

SUMMER 2022

YOU



NEVER ALONE

THE HOLY SPIRIT
IN OUR LIVES

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**HOW TO LOVE
YOUR NEIGHBOR**

STUDY 1 NEVER ALONE: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

HOW THIS STUDY FITS YOUR'S DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

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Seek God

We seek God and come to know Him because His Holy Spirit is at work in us. He draws us into a relationship through our faith in Christ, and the Holy Spirit guides us to walk with Him.

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A BIBLE STUDY ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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In 1978, Walter Hawkins released the song “Never Alone” on the album entitled *Love Alive II*. The lyrics are written in the form of a testimony, which communicates a fundamental truth about the life of every believer in Christ—God’s Spirit lives in each of us, we will never be alone. Hawkins’ words should encourage the heart of every believer regardless of age, gender, and race.

In his song Hawkins attests that because we are never alone, there is no need to worry. The reason for this confidence is because there is Someone who walks with us, guiding our footsteps every day. Hawkins repeats over and over again that we are never alone.

Believers understand that our life in Christ is not brought about by self-effort (Eph. 2:7-8). Our awareness, understanding, and acceptance of the life we received was facilitated by the Holy Spirit who convicted us, cleansed us, and made us whole.

Once we heard the good news, believed it, and accepted Jesus into our hearts, the Holy Spirit with transforming power escorted us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God.

That is a powerful testimony in itself, but there’s more. Because we have the Spirit in us, we enjoy many benefits. For one, we become members of the family of God. We become brothers and sisters under the fatherhood of a mighty God, who loves us as His children. Also, we have power against the enemy who tempts us with lusts of the flesh and eye, and the pride of life. We can walk in victory though because “the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

This study about the Holy Spirit will be inspirational. We should remember Hawkins’ song and allow the lyrics, “Never alone . . . Never again will I be insecure anymore”² to replay over and over in our minds as a constant reminder of the truth—we are never alone.

CONVICTED BY THE SPIRIT

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
THE HOLY SPIRIT
CONVICTS OF SIN AND
POINTS TO THE TRUTH
OF SALVATION.

JOHN 15:26-27; 16:7-15

^{15:26} “When the Counselor comes, the one I will send to you from the Father — the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father — he will testify about me. ²⁷ You also will testify, because you have been with me from the beginning.

.....
^{16:7} Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don't go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: ⁹ About sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

.....
¹² “I still have many things to tell you, but you can't bear them now. ¹³ **When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come.**

¹⁴ He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.

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MEMORY VERSE

KEYWORDS

Counselor (15:26)—The translation of the Greek word *parakletos*, meaning “One who has been called alongside or sent to assist another person.”

Convict (16:8)—A term describing the work of the Holy Spirit of exposing a person's sin and calling that individual to repentance.

Spirit of truth (16:13)—The Holy Spirit who guides disciples into all truth (16:13). The Spirit's ministry of guiding Jesus's followers into all truth will fulfill the psalmist's longing for divine guidance (Ps. 25:4-5; 43:3; 86:11; 143:10).

HOW DOES THE SPIRIT HELP US TO KNOW RIGHT AND WRONG?

In 2002, a biographical film premiered that told the story of a young seaman named Antwone Fisher with a troublesome past and a violent present. His outbursts of anger and the rapid speed in which he would lose his temper had posed him for a quick exit from the Navy.

In an effort to help the volatile sailor, he was sent to a naval psychiatrist, Jerome Davenport, for help. Antwone rejected Jerome's help at first and refused to share the source of his pain. Eventually, the young man softened and revealed a horrific childhood. Through Jerome's counsel Antwone dealt with His past and forged ahead toward a new beginning.

Just like Antwone Fisher, our past may be filled with an album of hurtful memories. You may have been or may be feeling lost and alone. Yet, there is good news! We have not been left to handle our heartache alone. Christ promised that He would send another Counselor, the Spirit of Truth, who would guide us into all truth. He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit and that His disciples would never be alone.

