



**DAMASCUS ROAD**  
community church

# THE HELPER

## *holy spirit*

**12-WEEK STUDY ON THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM



# Introduction



Welcome to "The Helper," a 12-week small group study designed to help us fully understand, experience, and cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is not an abstract concept or a mystical force; He is the third Person of the Trinity—God with us, sent by Jesus to continue His work in the world through the Church. This study is broken into three essential sections (right):

## **The Person of the Spirit**

### **SECTION 1 | WEEKS 1-5**

We will establish a biblical foundation, understanding the Spirit's divinity, distinct personhood, and essential roles.

## **The Gifts of the Spirit**

### **SECTION 2 | WEEKS 6-9**

We will explore the supernatural empowerments given to the church for service, unity, and mission, seeking a balanced, biblical perspective on their use today.

## **The Fruit of the Spirit**

### **SECTION 3 | WEEKS 10-12**

We will focus on the Spirit's formative work: conforming our character to the image of Jesus, resulting in lasting transformation and a visible witness to the world.



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# Introduction

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Our prayer is that through this study, your relationship with the Holy Spirit will move from distant knowledge to a daily, intimate partnership.



# Overview & Vision

## The Adventure of Spirit-Filled Living

Welcome to a transformative journey into the heart of the Christian life. This discipleship experience is designed to move us beyond a mere intellectual knowledge of the Trinity and into a dynamic, living encounter with the Third Person of the Godhead: the Holy Spirit.

We approach this journey with the conviction that the Bible is not merely a history book of what God did, but a living manual of what God is doing today through the agency of the Holy Spirit. A "Spirit-filled life" is not intended solely for a demographic of emotional believers; it is the normative, expected, and empowered existence for every child of God. It unlocks the full potential of our redemption, bringing the reality of heaven into the grit of our daily lives.

Many Christians live functionally as "Binitarians"—believing in the Father and the Son, but leaving the Holy Spirit as a nebulous, impersonal force or a "ghost" on the margins of their theology. This course aims to dismantle that misconception. We will dive into scripture along with gaining insight from scholars like N.T. Wright, Jack Hayford, Mark Rutland, and more, to paint a portrait of the Spirit that is vibrant, personal, and deeply relational.

Our vision for these 12 weeks is simple yet profound: **To transition from viewing the Holy Spirit as an "It" to knowing Him as a "He"—and eventually, to loving Him as the comforter, sent as Christ's gift to us.**

We will journey from the "hovering" breath of Genesis to the rushing wind of Pentecost. We will examine the distinct works of the Spirit: how He seals us for eternity, grows us in character, and clothes us with power for service. We will hear from Jesus (in John 14-16) and unpack the rich Greek meaning of the *Parakletos*—our Heavenly Coach and Advocate. Finally, we will confront the startling intimacy of James 4, discovering a Spirit who "yearns jealously" for our friendship.

This is not just a study; it is the development of a relationship that will have an impact of unfathomable proportions on our lives. As we open the Word, we expect the Ruach (Breath) of God to breathe new life into us and the Dunamis (Power) of God to transform our lives and equip us for Kingdom service.

# Overview & Vision

## What You'll Find in This Discipleship Guide

Each week includes:

- **Scriptural Foundation:** The primary texts for the week.
- **Insight and Observations:** A closer look at how the Holy Spirit actually works, both relationally and in practice.
- **Digital Content:** Scan the QR codes to discover additional insight and conversation from our video/audio casts
- **Discussion Questions:** To facilitate dialogue.
- **Life Application:** A practical challenge to bring truth into action.
- **Prayer Focus:** A guided trajectory for group and private prayer.

*Let the adventure begin!*



## SECTION 1

# THE PERSON *of the spirit*

## WEEK 1

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

**FOCUS:** THE PERSONHOOD, DEITY, AND ETERNAL NATURE OF THE SPIRIT.

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## Introduction

In week one, we address the foundational identity of the Holy Spirit. Before we can understand His power, we must recognize His person. A common error in the modern church is the depersonalization of the Spirit—reducing Him to an atmosphere, a feeling, or a "battery pack" for miracles. But you cannot have a relationship with an atmosphere. You cannot love a battery pack.

This week, we trace His footprint from the chaotic waters of creation in the Old Testament to the baptismal waters of the Jordan in the New Testament. We will establish that He is not a junior partner in the Trinity, nor is He a passive observer. He is God—co-equal, co-eternal, and fully active. He is the Executor of the Godhead, the One who moves to manifest the will of the Father and the Word of the Son.

## The Breath of the Almighty

### I. The Ruach: The Hovering Architect

To meet the Holy Spirit, we must turn to the very first verses of Scripture. Genesis 1:1-2 states: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."

Here we encounter the Hebrew name for the Spirit: *Ruach*.

This word Ruach is dynamically multi-faceted. It translates as "breath," "wind," or "spirit" depending on the context. It is the same word used for the breath of life that God blew into Adam's nostrils. It captures the essence of invisible, vital energy that sustains all life.



## WEEK 1

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

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The action of the Spirit in Genesis 1:2 is described by the Hebrew word *rachaph*. This is not a static floating. It implies a "brooding" motion, much like a mother hen hovering over her eggs to warm them into life, or an eagle fluttering over its young (Deuteronomy 32:11).

- **Observation:** The Holy Spirit is the sensing and active agent of Creation. The Spirit senses that the darkness and chaos is out of line with the character and nature of the Godhead or Trinity. So, the Father wills and speaks the creation; the Son is the Word ("Let there be light") that is sent forth and declares the creation; and the Spirit is the one who hovers to actualize that Word into physical reality.
- **Implication:** Wherever there is chaos, void, or darkness in our lives, the Spirit of God is not absent. He is hovering. He is brooding over the mess, waiting for the Word of God to be spoken so He can release creative power to bring order out of chaos. He is the Architect of restoration.

Throughout the Old Testament, we see the Ruach coming upon individuals to equip them for specific tasks. He came upon Bezalel for artistic craftsmanship (Exodus 31:3), upon Gideon for leadership (Judges 6:34), and upon Samson for physical strength (Judges 14:6). However, in the Old Covenant, this presence was often transient—He came upon them, but did not yet permanently indwell them in the way the New Covenant would promise.

## II. The Pneuma: The Personal Spirit

As we transition to the New Testament, the language shifts to Greek, and the word becomes *Pneuma*. Like Ruach, it means wind or breath, but the New Testament writers go to extraordinary lengths to emphasize His Person-hood.

In Greek grammar, the word *pneuma* is neuter. Grammatically, it would be correct to refer to the Spirit as "it." However, Jesus deliberately breaks the rules of grammar to establish the rules of theology. In John 16:13, when speaking of the Spirit, Jesus uses the masculine pronoun *ekeinos* ("He").

- *"When He, the Spirit of truth, has come..."*

This is a theological thunderclap. Jesus is declaring: The Holy Spirit is not an "it." He is a "He." More specifically a person.



## WEEK 1

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

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We use the pronoun "He" and the title "Father" to describe a relationship of authority, origin, and protection, but theologians generally agree that God is Spirit and encompasses the fullness of traits we see in both men and women.

In Genesis 1: The text says God created mankind "in his own image... male and female he created them." This implies that both genders reflect the nature of God.

### The Three Faculties of Personhood

Many theologians point out that to be a person, one must possess three distinct faculties. The Holy Spirit possesses all three in fullness:

1. **Intellect (Mind):** He is not a mindless force. Romans 8:27 speaks of "the mind of the Spirit." 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 tells us that the Spirit "searches all things, yes, the deep things of God." He knows the thoughts of God. He plans, He strategizes, and He imparts wisdom.
2. **Volition (Will):** He makes decisions. In 1 Corinthians 12:11, regarding the distribution of spiritual gifts, Paul writes, "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills." The Spirit decides who gets the gift of prophecy and who gets the gift of healing. In Acts 16:6, the Spirit forbids Paul to preach in Asia. He has executive authority in the Kingdom. It is important to note that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit will always share a unified will. One member of the Trinity will always authentically represent the others.
3. **Emotion (Feeling):** He feels. Ephesians 4:30 commands, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God." You cannot grieve a force. You cannot hurt the feelings of electricity or gravity. Grief is a function of love. Only a person who loves deeply can be grieved deeply. Furthermore, Romans 15:30 speaks of "the love of the Spirit."

### III. The Third Person of the Trinity

The Holy Spirit is not a "lesser" God. We see the Trinity in beautiful cooperation at the Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17):

- The **Son** comes up from the water.
- The **Spirit** descends like a dove.
- The **Father** speaks from heaven ("This is My beloved Son").

The Holy Spirit is co-equal and co-eternal. In Acts 5, when Ananias and Sapphira lie about their offering, Peter asks, "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" (v.3). Then he delivers the verdict: "You have not lied to men but to God" (v.4). To lie to the Spirit is to lie to God.

