

The Spirit of the Living God

4 Studies



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Study 1 The Problem to Solve

Study 2 Knowing God and his plan

Study 3 Our Love, Gifts & Focus

Study 4 Pentecost

Study 1: The Problem to Solve

The Spirit of the Living God

A. The Bible says, “You always resist the Holy Spirit”

*The Spirit of the Lord came on him in power
so that so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands Judges 14:6*

Which churches resist the work of the Holy Spirit? Which ones don't let Him do his job? What might be the signs of this?

B. The Holy Spirit in the Old Covenant (Testament)

How did God's people *resist* and *grieve* the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?

Isaiah 63:7-10

Acts 7:37-41, 51.

How was God at work by his Spirit in the nation of Israel?

Genesis 1:1-2, Job 33:4

Judges 3:9-11, 1 Samuel 16:13

2 Peter 1:20-21, Nehemiah 9:30, eg. Ezekiel 11:4-5

What was the problem with Israel?

Deuteronomy 10:16

Jeremiah 4:4

Zechariah 7:11-12



C. The Promises for the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant (Testament)

How do these passages from the OT describe God's promised solution?

Isaiah 11:2

Isaiah 42:1

Isaiah 53:11

Isaiah 61:1

Ezekiel 11:19-21

Ezekiel 36:24-27

Deuteronomy 30:6

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Joel 2:28-29

How is God able to place his Holy Spirit in sinful people?

Mark 1:7-8

Acts 2:32-39

Under the Old Covenant there was a problem. God solved it in the New. What is the Holy Spirit doing in us?

Romans 5:5

Galatians 5:16-26

D. How to avoid resisting the Holy Spirit

Have you been resisting the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, not letting Him do his job? What might be the signs of this?

Look back at Galatians 5:16-26



Study 2: Knowing God & His Plan

The Spirit of the Living God

A. Spiritual churches

“You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because they ...”

What sorts of ways would different people finish that sentence.

B. The Spirit and God's plan!

i. What are all Christians able to do by the work of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 2:18 (14-18)

Romans 8:15-16 (15-17).

John 7:37-39

ii. Where does receiving the Holy Spirit fit into God's ultimate plan for us?

Ephesians 1:3-4,13-14

Ephesians 2:19-20 , Ephesians 4:3 , 2 Corinthians 13:14

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

2 Corinthians 5:4-5

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Recap: What was the problem? Why did God promise in the OT to give his Spirit to all his people, not just some?

25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

Ezekiel 36

iii. What ultimately lies ahead for us, that we have a deposit of now?

Revelation 21:1-4

Revelation 21:22-27

John 17:3

iv. How does what lies ahead relate to what God promised in the past in the OT?

Compare Revelation 21:1-4, Jeremiah 31:31-34 and 1 Corinthians 13:8-12.

v. In light of i to iv, finish the sentence: “*The work of the Spirit is not an extra add-on to being a Christian, it is right at the core of Christian life since it’s about ...*”



C. The Spirit and the truth

i. What do each of these verses say the Spirit has to do with the Word of God?

Ephesians 6:17

2 Peter 1:20-21

John 15:26-27

John 14:25-26 (This is addressed to the apostles)

1 Corinthians 2: 12-13 & 14

(“We” is not referring directly to all Christians but to Paul & his companions, see v6).

ii. Summarise your findings :

iii. In light of these verses finish this: “You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because ... ”

Continued next study

Study 3: Our Love, Gifts & Focus

The Spirit of the Living God

A. Spiritual churches

“You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because they ...”

What sorts of ways would different people finish that sentence.

B. The Spirit and living as God's people

i. Read Galatians 5:16-26.

- What does the 'leading' process look like when someone is 'led' into sin?
- What are people 'led' by the Spirit 'from' and 'to'?
- What does the 'leading' process look like when someone is 'led' into love, joy, peace, patience etc?
- A person could be either a loving, joyful, patient doctor or a loving, joyful, patient carpenter.
Does this verse promise that the Spirit will 'lead' people to decide between these two jobs?

ii. What role will the Spirit-inspired Bible have in people being 'led' by the Spirit into love, joy, peace, patience etc? *See also Romans 12:2*

iii. In light of these verses finish the sentence: *“You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because ...”*

Recap from Study 2:

1. In what way is the Holy Spirit a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance?

[Hint: Rev 21:3, 22]

2. Did the Holy Spirit ensure the Bible is the truth or does He help Christians grasp the truth?

[Hint: 1 Peter 1:21, 1 Cor 2:14]

C. The Spirit and gifts

i. Look up 1 Corinthians 12:4-6,7 & 27-13:8.