The Holy Spirit Testifies of Jesus // John 15:26-27

Jesus spoke these words during His final Passover meal with His disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem (Luke 22:7-13). Jesus knew that in a few hours He would be arrested, tried, beaten, and crucified. He also knew His disciples would be scattered, confused, and afraid. So, as they finished the meal—a meal that Jesus instilled with new significance and meaning (vv. 14-20)—He began what some have called His farewell address. Of the many things Jesus told them that night, perhaps the most significant moment was when He told them He was leaving them: “Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so now I tell you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’” (John 13:33).

We can imagine the confusion of the disciples. One by one, they asked questions, trying to understand what Jesus was telling them. John recorded questions from several disciples (Peter, Thomas, Philip, and the other Judas)



THE POINT: THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS OF SIN AND POINTS TO THE TRUTH OF SALVATION.

and the tender way Jesus answered them. Despite the fear and uncertainty He surely saw in the disciples' eyes, Jesus told them that He would not leave them alone. And thus, Jesus began to teach the disciples about the Holy Spirit and His work. He used two phrases to describe the Holy Spirit.

HOW HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED THE HOLY SPIRIT'S COUNSEL?

Counselor. The Greek word is *parakletos* and means “one called or sent for to assist another,” “an advocate,” or “one who pleads the cause of another.” The role of the Holy Spirit was to be present with those who belonged to Jesus. The Spirit would walk with them, comfort them, and provide help.

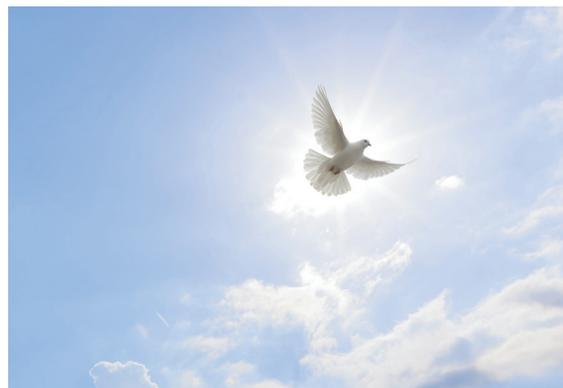
The Spirit of Truth. A key role of the Holy Spirit is to give testimony to the truth of Jesus. In John 5:31-39, Jesus identified six witnesses who testified about Him: (1) Himself. Of course, one person's testimony alone would not have been accepted as valid. So, Jesus identified others: (2) John the Baptist; (3) the miracles Jesus performed; (4) God the Father; (5) Scripture; and (6) “another” (v. 32). Jesus identified the Holy Spirit as that Other. The Spirit would continue to testify the truth of Jesus to and through the disciples to the world.

Just as Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to His disciples, Jesus sends His Holy Spirit to us. The Holy Spirit is God's presence with us. We may feel alone at times, but Jesus has promised never to leave us or abandon us (Heb. 13:5). He is always present with us in the person of the Counselor.

The Holy Spirit Convicts of Sin // John 16:7-11

John 16 begins with Jesus explaining to the disciples how hard their lives would be. It may have been even more startling when Jesus told them His departure would actually benefit them. The disciples had chosen to be with Jesus. They had left fishing boats, tax booths, families, and homes to follow Jesus. How on earth could His absence be to their advantage—especially if they would face the hardships He described?

The benefit would come in the presence of the Holy Spirit. During His earthly ministry, Jesus worked to carry out His mission in one specific place at a time. However, the Spirit is different; He moves and works all over the world without concern of time or place to accomplish God's work.



DIGGING DEEPER JESUS' DEPARTURE

Throughout His time on earth Christ made it clear to His disciples that He had a job to complete. The work God the Father gave His Son to finish (John 5:36) was crucial (9:4). Christ described it as the substance that fueled His appetite (4:34). So, when He told the twelve that the Counselor will not come if He did not go away, He spoke concerning the plan of God. The Holy Spirit would come when Christ finished His work. This verse is not saying the Holy Spirit could not be with them while Christ was still on earth, as if they could not occupy earth together. Every member of the Godhead is omnipresent. Jesus is emphasizing His role as Redeemer and the Spirit's role as the One who will “convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment” (16:8) and will guide the repentant to the salvation.

