



Empowered by the
Holy Spirit

Discovering ways to help you draw on the Holy Spirit for strength and encouragement

REVIEW

Recap on your experience of the challenge. Ask the following questions:

How did it go? Was it helpful?

If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question:

Where and how did you experience God last week?

Read the passage several times through, read it slowly, use your imagination to picture the scene and soak it up. As you read, look out for one or two points that really impact you.

We call these 'shockers' and 'blockers'. Shockers - something from the text that stands out or surprises you. Blockers - something that raises questions or you find hard to understand.

READ

† John 14.15–17

The Holy Spirit is promised

¹⁵ Jesus said to his disciples: If you love me, you will do as I command. ¹⁶ Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. ¹⁷ The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you.

John 14.25–26

²⁵ I have told you these things while I am still with you. ²⁶ But

the Holy Spirit will come and help you, because the Father will send the Spirit to take my place. The Spirit will teach you everything and will remind you of what I said while I was with you.

John 15.26–27

²⁶ I will send you the Spirit who comes from the Father and shows what is true. The Spirit will help you and will tell you about me. ²⁷ Then you will also tell others about me, because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16.7-15

⁷ But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. ⁸ The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin and God's justice and the judgment. ⁹ The Spirit will show them that they

are wrong about sin, because they didn't have faith in me. ¹⁰ They are wrong about God's justice, because I am going to the Father, and you won't see me again. ¹¹ And they are wrong about the judgment, because God has already judged the ruler of this world. ¹² I have much more to say to you, but right now it would be more than you could understand. ¹³ The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth. The Spirit doesn't speak on his own. He will tell you only what he has heard from me, and he will let you know what is going to happen. ¹⁴ The Spirit will bring glory to me by taking my message and telling it to you. ¹⁵ Everything that the Father has is mine. That is why I have said that the Spirit takes my message and tells it to you.

Contemporary English Verse - CEV

REFLECT

Take time to discuss what you've read and particularly the points that impacted you. Share your thoughts and listen carefully to one another. Use the questions to help you reflect.

Setting the scene:

- ▶ Picture it... Jesus has spent years on the road with his disciples. Here, he explains that God will send the Holy Spirit to them. The catch? Jesus reveals he has to die and leave them first. He urges his disciples not to worry, the Holy Spirit will dwell among them and bring strength and help.

- ▶ The idea of the Holy Spirit dwelling - continually living among us - was new. Previously the Holy Spirit would come, engage and go.
- ▶ The Holy Spirit's character and action affirms what is good, true, holy and pure. The Holy Spirit also teaches us, revealing more about God, helping us to pray, discern spiritual gifts, how to use them and grow in the fruit of the spirit. (See Gal 5:22)
- ▶ These passages paint a vivid picture of the Holy Spirit's role and work. They also reveal that we can experience God's enduring presence in our lives.
- ▶ What are the 'shockers' and 'blockers' for you in this passage?
- ▶ The Holy Spirit is often said to be the 'forgotten' person of the Trinity - why might this be?
- ▶ In what ways have you experienced the power of the Holy Spirit?

RESPOND

As you have read and reflected on the passage, it's now time to consider how to respond.

Spirit lyfe challenge: As a group, create a challenge that will help you increase your interaction with the Holy Spirit this week.

Challenge ideas:
If you struggle to come up with your own challenge then why not try one of the following...

01 Asking

In Luke 11:13, Jesus explains that we should ask God for the Holy Spirit. If you feel that God's Spirit has taken a back seat in your life, spend some time asking him to give you his Spirit. You could ask God to help you grow in awareness of his dynamic, life-giving, energising presence as he works in and through you.

02 Reflection

Galatians 5:22 lists nine fruit of the spirit such as love, joy and peace. This week, set aside 15 minutes each day to read and meditate on each of the fruits described in verse 22. Ask God to show you which ones represent your most significant areas for growth. Ask the Holy Spirit to begin to work in your heart and mind. God is faithful, and he will transform us as we intentionally spend time with him becoming increasingly open to the Holy Spirit's work in every part of our lives.

03 Lectio

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is teacher, helping us to connect with God when we read the Bible. This week, find a quiet space, and choose a passage from the Bible to reflect on.

Read carefully and slowly, then close your eyes and wait for a word, phrase or picture to come to mind. Take some deep breaths, wait awhile and then ask the Spirit to reveal what he might want to tell you through what he has brought to mind.

04 Going Deeper

Guidance - see following page.

'We do not live our lives 'under our own steam'; we were never created to do so. We were created to live our lives in cooperation with another reality... quite simply life in and through the Spirit.'

Richard J. Foster *Streams of Living Water*

Don't Forget

1. To record your experience of the challenge so that you can accurately share it with your lyfe group when you next meet. You might like to text/tweet each other throughout the experience!
2. Consider posting your created challenge on the lyfe facebook site for others to view.

More resources on 'Spirit Lyfe'

- **Listen** to video interview with James Parker
- **Read article** on 'Holy Spirit FAQs' by David Spriggs
- **Read** 'lyfe story' biographies on Jackie Pullinger and John Wimber
- **Recommended reading** – *Come Holy Spirit* by David Pyches

GOING DEEPER: GUIDANCE

Another role of The Holy Spirit is as a guide. Check out Romans 8.14 and Galatians 5.25.

When you make decisions this week, take the time to invite the Spirit to help you. Speak with God, explain the decision you have to make, ask him to lead you and give you insight.

You might feel his direction comes in the form of an intuitive sense, like a gut instinct. Other times God might use a friend's advice that you sense must have come from him. God may also open or close doors to opportunities you're exploring. Whatever the case, we can test the Spirit when we make decisions by reading the Bible carefully.

The Spirit of God will never lead you to a decision that goes against the wisdom and commandments found in the Bible. If you're not too familiar with the Bible, ask a more mature Christian who you trust to help you find some relevant passages that you can read. See what God wants to say to you through them.