## WEEK 1

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

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### The Revealer of Jesus

Scripture emphasizes that while the Spirit is fully God, His primary role in this age is to reveal and glorify Jesus. Jesus said, "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:14). That being said, each member of the Godhead beautifully gives glory and recognition to the others. God says of Jesus "This is my beloved son" and Jesus says God glorifies him and he glorifies God. John 8:54. Part of the beautiful relational nature of the Triune God is perfect harmony, collaboration, love and mutual glorification - never competition of any kind.

### Discussion Questions

1. **The Hovering Spirit:** Think of a situation in your life right now that feels "without form and void" (chaotic or empty). How does the image of the Spirit hovering (rachaph) over that situation change your perspective?
2. **Person vs. Force:** Be honest—have you primarily related to the Holy Spirit as a "force" (something to use) or a "Person" (someone to know)? How does realizing He has a mind, will, and emotions change the way you might pray this week?
3. **The Trinity:** Why is it important to understand that the Holy Spirit is fully God? How does Acts 5:3-4 (lying to the Spirit is lying to God) impact your understanding of His holiness and authority?

### Life Application Challenge

**The "Acknowledgement" Discipline:** This week, shift your interaction with the Holy Spirit from passive to active. Every time you open your Bible, pray, or drive to work, verbally acknowledge Him as a Person.

- **Say:** "Good morning, Holy Spirit. I acknowledge that You are here. You are a Person. You are God. I invite Your mind to think through me, Your will to lead me, and Your emotions to be expressed through me."
- **Observe:** Note if this simple acknowledgement changes your sensitivity to His promptings (the "still small voice") throughout the day.

## **WEEK 1**

# Who is the Holy Spirit?

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## **Prayer Focus**

God, I worship you and I am grateful for you in your entirety, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for your role in creation and redemption. I repent of any times I have treated You as an impersonal object or ignored Your presence. I invite You to breathe fresh life into my spiritual walk. "Come, Holy Spirit, and hover over the chaos of my life." In Jesus' name, Amen!

## WEEK 2

# Why is the Holy Spirit Important?

**FOCUS:** THE THREE-FOLD WORK: SEALING (SALVATION), GROWING (SANCTIFICATION), AND EMPOWERING (SERVICE).



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## Introduction

Having met the Person, we now ask: "What does He do?" The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not a single event; it is a multi-layered process that begins at salvation and continues through eternity. It's important to distinguish between the Spirit's work in the believer for character and life, and the Spirit's work upon the believer for power and service.

This week, we will explore the "Kingdom Dynamics" of three distinct operations:

- **The Seal:** How He secures us for heaven.
- **The Fruit:** How He changes us to look like Jesus.
- **The Baptism:** How He empowers us to work like Jesus.

## Study: Sealed, Sanctified, and Spirit-Filled

### I. The Seal of Salvation: The Spirit In You

The foundation of our relationship with the Holy Spirit is regeneration. The moment a person repents and places faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit enters their human spirit to bring about the "new birth" (John 3:5-6).

Ephesians 1:13 declares: "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth... in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

The Greek word used here is *sphragizo*. In the ancient Roman world, a seal (often a signet ring pressed into hot wax) signified three critical legal realities:



## WEEK 2

# Why is the Holy Spirit Important?

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- **Ownership:** Just as a rancher brands cattle, the seal marks the object as the property of the owner. You belong to God. The Holy Spirit is the mark of God's ownership on your life.
- **Authenticity:** A royal seal proved that a document or shipment was genuine, not a forgery. The Spirit "bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16). He provides the internal assurance that our faith is real.
- **Security:** A seal on a scroll or tomb meant that the contents were under the protection of the owner. To break the seal was to defy the owner. We are "sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30).

This indwelling presence is the "well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). Every believer has the Spirit in them.

### I. The Fruit of the Spirit: The Character of the Christ

While the "seal" secures our destiny, the "fruit" transforms our daily reality. Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. In John 15, Jesus says that every branch who abides in him WILL produce good fruit and if a branch is not producing fruit it will be cut off.

Notice the singular "fruit," not "fruits." It is a singular cluster of attributes that reflects the personality of Jesus. This is the work of Sanctification. The Spirit indwells us to "redecorate" the house. He works to displace the "works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21) with the character of Christ.

### The Conflict of Galatians 5

The reality is that the Spirit and the flesh are in a state of war. Galatians 5:17 says the flesh "lusts" against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The Spirit is actively gardening our hearts, pruning away dead attitudes and nurturing the nature of Christ.

- **Application:** We cannot produce this fruit by willpower. An apple tree does not grunt and strain to produce apples; it produces apples simply by abiding in the life of the tree. As we "walk in the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16), the fruit grows naturally. As we abide in Christ and He abides in us we become more like Him. Our main goal is to stay connected to Christ through walking in the Spirit.

## WEEK 2

# Why is the Holy Spirit Important?

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### III. The Baptism with the Holy Spirit: The Spirit Upon You

While the Spirit is in every believer for life, Jesus promised that the Spirit would come upon believers for power.

Acts 1:8: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me..."

The Greek word for power here is *Dunamis*. This word is the etymological root of modern words like "dynamite" and "dynamo".

- **Dynamite:** Explosive power to break through hard obstacles (strongholds, addictions, cultural resistance).
- **Dynamo:** Continuous, generating power to sustain light and energy over a long period.

Scripture teaches that the "Baptism with the Holy Spirit" is a distinct encounter intended to equip the believer for ministry. Just as Jesus was born of the Spirit (Luke 1:35) but later anointed by the Spirit at the Jordan for ministry (Luke 3:22), disciples need both the indwelling life and the outpoured power of the Holy Spirit. This empowerment leads to the operation of the Gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12)—words of knowledge, gifts of healing, prophecy, etc. These are gifts empowering the life and ministry of the believer.

In the following chart, you will see the distinction between the "Spirit" being in the believer versus being upon the believer. Salvation is accomplished solely through the work of Christ. The indwelling of the "Holy Spirit" serves as the seal or deposit guaranteeing the saving work of Christ. The indwelling of the "Holy Spirit" also transforms the character of the believer into the character of Christ through the ongoing process of sanctification. This results in the fruit of the Spirit. When we are "baptized" or immersed in the Holy Spirit, that is the Holy Spirit coming upon our lives to empower us with gifts for service to others.

## WEEK 2

# Why is the Holy Spirit Important?

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### Empowerment for the believer

| Dimension      | Preposition        | Purpose         | Result            | Scripture            |
|----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Salvation      | Spirit <b>IN</b>   | Sealing/Deposit | Eternal Life      | John 4:14, Eph 1:13  |
| Sanctification | Spirit <b>IN</b>   | Transformation  | Fruit (Character) | Gal 5:22-23          |
| Baptism        | Spirit <b>UPON</b> | Empowerment     | Gifts (Ministry)  | Acts 1:8, Luke 24:49 |

### Discussion Questions

1. **In vs. Upon:** Discuss the difference between having the Spirit in you (for your own life) and upon you (for the sake of others). Have you experienced these as distinct realities?
2. **Fruit Check:** Look at the list of the Fruit of the Spirit. Which one is most abundant in your life right now? Which one is the "scrawniest"? What "weeds" (works of the flesh) might be choking that fruit?
3. **The Power Source:** Why did Jesus tell the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received power (Luke 24:49)? What happens when we try to do the work of the Kingdom (witnessing, serving) without the Dunamis of the Spirit?

### Life Application Challenge

#### The "Fruit Inspection" and "Power Plug-In":

- **Fruit:** Choose one fruit (e.g., Patience) to focus on. Each morning, ask the Spirit to produce this in you. When tested, pause and ask for His help to respond in the Spirit rather than the flesh.
- **Power:** If you have never asked for the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, set aside time this week to ask Jesus (the Baptizer) to fill you to overflowing. Scripture also encourages believers to ask for prayer for baptism through the laying on of hands. If you would like someone to pray for you for the baptism of the Holy Spirit please email us at: [elders@damascus.com](mailto:elders@damascus.com)

## **WEEK 2**

# Why is the Holy Spirit Important?

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## **Prayer Focus**

Thank You God for the Seal of Your Holy Spirit that identifies me as Your child.

"Holy Spirit, I yield to Your gardening. Prune the works of the flesh and grow the character of Jesus in me."

"Lord Jesus, baptize me afresh with the Holy Spirit and fire. Cloth me with Dunamis power to be a witness for You!"



## WEEK 3

# The Parakletos – The "Dynamic Duo"



watch podcast

**FOCUS:** JESUS' TEACHING IN JOHN 14 AND THE GREEK MEANING OF *PARAKLETOS*.

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## Introduction

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus introduced the disciples to the One who would take His place. He used a specific, loaded Greek word to describe this new Partner: *Parakletos*.