What benefits do you now enjoy because Jesus went away?



Jesus described the convicting work of the Holy Spirit He would send. “Convict” is a legal term indicating that someone has decided a person is guilty of wrongdoing. We see this convicting work in three ways:

- **The Spirit convicts us of sin.** The Holy Spirit leads us to understand the evil in our own hearts. In verse 9, Jesus tied our sin to our lack of faith. A lack of faith is not merely experiencing doubt; it involves willfully rejecting the truth of Jesus. Only the Spirit can convict us of our faithlessness which had led to our sinful behavior.
- **The Spirit convicts us of righteousness.** Jesus was referring to His own righteousness. In fact, in verse 10, Jesus tied the conviction of righteousness to the fact that He was returning to His Father. Jesus’ return to His place at the Father’s right hand attested that He is completely pure, completely righteous. Jesus is so perfectly righteous that our every word and every deed is measured against His righteousness, then we see our own guilt.
- **The Spirit convicts us of judgment.** When we see our sin in contrast to the

righteousness of Christ, it is clear that we deserve judgment. In verse 11, Jesus tied our conviction to the judgment of “the ruler of this world.” The Holy Spirit convicts us of having in our own hearts the same self-serving rebellion of the devil.

HOW ARE PEOPLE DESENSITIZED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT’S CONVICTION?

God’s purpose is not to demoralize when the Holy Spirit convicts us. He convicts us in order to draw us to salvation. The intention of Jesus is for us to experience His forgiveness, His redemption, and the eternal life that He bought for us on the cross.

The Holy Spirit Guides Us in the Truth // John 16:12-15

WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS THAT THE SPIRIT WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH?

Jesus had explained much to His disciples, but He knew they still could not understand all He wanted them to know. Until they saw the resurrected Jesus standing before them, they were not ready to hear. Jesus could only teach them as much as they could comprehend. When the Holy Spirit—“the Spirit of Truth,” came and was with them, He would lead the followers of Christ “into all the truth” (v. 13). Even though the disciples had observed Jesus up close, they could not have wholly understood who He is. They could not have been clear about the mission of Christ to the world. The Spirit would change that.

The Spirit would also lead them to deeper truth about Jesus’ mission in the world. As the apostle John wrote the account of Jesus, the Spirit of Truth reminded him of the words of Jesus. The Spirit inspired him to write the words Jesus had spoken to Nicodemus: “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness,

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so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life" (John 3:14-15). The Spirit showed John a picture of the sacrificial death of Christ.

The Holy Spirit will only speak what He hears from God (16:14). He would never lead them to a different truth than what Jesus has shared, but He would continue to deepen their understanding.

Another aspect of the Spirit's ministry is to bring glory to Christ. His work among both believers and unbelievers is always to draw attention to Jesus, His incarnation, His saving work on the cross, and His coming return.

The Holy Spirit is still the Spirit of Truth! He still speaks only what He hears from God. Certainly, we often have a hard time hearing the voice of the Spirit, but that happens because we surround ourselves with so much of the world's "noise." Perhaps we squelch His voice by the overwhelming "busy-ness" of our lives. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth; we need to be intentional to listen to His voice.

HOW CAN WE BECOME BETTER LISTENERS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT?

LIVE IT

How will you allow the Holy Spirit to do His work in your life?

Medical professionals become frustrated because some patients refuse treatment. The same is true with Christians. Paul warns saints not to cause grief or offend the Spirit of Truth due to a saint's sinful behavior (Ep. 4:30) nor should believers suppress or stifle the influence of the Spirit (1 Thess. 5:19). Do not refuse the Helper anymore. Make up your mind that you will let the Spirit do His job.

