

CHAPTER 11

OUR MEANS OF VICTORY - THE HOLY SPIRIT

ASSIGNMENTS:

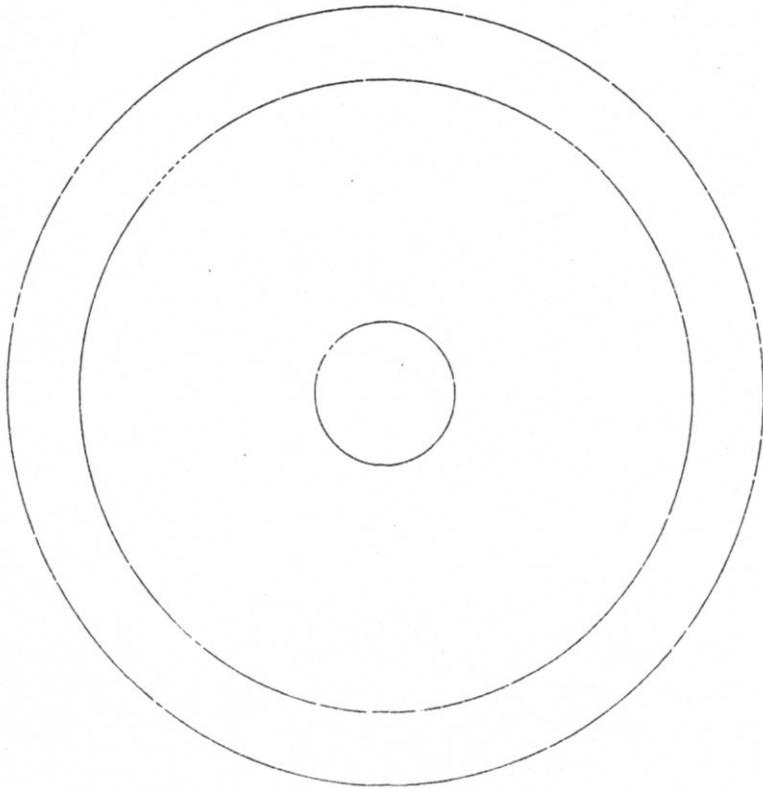
1. Scripture Reading - Acts 22-28  
Read one chapter each day.
2. Prayer - Use the prayer list page to record your requests and answers.
3. Memorize - Ephesians 5:18 and Galatians 5:16
4. Study and complete the material in the chapter.
5. Outline the pastor's Sunday sermon.

Outline your daily progress below:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wcd	Thu	Fri	Sat

CHAPTER 11

THE HOLY SPIRIT - OUR MEANS OF VICTORY



The Christian life is a great adventure. It is a life of purpose and power. Christ has given us this almost unbelievable promise, "anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name..." (John 14:12-13).

Obviously, we cannot, in our own energy, accomplish these great works which Christ has promised that we can do. It

is Christ Himself - living within us, in all of His resurrection power, walking around in our bodies, thinking with our minds, loving with our hearts, speaking with our lips - who will empower us with the Holy Spirit to do these great works. The Holy Spirit lives within every believer. He gives us power to lead a life of victory, to be like Jesus.

As the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they received a divine, supernatural power that changed them from fearful men into radiant witnesses for Christ. They were used of God to change the course of history. And that omnipotent power, the power of the Holy Spirit, is available to us, to enable us to live a holy and fruitful life for Jesus Christ.

Yet, many Christians do not even know who the Holy Spirit is, or if they do, they do not know how to appropriate His power. Consequently, they go through life without ever experiencing the abundant and fruitful life which Christ promised to all who trust Him.

Before we can understand why appropriating the Holy Spirit is so important for a joyful, victorious life, we need to understand more about the person of the Holy Spirit.

God exists as three persons, yet He is one. This belief is called the Trinity (three-in-one). Although the word *trinity* is not found in the Bible, the concept is taught throughout, starting in Genesis 1:26. The three persons of the Trinity are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are one in substance and function in perfect harmony (Deuteronomy 6:4). There is diversity in role but unity in purpose (Hebrews 9:14). The person and work of the Holy Spirit is the least understood, yet the Bible clearly reveals His purpose and the relationship we can have with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

THE HOLY SPIRIT

What indications are there in the following verses that the Holy Spirit is God?

Genesis 1:2; Acts 5:3,4; I Corinthians 2:4-6

Psalms 139:7-8

When Ananias and Sapphira forfeited their lives, to whom had they lied?

List three verses from this passage that refer to their sin (Acts 5:1-10):

THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Bible the Holy Spirit has several names, including Comforter, Spirit of the Lord, and Spirit of God. What does Jesus call the Holy Spirit and how does He describe His function in this passage?  
John 14:15-20

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is active in this world to bring people to salvation. According to this passage He will convict the world of guilt in what three areas?  
John 16:7-11

How is the Holy Spirit involved in our conversion?  
John 3:5-6:

Ephesians 1:13-14:

Titus 3:5-7:

The moment we receive Christ as Saviour, God creates a new nature within us. This new nature gives us a capacity for righteousness we didn't have access to before (John 3:3-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20). The Holy Spirit indwells us and gives us the ability to put off the old nature and live in His strength (we still have a free will to choose His power or to go on our own). The Holy Spirit is not a gift we must beg to receive. He comes without reservation to every believer.

