



FILLED FOR SERVICE

(8 BIBLE STUDIES)

EXAMINATION APPLICATION
BIBLE STUDIES

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THE SMALL PRINT

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Your Commitment

I would encourage you to make a commitment to attending your group regularly. I realise that sometimes there are things that get in the way, but do prioritise studying the Bible with other. This will involve sacrifice, and effective use of your time, but I really believe that in doing so you will get the most out of studying the Bible and praying together in your small group.

Your Contribution

What you put into the group is going to determine what you get out of the group. I encourage you to contribute honestly to the discussion and workings of the group. I understand people come from different backgrounds with unique personalities & life experiences. But, we all have a big part to play, so I encourage you to be fully present and take ownership of your group.

Your Preparation – Topical Studies

These materials are primarily for use in preparing and/or leading the group discussions but they will also be useful in keeping your thoughts together in one place. The materials firstly provide you with a series of passages so that you can identify and highlight recurring themes and note down your own thoughts and questions. Secondly, the materials include questions designed to provoke thought and help you think through what the passages meant both at the time it was written and also what it means for us now. Because these studies are topical there is a much stronger progression of thought (than there would be in a passage based study). The dangers of such studies are that discussion can move quite far from the Bible. Yet this it is still the best way of covering broad subjects like this.

I would really encourage you to make use of these materials, as doing so will help you contribute and get the most out of the group discussions. The materials are however only “tools”, they are there to help you and not to restrict you or force you to think in a certain manner. I want to see God speaking to you through these passages and if the questions or notes do not help you, then don't use them!

I have included within these materials an introduction to the book. Make of this what you will, but I hope that it is helpful in getting you started with these studies!

Your Leadership

Here are some useful pointers in how to lead your Bible study group. Be aware that included in this study guide are more questions than you can possibly ask and/or answer in one session. They are not designed to be used rigidly, and there will rarely be a need to ask every question! Make sure that you spend some time praying at the start and ensure you read & re-read the passages as much as possible. In relation to the passages, then consider the suggested questions with an open mind. There is rarely “a single right answer” and I would encourage you to share your thoughts with your group.

I have also included a number of quotations from relevant Christian literature, most of which are readily available online if you want to do further thinking or study. My prayer is that as you study together you would grow to love Jesus and experience Him more deeply.

I would appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how to make these materials even better!

INTRODUCING “EXPERIENCING THE SPIRIT”

When you are writing a Bible series on “Experiencing the Spirit” it is very hard to know where to start. This issue has often been the cause of such contentious and debated issue that putting anything to paper feels like a dangerous game to play. I would encourage you to come to this series with an open mind and weigh up all that you hear, read and talk about during the series. I myself don't claim to have all the answers and neither do the theologians and commentators quoted within this booklet; even a brief comparison of different resources will convince you of that.

There are many diverse and complex issues regarding the Holy Spirit; though many of them are very controversial, they are nevertheless of uppermost importance to us. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is indispensable; His ministry has a crucial role to play in every aspect of our lives. We probably have some very strong convictions on many of these issues. However, what we need to do in these next eight studies is come afresh to Scripture and examine what it has to say about the Holy Spirit.

Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:19 says ‘do not put out the Spirit's fire.’ We can quench the Holy Spirit by resisting or undervaluing His work and by declining to yield to His influence. The picture Paul uses is of putting out a fire by pouring water on it. If we are not to put out the Spirit's fire then we must develop an understanding and appreciation of His ministry. We must also be aware of what the Holy Spirit is doing in each of our lives and our need to actively co-operate with Him in those things. We are firstly going to look at the personhood and ministry of the Holy Spirit and how we interact with Him.