We are designed to operate in a partnership where we provide the physical vessel, and He provides the supernatural ability. This week, we will explore the depths of this word *Parakletos* to understand exactly who has moved into our hearts.

## Study: The Seven-Fold Ministry of the Paraclete

### I. Defining the Parakletos

In John 14:16, Jesus promises: "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever."

The word translated "Comforter" (KJV), "Helper" (NKJV), or "Advocate" (NIV) is the Greek word *Parakletos*. It is a compound word rich with meaning:

- **Para:** Means "alongside" or "close beside." It implies a position of proximity. It is the root of the word "parallel" (two lines running side by side) and "parasite" (an organism attached to another, though the Spirit is symbiotic, not parasitic!).
- **Kaleo:** Means "to call" or "to beckon."

Put together, the *Parakletos* is "One called alongside to help." The ancient usage of this word described a legal assistant, a military aide, or a specialized advisor summoned to the side of someone in deep need. It conveys the image of a person who is not just a spectator, but a participant in your struggle.

## WEEK 3

# The Parakletos – The "Dynamic Duo"

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## II. The "Allos" Comforter

Jesus said He would give "another" Comforter. The Greek word for "another" is pivotal here.

- **Heteros:** Means "another of a different kind" (e.g., I trade an apple for an orange).
- **Allos:** Means "another of the same kind" (e.g., I trade one green apple for another green apple).

Jesus used Allos. He was saying: "The Holy Spirit will be just like Me." He will think like Jesus, love like Jesus, and act like Jesus. The only difference is that Jesus was limited by a physical body to be in one place at one time. The Holy Spirit, being spirit, can be in all believers at all times. He is the presence of Jesus universalized.

## III. The Seven Facets of the Helper (Paraclete)

We can identify seven distinct roles contained in this one title Parakletos.

1. **The Comforter:** He brings relief to the hurting. When we are brokenhearted, He applies the oil of joy. He soothes the emotional wounds that no human counselor can reach. (John 14:26 & 2 Cor. 1:3-4)
2. **The Counselor:** He gives legal and practical advice. Like a lawyer who whispers in the ear of the client during a trial, the Spirit whispers the wisdom of Heaven into our hearts when we don't know what to do. (John 16:13)
3. **The Helper:** The Greek concept here suggests someone who grabs the other end of a heavy log. We are carrying the burden of life or ministry, and the Spirit comes alongside to bear the weight with us. He "helps" our infirmities (Romans 8:26).
4. **The Intercessor:** He prays through us. When we run out of words, He makes intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered. He knows the perfect will of God and prays it through our spirits. (Romans 8:26-27)
5. **The Advocate:** He defends us. In the court of Heaven, when the Accuser (Satan) points out our sin, the Advocate points to the Blood of Jesus. He pleads our case. (John 14:26)
6. **The Strengthenener:** He infuses us with grit. When we feel like giving up, He imparts a supernatural second wind. He strengthens us with might in the inner man. (Ephesians 3:16)
7. **The Standby:** He is ready for emergency deployment. He is never asleep, never distracted. He is standing by, waiting for our call of faith to spring into action. (John 14:16-17)

## WEEK 3

# The Parakletos – The "Dynamic Duo"

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### IV. The Heavenly Coach

A powerful modern illustration of the Parakletos would be that of a Heavenly Coach. Imagine a professional athlete. They have the raw talent, but they need a coach to refine their technique, push them beyond their perceived limits, and call the strategic plays.

- **The Coach doesn't play the game for you.** The Holy Spirit won't do what you are supposed to do. He won't apologize for you; you have to do that.
- **The Coach stands alongside (Para).** He is on the sidelines, giving instructions. "Keep your eye on the ball! Adjust your stance!"
- **The Coach corrects and comforts.** After a bad play, He corrects your form. After a loss, He comforts your heart but challenges you to get back in the game.

The Holy Spirit is coaching us in righteousness. He corrects our stance when we get arrogant. He adjusts our focus when we get distracted by the world. He tells us, "You can do this! I have empowered you!" But for a coach to be effective, the player must be coachable. A player who ignores the coach will end up benched. A believer who ignores the Spirit ends up spiritually sidelined—saved, but ineffective.

### Observation: Listening to the Coach

How do we hear the Coach? Through the Word and the Witness. The Spirit will often bring a scripture to remembrance (John 14:26) right in the middle of a "game situation" (an argument, a business deal). That is the Coach calling the play. Our job is to execute. Remember, though, that the Holy Spirit is always a gentleman and works in cooperation with us, but does not coerce or control us. The Spirit inhabits - he does not possess, like a demon. And he will leave if we want him to; that's why we are urged not to grieve Him.

### Discussion Questions

1. **The 7 Roles:** Review the 7 facets of the Parakletos (Comforter, Counselor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, Strengtheners, Standby). Which of these roles is most needed in your life right now? Why?
2. **The Coach:** Have you ever felt the "correction" of the Holy Spirit? How did it feel? Was it condemnation (which drives you away from God) or conviction/coaching (which drives you to improve and draw closer)? How can you tell the difference?
3. **Same Kind (Allos):** How does knowing that the Holy Spirit is "just like Jesus" help alleviate any fear or weirdness you might feel about spiritual manifestations?

## WEEK 3

# The Parakletos – The "Dynamic Duo"

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## Life Application Challenge

### The "Parakletos Reflex":

This week, practice a new reflex. Whenever you encounter a difficulty—a traffic jam, a difficult email, a temptation, a parenting struggle—stop immediately.

*Don't try to solve it in your flesh first.*

- **Pray:** "Holy Spirit, come alongside me. Grab the heavy end of this log. Coach me through this conversation."
- **Wait:** Take 30 seconds to listen. Does a verse come to mind? A sense of peace? A strategy?
- **Act:** Follow the Coach's instruction.

## Prayer Focus

Heavenly Father I thank you for the comforter, the Holy Spirit. "Holy Spirit, I recognize You are my Partner. I am not doing life alone."

I wait in silence, asking You, the "Counselor" if there is any instruction You have for me today. I ask You my "Helper" to lift the burden regarding any specific worry or stress. "I cast this care on You, for You care for me."



## WEEK 4

# The Guide and The Revealer

**FOCUS:** JOHN 16:13, THE SPIRIT'S ROLE IN GUIDANCE (ODEGEO), AND THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.



watch podcast

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## Introduction

We live in an age of information overload but wisdom is scarce. We have GPS to navigate our streets, but what about the map for our lives? Who do we marry? What career path should we take? How do we navigate a culture that calls evil good and good evil?

Jesus promised in John 16:13, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

This week, we examine the Holy Spirit as the Master Guide who knows the terrain of the future and as the Revealer who transmits the secrets of God to our spirits.

## Study: The Tour Guide of Truth

### I. The Spirit as Guide (Odegeo)

The best tour guides are ones who have lived where you are visiting and experienced what you are preparing to experience. Because they have lived there for years and visited places of interest hundreds of times, they know the complex inside and out. They know the shortcuts. Which corridors are closed and which offer the best views. They often see tourists wandering on their own, taking the "long way," getting lost, tired, and frustrated. They think, "If they would just follow me, I could get them there faster, safer, and with much less energy."

Odegeo literally means "to show the way" or "to lead a traveler through unknown territory."

## WEEK 4

# The Guide and The Revealer

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Life is unknown territory. We have never lived tomorrow. But the Holy Spirit has. He is the Eternal Spirit; He stands outside of time.

- **Shortcuts to Maturity:** We often learn the hard way through "hard knocks"—trial and error. The Spirit desires to teach us through revelation so we don't have to learn through devastation. He knows the "shortcuts" to spiritual maturity and blessing.
- **Avoiding Traps:** In Acts 16:6-7, the Spirit forbade Paul to preach in Asia. It seemed like a good opportunity, but the Guide said "No." Why? Because He saw a trap, or He saw a better open door in Macedonia (v.9). The Guide sees the roadblocks we cannot see.

To be guided, one must be moving. It is hard to steer a parked car. As we step out in faith, the Spirit adjusts our course. "This is the way, walk in it" (Isaiah 30:21).

## II. The Spirit of Truth

Jesus calls Him "The Spirit of Truth." In a post-truth culture, this role is critical. The Holy Spirit acts as a divine filter for the believer.

- **Exposing Lies:** The enemy is the "father of lies" (John 8:44). He whispers, "You are a failure," "God has forgotten you," "Sin is no big deal." The Spirit of Truth rises up within us to counter those lies with the Word of God.
- **Illuminating Scripture (Rhema):** Have you ever read a Bible verse you've read 100 times, but suddenly it "pops" off the page and electrifies your heart?

