

We Believe in the Holy Spirit

RESOURCES

STUDY GUIDES BY SECTION



WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 1.1
Lesson 1: In the Trinity
Section 1: Old Testament

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

In the Trinity

Introduction

I. Old Testament

A. Spirit

B. Divinity

1. God Himself
2. Prophecy and Visions
3. Special Skill and Knowledge
4. Anointing and Empowerment

C. Personhood

1. Emotions
2. Relationships
3. Authority
4. Volition

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a distinct, uncreated person of the Trinity develop?
2. In the Old Testament, do we see God's people understanding His existence as one person or three persons? Explain.
3. Which 20th century theologian compared the Old Testament to a room that's richly furnished but poorly lit?

4. When the Old Testament uses names like "Spirit of God" or "my Spirit," is it a direct reference to the third person of the Trinity. Why or why not?
5. How did Isaiah intend his original audience to interpret the names "Holy Spirit" and "Spirit of the Lord" in Isaiah 63?
6. In what passage do we see God speaking of remaining present with his covenant people through his Spirit?
7. What literary device does David use in 2 Samuel 23 to suggest that the "Spirit of the Lord" and the "God of Israel" are one and the same?
8. What purpose did God have for filling Bezalel and Oholiab with his Spirit?
9. According to Psalm 51, after his adultery with Bathsheba, what does David ask to keep?
10. In the Old Testament, was God's Spirit presented as an impersonal force or power? Why or why not?
11. Where in Scripture do we see Israel's rebellion grieving the Holy Spirit?
12. As Christians, it's right for us to conclude that Old Testament references _____ the revelation of the Holy Spirit as a full member of the Trinity.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. What has been your experience with or understanding of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit prior to starting this course?
2. Why is it important to remember that we are not given the full teaching of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?
3. What passage from the Old Testament would you use to demonstrate the existence of the Holy Spirit?
4. Why does it matter that the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force or power?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 1.2-3

Lesson 1: In the Trinity

Sections 2 and 3: New Testament, and Church History

Note: Normally the study guides cover just one section, but in this case, section 2 is very brief. Therefore, we are combining sections 2 and 3 for our study and for the quiz.

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

The Goal of Creation

II. New Testament

A. Jesus

B. Apostles

III. Church History

A. Apostles' Creed

B. Trinitarian Doctrine

C. Nicene Creed

D. Ontology and Economy

Conclusion

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Did the Jews in Jesus' day understand the one true God to exist as only one person or had they already come to see him as three persons?
2. In what passage do we find Jesus' fullest teachings on the Holy Spirit's distinct personhood?
3. In which New Testament passage do we see the Father, Son and Holy Spirit listed as equals while the author uses a singular form of the word "name"?
4. According to the lesson, what is one of the most frequent ways the apostles testified that the Holy Spirit was a member of the Trinity?
5. In which of the following passages do we see the entire church receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in a spectacular way?
6. The Apostles' Creed grew out of local baptismal creeds that date as far back as _____.
7. Which prolific Christian writer lived from around A.D. 155 to 230 and popularized the Latin term "trinitas" for the Trinity?

8. Which council met in A.D. 381, rejected the Arian heresies, and defended the Nicene understanding of the Trinity?

9. Define "ontological Trinity."

10. The formalization of pneumatology happened in stages, and generally in response to _____.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Read through John 14-16. Write down notes about the Holy Spirit's role in the life of the believer.
2. If you haven't already done so, use this opportunity to commit the Apostles' Creed to memory.
3. For you, is it more comforting or disconcerting that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit developed in stages? Explain.
4. Write down some of the things you would like to learn in this course.
5. What are some of the areas that often produce confusion regarding the Holy Spirit?
6. Would you say that the subject of the Holy Spirit is important to you? Why or why not?
7. What if the Holy Spirit did not exist? What practical difference would that make to you in your daily life?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 2.1-2

Lesson 2: In the World

Sections 1 and 2: Creation and Providence

Note: Since both sections 1 and 2 are brief, we combine the study of both of them in one study guide, and there will be just one quiz on both sections together.