“Some have questioned whether the Holy Spirit is indeed a distinct person, rather than just the “power” or “force” of God at work in the world. But the New Testament evidence is quite clear and strong. First are several verses...where the Holy Spirit is put in a coordinate relationship with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Ephesians 4:4-6, 1 Peter 1:2). Since the Father and Son are both persons, the coordinate expression strongly imitates that the Holy Spirit is a person also. Then there are places where the masculine pronoun he is applied to the Holy Spirit (John 14:26, 15:26, 16:13-14), which one would not expect from the rules of Greek grammar, for the word spirit is neuter, not masculine, and would ordinarily be referred to with the neuter pronoun ekeino. Moreover, the name counsellor or comforter (Parakletos) is a term commonly used to speak of a person who helps or gives comfort to another person or persons, but is used of the Holy Spirit in John's gospel (John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7).

Wayne Grudem, pg. 107, Bible Doctrine

Secondly, we will look at the resources that the Spirit gives to us in order to equip us to play our part in His mission. We will examine the whole issue of the spiritual gifts through the lens of Paul's teaching to the Corinthians. Paul is clear that the Spirit distributes gifts as He determines, and they are given for the building up for the church. We will also think about we are filled with the Spirit and wrestle a little with teaching on experiencing a so called second blessing. If we know and love Jesus, then having the Spirit is not optional. As John Stott says in the quote below, the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and hearts is the key marker of a believer.

“If we do not have Christ’s Spirit in us, we do not belong to Christ at all. This makes it plain that the gift of the Spirit is an initial and universal blessing, received when we first repent and believe in Jesus. Of course, there may be many further and richer experiences of the Spirit, and many fresh anointing of the Spirit for special tasks, but the personal indwelling of the Spirit is every believer’s privilege from the beginning.”

John Stott, pg.224, Message of Romans

Taken together, we could describe the Spirit’s ministry in terms of six major areas all of which bring glory to the Lord Jesus:

1. Teaching and revealing to us as Christians the definitive Revelation of Christ
2. Illuminating the minds and convicting the hearts of unbelievers so that they can receive and respond to this Revelation
3. Regeneration, giving people a new birth and a new relationship with the Saviour
4. Hope and assuring us that we are Christ’s forever with foretaste of heaven’s joy
5. Transforming us into the likeness of the Lord Jesus
6. Equipping and empowering us for service and mission through the Spirit’s witness and gifts

I really hope and pray that we all enjoy the studies and find them helpful. Below is a list of the background reading used for the series and I would commend them to you.

To Him be the glory,

Steve McClure October 2020

Further Reading

J.I. Packer, *Keep in step with the Spirit*, 1984, IVP
J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, 1993, IVP
Bruce Milne, *Know the Truth*, 1982, IVP
John Stott, *Baptism and Fullness*, 1975, IVP
D.A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 1987, Paternoster Press
Keith Warrington, *The Message of the Holy Spirit*, 2009, IVP
Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 1999, IVP
John Stott, *Evangelical Truth*, 1999, IVP
John Stott, *Manufacturing Truth, In Touch*, 1992, no 2
John Stott, *Message to the Romans*, 1994, IVP
Michael Green, *To Corinth with love*, 1982, Hodder

STUDY 1 – WHO IS THE SPIRIT? ESSENCE OF HIS MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will try to understand more fully who the Holy Spirit is (power vs person) and begin to focus in on the essence of His ministry. As we do so, our aim is to work through the implications of these truths in terms of how we interact with the Holy Spirit.

SETTING THE SCENE (MATT 3:16-17): How would you describe the Holy Spirit? From your knowledge of Scripture how does (or doesn't) the Bible describe the Holy Spirit? What is the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the rest of the Trinity (see also Matt 28:18-20)?

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POWER VS PERSON (LUKE 4:14, ACTS 10:37-38, JOHN 15:26): The Holy Spirit is usually referred to as a "He" rather than an "it" and is often described as doing interpersonal activities: would you tend to describe the Holy Spirit as "power" or "person", and what are the implications either way?

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WHO IS THE SPIRIT (JOHN 14:15-21 & 25-26)? How do you understand the titles given to the Spirit, e.g. "the Holy Spirit", "Counsellor/Advocate" (parakletos, literally 'one called alongside to help') and "the Spirit of truth"? How do these titles help us see that the "Holy Spirit" is a person and not a "thing"?