In light of this passage finish the sentence: "You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because ..."

ii. Should we expect or desire miracles to be a common experience? Who did Paul & Jesus expect would do signs, wonders & miracles?

Look up 2 Corinthians 12:11-13, Hebrews 2:1-4, Acts 19:11-12, Matthew 11:20-21, Matthew 12:38-41.

D. The Spirit and our focus:

*"The Holy Spirit is the forgotten member of the Trinity.
We should be hearing of him as much as we hear of Jesus."*

i. Comment on the statement in light of these verses: 1 Corinthians 12:1-3 and John 15:26 & 16:14:-15

ii. In light of these verses finish the sentence: "You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because ..."

E. Where will you look for the work of the Spirit?

i. In light of all we've seen, finish the sentence: "You can tell a church where the Spirit is working powerfully because ..."

ii. What would warm feelings during singing be an indicator of? Does singing "usher in the presence of God"?

iii. Recently, one night at Hillsong the Youth Pastor, Phil, said to the crowd of 3000, "I can sense that a young person here tonight is suffering from nightmares." Do you think Phil was 'led by the Spirit'? Is this the sort of thing the Bible means by the term 'led by the Spirit' in Galatians 5 (see Part 'B')?

iv. List all the ways we have examined that the Spirit is at work. Where have you been neglecting the work of the Holy Spirit in your life? Pray.

Think:
Is the book of Acts written to show us 'normal' Christian experiences or unique ones?
Have you seen tongues of fire come on people while violent winds filled a room? Do you touch hankies and expect people to be healed?



Study 4: Pentecost

The Spirit of the Living God

A. Drawing it together

Look back over the previous studies.

What topics have we covered?

What have you learnt, been reminded of and been challenged by?

B. Pentecost: The Climax, the Conclusion and the Commencement

1. Just before Pentecost, what did most of the crowds think of Jesus?

Read Acts 2:1-47

2. What did Peter most want people to understand in his speech? Why? *(Note too: he is answering v12)*

3. What did Jesus want people to speak about after Pentecost, according to Luke 24:45-49 & Acts 1:8?

4. In light of all the OT problems/expectations we have looked at (Study 1) and the work of the Spirit according to the New Testament (Study 2-3), what do you think Pentecost is all about?

5. How does the speaking in 'tongues' (= 'languages') compare between Acts 2:4-12 with 1 Corinthians 14:1-4,13,27-28.

6. Do you expect all Christians to speak in tongues, have visions/dreams and to miraculously prophesy?

These things are not ends in themselves. They are just some of the different means to an end that ALL who call on the name of Jesus have now, through our deposit. Look up 1 Cor 12:30, 1 Cor 13:8-12, Rev 19:10 and Philippians 3:8-11. What have we previously seen that ALL Christians have?



C. Summary of what we've seen in the Bible

1. God's Plan

The Holy Spirit creates.

The Holy Spirit re-creates in Christ.

The Holy Spirit was promised to all because of hard hearts to God.

The Holy Spirit is our deposit guaranteeing our inheritance in the new creation: knowing God!

2. The Bible

The Holy Spirit wrote the Bible through human authors.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of the truth *of* the Bible & of the truths *in* the Bible.

The Bible was written to 'make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ'.

3. Godly Living

The Holy Spirit enables us to say 'no' to sin, as we keep in step with Him.

The Holy Spirit transforms us by God's Word, on our way through life's experiences.

Love of God and others are the basic directions in godly living that the Spirit brings.

4. Gifts

God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit give gifts.

The Holy Spirit gave miraculous gifts to the Apostles and some others.

The Bible does not say God won't do miracles today. It seems he does in some cases.

Often the Spirit gives 'ordinary' gifts that we are to use for the sake of others.

The most important thing is not what gift you have but whether you use it in love.

5. Focus on Jesus

The Holy Spirit enables us to have Jesus as our Lord and to focus on him.

Pentecost was focussed on authenticating Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ.

The Holy Spirit continues today to draw people to the Messiah, by his Word and Christian witnesses.



D. Pray for us to witness to Jesus

Praise God for the privilege to live this side of Pentecost. Praise God for the relationship we have with him through his Son and his Spirit.

What comfort can we gain from Pentecost as we pray, serve and witness to the returning Messiah?