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

In the World

Introduction

I. Creation

II. Providence

A. Nature

B. Humanity

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. With what does the Westminster Larger Catechism primarily identify God's creative work?
2. Other than Genesis 1, what is the only other passage where we see the Hebrew word "rachaph" (hovering) in the Pentateuch?
3. In Genesis 1, we see God dealing with creation's _____ on days 1-3 and its _____ on days 4-6.
4. Do the passages of Scripture that speak about providence clearly distinguish between the persons of the Trinity? Why or why not?
5. According to the lesson, what is the emphasis of Psalm 104?
6. What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in Job 33:4?
7. In regards to his providential care, does the Holy Spirit simply maintain the world so that we can live in it? Why or why not?
8. In what passage do we see God's providential control of Nebuchadnezzar in taking away both his royalty and his sanity?
9. When it comes to humanity at large, the Holy Spirit's _____ work is sometimes the terrifying implementation of divine judgment.
10. In what passages of the Old Testament do we see God presented as a potter and human beings as clay?
11. All Evangelical Christians should agree that one of the principle functions of the Holy Spirit is to cause people to _____.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Why is it significant that Moses used the metaphor of a mother bird caring for her young when describing the Holy Spirit's work of creation in Genesis 1:2?
2. How do you see the Holy Spirit providentially governing the world where you are?
3. What can we learn from God by observing his providential work in the life of King Nebuchadnezzar, as seen in Daniel 4?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 2.3
Lesson 2: In the World
Section 3: Revelation

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

In the World

III. Revelation

A. Models

B. Source

1. Inspiration of Prophecy and Scripture
2. Illumination and Inward Leading
3. Miracles, Signs and Wonders

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. All revelation is ultimately _____.
2. _____ revelation is intended for all human beings, irrespective of issues like sin and salvation, while _____ revelation is given to a select group of sinners for whom God intends salvation.
3. According to the lesson, which two passages warn us that we shouldn't naively believe that every revelation, illumination, interpretation, and tradition is from the Holy Spirit?
4. When Paul pointed out that the Holy Spirit directly grants wisdom and insight to believers in 1 Corinthians 2, did that mean we have the same authority to speak or interpret God's words as the apostles had? Why or why not?
5. In Scripture, miracles, signs and wonders were extraordinary works of _____ performed by the Holy Spirit.
6. Daniel's rescue from the lions is called a sign and wonder in Daniel 6:27 because it _____.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Of the five sets of theological models given for discussing revelation, which did you find to be the most helpful? Why is that?
2. Read through 2 Peter 1:20-21. Why is important to recognize that prophets and prophecy were guided by the work of the Holy Spirit?
3. What are some ways believers can rightly understand and discern "illumination" and "inward leading" in their own lives?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 2.4
Lesson 2: In the World
Section 4: Common Grace

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

IV. Common Grace

- A. Promoting Goodness
- B. Promoting Life

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which systematic theologian distinguished between two types of common grace, that which restrains evil and that which meets humanity's daily needs?
2. God's primary purpose for humanity is for us to turn the world into _____.
3. The Holy Spirit providentially governs the world in such a way that _____ behavior tends to produce _____ results.
4. Paul mentioned God's provision for all human beings in Acts _____.
5. The Holy Spirit is so benevolent and kind that he allows human beings to experience _____ in their lives.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. How do you see the Holy Spirit providentially restraining evil where you live and work?
2. In what ways can you promote goodness through the power of the Holy Spirit in your area?
3. The lesson indicates God's primary purpose for humanity as turning the world into his "earthly kingdom. What are you doing to contribute to that process? What new things could you do?
4. Christ and Culture:

The lesson talks about common grace and finding God's truth even among non-Christians. The topic of how Christians should relate to society or to culture is very complex and has been discussed throughout church history.

One of the books that is often quoted as a classic discussion of this topic is H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*. He presents five positions that have been expressed throughout the centuries. They basically depend on whether the emphasis is placed on the sinfulness of culture or the goodness of culture. Read the descriptions and answer the questions that follow:

A. Christ Against Culture (Culture is bad.)

This position emphasizes sin in society, and its supporters tend to separate themselves from the "world." Living in a monastery would be an example of this view. Other more common expressions are avoiding non Christian art, music, television, or news. The basic reason is that these things will corrupt us.

B. Christ in Culture (Culture is good.)

These people believe that Christ is operating in and through culture, and they minimize the effects of sin. They think we should cooperate with the current cultural tendencies, instead of fighting against them or running from them.

This view is manifest in religious movements that attempt to mix Christianity with current philosophies, such as Gnosticism in the early centuries or the New Age movement today. Another example is the liberal tendency to accept the current moral views.