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PERSONALITY (ROM 8:27, 15:30, 1 COR 12:11, EPH 4:30, LUKE 10:21): How do these verses demonstrate that the Holy Spirit has characteristics of personality, e.g. mind, will and emotions? What are the implications for us of the fact that the Spirit can be grieved (Eph 4:30), lied to (Acts 5:3-4), insulted (Heb 10:29), blasphemed (Matt 12:31-32) and His fire can be put out (1 Thess 5:19)?

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PURPOSE (JOHN 14:15-21, ROMANS 8:26-27): In what sense is He “another” counsellor and how does Jesus fulfil His promise not to leave them as orphans but to come to them? What would you say is the essence or focal element in the Holy Spirit’s multi-faceted ministry? In what ways does the Spirit “mediate the presence of Jesus” (Packer, Knowing God) to us today?

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GLORIFYING JESUS (JOHN 16:12-15): How is the Spirit’s ministry like a floodlight (Additional Quotes 1)? How does the Holy Spirit (and His ministry among us) bring glory to Jesus? In what ways have you experienced this in your life?

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ABUSE OF POWER (ACTS 8:9-24): What can we learn from the account of Simon the Sorcerer about treating the Holy Spirit ‘as an impersonal tap of power’? How is the purpose and the essence of the Spirit’s ministry completely opposed to Simon’s desire for divine power?

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How would you contrast a person who sees the Spirit at their disposal with the person who makes themselves willing and available at the Spirit’s disposal?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: These truths are foundational to all that we have ahead of us in this series: how would you summarise essential lessons about who is the Spirit and what is the goal of His ministry? What shifts in understanding and/or practice are necessary as a result of this study?

IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Share about how the study has helped you understand more about the Holy Spirit (his personhood and personality) and the essence of His ministry in our lives. Pray that God would give us all humility as we work through these studies together this term.

MEMORY VERSES: MATTHEW 3:16-17

STUDY 2 – PROMISE AND FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will develop a framework of understanding about the work and promise of the Holy Spirit within the Old Testament, upon which to base a New Testament understanding of the Spirit. To help us understand what it means in practice to be filled with the Spirit.

SETTING THE SCENE: The Hebrew word for Spirit *rûah*, means ‘wind’ or ‘breath’. It’s a picture word, meaning invisible and life-giving power: how is this illustrated in Ezekiel 37:10? What is your understanding of how the Holy Spirit is portrayed in the Old Testament (see Genesis 1:2, 2:7, Psalm 33:6, 104:27-30, Job 26:13, 33:4)?

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OLD TESTAMENT PROMISE (JEREMIAH 31:31-34, EZEKIEL 11:19-20 & 36:25-27, JOEL 2:28-29): What do these passages promise about the ministry of the Spirit under the New Covenant?

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SPIRIT-FILLED MESSIAH: What do Isaiah 11:1-3, 42:1 & 61:1-2 (quoted & applied by Jesus to Himself in Luke 4:14-21) promise about the Messiah? What was the significance of Jesus’ baptism (Mark 1:9-13)? How should these promises impact how we understand the ministry of Jesus?

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FULFILMENT IN NEW TESTAMENT: When do you think that the fulfilment of these OT promises happened (John 7:37-39, 16:7 & 20:21-22 and Additional quotes 2)? Why or why not do you think we still have to wait for further fulfilment of these promises?

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FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT: In the OT, people were filled with the Spirit for particular tasks (e.g. Exodus 31:3, Deut 34:9) but this idea shifts in the NT. What do you think it means to be ‘filled with (or full of) the Spirit’? How is being filled with the Spirit different from being indwelt by the Spirit?

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Two Greek words *pleres* (meaning a settled disposition, e.g. Acts 6:3-8, 7:55. 11:24, 13:52, 11:24) & *pimplemi* (used on specific occasions, e.g. Acts 4:8-12, 29-31, 9:17-18): what lessons can we learn from the differences in these words? How does this impact your understanding of what it means to be filled with the Spirit?

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CONTUNAL FILLING: Why does Paul tell us in Ephesians 5:19-21 (*pleres*) to be filled and keep on being filled with the Spirit (Additional quotes 3)? What are the consequences of being filled with the Spirit? What has been your experience of being filled with the Spirit in the past?