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- **Appreciate the Spirit:** Paul stated that believers ought to give thanks for all things (Ep 5:20). Take the time to thank God for sending the Counselor.
- **Listen to the Spirit:** Open your spiritual ears and hear what the Spirit is saying to you through God's Word as a spouse, a parent, a friend, a worker, a sibling, a child, a neighbor, etc.
- **Surrender to the Spirit:** Sometimes we know what is right but fail to live it out. So, throw your hands up and surrender to the guidance of the Spirit.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many gospel choirs have sung the song, "Lead Me Guide Me Along the Way," without knowing the famous gospel composer who penned it. These are the lyrics written by Doris Mae Akers. She was known as "Miss Gospel Music." Imperial Records indicated that she sang all three parts of the recorded song in 1954. She is credited with writing over 500 gospel songs. Her work has been honored by the Smithsonian Institution as a National Treasure. She also was given a lifetime achievement award by the NAACP. Other accolades include her being inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001 and Akers' compositions were the inspiration for Edwin Hawkins' arrangement of "O Happy Day." She is stated to be the creator of an innovative style and arrangement of gospel choir music.³

How does the Holy Spirit use music to inspire and lead us?

DAILY READINGS

1. ADVANCE DIRECTIVE // JOHN 14:26; JOHN 15:26-27

An Advance Directive is a living will. This directive tells the medical world what you prefer if you are in a life-altering position and cannot speak for yourself. In John 15:26-27, Jesus shared His Advanced Directive (His living will) with the disciples. Jesus's directive includes the Holy Spirit as the One who has durable power to speak in His absence. More specifically, John 14:26 states that the "Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you". Thus, when Jesus is absent on earth, the Spirit of Truth is present to help us carry out Jesus's directive.

As Christians, we are bound by Christ's Advanced Directive to testify about Him.

2. GUILTY AS CHARGED // JOHN 16:8-11

Mankind is guilty of sin and the Holy Spirit comes to convict us. According to John 16:8-11, the Holy Spirit convicts the world of the sin of unbelief in Jesus, the righteousness of Jesus, and the judgement of God. Since we are guilty of sin, we need the Holy Spirit's convictions to help us understand that Jesus took on the punishment of our guilty charge and reconciled us to the Father. We could not justify our own sinful acts; we needed the Savior. Jesus' work of salvation has been completed and the Holy Spirit now dwells with us as a reminder of the price Christ paid. We are guilty as charged.

If we heed the convictions of the Holy Spirit and repent, the sentence is eternal life.

3. OUR COUNSELOR // JOHN 16:7

School counselors work with families to help them make decisions about students' future endeavors,. In the same way, the Holy Spirit counsels us in making eternal decisions. High school seniors and parents may connect with the counselor to follow up on applications, transcripts, or scholarships; however,

as Christians we should constantly connect with the Holy Spirit when applying God's Word. Our human decisions are important, but for spiritual needs, the Holy Spirit invokes us to seek Jesus, the Bread of Life, and the Sustainer of all we need.

We must rely on the Holy Spirit to counsel us and to convict us to repent, regroup, and refocus on Christ when we veer off the path.

4. SPIRIT OF TRUTH // JOHN 16:13-14

In preparing for a road trip, one item we check for is the GPS – Global Positioning System. This system is designed to determine the position of satellites, use data to calculating other positions, and provide directions for the journey. Like the man-made GPS, the Spirit of Truth has come to point us to Jesus who is our spiritual satellite. In contrast to man's GPS, the Spirit of Truth helps us to seek salvation and develop an intimate relationship with the Savior. As we navigate this world, the Spirit of Truth examines our actions and recalibrates us to align to the direction that leads us to Christ.

The Spirit of Truth is our GPS that always points us to salvation and an everlasting relationship with Jesus.

5. OUR COMFORTER // II CORINTHIANS 1:3-4

In times of crisis when we feel we are alone, the Holy Spirit is our comforter. Like a soft, cozy, quilted bed comforter, the Holy Spirit wraps us in the warmth of God's promises of protection and peace. It is comforting to know that when life happens, sickness comes, finances are limited, or death takes our loved ones, the precious Holy Spirit is right there to lift us up and to encourage us to move forward. Additionally, Our Comforter reminds us to testify about God's goodness and grace. Led by the Holy Spirit, our actions bear witness to others that a relationship with Christ makes a difference.