1. **Logos:** Is the written, unchanging Word of God (the Bible). Jesus is also described as the logos. So as the "Spirit of Truth" the "Holy Spirit" will guide us to the "logos", God's revelation in Christ.
2. **Rhema:** The "spoken" or "uttered" word—the specific application of the *Logos* to a specific situation by the Spirit. Ephesians 6:17 calls the sword of the Spirit the "Rhema" of God. It is the specific verse the Spirit hands you to defeat a specific temptation.

## WEEK 4

# The Guide and The Revealer

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### III. He Will "Show" You Things to Come

The word "show" or "declare" in John 16:13-14 is *Anaggello*. It means to "report back" or to "announce in detail." So the Holy Spirit hears and shares what He hears with us.

- **He hears:** "Whatever He hears He will speak." He listens to the conversation between the Father and the Son regarding divine purpose and how that intersects with our lives.
- **He shares:** He shares that divine strategy/revelation with us.

This isn't just about prophecy regarding world events; it's about the "things to come" in your life. He wants to prepare you for your future marriage, your future ministry, your future trials.

Scripture teaches us that the Spirit is the one who "unveils" (Apokalupsis) Jesus. The Spirit doesn't just show us events; He shows us Jesus in the midst of events. He reveals the Christ's supremacy over history.

### IV. Led by the Spirit

Romans 8:14 says, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God."

The Greek word for "led" here implies a strong, driving leadership, like a wind driving a ship. But we must raise the sails.

How do we raise the sails?

1. **The Word:** The Spirit never leads contrary to the Bible. If a "voice" tells you to sin, it is not the Spirit.
2. **The Witness:** The inner "knowing" or peace (Colossians 3:15). The Spirit acts as an umpire, calling "safe" (peace) or "out" (unrest).
3. **Wisdom:** The Spirit gives a "sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

## WEEK 4

# The Guide and The Revealer

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### Discussion Questions

1. **The Tour Guide:** Think of a time you took the "long way" in life because you didn't listen to the prompting of the Spirit. What did you learn? How does the concept of Odegeo (the Guide who knows the safest route) encourage you to trust Him with your future?
2. **Rhema Moments:** Share a time when a Bible verse "jumped off the page" (Rhema) and gave you specific direction or comfort. How did that differ from regular reading?
3. **Decision Making:** When you have a big decision to make, what is your process? How do you factor in the "Spirit of Truth"? Do you wait for the "Green Light" of peace?

### Life Application Challenge

#### The "Traffic Light" Test:

Before making any decisions this week (spending money, committing to an event, responding to a text), pause for the internal Traffic Light of the Spirit.

- **Red Light (STOP):** An inner check, a heaviness, a lack of peace, or a contradiction to Scripture.
- **Yellow Light WAIT):** Unclear, no distinct leading.
- **Green Light (GO):** A sense of flow, peace, joy, and scriptural alignment.
- Practice navigating by the internal peace of God.

### Prayer Focus

"Holy Spirit, I resign as the master of my own destiny. I hand the map of my life to You. Spirit of Truth, shine Your light on any lies I am believing about myself, my family, or my God."

Now, pray for specific direction regarding a current decision. "Reveal to me what I need to know. I am listening."

## WEEK 5

# The Divine Lover and The Fire

**FOCUS:** THE EMOTIONAL LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, INTIMACY,  
HIS JEALOUSY (JAMES 4:5), AND HIS FIRE.



watch podcast

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## Introduction

We conclude this section of our study by looking at the heart of the Holy Spirit. He is not just a Power to be used, a Coach to obey, or a Guide to follow; He is a divine relationship to be enjoyed.

In this final week, we look at one of the most startling concepts in Scripture: The Jealousy of the Holy Spirit. We will discover that the Spirit desires us with a holy passion. We will also look at how to keep the fire of the Spirit burning on the altar of our hearts and how to avoid the tragedy of grieving this Divine Lover.

## Study: How Deep is Your Love

The goal for every believer should be to become like Christ. We accomplish this by not just learning who Christ was, but by becoming close in relationship with the Spirit who empowered Christ to be who He was. So what is our level of relationship with the Holy Spirit?

1. **The Physical Level (Lowest):** This is the most superficial level, where connection is based purely on what can be seen, felt, or tangibly experienced. In a spiritual sense, this is a relationship that is based only on the observable, or what is perceived in the natural realm. For example, some people focus only on the outward manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power (like healing or miracles) without cultivating a deep, daily fellowship with the Person Himself. They are drawn to the fire but not the Friend. This level is insufficient for an intimate walk with God.



## WEEK 5

# The Divine Lover and The Fire

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2. **The Soul/Personality Level (Deeper):** At this level, people connect through common thinking, feelings, goals, and emotions. They share a friendship based on the soul realm. In a spiritual context, this might involve an intellectual understanding of biblical truths about the Holy Spirit or emotional experiences in worship, but it doesn't fully penetrate to the core of one's being. It is a relationship of the mind and emotions, not the innermost spirit.
3. **The Spiritual Level (Deepest & Most Intimate):** This is the highest level of relationship, reaching the core of who a person really is. It is understanding that to truly know God, who is a Spirit, we must know Him by His Spirit (John 4:24). This is a level of fellowship, partnership, and intimacy where we share our most personal thoughts, desires, and secrets with the Holy Spirit, and He shares God's with us.
- Fellowship means staying connected through communication, sharing life, and dwelling in His company (2 Corinthians 13:14).
  - Partnership means working together, allowing His influence and power to work through us. (Acts 5:32).
  - Intimacy is the daily, moment-by-moment communion where we are led by the Spirit and gain a supernatural understanding of the Father's heart (1 Corinthians 2:11-12). This level is achieved by choosing to obey Him, as God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32).

## II. Grieving vs. Quenching the Spirit

Because He is a Person who loves us with such intensity, He can be hurt. The New Testament gives two specific warnings about our conduct toward the Spirit.

1. Grieving the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God..."
- **Context:** Paul lists bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice (v.31).
  - **Meaning:** "Grieving" relates to our relationship and holiness. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Holiness. When we act like the world—when we are unforgiving, hateful, or dishonest—the Spirit feels the pain of betrayal. He withdraws His manifest fellowship. He doesn't leave us (we are sealed), but the intimacy is broken. It's like a husband and wife arguing; they are still married, but the joy of the relationship is suspended until there is repentance.

## WEEK 5

# The Divine Lover and The Fire

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### 2. Quenching the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19) "Do not quench the Spirit."

- **Context:** Prophecy, rejoicing, prayer (v.16-20).
- **Meaning:** "Quenching" relates to our ministry and power. To quench means to put out a fire. The Spirit often moves as a fire—prompting us to worship, to give a prophetic word, to pray for someone, or to act in faith. When we say "No" out of fear, pride, or apathy, we throw a wet blanket on His fire. If we do this repeatedly, the fire dims, and our hearts grow cold.

### III. Keeping the Fire Burning

How do we respond to this Divine Lover? We keep the fire on the altar burning (Leviticus 6:13).

Worship is the primary way we maintain a "Spirit-formed" environment.

- **Private Worship:** Praying in the Spirit (Jude 20) builds us up. It is an act of intimacy where our spirit speaks mysteries to God. It strokes the fire.
- **Public Unity:** Acts 2 tells us the fire fell when they were "in one accord". Psalm 133 speaks of the anointing of the Spirit being upon unified believers. Strife kills the anointing. Unity attracts the anointing.

### IV. The Expanding Kingdom: Acts and Beyond

We end our study where the Church began. In the Book of Acts, the Holy Spirit is the main character. He is the Director of Missions.

- He falls on the Jews (Acts 2)
- He falls on the Samaritans (Acts 8)
- He falls on the Gentiles (Acts 10)
- He falls on the disciples of John (Acts 19)

The Spirit is constantly breaking barriers. He wants to use you to break barriers in your sphere of influence. What God is doing in you through the indwelling presence of His Spirit is meant to flow out of you (John 7:38) to a thirsty world.

The Spirit-filled life is not a reservoir; it is a river. If it doesn't flow out, it becomes stagnant.

## WEEK 5

# The Divine Lover and The Fire

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### Discussion Questions

1. **The Jealous Lover:** How does it make you feel to know that the Holy Spirit "yearns intensely" (Epiphotheo) for your friendship? Does this change your view of God as distant or indifferent?
2. **Grieving vs. Quenching:** Discuss the difference. Can you identify a time you "grieved" Him (through sin/attitude) or "quenched" Him (through fear/suppression)? How did you restore that fellowship?
3. **The Fire:** What are the "wet blankets" in your life that tend to dampen the Spirit's fire? (e.g., busyness, cynicism, fear of man, unconfessed sin). How can you remove them this week?

### Life Application Challenge

#### The "Secret Place" Date:

This week, set aside one hour for a "date" with the Holy Spirit. This is not a study time. It is not a prayer list time. It is a relational time.