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CHARACTERISED BY THE SPIRIT: John Stott, in answering the question ‘what are the marks of a person filled with the Spirit of God today?’ says “there can be no doubt that the chief evidence is moral not miraculous, and lies in the Spirit’s fruit not the Spirit’s gifts” (*Baptism and fullness, pg.54*). Would you tend to say that ‘being filled with the Spirit’ was characterised by ‘gifts’ or ‘fruit’? Why?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: Why is being ‘filled with the Spirit’ (in both usages) such a big deal? What might hold you back from asking God (remember James 4:2-3) to ‘be filled with the Spirit’? How helpful do you find this metaphor of “being filled with the Spirit”?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Share what you have learned about the Old Testament promises and Ne Testament fulfilment of the Holy Spirit. Pray for one another that you may live Spirit-filled lives and be filled afresh by the Holy Spirit today.

MEMORY VERSES: EPHESIANS 5:19-21

STUDY 3 – MINISTRY OF TRUTH; TEACHING, ILLUMINATION AND NEW BIRTH

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will think about the following aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit; (1) teaching and revealing Christ to us as believers, (2) illuminating the minds and convicting the hearts of unbelievers and (3) giving people new birth and a new relationship with the Saviour.

SETTING THE SCENE: Why is it so hard to understand the truth of God's Word on our own (See Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1:7-8)? At the outset of this study what is your experience of the Spirit illuminating your mind, convicting your heart and/or opening your heart to receive new birth?

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ILLUMINATING MINDS (1 COR 2:9-14): What is the Holy Spirit's role in illuminating people's minds to the Gospel? Why and how are we by nature blinded to the gospel and in need of a work of the Spirit in our lives (see also 1 Thess 1:4-5, 2 Cor 4:4 & 1 Cor 1:18)?

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What do you think Paul means when he says that 'the Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God' (1 Cor 2:10)? How does the Spirit help us to understand that which 'God has freely given us' (1 Cor 2:12)? How did the Holy Spirit help you to understand spiritual truth (1 Cor 2:13)?

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CONVICTING HEARTS (JOHN 16:8-11): Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would 'convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement': what do you think Jesus meant by this statement and how have you seen this ministry in practice?

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Living within a world that has no regard of God or sin, how does the Spirit's ministry of conviction encourage you in your evangelism? What sort of an impact do you think that a godly Christian life should have on those around us (2 Cor 2:15-16)? How did (and does) the Holy Spirit convict you?

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NEW BIRTH (JOHN 3:5-8): How would you describe new birth and how does it come about? How do you understand the analogy Jesus uses with Nicodemus of being born again? What do we learn from this birth analogy (who initiates it, when, why, how does it happen)?

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In v8 how do you understand Jesus' comparison of the Holy Spirit with the wind (blowing wherever it pleases)? What is the relationship between illumination, conviction & new birth (Additional quotes 4)?

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TEACHING TRUTH (JOHN 14:25-26 & 16:12-15): How do we distinguish between the application of Jesus' promise to teach and remind the disciples and the application for us today? Why does Jesus call the Holy Spirit the 'Spirit of truth' and how in practice does He 'guide us into all truth'?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER (EPH 6:17-18): What is the relationship between the Spirit of God and the Word of God (Additional quotes 5 & 6)? Why is this so important? How can we ensure that our hearts and minds are open to the Holy Spirit as He teaches, reminds and guides us into all truth?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Share about your experience (past & present) of the Holy Spirit illuminating your minds, convicting your hearts, giving you new birth and teaching, reminding and guiding you into all truth. Pray for humility, openness and receptiveness to the Spirit & the Word of God.

MEMORY VERSES: 1 THESSALONIANS 1:4-5

STUDY 4 – MINISTRY OF HOPE & ASSURANCE

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will think through the how the Holy Spirit gives us both assurance and hope. To this end we will think about what it means to be indwelt by the Spirit and how this in turn provides us with assurance and hope.