In Old Testament times, God's presence was localized in a special way in the tabernacle. God's glory descended after the tabernacle was completed and moved with the Israelites as they traveled; later the glory of God descended at the dedication of Solomon's Temple. At Pentecost in the book

## The Holy Spirit

of Acts, God's presence was transferred from a temple made with hands to the body of each believer, now called the temple of the living God. That's why Paul wrote that our bodies are temples (houses) of the Holy Spirit, *temple* meaning the place where God Himself dwelt. "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16).

When we receive Christ as Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit indwells us, His temple. What do these verses say He does in our life?

John 16:13-15

---

Acts 1:8

---

Romans 8:9-11

---

Romans 8:26

---

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Several years ago archaeologists entered the tombs beneath the Egyptian pyramids. There they discovered containers of grain buried beside the Pharaohs' mummies. Researchers carefully took the grain from the ancient vessels and planted it in moist, warm soil. Incredibly, it

11-5

## The Holy Spirit

grew! The life within the kernels remained imprisoned for 3000 years until placed in the right conditions for growth. And so it is with our relationship to the Holy Spirit. As believers we receive the glorious presence of the Holy Spirit the moment we receive Christ into our lives. But this is no guarantee that the Spirit will be free to express His power in our lives until some conditions are met. Christ taught in John 12:24, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" Some Christians are apprehensive about a study of the Holy Spirit because they fear that if they yield to the Spirit, they might become fanatics or speak in strange languages. Or worse, they believe that the Spirit's work is not important to their lives. Thus they attempt to bypass this special gift, the means by which God's glory comes to indwell us. Like the kernels of grain in the pyramid, they have life, but there is no evidence of it.

The working of the Spirit in our lives is our only means to live the Christian life victoriously. We can either yield our lives to His control or we can grieve Him; there is no middle ground. It is the Lord's will that we yield our lives to the Spirit's control so He can fill us with His Spirit.

Explain in your own words how these scriptures show the results of being filled with the Spirit:

Ephesians 5:15-21

---

Acts 4:31

---

The word *filled* in Ephesians 5:18 means to "bring to a full level" just as we would fill a glass with water to the capacity that it overflows. When the Bible talks about

11-6

## The Holy Spirit

people being "filled" with the Spirit, it refers to them being "totally" empowered and directed by the Holy Spirit. When we are filled with the Spirit there is no room for our own natural power, desire, or will because we are under the Spirit's influence. We receive the Holy Spirit only once at salvation. Since the Spirit came to glorify Christ (John 16:4) and is the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9), to be filled with the Spirit is to be filled with Christ by abiding in Christ.

To abide in Christ is to live in conscious dependence upon Him, recognizing that it is His life, His power, His wisdom, His resources, His strength, and His ability operating through us, which enable us to live according to His will. This amazing fact that Christ lives in us expresses His life through us by the power of the Holy Spirit is one of the most important truths of the Word of God. Jesus does not want us to live the Christian life; He wants to live the Christian life through us (John 15:1-8).

This is that glorious experience that the apostle Paul knew when He said in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." The Christian's body now becomes Christ's temple to use as He wills; the mind becomes Christ's temple to use as He wills; the mind becomes His mind to think His thoughts; the will is now controlled by His will; the total personality, time, and talents are now completely His.

## The Holy Spirit

### WHAT IT MEANS TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT

Read Galatians 5:16-17. Describe the conflict involved in these scriptures.

The word *walk* or *live* is often used figuratively in the New Testament to signify the sum of the activities of an individual. To walk in the Spirit means that we will have Christ-like responses to all the experiences and encounters we face each day. This is in total contrast to the natural, selfish, fleshly way we sometimes act. If we read further in Galatians 5:19-21 we see some examples of the 'acts' of sinful nature. The word *acts* or *deeds* is plural in verse 19. Any one of these or a variety of them may be evident in our life at any given time if we are not under the control of the Holy Spirit. However when we read Galatians 5:22-25 we see a total contrast. Just as light diffuses into a rainbow of colors when it shines through a prism, so the pure life of abiding in Christ can be displayed in our life by an array of Christian virtues. These virtues are called the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit essentially involves our attitudes toward the many and varied circumstances that we face. To be Spirit-filled thus means that we are not controlled by what happens on the outside but by what is happening from within us.