The Holy Spirit leads us to help others find hope, peace, and protection.

LEADER GUIDE

STUDY 1 NEVER ALONE

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR LIVES

INTRODUCTION

The beauty of the Christian life is that we are never on our own. Just as we cannot save ourselves by our own power, we cannot live the Christian life in our own power. God comes to us through His Holy Spirit, leading us to faith in Christ and empowering us to walk daily in His strength.

Writer Bio

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BEFORE YOU TEACH

Activate Prior Knowledge

Prepare a K-W-L Chart or print one from online. Make several copies. Have the learners fill in the first column, listing everything they know about the Holy Spirit. Then, have them fill in the second column, listing things they want to know about the topic. Hold a discussion about the first two columns. At the close of the session, invite the learners fill in the final column, listing what they have learned about the topic.

Pray for the Class

Throughout the week, pray for yourself and the learners. Pray that you will be able to teach with clarity and truth. Pray that the Lord opens the eyes of your learners so that they may behold wonderful things out of God's law. Ask the Lord to reveal any sin that may be in your lives and to give you the heart and mind to turn away from that sin.

LOOK BACK

Remind learners that the last session from the study about preparing for Christ's return. Share that preparation is a life-long journey that we never fully complete. Explain the importance of taking the time to deepen one's faith daily because we do not know the day or hour of His return. Prompt learners to discuss Christian disciplines practiced this week that allowed them to deepen their faith.

TEACHING PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Upon entering class, provide each learner with an index card. Instruct them to record two truths and a lie about themselves on the card. Guide learners to take turns sharing the three statements without disclosing which statement is a lie. Explain that the class will attempt to guess which statement is not true.

SAY: "It can be difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. But when it comes to Christ, we don't have to wonder or guess. He is the truth. In fact, he's the way, the truth, and the life."

PACK ITEM: Focus attention on **Pack Item 1: "Never Alone" poster.** Review the sessions in this study. Instruct learners that in preparing to leave the disciples to return to the Father, Jesus promised to send them the Holy Spirit to teach and remind them of all He had said.

TRANSITION: To transition into the session, read the title, "Convicted by the Spirit." Also read **The Point: "The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and points to the truth of salvation."**

DIG INTO THE TEXT

The Holy Spirit Testifies of JESUS // John 15: 26-27

READ: Call for a learner to read John 15:26-27.

EXPLAIN: Point out that the Lord spoke these words to His disciples during His final Passover meal. He knew He would have to soon leave them.

ASK: "Think of times when someone has had to leave you. How did the person's leaving make you feel? How do you think Jesus's disciples felt upon hearing of His departure?"

GUIDE: Explain that Jesus knew how His leaving would affect the disciples, so He promised not to leave them alone. He described the Holy Spirit in two ways. On the board, write the definitions to the word "Counselor: one called or sent for to assist another" and "Advocate: one who pleads the cause of another." Write "The Spirit of truth" on the board.

PACK ITEM: Distribute **Pack Item 2: "The Holy Spirit"** handout to learners. Ask them if there is anything they did know about the Holy Spirit on the handout. Direct them to use as a reference throughout the study.

DISCUSS: "In what ways does the Holy Spirit serve as the Counselor or Advocate?" Lead learners to discuss the role of the Holy Spirit

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according to verse 26. Write the title “Roles of the Holy Spirit” on the board. Record “testifies about Jesus” under the title. Ask: “What does it mean to testify?” Use the commentary for verse 27 (p. 105) to add to the discussion. Point out that believers have the presence and help of the Holy Spirit when testifying about Christ.

The Holy Spirit Convicts Us of Sin // John 16: 7-11

READ: Enlist a volunteer to read John 16:7-11.

GUIDE: Remind learners that Jesus’s disciples were very sorrowful upon hearing the news that He would be leaving them. But Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be our Counselor. Ask learners to identify additional roles of the Holy Spirit. Add the following roles to the list: convicts of sin, convicts of righteousness, and convicts of judgment. Write the word “convict” on the board. Draw a circle around it. Draw several lines extending out from the word in different directions.