SETTING THE SCENE: What would you say characterises the human need for assurance and hope? Why are these ideas such a big deal and to what extent would you be looking to the Holy Spirit to impart them in your lives?

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INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT (JOHN 16:7 & ROMANS 8:9): What do you think Jesus meant that it was for the disciples 'good' that Jesus left them? How does the Spirit universalise and internalise the presence of Jesus in our lives? To what extent do you agree that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing mark of the people of God?

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ASSURANCE (ROM 8:12-17): To what extent do you think we can have assurance of faith? How do you really know that the Spirit lives inside you and that you are saved? What do these verses tell us about the Spirit's ministry of assurance in our lives? What does it mean to be 'led by the Spirit' (v15) and how does the Spirit testify with our spirit (v16) that we are God's children?

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Assurance is a huge theme in the letter of 1 John; how do the various extracts from this letter help us to understand how we know (and in particular how the Spirit helps us know) that we live in Christ (1 John 2:23-24, 2:4-6, 3:24, 4:13, 5:10)?

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DISTINGUISHING THE SPIRITS (1 JOHN 4:1-6): How do we distinguish between the spirits? How in practice do we determine whether something is from the 'Spirit of truth' or the 'spirit of falsehood' (v6)? What is your experience of testing the spirits; positive and negative?

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SPIRIT IS A SEAL, DEPOSIT & GUARANTEE (EPHESIANS 1:14): In what sense have we been marked in Christ with a seal (see also 2 Cor 1:22 & 5:1-5)? What is the significance of the Spirit being described as a deposit (down payment) and guarantee (Additional quotes 7)?

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THE HOPE OF GLORY: How do these analogies bring us hope? How else does the Holy Spirit give us (who are living between Christ's first and second comings) hope which 'does not disappoint' (Romans 5:2-5)? How has God poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom 5:5)?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: How would you summarise in your own words the lessons of this study? How have you experienced the Spirit's ministry of assurance in your life? How has (and does) the Spirit assure you of your identity in Christ and of the 'hope of glory'?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Share your struggles in this area of assurance and spend some time encouraging one another of what you are seeing the Spirit doing in one another's lives. Pray for each other that you would know the Spirit's ministry of hope and assurance in a deeper way.

MEMORY VERSES: 2 CORINTHIANS 1:21-22

STUDY 5 – MINISTRY OF TRANSFORMATION AND MISSION

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will think firstly about the Holy Spirit's ministry of transformation in our lives: specifically, how He works in us to produce fruit. Secondly, we will also think about how the Spirit equips and empowers us for co-labouring with Him in His mission.

SETTING THE SCENE: Many of our worship songs include lyrics about *surrendering* to God but this is no easy task. What is your understanding and experience of the inner conflict between the Holy Spirit living in us and our natural inclination to sin?

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INNER CONFLICT (GAL 5:16-25): How does Paul contrast living (or walking) by the Spirit with gratifying the desires of the sinful nature (sometimes translated the flesh)? What does Paul say is the fruit (or acts) of each?

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Paul exhorts the Galatians to 'live by the Spirit' (v16), be 'led by the Spirit' (v18) and 'keep in step with the Spirit' (v25), what do you understand these commands to mean and what do they look like in practice? What does Galatians 6:7-8 say about the consequences either way?

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FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: The fruit of the Spirit are described as one nine-fold fruit that comes together (rather than individually): to what extent do you think this fruit naturally ripens under the indwelling influence of the Holy Spirit? What connection do you see between fruit and living by the Spirit?

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THE WAY OF HOLINESS (ROMANS 12:2, 2 COR 3:18): In what sense is holiness (sanctification) instantaneous, a process and a future reality? How would you differentiate between our responsibility and the Holy Spirit's ministry in our transformation (metamorphosis) into the likeness of Christ?