C. Christ Above Culture (Culture is good.)

Those who hold this view believe culture has many positive aspects, and minimize the effects of sin. However, they believe we should add Christian aspects to culture, in order to improve it. Thomas of Aquinas is an example that Niebuhr gives of this position. He accepts Aristotle's method of using logic, and believes that reason can lead us to believe in God, but that we need faith and the Scriptures in order to understand and believe more complicated things such as the Trinity. In other words, faith is added on top of reason.

A common expression today would be of a person who lives a life during the week without practicing his faith and without following Christian ethical standards, and then goes to church on Sunday to fulfill his spiritual duty and feel good.

D. Christ and Culture in Paradox (Culture is bad.)

In this case, while culture is basically evil, we must inevitably participate in it and be affected by it. We must submit to Christ, but also to culture, even though they are frequently in opposition.

Niebuhr gives Martin Luther as an example of this position. Luther taught that man lives in a dilemma, that the Kingdom God and the Kingdom of the World are clearly distinguishable, but not separable.

E. Christ Transforms Culture (Culture is bad.)

This view admits that culture is evil, but also believes that the grace of God is present in it, bringing positive transformation. These people believe we should not separate ourselves from the world (like position #1), nor go along with it (#2), simply add grace to it (#3), nor reluctantly accept it and submit to it (#4). Instead, we should stay in it and work toward change. This change is not just an addition, but a profound transformation.

Niebuhr mentions John Calvin as a representative of this position. Not only did he express this view in his writings, but in Geneva, he made many efforts to practice this view, making improvements in the city. They received refugees, cared for the sick and the elderly, modified the laws of commerce, and even installed a sewage system. They literally cleaned up the city!

Do you think culture (or society) is good or bad?

How do you think God has asked us to relate to culture?

Can you think of any Bible passages that support your view? Write them down.

Which of the five categories do you agree with? You may select one, or more than one.

Write down any problems you see with some of the views.

Write any other thoughts on your view. Mention examples of how this might affect your decisions and your life style.

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 3.1
Lesson 3: In the Church
Section 1: Covenant Grace

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

In the Church

Introduction

I. Covenant Grace

A. Old Testament

B. New Testament

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. In what passages do we see Scripture also refer to ancient Israel as the "church"?
2. What are the three common features shared by ancient suzerain-vassal treaties?
3. Where do we see God first creating Israel as a special nation?
4. In the Old Testament, was the nation of Israel characterized by faithfulness to God or unfaithfulness?
5. Why are the dates 930 B.C., 722 B.C., and 586 B.C. significant to our understanding of the Old Testament?
6. Like the church in the Old Testament, does the New Testament church contain both believers and unbelievers?
7. What are some of the ways we all share in the grace that God grants the church as a whole?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Why is it important to see Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church as one continuous covenant people?
2. Read through Isaiah 63:7-14. How does your relationship with God compare to the nation of Israel in Isaiah's time?
3. What would it look like for your church to share the description Luke gave the church in Acts 9:31? How would your city or country be different?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 3.2
Lesson 3: In the Church
Section 2: Scripture

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Scripture

A. Inspiration

B. Message

C. Purpose

1. Covenant Community
2. Divine Benevolence
3. Human Loyalty
4. Consequence

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Define romantic inspiration.
2. Define mechanical inspiration.
3. Define organic inspiration.
4. Which book of Scripture consists entirely of quotations from God?
5. According to the lesson, "The Holy Spirit was always intimately involved in _____ God's word to the church, and in _____ it for the church through his inspired human authors."
6. According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism answer 3, what do the Scriptures principally teach?
7. What did Jesus mean in Matthew 22:37-40 when he referenced "the Law and the Prophets"?
8. "The commandment to love our neighbors is fundamentally _____."
9. "The New Testament was written by apostles and prophets who served as God's covenant _____."
10. What is the main point of Deuteronomy 4:8?
11. What was the primary reason the biblical authors wrote their texts?
12. Loving God is, simply put, a matter of _____.

