy 1:14** and **1 Corinthians 6:19**

- Where does the Holy Spirit reside?

Read **Ephesians 1:13-14**

- When do we receive the Holy Spirit?

God promises us an inheritance in our future, and gives us His Spirit today as a guarantee of that promise.

What are some of the things the Holy Spirit does today?

Read **John 16:8-9**

- What does it mean when it says the Spirit will convict the world of sin?
- Why is this important?

Read **John 16:13**

- What did Jesus mean, "He will guide you into all truth"? Why is this significant?
- How does this promise, which Jesus made to His disciples, apply to us today?

Conclusion: The Holy Spirit guided Scripture writers to ensure that they gave an accurate account of Jesus Christ's work and teachings. He guides us in understanding and applying God's truth as we study the Bible.

Read **Acts 1:8**

- In a courtroom, what does a witness talk about?
- Does he talk about others' reports, or just the things he has personally experienced?
- Do you think Jesus wants you to talk to others about what He has done in your life?
- What does the Spirit do to help you tell people about your new life in Christ?
- How will people receive Jesus and gain a relationship with God unless someone tells them?

Conclusion: The Spirit points people to Jesus because He is the only way to God. The Holy Spirit cannot dwell in our lives until we have received Jesus as Lord.

What does the Holy Spirit desire to produce in your life?

Read **Romans 8:6; 14:17**

- What are the things the Holy Spirit brings to our lives?
- Are these things that you consider desirable?
- Are these things that people are seeking in life?

Read **Galatians 5:16, 19–21**

- What are the deeds of the flesh the Holy Spirit seeks to remove from our lives?
- Do you consider any of these things to be desirable, or are they all now detestable?
- According to verse 21, what is the outcome of practicing these things?

Read **Galatians 5:22–23**

- Do you consider these things desirable?
- What will people think about you if you practice these things?
- What will people think about Jesus if you practice these things?

Read **Galatians 6:7–10**

- What will happen to those who practice these things instead of the deeds of the flesh?
- Are there rewards in this life to those who have these qualities?

TO BEAR HIS FRUIT, WE NEED TO BE CONTINUOUSLY FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Read **Ephesians 5:18**. This verse uses an illustration to help us understand how to be filled with the Spirit. In order to get drunk with wine, what must a person do? It is not enough to possess or to hold the wine bottle, but he needs to open it and choose to drink a sufficient quantity to get drunk.

It is not enough that we possess the Holy Spirit. We must choose to be filled in order for Him to affect our lives and produce His good fruit in us. Just as a wine-drinker must repeat his actions in order to get drunk each day, we also need to be filled with the Spirit every day—perhaps even more than once—in order to walk in His power and bear His fruit.

How to be filled with the Holy Spirit

- Confess your sins as the Holy Spirit points them out to you (**1 John 1:9**).
- Surrender control of every area of your life to God (**Romans 6:12–13; 12:1–2**).
- Desire (be thirsty) to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit (**John 7:37–39**).
- Ask the Lord to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit.
- Keep in step with the Spirit (**Galatians 5:25**).

How can you know that you are filled with the Holy Spirit?

Trust the Holy Spirit to fill you in response to God's command and promise:

God has commanded us to keep on being filled repeatedly with His Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**).

God has promised to answer our requests which are in accord with His will (**1 John 5:14–15**).

God has commanded us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, so we know this is His will. Since God has promised to grant a request if it is according to His will, we know that we will be filled with the Holy Spirit if we ask.

LEARNING AND GROWING IN THE WEEK AHEAD

You have begun the exciting adventure of growing in your relationship with God. We have been studying to learn the things you must do in order to nurture this relationship. Any relationship that is neglected will ultimately fade and disappear. So remember to practice these things:

- If you have access to the booklet about the Holy Spirit and the Spirit-filled Life, study that booklet thoroughly this week, seeking to understand and apply its principles to your life.
- Keep trusting and following Jesus as Lord of your life. Remember that He has set you free from sin.
- Consider yourself to be dead to sin, like a corpse that cannot be tempted by anything.
- Remember to practice Spiritual Breathing, which we learned in Lesson 3. Confess and get rid of any known sin in your life and ask the Holy Spirit to fill you day by day, moment by moment.
- Continue reading the Bible and enjoying time with God in prayer. Communication is vital to a healthy relationship.
- Bring your notes and questions to your meeting next week.