- **Set the Atmosphere:** Play worship music. Remove distractions.
- **Ask:** "Holy Spirit, I am here to satisfy Your yearning for me. What do You want to talk about?"
- **Listen & Journal:** Write down what comes to mind. Enjoy His presence. Let Him love you.

### Prayer Focus

"Lord, forgive me for flirting with the world and ignoring the Divine Lover. Forgive me for grieving You with my attitudes and quenching You with my fears. Holy Spirit, blow on the embers of my heart. I want to be on fire for You. Consuming Fire, burn away everything that is not of You. Here I am. Send me. Empower me. Work through me to carry Your mission."



## SECTION 2

# THE GIFTS *of the spirit*

## SECTION 2

### The Gifts of the Spirit

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# Unwrapped - Discovering the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

## Welcome to the Adventure

As we begin this next section of our study on the Holy Spirit, I want you to stop for a moment and consider the magnitude of what God has done for you. When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you received the greatest gift of all—salvation. But God didn't stop there. He didn't just save you to sit in a pew and wait for heaven. He saved you to serve. He has a unique, specific, and powerful plan for your life, and He has equipped you to fulfill it.

Many people walk through life feeling inadequate or unsure of their purpose. They look at others and think, "I could never do what they do." And the truth is, you weren't meant to! God has placed within you specific spiritual gifts—supernatural empowerments—endowed by the Holy Spirit. These aren't natural talents you were born with; they are spiritual endowments given to you the moment you became a believer, tailored perfectly to fit you into the Body of Christ.

Over the next four weeks, we are going to open God's Word and explore these gifts. We aren't just going to list them; we are going to look at how they function practically. We will examine the **Motivational Gifts** of Romans 12, which reveal how God wired your heart. We will look at the **Manifestation Gifts** of 1 Corinthians 12, which show how the Spirit works through us in power. And we will look at the **Ministry Gifts** of Ephesians 4, which show how God leads His church.

Our prayer is that by the end of this study, you won't just know about the gifts; you will be ready to step out in faith and use them. The church needs you. The world needs what God has put inside of you. Let's discover it together.

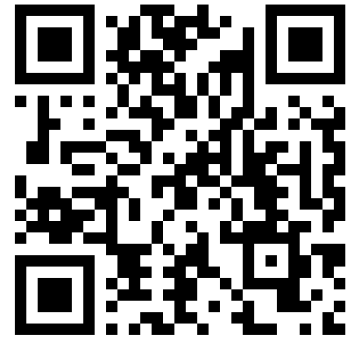


## WEEK 6

# Created to Serve (The Motivational Gifts)

**SCRIPTURE:** ROMANS 12:3-8

**FOCUS:** THE PRACTICAL MOTIVATIONS  
THAT DRIVE HOW WE SERVE OTHERS.



watch podcast

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## Introduction

In Romans 12, the Apostle Paul urges us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice. Immediately following that command, he explains how we function as that sacrifice. These gifts are often called "Motivational Gifts" because they represent the basic inward drive God places in a believer. It is the lens through which you see the needs of the church.

## Study: The Pattern of Your Heart

Listen closely to what the Apostle Paul is saying here. He begins with a warning: "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought." Why? Because when we start talking about gifts, it is easy to become prideful. But a spiritual gift is exactly that—a gift. You didn't earn it, and you didn't create it. It is an expression of God's grace given to you for the benefit of others.

Paul lists seven specific gifts in this passage. As we walk through them, ask yourself: Does this sound like me? Is this how I respond when I see a need?

### I. Prophecy (Perceiving Truth)

In the context of Romans 12, prophecy is not necessarily foretelling the future. It is the God-given ability to proclaim truth boldly. The person with this gift has a deep hatred for sin and a burning desire for justice. They see things in black and white. They are the "watchmen" on the wall. When they see a situation, they immediately want to know, "Is this right or wrong according to God's Word?" They are often the ones who will speak the hard truth when everyone else is trying to be polite. If you have this gift, your motivation is to reveal unrighteousness so that repentance can happen.



## WEEK 6

### Created to Serve (The Motivational Gifts)

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#### II. Serving (Ministry)

This word in Greek is *diakonia*, where we get the word "Deacon." This is the gift of practical assistance. The server doesn't need the spotlight; they just need to know that the job got done. They are the ones setting up the chairs, cooking the meals, and fixing the leaking faucet. They see a physical need and their immediate reaction is to meet it. While the prophet is concerned with the principle, the server is concerned with the process. They demonstrate love through action.

#### III. Teaching

The teacher has a supernatural drive to validate truth. They are not satisfied with just hearing a statement; they want to check the references. They love research. Their greatest joy is taking a complex spiritual truth and breaking it down so that everyone can understand it. They are concerned with accuracy. If you have this gift, you likely get frustrated when Scripture is taken out of context, and you find great delight in studying the Word for hours on end.

#### IV. Exhortation (Encouragement)

The exhorter is the cheerleader of the church. This gift is about stimulating faith in others. While the teacher explains how to do something, the exhorter tells you why you can do it and walks beside you while you try. They are practical counselors. They don't just want you to know the theology; they want to see you apply it to your daily life. They are often the ones people go to when they are discouraged or struggling, because the exhorter always has a word of hope.

#### V. Giving (Contributing)

Every Christian is called to give, but the person with the gift of giving does so with extraordinary liberality and joy. They are shrewd stewards. They often have an ability to make money, but their goal in making it is to give it away to advance the Kingdom. They are sensitive to financial needs that others might miss. They don't give to control; they give to bless. They trust God implicitly to supply their needs, so they hold their resources with an open hand.

#### VI. Leading (Ruling/Administration)

This gift is the ability to see the big picture and mobilize people to reach a goal. The leader doesn't just do the work (like the server); they organize the work. They have a vision for what could be, and they know how to delegate and direct others to get there. They bring order out of chaos. If you are frustrated by inefficiency and you naturally find yourself taking charge when a group is disorganized, you likely have this gift.

## WEEK 6

### Created to Serve (The Motivational Gifts)

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#### VII. Showing Mercy

The person with the gift of mercy feels the pain of others. They are sensitive to the emotional atmosphere of a room. When someone is hurting, the prophet might say, "You sinned," the server might say, "Here is some food," but the mercy-giver will sit down, hold their hand, and weep with them. They are drawn to the outcasts, the wounded, and the suffering. They reflect the compassion of Jesus in a tangible way.

#### Walking in Your Design

Do you see how beautiful this is? God didn't make us all the same. If we were all prophets, there would be no one to set up the chairs. If we were all mercy-givers, we might compromise the truth. We need each other. Others need your gifts and we need the gifts of others. When we humbly operate in our gifts, and receive the gifts of others with humility, we are doing what God designed us to do. This brings with it, a deep sense of fulfillment and joy.

#### Discussion Questions

1. Based on the descriptions above, which one or two gifts resonate most with your natural inclinations and spiritual experiences?
2. How have you seen the "body" dynamic work in your life? (e.g., where someone else's gift covered your weakness).
3. We mentioned that pride is a danger when using gifts. How can we serve in our gifting while remaining humble?

#### Life Application Challenge

This week, pick one of the gifts you identify with most. Look for one specific opportunity to use that gift intentionally. If it is **Encouragement**, write a letter to someone who is struggling. If it is **Serving**, find a chore no one wants to do and do it.

#### Prayer Focus

Heavenly Father, thank You for designing me with a purpose. Thank You for the gifts You have placed in my life. Show me how I am wired, and give me the courage to step out and serve Your people. Let me be a living sacrifice for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## WEEK 7

# Power for the Moment (The Manifestation Gifts)

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

**FOCUS:** THE SUPERNATURAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT GIVEN FOR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS.

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watch podcast

## Introduction

While Romans 12 focuses on our "hard-wiring," 1 Corinthians 12 focuses on the "manifestation" of the Spirit. These are not necessarily permanent titles we hold, but ways the Holy Spirit shows up in a moment of need. Paul says these are given "to each one for the profit of all."

## Study: The Spirit's Toolkit

The church at Corinth was a gifted church, but they were also a confused church. Paul writes to them to bring order. He categorizes these gifts as "manifestations"—meaning, this is how the invisible Spirit makes His presence visible.

We must remember: The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a force. He decides who gets what gift and when. We should be open to all of them, but we cannot demand them. Let's look at these powerful tools.