13. In what passage do we see the biblical author teaching the purpose of God's commands as God's people pursuing his blessings by obedience?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Of the three types of inspiration given in the lesson, which do you see most clearly at work in Scripture?
2. How can you best live out the commandment to "love your neighbor" in your context?
3. When you read the Scriptures, do you find you are more motivated to obey God?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 3.3
Lesson 3: In the Church
Section 3: Spiritual Gifts

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

III. Spiritual Gifts

- A. Purpose
- B. History in Scripture
- C. Present Use

Conclusion

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. If an apparent gift doesn't benefit the church, then it's likely that it's being _____, or that it isn't _____.
2. What metaphor did Paul use in 1 Corinthians 12:8-31 to explain the use of spiritual gifts?
3. Spiritual gifts first appeared during the days of _____.
4. How were spiritual gifts distributed among God's people in the Old Testament?
5. In which passage do we find a comprehensive list of spiritual gifts?
6. Can unbelievers in the church receive spiritual gifts?
7. What is cessationism?
8. What is continuationism?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

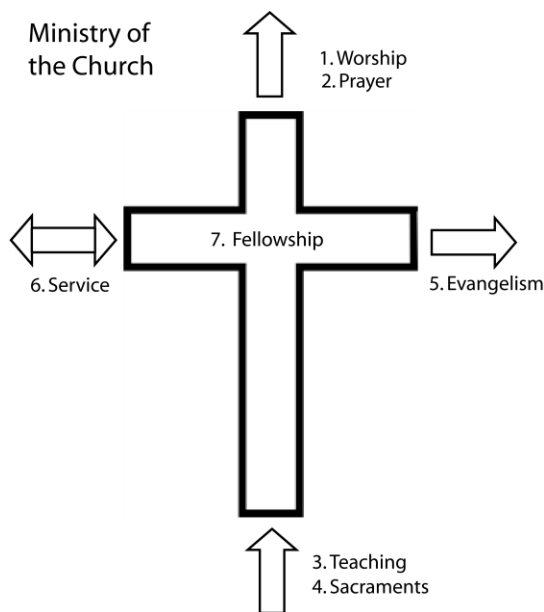
1. Do you agree with the lesson when it said the spiritual gifts are shared by both the saved and unsaved in the church? Why or why not?
2. Do you accept the cessationist or the continuationist viewpoint in regards to the spiritual gifts today? Why?
3. Ministry Gifts

We want to encourage you to discover the area of your own spiritual gifts, so that you might place a higher priority on this area and have a more effective ministry. Read the following analysis, and answer the questions.

When we look at the areas of ministry of Jesus (See Matthew 9:35, 11:25, 26:20, 26:26-29, and Mark 1:35), and also the areas of ministry of the disciples (See Acts 2:42-47 and 4:31-35), we can list seven general areas:

- 1) worship
- 2) prayer
- 3) evangelism
- 4) teaching
- 5) the sacraments
- 6) service
- 7) fellowship

The following drawing of a cross illustrates these seven aspects of the ministry, symbolizing the fact that Jesus dwells in us and carries out His ministry through His Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. The arrows indicate the objects of the respective ministries.



- 1 & 2) Worship and prayer are at the head of the cross, looking up to God.
- 3 & 4) Teaching and the sacraments are at the base, aimed at strengthening and building up the church, giving it a firm foundation.
- 5) Evangelism is one arm extended toward the world, sharing the gospel with non-Christians.
- 6) Service is the other arm, reaching out to show mercy. This arm extends both toward the world and toward the Church itself.
- 7) Fellowship is in the middle, where we get together to encourage one another as fellow Christians.

How do you know what your spiritual gifts are?

Here are some indications:

- 1) One indication is that others in the church encourage you either by telling you directly that they think you have a certain gift, or by encouraging you to do certain things related to a particular gift. This is especially important when the leaders of the church encourage you this way.

Is there any area of ministry which people encourage you to do, especially the leaders of your church?

2) Another indication is that you see more fruit as a result of using a particular gift.

Are there any areas where you see more fruit?

3) A third indication is that you have a sense of fulfillment, contentment, and joy when you use a particular gift. We should all do all aspects of ministry, but some aspects seem to make you feel much more "alive" than others. Instead of "draining your batteries," these activities seem to "charge" them. This could be an indication that you are using one of your special spiritual gifts.

Are there any areas of ministry that tend to fill you with joy and contentment?

If all three indicators coincide, it is likely that you have identified a spiritual gift. If only one of the factors fits, you may need to reconsider.

Are there any areas in which all three indicators apply (people encourage you, you see more fruit, and you sense a special joy)?