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How do you respond to Additional quotes 8 which try to explain the practicalities of how the Holy Spirit works in us and through us in this process of holiness?
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EMPOWERED FOR SERVICE: In what sense does the Spirit prepare us, equip us and empower us for service (Acts 4:29-31 and also Matt 10:17-18)? How does the 'Spirit of truth' testify about Jesus (John 15:26-27 and also John 7:37-39)? How do you think Paul's message came with a demonstration of the Spirit's power (1 Cor 2:1-5)? How are these things an encouragement to us in our service?
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SPIRIT AND PRAYER (ROM 8:26-27): How does the Spirit help us in our prayers by interceding 'for us with groans that words cannot express'? What does it mean to 'pray in the Spirit' (Eph 6:17-18)?
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FOR THE COMMON GOOD (1 COR 12:7-8): How are gifts of the Spirit (to be discussed in sessions 6-7) a vital part of the Spirit's ministry of equipping and empowering us for service?
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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: In all these things we have looked at; how does the Spirit bring glory to Jesus Christ? To what extent does it encourage you to think that these things are a work of the Spirit?
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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Pray for one another that God would transform you into the likeness of Christ. To that end ask also that God would help you play your part to keep in step with the Spirit. Pray too tat God would equip and empower you for the mission He has given us.

MEMORY VERSES: GALATIANS 5:22-23

STUDY 6 – SPIRITUAL GIFTS PART 1

INTRODUCTION: In this study we will develop a Biblical understanding of the diversity of the gifts God sovereignly distributes to us for the edification of the Church, and the relevance they have for us today. Unsurprisingly the key text here (and in study 7) is 1 Corinthians 12-14.

SETTING THE SCENE: What kind of reaction does the subject of Spiritual gifts evoke for you (enthusiastic, confused, mystified, daunted etc) and why? Specifically, for these next few studies, what are your expectations for you would like to be covering?

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IGNORANCE & UNITY (1 COR 12:1-3): What is the significance of the words Paul uses for 'spiritual here (Greek *Charisma* meaning grace-gift)? How do Paul's words here speak both to the non-*charismatic's* (the sceptics) and the *charismatic's* (the fanatics) at Corinth?

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How were the horizons of both groups too narrow? How significant is the contrast between what 'those who do have' and what 'those who don't have' the Spirit say about Jesus? In what sense was this Paul's test for authentic spirituality (v3) rather than anything else that might have been suggested?

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DIVERSITY (1 COR 12:4-11): How would you define a spiritual gift (Additional quotes 9)? What is Paul saying about the diversity of gifting and why is this so important? What are the implications of "one Spirit" being the source of the distribution of each gift? What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

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How would you distinguish between the gifts mentioned in v8-11 (for prophecy & tongues wait until the next study)? Why do you think we are told so little about these gifts (See also v28, Eph 4:11, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Rom 12:6-8)? Are there any conclusions we should or shouldn't draw from these lists?

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What is the difference between a spiritual gift and a natural ability? What gifts has the Spirit distributed to you? How can you find out what your gifts are? Can gifts vary in strength; why or why not? (nb: In Rom 12:6 Paul says to use prophecy 'in proportion to your faith' and he encourages Timothy not to neglect his gift (1 Tim 4:14) but to fan it into flame (2 Tim 1:6).

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BAPTISED INTO ONE BODY (1 COR 12:12-30): In what sense have we been baptised by one Spirit into one body? What is the significance of the body metaphor in the area of spiritual gifts? What do you think was happening in the Corinthian church to make Paul say these things? What are the consequences of the answer to Paul's questions in v27-30 being 'no'?

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LOVE (1 COR 12:31-13:7): Why does Paul place this chapter between two chapters on gifts? In what sense should we 'eagerly desire' or after seek spiritual gifts and what are the 'greater gifts'? How do you understand Paul's argument that without love he is nothing (Additional quotes 10)?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER (1 COR 13:8-13): How is love superior to spiritual gifts? Will there be spiritual gifts in heaven; why or why not? What does Paul mean by *perfection* and the *imperfect* (e.g. Second Coming or completion of Scripture)? Why does Paul say that love is the greatest?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Talk about the implications of what you have learned about spiritual gifts from this study. Encourage one another in the part that you (with the gifting God has given you) play in the body of Christ. Pray that above all you would be characterised by love.