### I. The Revelation Gifts: Knowing Something

- **Word of Wisdom:** This is not just general wisdom gained from life experience. This is a supernatural fragment of divine wisdom for a specific situation. It is when the Spirit suddenly gives you the insight to know what to do or how to apply knowledge to resolve a crisis or answer a difficult question.
- **Word of Knowledge:** This is the supernatural revelation of facts—past, present, or future—that were not learned through natural means. It is God sharing a secret with you to minister to someone else. It might be knowing someone is in pain, or knowing a specific detail about a situation that opens the door for ministry.
- **Discerning of Spirits:** We live in a spiritual battlefield. This gift is the ability to distinguish the source of a spiritual manifestation—whether it is from the Holy Spirit, a demonic spirit, or merely the human spirit. It is a protective gift for the church to prevent deception.

## WEEK 7

# Power for the Moment (The Manifestation Gifts)

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## II. The Power Gifts: Doing Something

- **Faith:** All believers have saving faith. But the gift of faith is a surge of confidence that God is about to act in a specific situation. It is the ability to believe God for the impossible when all natural hope is lost. The person with this gift stands firm and says, "God will do this," and their faith anchors the rest of the group.
- **Gifts of Healings:** Notice it is plural—"gifts." This suggests different gifts for different sicknesses or occasions. This is the supernatural intervention of God to cure sickness and restore health without natural means. We believe God still heals today. We pray, and we leave the results to Him, but we must never stop asking.
- **Working of Miracles:** A miracle is an intervention into the ordinary course of nature. This is God overriding natural laws—like the parting of the Red Sea or Jesus feeding the five thousand. This gift operates to testify to the power of God and the truth of the Gospel.

## III. The Vocal Gifts: Saying Something

- **Prophecy:** In 1 Corinthians, prophecy is described as speaking to men for "edification, and exhortation, and comfort." It is a message from God, through a person, to the church. It must always be tested by Scripture. It is not about adding to the Bible; it is about bringing a timely word from the Lord to His people.
- **Speaking in Tongues:** This is a controversial gift for some, but it is in the Bible. It is the ability to speak in a language—either human or angelic—that the speaker has never learned. Paul distinguishes between tongues for personal edification (prayer language) and tongues in a public service, which must be interpreted.
- **Interpretation of Tongues:** This is the companion gift to public tongues. It is not a translation (word-for-word) but an interpretation (giving the meaning). Without this, public tongues can cause confusion. With it, the church is edified just as it is with prophecy.

## For the Common Good

Why does God give these strange and powerful gifts? Is it so we can have exciting church services? No. Paul says it is "for the profit of all."

Imagine a carpenter showing up to build a house with no tools. He might have the knowledge, but he can't drive the nail. These gifts are the tools in the toolbelt of the Body of Christ. When we need direction, the Spirit pulls out the Word of Wisdom. When we need a breakthrough, He pulls out Faith or Miracles.

## **WEEK 7**

# Power for the Moment (The Manifestation Gifts)

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You must be willing to be the vessel. You must say, "Lord, I am available. If you want to give me a word of knowledge to encourage this brother, I will speak it. If you want to use me to pray for healing, I will pray." It is about availability and obedience.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Have you ever experienced a moment where you knew something or said something that seemed to come from outside your own ability? Share that experience.
2. Why do you think we sometimes fear or neglect these "supernatural" type gifts in the modern church?
3. How can we maintain a balance between being open to the Spirit's power and maintaining the order and testing that Paul commands?

## **Life Application Challenge**

This week, pray a dangerous prayer each morning: "Holy Spirit, I am open to Your leading. If You want to interrupt my day to minister to someone with Your power, I am willing." Pay attention to the "nudges" you feel to pray for or speak to strangers or friends.

## **Prayer Focus**

Lord Jesus, You are the Baptizer in the Holy Spirit. I ask You to fill me afresh. I don't want to operate in my own strength; I want to operate in Your power. Remove my fear of the unknown and replace it with a faith that expects You to move. Use me to demonstrate Your love to a hurting world. Amen.

## WEEK 8

# Equipped to Build (The Ministry Gifts)

**SCRIPTURE:** EPHESIANS 4:7-16

**FOCUS:** THE LEADERSHIP OFFICES GIVEN  
TO MATURE AND EQUIP THE CHURCH



watch podcast

## Introduction

We have looked at the gifts given to believers. Now, in Ephesians 4, we see that believers themselves are given as gifts to the church. Paul lists five specific roles, often called the "Five-Fold Ministry." These are not just titles for business cards; they are functions essential for the church to grow up.

## Study: The Equipping of the Saint

Paul tells us that when Jesus ascended to heaven, He "gave gifts to men." What are these gifts? They are people. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers.

Now, listen carefully to the purpose of these leaders. Verse 12 is the key: "for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry." Did you catch that? It is not the pastor's job to do all the ministry. It is the pastor's job to equip you to do the ministry. If you are sitting in church waiting for the staff to do everything, you have missed God's plan.

### I. Apostles (The Architects)

The word "Apostle" means "sent one." In the early church, the Twelve Apostles had a unique role in establishing Scripture. We don't have apostles like that today who write Scripture. However, the function of the apostle continues. These are the entrepreneurs of the Kingdom. They plant churches, break new ground, and oversee movements. They are concerned with the overall health and structure of the church. They keep the church moving outward into new territories.

## **WEEK 8**

# Equipped to Build (The Ministry Gifts)

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### **II. Prophets (The Conscience)**

We discussed the gift of prophecy earlier, but here we are talking about the office of the prophet. These are individuals who serve as the spiritual barometer of the church. They have a keen ear for God's voice and a deep concern for holiness. They challenge the church to align with God's heart. While the Apostle lays the foundation, the Prophet ensures the foundation is true and square with God's standard. They prevent the church from drifting into worldliness.

### **III. Evangelists (The Recruiters)**

The evangelist has one consuming passion: lost souls. They can't stand the thought of someone going to hell. They are gifted at communicating the Gospel simply and effectively to non-believers. They are the ones who can strike up a conversation on a bus and lead someone to Christ before the next stop. Their role in the church is not just to win souls, but to infect the rest of us with that same passion. They remind us that the church exists for those who are not yet here.

### **IV. Pastors (The Shepherds)**

The word here literally means "Shepherd." The shepherd's heart is for the flock. They care for the sheep, feed the sheep, and protect the sheep. They are relational. They are the ones who visit the hospital, counsel the broken marriages, and walk through the valley of the shadow of death with their people. They provide the long-term care and stability the body needs to grow.

### **V. Teachers (The Instructors)**

These are the individuals who can explain the truth of God's Word. They ground the church in sound doctrine. Without teachers, the church falls into error. They produce stability. They take the "meat" of the Word and cut it up so the sheep can digest it.

### **The Goal: Maturity**

Why did God give us these five roles? Paul says it is so that we "may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine."

God wants you to grow up. He wants the body of Christ to be mature. When these five gifts are functioning, the church becomes a healthy body. The Apostle keeps us on mission. The Prophet keeps us holy. The Evangelist keeps us growing numerically. The Pastor keeps us cared for. The Teacher keeps us grounded in truth.



## WEEK 8

# Equipped to Build (The Ministry Gifts)

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If any one of these is missing, the church becomes unbalanced. A church with only teachers becomes a classroom. A church with only evangelists becomes a crusade with no discipleship. We need the fullness of Christ's ministry.

### Your Role

You might not be called to one of these offices, but you are called to be equipped by them. You should be learning from the teachers, catching the heart of the evangelist, and submitting to the care of the pastor. And remember, you have a part to play. Verse 16 says the body grows "when each part is working properly." That means you.

### Discussion Questions

1. Which of these five influences (Apostolic, Prophetic, Evangelistic, Pastoral, Teaching) has had the biggest impact on your own spiritual growth?
2. How does the concept that "pastors equip the saints to do the work" change the way you view your role in the church?
3. In which of these areas is your local church strong? In which area might it need to grow?

### Life Application Challenge

Identify a leader in your life who fits one of these descriptions (a pastor, a mentor, a teacher). This week, ask them a specific question: "How can I better serve the body of Christ?" Then, listen to their answer and take one step toward doing it.

### Prayer Focus

Father, I thank You for the leaders You have placed over me. I pray for my pastors and teachers—strengthen them and give them wisdom. Help me to be a teachable spirit. I want to grow up into maturity. Equip me, Lord, to do the work of ministry so that the Body of Christ may be built up in love. Amen.

## WEEK 9

# The More Excellent Way (Love & Unity)

**SCRIPTURE:** 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27 & 13

**FOCUS:** USING GIFTS IN LOVE AND THE  
NECESSITY OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

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↘ watch podcast

## Introduction

We have spent three weeks looking at the “what” and the “how” of spiritual gifts. Now, we must look at the “why.” In 1 Corinthians, right in the middle of teaching on gifts, Paul pauses to show us “a more excellent way.” You can have the most spectacular gifts in the world, but without love, they are nothing.

## Study: The Glue that Holds it Together

Imagine a symphony orchestra. You have the percussion, the strings, the brass, and the woodwinds. If everyone plays their own song as loud as they can, it’s just noise. It’s chaos. But when they follow the conductor and play in harmony, it is a masterpiece.