ASK: “What does the word ‘convict’ mean? What words/phrases are associated with the word convict?” Record responses on the board.

EXPLAIN: Use the commentary (p. 105) for verses 8-11 to explain the word “convict” and its connection to sin, righteousness, and judgment.

ASK: “Why do we need to be continually convicted of our sin?”

OBJECT LESSON: Use the “Object Lesson” (p. 104) to explain the benefits of being convicted of sin. Explain that convictions allows us to feel bad about our sin then we will repent and turn to Jesus.

EXPLAIN: Point out that we often use the wrong measuring rod. It is essential that we measure our righteousness according to God’s standards and not that of the world. While we may appear to be “good” or “right” according to man’s standard for living, we fall very short in comparison to God’s perfect standard of righteousness.

ASK: “How are people desensitized to the Holy Spirit’s conviction? How can this be reversed?”

The Holy Spirit Guides Us in the Truth // John 16: 12-15

DID YOU KNOW?: Invite a learner to read “Did You Know?” (p. 15). Ask the question that follows.

READ: Invite a learner to read John 16:12-15.

ASK: “How does verse 12 further illustrate the need for the Holy Spirit?” Use the commentary (p. 105) for this verse to guide the discussion.

GUIDE: Use verses 13-14 to point out additional roles of the Holy Spirit. On the board, finalize the list by recording the following: “guides us into truth, speaks the words of Jesus, and glorifies Jesus.” Refer to the commentary (p. 105) to discuss Truth.

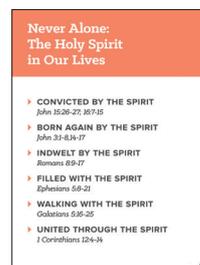
ASK: “What are some obstacles that can prevent us from clearly hearing from the Holy Spirit? How can we become better listeners to the Holy Spirit?”

DO: Encourage learners to discuss this term “glorify” with another learner. Invite volunteers to share what was discussed. Use your electronic device to look up the word “glorify.” Write the definition on the board.

READ: Reread verses 14-15 and ask: “how do we see the Trinity at work in these verses?”

LEARN: Use the commentary for verses 14-15 (p. 105) to add to your discussion. Invite a learner to read the paragraph that begins, “The interrelationship of the three Persons of the Godhead...”

DIGGING DEEPER: Instruct a learner to read “Digging Deeper” (p. 13) to outline the purpose of Jesus’ departure. Discuss the question included.



PACK ITEM 1



PACK ITEM 2

CLOSE THE SESSION

Play Walter Hawkin's song "Never Alone."

Ask, "what key points from today's session are illustrated in this song?" Emphasize that the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and points us to the truth. Challenge learners to complete the "Live It" (p. 15) this week.

Write a 2-3 sentence prayer to guide the teacher in praying for the learners.

PRAY: Ask the Lord to make the learners sensitive to the Holy Spirit and His convictions. Pray that He instills within them a mind and heart to seek His truth and respond in obedience.

OBJECT LESSON

Bring in a GPS, use your cellular phone to pull up Google Maps, or project an image of a GPS so that all learners will be able to get a good view. Lead a few of the learners to share their experiences with the GPS.

ASK: "Why is the GPS important for drivers? What are the benefits of relying on a GPS when traveling to an unknown place?"

EXPLAIN: Point out that as drivers, we rely heavily on the GPS to guide us to our many destinations, even though many of us still get lost.

SAY: "Just like the GPS, the Holy Spirit lets us know when we are headed in the wrong direction and helps us get back on track." Encourage learners to read and pray John 16:12-15 when in need of direction this week.



COMMENTARY

JOHN 15:26-27

Verse 26. After Jesus had predicted that His disciples would suffer hatred and persecution for their allegiance to Him (15:18-25), the Lord again promised He would send them the Counselor (parakletos), referring to the Holy Spirit. The term parakletos describes one who has been called alongside or sent to assist another person. It can be translated advocate, comforter, or helper. The Holy Spirit and Jesus' disciples will testify to the world about the truth concerning Jesus, God's Messiah, as well as of God's coming judgment against sin. The Greek word translated testify (martureo) is used to describe the activities of both the Holy Spirit (John 15:26) and Jesus' disciples (v. 27). It means to provide information or bear witness about a person or event based on personal experience and/or knowledge.