## The Holy Spirit

The word *fruit* in verse 22 is singular; it comes in one bunch. We do not pick or choose or have one but not another. When we are abiding in Christ and thus filled with His Spirit, we will have the whole fruit present in our life. We must not confuse the *fruit* of the Spirit with the *gifts* of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the agent which God uses to give special spiritual gifts to His church so that the church is equipped to do His work in the world. These gifts were discussed briefly in the chapter on stewardship. In the following table, list the deeds of the flesh from Galatians 5:19-21 and Ephesians 4:25-31. Then list the fruit of the Spirit and the attitudes of a person walking in the Spirit.

Deeds of the flesh	Life in the Spirit
Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:25-31	Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 4:32-5:3

To walk in the Spirit is a decision of our will based on faith, not feelings (2 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 2:6-7). Most Christians understand that salvation comes by faith, apart from feelings. But they think that the Spirit-controlled life requires some type of mystical experience. Not so. Walking in the Spirit is spiritual power, independent of feelings, experiences, or circumstances.

Remember - to be filled with the Spirit is to be controlled by God's power. To walk in the Spirit is to respond to life situations with that power.

## The Holy Spirit

We must choose to depend on the Holy Spirit for power, just as we depend on Christ's death for forgiveness. The basis for our forgiveness is Christ's death; the basis of the gift of the Holy Spirit is Christ's ascension (John 7:39; Acts 2:33). Just as we receive forgiveness by faith and we prove our faith by thanking God for Christ's death, so we accept the ministry of the Holy Spirit by faith and thank God for Christ's glorification. Forgiveness and the work of the Holy Spirit are both accepted by saying thank you to God.

You're Richer Than You Think , by Erwin Lutzer (p66)

1 Thessalonians 5:18-19 says, "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit's fire."

### ABIDING IN THE SPIRIT

The Spirit-filled life is an obedient and abiding life. We need to begin each new day by asking God to cleanse our life according to 1 John 1:9. Then we can present our bodies to the Holy Spirit according to Romans 12:1-2 and ask Him to keep us filled with His power according to Ephesians 5:19.

If we grieve the Holy Spirit through sin - a deliberate act of disobedience to His will - we need to confess it. God's Word promised in 1 John 1:9 that, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." Confession here suggests

## The Holy Spirit

agreement with God. He already knows all about it. Such agreement involves at least three considerations:

- a. We name our specific sin or sins and admit they are wrong and are therefore grievous to God.
- b. We acknowledge that God has already forgiven our sins through Christ's death on the cross.
- c. We must repent. This means that we change our attitude toward sin. The power of the Holy Spirit enable us to change our conduct so we can now do what God wants us to do.

Next, we appropriate the fullness of God's Spirit by faith. We trust Him to direct and empower us according to His command to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18), which in its original meaning suggests that we are to be constantly and continually directed and empowered with the Holy Spirit moment by moment as a way of life. We continue to claim His love, forgiveness, and power by faith and thus experience fellowship with Him moment by moment (1 John 3:14,15).

Our relationship with the Holy Spirit is both critical and progressive: critical in that at a point in time we discover how to appropriate His power by faith; progressive in that we continue to learn how to grow and mature in the Christians who have walked in the Spirit by faith through abiding in Christ. Christians who have walked in the Spirit by faith for many years will generally be more fruitful in their witness of Christ than believers who have just discovered how to walk in the Spirit. We will always find new areas that need to be surrendered to the control of the Holy Spirit. When we do become aware of these areas in our lives - such as an attitude or action that is displeasing to the Lord - we have a choice to make. We choose either to confess it and trust the Lord to change us according to the Holy Spirit's power, or we grieve the Holy Spirit and our fellowship with God is broken.

## The Holy Spirit

Although we have no power within ourselves to walk in the Spirit, we do have the ability to choose to have the Spirit do the walking (Romans 6:16). As we make the right choice by faith, we can rely upon the Holy Spirit to supply the power. As we walk in the Spirit by faith, abiding in Christ, we will experience a life of victory.

### THOUGHT QUESTIONS

1. Describe the person and work of the Holy Spirit:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Why do some Christians not experience the filling of the Holy Spirit?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What is the relationship between being filled with the Holy Spirit and living a victorious life?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit

5. Of these practical benefits of being filled with the Holy Spirit, which are you experiencing?

- \_\_\_\_\_ I have evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Spirit has made Jesus real to me as a person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am beginning to be able to hear the inner voice of the Spirit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ He guides me in my decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ He has given me a new kind of love for other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am experiencing the energizing power of the Spirit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am receiving the Spirit's definite help in praying about my deepest concerns.

6. According to Galatians 5:22-23, what kind of fruit does the Holy Spirit produce in the life of a person who is yielded to His control? Which of these qualities is especially needed in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Holy Spirit

7. How do the following two concepts complement each other?

- a. Being filled with the Holy Spirit, and
- b. Letting the Word of Christ dwell in you richly? (See Ephesians 5:17-21 and Colossians 3:16-17).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Helper , Catherine Marshal

The Release of the Spirit , Watchman Nee

Practicing His Presence , Lawrence and Laubach.