The Holy Spirit is the Conductor. The Gifts are the instruments. And Love is the music.

### I. The Danger of Division

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul uses the analogy of the human body. He says, “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you.’” Yet, this is exactly what happens in the church.

We tend to value the “visible” gifts. We put the preacher and the singer on a platform, and we sometimes forget the person with the gift of serving who cleans the building. But Paul says the parts that seem weaker are actually indispensable.

## WEEK 9

# The More Excellent Way (Love & Unity)

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## II. The Necessity of Love

Then we move to chapter 13—the famous "Love Chapter." We read this at weddings, but Paul wrote it to correct a church that was abusing spiritual gifts.

He uses strong language:

- If I speak in tongues but have not love, I am a noisy gong.
- If I have prophetic powers and all faith but have not love, I am nothing.
- If I give away all I have (gift of giving) but have not love, I gain nothing.

Do you hear what God is saying? Character matters more than gifting. You can be a gifted speaker, but if you are arrogant and unloving, your ministry is hollow. God is more interested in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5) than the gifts of the Spirit. The gifts are temporary tools for this life; love is eternal.

## III. Discovering Your Gift

So, how do you find your place? How do you know if you are a server, a teacher, or an exhorter?

1. **Pray:** Ask God to reveal it to you.
2. **Experiment:** Start serving! You can't steer a parked car. Get involved in different ministries. You will quickly find out what you are not good at, and what brings you joy.
3. **Affirmation:** Listen to the body. If you think you have the gift of teaching, but everyone falls asleep when you talk, you might need to re-evaluate. But if people say, "That really helped me," that is a sign.
4. **Joy:** God usually gifts us in the area of our passion. When you operate in your gift, you shouldn't feel drained; you should feel energized.

## IV. A Call to Action

We are living in serious times. The world is dark. The church cannot afford to have half its army sleeping in the barracks. God has deposited a treasure inside of you. He has given you a supernatural ability to impact eternity.

Don't bury your talent. Don't let fear or insecurity stop you. Jesus is coming back, and He will ask what you did with what He gave you. Let your motivation be love. Let your power be the Spirit. And let your goal be the glory of God.

## WEEK 9

# The More Excellent Way (Love & Unity)

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### Discussion Questions

1. Why is it so easy to value "platform gifts" (like preaching) over "service gifts" (like mercy or helps)? How can we change that culture in our group?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Which characteristic of love is most difficult for you to maintain while serving others?
3. What is one step you are going to take to actively use your spiritual gift?

### Life Application Challenge

**The "One Body" Experiment:** This week, identify someone in your church who serves in a "behind the scenes" role (a nursery worker, a janitor, an admin). Go out of your way to thank them and affirm the value of their gift to the body.

### Prayer Focus

Father, thank You for the Body of Christ. Forgive me for the times I have been jealous of others or proud of myself. Teach me to love. Let everything I do be motivated by charity. Show me my place, and help me to fill it with faithfulness until the day I see You face to face. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



### SECTION 3

# THE FRUIT *of the spirit*



## SECTION 3

### The Fruit of the Spirit

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# The Abiding Life

## In the Garden

There is a vast difference between a factory and a garden. A factory produces goods through noise, stress, and striving. It is mechanical. But a garden produces fruit through life, nourishment, and abiding. It is organic.

Far too many believers live their Christian lives like they are running a factory. They grit their teeth, try to follow the rules, and strive to be "good people" in their own strength. And inevitably, they end up exhausted and defeated. That is because the Christian life was never meant to be a work of the flesh; it is a fruit of the Spirit.

In Galatians 5, the Apostle Paul paints a vivid contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. He tells us that when the Holy Spirit controls a believer's life, a transformation takes place—not from the outside in, but from the inside out. You don't tape fruit onto a dead branch to make it look alive. You nourish the root, and the fruit comes naturally.

Over the next three weeks, we are going to dive into the last section of our study of the Holy Spirit as we walk through the nine beautiful attributes of the Fruit of the Spirit. We will see that this isn't a list of nine different things you have to juggle; it is a singular "fruit"—a unified description of the character of Jesus Christ reproduced in you.

We will look at the **Inward Fruit** (Love, Joy, Peace) that settles our hearts. We will look at the **Outward Fruit** (Patience, Kindness, Goodness) that transforms our relationships. And we will look at the **Upward Fruit** (Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control) that directs our walk with God.

Stop striving and start abiding. Let's learn what it means to walk in the Spirit.

## WEEK 10

# The Root of Righteousness (Love, Joy, Peace)

**SCRIPTURE:** GALATIANS 5:22; JOHN 15:9-11; PHIL 4:6-7

**FOCUS:** THE INTERNAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE  
BELIEVER'S HEART TOWARDS GOD AND SELF.

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## Introduction

The first three virtues Paul lists—Love, Joy, and Peace—form the foundation of our spiritual character. These are primarily internal; they describe the state of a heart that is fully surrendered to God. Before we can effectively minister to others, we must have the atmosphere of heaven reigning in our own souls.

## Study: The Atmosphere of the Heart

The very first word Paul uses to describe the fruit of the Spirit is Love. This is not an accident. Love is the soil from which all the other virtues grow. If you don't have love, you don't have anything.

Now, we must understand that the Bible is not talking about the sentimental, emotional love the world speaks of. This is agape love. It is unconquerable benevolence. It is a choice of the will. It is the very nature of God, for "God is love." When the Holy Spirit dwells within you, He pours God's love into your heart. This means you don't have to manufacture love for difficult people. You simply have to allow the Spirit to love them through you. It asks nothing in return. It loves the unlovable. It is the love that sent Jesus to the cross while we were yet sinners.



## WEEK 10

# The Root of Righteousness (Love, Joy, Peace)

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### I. Growing out of this love is Joy

Listen carefully: Joy is not the same as happiness. Happiness depends on what happens; it is based on circumstances. If things go well, you are happy. If things go wrong, you are unhappy. But joy is a deep, abiding sense of well-being that is independent of your circumstances. It is the knowledge that God is in control and that you are His child.

Paul wrote the book of Philippians—what's known as the "Epistle of Joy"—while he was sitting in a Roman prison, chained to a guard. How could he rejoice? Because his joy was not anchored in his comfort; it was anchored in his Christ. When you have the Holy Spirit, you have a fountain of joy bubbling up inside you that the world cannot give and the world cannot take away. It is a supernatural confidence that God is working all things for your good.

### II. Finally, there is Peace

We live in a world of anxiety. People are taking pills to calm their troubled minds, drinking to forget, and constantly worrying about tomorrow. But Jesus said, "My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." (John 14:27)

The peace of God is not the absence of conflict; it is the presence of God in the conflict. It is a tranquility of order. It means there is no civil war raging in your soul. You are right with God through the blood of Jesus, and therefore, you can be at peace with yourself and with others. It is the "peace that passes all understanding." It doesn't make sense to the human mind to be calm when your world is falling apart, but that is exactly what the Holy Spirit provides. It acts as a sentry, guarding your heart and mind.

### III. The Connection

#### Do you see how these three work together?

Because I am filled with God's Love, I am secure. Because I am secure, I have Joy regardless of my trials. And because I have joy and trust in God's sovereignty, I have deep, settling Peace.

You cannot produce this on your own. You can't wake up in the morning and say, "Today I'm going to be joyful," if your heart is empty. You must abide in the Vine. You must spend time in His presence. The more you know the Father, the more His character flows through you.

## WEEK 10

# The Root of Righteousness (Love, Joy, Peace)

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### Discussion Questions

1. In this study we distinguished between happiness (external) and joy (internal). Can you share a time when you experienced joy despite difficult circumstances?
2. Why do we often find it so hard to accept God's peace? What are the "worries of this world" that most often choke out your peace?
3. How does viewing love as a "choice of the will" rather than an emotion change the way you treat people you don't naturally get along with?

### Life Application Challenge

**The "Peace" Audit:** This week, whenever you feel anxiety rising, stop immediately. Do not push through it. Identify what you are trying to control that belongs to God. Pray this simple prayer: "Lord, I transfer the burden of [situation] from my shoulders to Yours. I choose to trust You."

### Prayer Focus

Heavenly Father, I confess that I have tried to manufacture joy and peace on my own. Forgive me for striving. I surrender my heart to You afresh. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Let Your love wash over me, Your joy strengthen me, and Your peace guard my mind. I choose to abide in You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## WEEK 11

# The Expression of Grace (Patience, Kindness, Goodness)

**SCRIPTURE:** GAL 5:22; COL 3:12–13; EPH 4:32

**FOCUS:** THE RELATIONAL FRUIT—HOW THE SPIRIT TRANSFORMS OUR TREATMENT OF OTHERS.

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## Introduction

The Christian life is not lived in a vacuum. It is lived in traffic, in the office, in a busy home, and in line at the grocery store. The second trio of fruit—Patience, Kindness, and Goodness—deals with our relationships. This is where the rubber meets the road. It is how the love we discussed in Week 1 spills over onto the people around us.

