SUMMARY

Many believers go their entire Christian lives and never understand the necessity and work of the Holy Spirit.

Yet this topic is one of the most important ones in the Bible. Apart from the Holy Spirit, you and I simply cannot live a godly life. It is His ability that empowers us to resist sin and obey God. He helps us interpret Scripture and enables us to fellowship with the Lord. Without Him, no one can have a genuinely fruitful Christian life.

The apostle Paul knew the significance of relying on the Holy Spirit. He wrote, “Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). Although we are new creatures in Christ, each believer still has the flesh operating within him or her. The flesh is our tendency to sin or to rebel against God’s will for our lives. By walking in the Spirit, you and I can have the power to overcome the flesh and live victorious Christian lives.

SERMON POINTS

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Along with God the Father and Jesus the Son, the Holy Spirit is a member of the Trinity. As such, He was equally involved in the creation of the world (Gen. 1:2, 26). Like Jesus, the Holy Spirit is a Person, with a personality, a will, and emotions. He is not an impersonal force.

What does the Holy Spirit do in our lives? He . . .

- Teaches believers and reminds us of what we have learned (John 14:26). He brings to mind verses and scriptural truth we may have forgotten.
- Convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11).
- Testifies about Jesus, rather than Himself (John 15:26). He reveals our need for Christ and shows us how to depend on the Lord.
- Guides us into all truth (John 16:13).
- Dwells within every believer (Rom. 8:11). He lives within us from the moment of salvation.
- Guides our steps and helps us discover the Father’s plans for us (Rom. 8:14).
- Assures us that we are saved. He “testifies with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16).
- Gives us spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-11).
- Empowers us, especially for evangelism (Acts 1:7-8). The disciples waited for the Holy Spirit before sharing the gospel even though they had walked with Jesus for three years.
- Equips us to minister to others (Eph. 4:11-12).
- Helps us pray. The Bible says He intercedes for us “with groaning too deep for words” (Rom. 8:26).
- Seals our salvation (Eph. 1:13). God chastises believers who sin. However, our status as His children doesn’t change.

What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

This phrase means to live each moment in dependency on the Holy Spirit, sensitive to His voice, and obedient to Him. As we go through each day, we should be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit with us. We should be totally submitted to Him. That means we must be sensitive to the initial promptings of the Holy Spirit. When He speaks to our hearts, you and I should immediately obey. For
example, we may be convicted to turn away quickly from things that tempt us to sin. The Spirit can give us the right words to encourage a hurting person, or lead us to do something unusually kind for a stranger. He may even guide us to take a different route.

Sometimes it will become clear why the Holy Spirit directed us one way and not another; other times, we may never know why. However, the wise man or woman will obey the Spirit’s voice at once. The Holy Spirit knows all things, including the future, and His guidance is always for our benefit.

**Setting our Minds on the Things of God**

There is no doubt that we are in a spiritual battle. The good news is that the Holy Spirit is available to help us wage war against sin. The key to victory is in setting our minds on the things of the Spirit, not the things of the flesh (Rom. 8:5). In other words, we don’t think about how to gratify our sinful desires. Instead, we choose to focus on things which glorify and honor God. The Spirit of the Lord will equip us to live godly lives if our minds are set on Him.

Three things work against us as believers: the world, the flesh, and the devil. This means that aside from direct temptation, Satan works through our own sensual desires and the world’s system, or way of thinking and operating. Remember that the devil can’t force believers to sin. He can tempt us—and will certainly try to do so. But we can resist Satan’s lies through the power of the Holy Spirit.

How do we do that? We should begin before we are even faced with temptation. If we have made up our minds to obey God, no matter what, we are far more likely to win the spiritual battle and not act sinfully. On the other hand, if we entertain temptation as an option and imagine what it would be like to fulfill sinful desires, we will almost surely give in to temptation eventually. Why? Because the mind governs how we speak, act, and handle different situations. That’s why the Bible says “prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit” (1 Peter 1:13). What we think about determines, to a great extent, how we live.

**Surrendering to the Holy Spirit**

I challenge you to begin each morning with a prayer that goes something like this: “Father, I want You to guide me today and lead me. Speak to my heart. Make me sensitive to what is happening around me in the lives of those I meet. Fill me with Your supernatural joy, and use me today for Your purposes. I surrender fully to You.” If you yield your will to the Holy Spirit and depend on His ability rather than your own, He will enable you to live a life that is pleasing to Christ.

**RESPONSE**

Do you want to live with real peace, contentment and joy in life? Do you want to have the power to overcome temptation or persevere through adversity? The answer is found in total surrender and obedience to the Holy Spirit. Set your mind on the things of God and trust the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide you, enable you, and empower you to obey His voice. When we remain sensitive to the Spirit’s guidance, depend upon Him totally, and obey Him, we have life at its very best.

- When you think of the Holy Spirit, what image comes to mind?
- Reread 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. What spiritual gifts has the Holy Spirit given you? How are you using these gifts to glorify our heavenly Father and further His kingdom?
- How does the Holy Spirit help us distinguish between good and evil? Clarity and confusion? Truth and fiction?