The phrase who proceeds from the Father refers not to the nature of the Holy Spirit in relation to the other two members of the Godhead, but rather to the mission of the Holy Spirit in the world in relation to the plan of salvation. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (see 14:17). In John's Gospel, truth (aletheia) usually has the meaning of reality, what is true in contrast to what is false.

Verse 27. The work of the Holy Spirit is connected to Jesus' disciples. The disciples would testify to Jesus through the power and instruction of the indwelling Holy Spirit. They had been with Jesus from the beginning, most likely in this context referring to when they had been called to follow Jesus. The Holy Spirit would empower and aid the disciples as they testified about the gospel of Jesus Christ to a hostile world (Acts 1:8; see Matt. 10:17-19; 28:18-20). The same Holy Spirit that worked in the apostles still works in believers today as we live out our faith and testify about Jesus to a lost world!

JOHN 16:7-11

Verses 7-8. Jesus encouraged them to look beyond their sorrow and understand that His departure was for their benefit. They could not receive the Holy Spirit (the Counselor) until Jesus fulfilled His mission on the cross, rose from the dead, and ascended to the Father. It was not until He returned to the Father that Jesus would send His disciples the Holy Spirit. Jesus identified a specific role that the Holy Spirit would play after the Lord sent Him into the world: “When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment.” The Holy Spirit is the prosecutor who exposes the truth of the world’s sin, God’s standard of righteousness, and God’s judgment of the world for their failure to meet that standard.

Verses 9-11. The Holy Spirit’s initial task is to convict the world of its sin; specifically, the sin of not believing in Jesus, God’s Messiah. The second task the Holy Spirit performs is to convict the world concerning righteousness (*dikaioisune*). The standard of righteousness by which everyone is measured is God’s own perfect righteousness, His absolute goodness and purity. John here may have been referring either to the people of the world’s lack of righteousness or to Jesus’ perfect righteousness. All the world stands condemned for their sin because all human beings fail to measure up to God’s perfect standard of righteousness (Rom. 3:23). Finally, the Holy Spirit convicts the world about the coming judgment. Those who reject Jesus will face God’s judgment for their sins (Acts 17:30-31; see John 5:26-29). With His words, “because the ruler of this world has been judged,” Jesus identified the being who rules over the world that rejects God, Satan (12:31), and proclaimed that the devil too has been defeated and will face God’s judgment for his sins.

JOHN 16:12-15

Verses 12-13. Another of the major tasks of the Holy Spirit is to bear witness to the truth concerning who Jesus is and guide His disciples through life in light of that truth. Jesus’ told them,

“I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t bear them now.” The reason the disciples could not bear to receive the many things Jesus still had to tell them was at least in part because their understanding of the nature of His mission as God’s Messiah was incomplete and at times misguided. Jesus again referred to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth (see John 14:17; 15:26). The Holy Spirit’s mission is to guide Jesus’ disciples into all the truth. The fact that the Holy Spirit will not speak on his own but rather whatever he hears is clarified by Jesus’ earlier words: The Spirit of truth, who is sent by God the Father in Jesus’ name, will testify about Jesus, teaching the disciples all things, and reminding them of everything Jesus had told them (John 14:26; 15:26). The Holy Spirit will also declare to Jesus’ disciples what is to comewhat is to come.

Verses 14-15. Jesus reemphasized that the Holy Spirit would not speak on His own, saying, “He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.” The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus, the Messiah. The interrelationship of the three Persons of the Godhead (the Trinity) is emphasized in Jesus’ statement, “Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.” Just as God the Father sent God the Son into the world as His agent of redemption, so now God the Father and God the Son send God the Holy Spirit into the world to aid believers in testifying about Jesus and living out their salvation in a hostile world.