## Study: Grace Under Pressure

It is easy to be a Christian when you are alone in your prayer closet. It is much harder when someone cuts you off on the highway or when a coworker takes credit for your work. This is why we need the fruit of the Spirit.

### I. Patience (Longsuffering)

The Greek word here is *makrothumia*. It is a compound word: *makros* (long) and *thumos* (heat or anger). It literally means having a "long fuse." It is the ability to suffer a long time without blowing up.

We usually think of patience in terms of waiting for things—like a red light or a delayed answer to prayer. But in the New Testament, this word almost always refers to patience with people. It is the ability to endure mistreatment, provocation, or ignorance, without retaliation. We do this while also maintaining love and a desire for blessing toward even enemies

## **WEEK 11**

# The Expression of Grace (Patience, Kindness, Goodness)

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God is the ultimate example of this. Think of how patient He has been with you. How many times have you failed Him? Yet, He does not strike you down. He waits. He draws you with cords of kindness. When the Spirit controls you, you begin to treat others with that same "long fuse." You realize that people are broken, and instead of reacting in anger, you respond in grace.

## **II. Kindness**

If patience is how we endure the bad things people do to us, kindness is how we proactively do good things for them. The word involves the idea of being useful, helpful, and tender.

Kindness is love in work clothes. It is the Spirit's sensitivity to the needs of others. The kind person doesn't just feel bad for someone; they do something about it. They offer a word of encouragement; they lend a helping hand. Jesus was the embodiment of kindness. He touched the leper. He welcomed the children. He spoke to the woman at the well. He didn't have to do those things, but His heart was tender toward humanity.

In our harsh, abrasive culture, kindness is a powerful weapon. It disarms people. As the Proverb says, "A soft answer turns away wrath." When you are kind to someone who is being rude, you heap burning coals on their head—you convict them with the goodness of God. It is the kindness of God that leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4)

## **III. Goodness**

Patience and kindness are soft virtues, but goodness has a backbone. The word used here implies moral excellence and integrity. It is being good in character and doing good in action.

Sometimes, being "good" means taking a stand. Jesus was kind, but He also cleansed the temple. He called out the Pharisees. Goodness hates evil. It does not compromise the truth. A person with the fruit of goodness is transparent; they are the same in the dark as they are in the light. They are generous, honest, and pure.

It also carries the idea of generosity. A "good" man is a man who is good to others. He is not stingy with his time or his money. He recognizes that every good gift comes from above, and he is merely a steward.

## WEEK 11

# The Expression of Grace (Patience, Kindness, Goodness)

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### IV. The Impact on Others

When these three fruits—patience, kindness, and goodness—are operating in your life, you become a magnet for the Gospel. People are watching you. They know how the world reacts to stress and mistreatment. When they see you reacting with patience instead of anger, kindness instead of bitterness, and integrity instead of compromise, they want to know why.

You cannot fake this for long. You can grit your teeth and try to be patient, but eventually, the fuse will burn out. This must be the work of the Holy Spirit. It is Him living His life through you. When you feel your temper rising, that is the signal to say, "Lord, I can't handle this person, but You can. Love them through me."

### Discussion Questions

1. "Patience" is described as having a "long fuse" specifically regarding people. Who in your life requires the most patience right now, and how can you pray for them?
2. Kindness is described as "active." What is one small, practical act of kindness you can do this week for someone who doesn't expect it?
3. How do you balance "Kindness" (being tender) with "Goodness" (standing for moral truth)? Can you be firm on truth while still being kind?

### Life Application Challenge

**The Reaction Test:** This week, pay close attention to your reaction when things go wrong or people annoy you. Commit to the "5-Second Pauses." Before you respond to a frustrating text, email, or comment, pause for 5 seconds and ask the Holy Spirit, "How do You want to respond to this?"

### Prayer Focus

Lord, I thank You for Your immense patience with me. When I look at my own life, I am humbled by Your grace. Holy Spirit, I ask You to widen my capacity for patience with others. Make me tenderhearted and kind. Help me to walk in integrity and goodness, so that my life might be a reflection of Jesus to a watching world. Amen.

## WEEK 12

# The Discipline of the Spirit (Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control)

**SCRIPTURE:** GALATIANS 5:23; 2 TIMOTHY 1:7; MATTHEW 11:29

**FOCUS:** THE UPWARD AND INWARD DISCIPLINE—CHARACTER TRAITS THAT SUSTAIN OUR WALK WITH GOD.

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## Introduction

We conclude our study with the final three attributes: Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. These might sound like personality traits, but they are actually powerful spiritual disciplines. They define a person who is reliable, humble, and mastered by the Spirit of God.

## Study: Power Under Control

The Christian life is a marathon, not a sprint. To finish well, you need character that stands the test of time. The final three fruits provide the structural integrity for a life of faith.

### I. Faithfulness

The word here is *pistis*, which can mean faith, but in this context, it means fidelity, reliability, and trustworthiness.

A faithful person is a person who keeps their promises. If they say they will be there, they are there. If they take a vow, they keep it. God is the ultimate example of faithfulness. The Bible says, "Great is Thy faithfulness." He never changes. He never flakes out. He never quits on us.

In a society that treats commitments casually—where people walk out on marriages, jobs, and churches the moment things get difficult—the faithful believer stands out like a lighthouse. Faithfulness means you continue to do the right thing even when you don't feel like it, and even when no one is watching. It is the quality that hears the Master say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

## **WEEK 12**

# The Discipline of the Spirit (Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control)

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## **II. Gentleness (Meekness)**

This is perhaps the most misunderstood word in the list. We often equate gentleness or meekness with weakness. We think of a doormat. But the Greek word used here was often used to describe a wild stallion that had been tamed.

Think about a powerful horse. It has rippling muscles and the strength to kill a man. But when it is "meeked" or broken, it submits that power to the control of the rider. It still has the strength, but the strength is under control.

Moses was called the meekest man on earth, yet he challenged Pharaoh. Jesus described Himself as "gentle and lowly in heart," yet He had the power to call down legions of angels. Gentleness is power wrapped in love. It is the ability to handle a fragile soul without crushing it. It is the humility to admit when you are wrong. It is the refusal to use your power to exploit or manipulate others.

## **III. Self-Control**

The final fruit is the capstone: Self-Control. It literally means "holding oneself in." It is the mastery of one's desires and passions.

Now, wait a minute. If it is the fruit of the Spirit, why is it called Self-control? Because the Holy Spirit does not possess you like a demon. He does not turn you into a robot. He empowers your will, but you must still do the exercising. He gives you the power to say "no" to sin and "yes" to righteousness.

This applies to your temper, your appetite, your sexual desires, your spending, and your tongue. A city without walls is easily conquered, and a man without self-control is defenseless against the enemy.

## **IV. The Key: Walking in the Spirit**

So, how do we get these things? How do we become loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled?

You cannot just try harder. If you try to do this in your own strength, you will fail. The secret is found in Galatians 5:16: "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

## WEEK 12

# The Discipline of the Spirit (Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control)

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Notice the order. It doesn't say, "Stop fulfilling the lust of the flesh, and then you will walk in the Spirit." No. You focus on the Walk. You focus on the relationship. You set your mind on the things of God. You fill your mind with His Word. You talk to Him in prayer.

When you are full of the Spirit, there is no room for the flesh. Light displaces darkness. As you yield to Him moment by moment, His character naturally flows out of you. It is His life, living in you.

God wants to do a mighty work in your character. He wants to make you like Jesus. It won't happen overnight, but if you abide in Him, it will happen. That is His promise.

## Discussion Questions

1. Faithfulness often means staying committed when things are boring or difficult. In what area of your life (work, marriage, church, spiritual disciplines) is God calling you to simply "hang in there" and be faithful right now?
2. Scripture describes Gentleness as "power under control" (like a tamed horse). How does this definition change your view of what it means to be a "meek" Christian?
3. Self-Control requires a partnership: The Spirit gives the power, but we must make the choice. What is one "city wall" in your life that needs rebuilding through self-control?

## Life Application Challenge

**The Stewardship of Words:** The tongue is one of the hardest things to control. This week, practice the discipline of silence. Do not feel the need to win every argument or voice every opinion. Practice "gentleness" by listening twice as much as you speak.

## Prayer Focus

Father, I want to finish well. I want to be found faithful on the day I stand before You. Tame my heart, Lord. Bring my will under submission to Your will. Give me the strength of self-control, not to glorify myself, but to keep my life pure for Your use. I yield my rights, my desires, and my future to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.













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