What are your spiritual gifts and how can you best use them to benefit the church?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 4.1
Lesson 4: In the Believer
Section 1: Conversion

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

In the Believer

Introduction

I. Conversion

A. Regeneration

B. Convicting

1. Preponderance of Sin

2. Repulsiveness of Sin

3. Offensiveness of Sin

4. Hopelessness of Sin

C. Justifying

D. Sanctifying

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which members of the Trinity are involved in salvation?
2. All people enter the world in a state of _____.
3. In what passages do we see New Testament authors confirm that every human being comes into this world spiritually dead.
4. Can people be called to repentance and faith, genuinely recognize their sinfulness, and still not turn to Christ.
5. According to the lesson, in what passage do we find a good example of the Spirit's convicting work as part of conversion in the New Testament?
6. Part of the Holy Spirit's saving work of _____ is to make us aware of how sinful we really are.
7. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, what does he reveal to us about our sin?
8. Paul called us _____ in Romans 5:6 because of sin's corruption.

9. In his letter to _____, Paul indicated that the Holy Spirit applied Christ's righteousness to us as part of his work of conversion, contemporaneously with our regeneration.

10. In Ephesians 1:4-12, what does Paul mention as part of the inheritance we receive in the blessings of salvation?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Why is it important to have a solid understanding of both the "ordo salutis" and the "historia salutis"?

2. Describe the Holy Spirit's work of conviction in your own life.

3. What benefits do believers receive from Christ's own sanctification?

WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
STUDY GUIDE 4.2
Lesson 4: In the Believer
Section 2: Christian Living

OUTLINE FOR TAKING NOTES

II. Christian Living

- A. Indwelling
- B. Sanctifying
- C. Interceding
- D. Preserving

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When the Holy Spirit _____ us, he doesn't simply repair our spirits and then leave us to our own devices.
2. The Holy Spirit began to indwell believers in the _____ age.
3. As Paul explained in _____, the Holy Spirit doesn't completely remove sin's corruption and influence from our lives at regeneration.
4. In the New Testament, what are some differences between the fruit of the Spirit and spiritual gifts?
5. The Spirit's intercession on our behalf is always successful because he always intercedes in accordance with _____.
6. A very common way Scripture speaks of the Holy Spirit's preserving work is through the language of a _____.
7. What do theologians call our final state, when we are completely free from the presence, influence and effects of sin in both our bodies and our souls, and when we finally enter into the blessings of the new heavens and new earth?

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

1. Read through Romans 8:9-11. What benefit do believers have in the indwelling Holy Spirit?
2. Why doesn't the Holy Spirit completely remove sin's corruption and influence from our lives when we are regenerated?
3. Why is it important that the Holy Spirit intercede for us when we pray?
4. Did you learn some new things in this course about the Holy Spirit?
5. Explain the most important new things you learned in this course.

6. In order to make theology more of a heart matter, and not just an intellectual matter, it is helpful to listen to Christian songs, such as "Same Power" by Jeremy Camp, based on Romans 8:9-11. Read the lyrics below, then answer the questions in italics afterwards.

SAME POWER

I can see waters ragin' at my feet
I can feel the breath of those surroundin' me
I can hear the sound of nations risin' up
We will not be over taken, we will not be overcome
I can walk down this dark & painful road
I can face every fear of the unknown
I can hear all God's children singin' out
We will not be overtaken, we will not be overcome!

[Chorus]

The same power that rose Jesus from the grave
The same power that commands the dead to wake
Lives in us, lives in us
The same power that moves mountains when He speaks
The same power that can calm a ragin' sea
Lives in us, lives in us, He lives in us, lives in us!

[Verse 2]

We have hope, that His promises are true
In His strength, there is nothin' we can't do
Yes, we know, there are greater things in store
We will not be overtaken, we will not be overcome!

[Chorus]

[Bridge]

Greater is He that is livin' in me
He's conquered our enemy
No power of darkness
No weapon prevails, we stand here in victory

[Chorus]

You also may want to listen to the video (with lyrics):

<https://youtu.be/InsifiZxVXU>

Or this live concert version (without the lyrics):

<https://youtu.be/7NcEkEeghYQ>

You may also enjoy the version of Hillsong:

<https://youtu.be/-2J9la0X6WE>

You can also watch a video of Jeremy Camp's testimony behind this song (as well as another rendition of the song) at:

<https://youtu.be/iqZ-G4UhLDw>

Are there some biblical points about the Holy Spirit mentioned in this song?

What words are especially meaningful to you in this song?

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