MEMORY VERSES: 1 PETER 4:10-11

STUDY 7 – SPIRITUAL GIFTS PART 2

INTRODUCTION: It's important to keep in mind what we have covered in chapters 12-13 as we look more closely at the gifts of prophecy & tongues (including its interpretation). We will think about how to define them and their purpose before considering the implications for their usage in the Body of Christ.

SETTING THE SCENE: Before you read chapter 14 have a first stab at the following questions: How would you define the gifts of prophecy (how does it compare with Old Testament prophecy) and tongues (is it more like self-controlled speech or ecstatic speech)? How do interpreted tongues differ from the gift of prophecy? How is prophecy different from teaching?

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DEFINING TONGUES: What essentially are the gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues (Additional quotes 11)? Is speaking in tongues self-controlled speech or ecstatic speech? How does the interpreted gift of tongues differ from the gift of prophecy? How could tongues be falsified?

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DEFINING PROPHECY: Green writes that prophecy is “a word from the Lord through a member of His body, inspired by His Spirit and given to build up the rest of the body.” *To Corinth with love, pg. 74*. Do you agree with this definition? Why or why not? (See also Additional Quotes 12)

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How was “prophecy” understood, both in the Old Testament and also at the time of Jesus? How do we see the gift of prophecy in action today and how does it differ from teaching?

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EDIFICATION IS KEY (14:1-12): What is Paul's chief concern in these verses? How do the gifts of tongues and prophecy differ in the area of building up the church? What's the link between intelligibility and edification? How should we eagerly desire (v1) and excel (v12) in gifts that build up the Church?

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR TONGUES (14:13-19): What instructions does Paul lay down for the speaker of tongues? What does it mean to pray or sing with the Spirit (v14)? What are the implications of Paul's insistence upon intelligibility for the use of his own gift of tongues; public or private usage?

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BELIEVERS OR UNBELIEVERS (14:20-25): How were the Corinthians being childish (v20)? How should we understand the idea of tongues and prophecy being signs to believers and unbelievers? How do we explain the apparent contradiction? How do we apply these verses to the use of these gifts in relation to unbelievers?

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ORDER (14:26-36): What should we conclude from v24 & 31 about who can prophecy? How does Paul set out his instructions for order within the Church? What implications do these verses have for our Church services?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER (14:37-40): How does Paul conclude these chapters by way of warnings and instructions? What should our response be to all that we have looked at on Spiritual gifts in Corinthians 12-14? Is there anything we need to go away and put into practice?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Share about what God has been saying to you about the importance of intelligibility, edification and order in the usage of our God-given Spiritual gifts. Ask God to enable you to follow the way of love and eagerly desire those gifts which build up others.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 14:1

STUDY 8 – EXPERIENCING THE SPIRIT

INTRODUCTION: Building on lessons from 1 Cor 12-14 we're going to look at some key parts of Acts to consolidate what we've learned and develop a Biblical view of Baptism of the Spirit. Remember Acts is *descriptive* not *prescriptive* and that it's more likely to be *extraordinary* rather than *ordinary*.

SETTING THE SCENE: Thinking back over the studies (and the different ministries of the Spirit) what would you say have been your most significant experience of the Spirit? What would you say would be a healthy (and unhealthy) expectation for what He might do in our lives?

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BAPTISM WITH THE SPIRIT (MATT 3:11, MARK 1:8, LUKE 3:16 & JOHN 1:33): All of the gospels record John the Baptist prophesying that Jesus would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire': what is your initial reaction to this phrase and the way that it is used? What viewpoints are you aware of concerning the nature of this baptism? How does Paul's only usage in 1 Cor 12:13 add to this?

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A SECOND BLESSING (ACTS 1:4-8): Some argue this baptism constitutes a 2nd experience typically evidenced by the gift of tongues: how does this sit with this passage in Acts as Jesus tells them to wait for the Spirit to come before witnessing in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth?

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TO JERUSALEM (ACTS 2:1-21): To what extent do you think John the Baptist's prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost? What is the significance of the fact that Peter concludes that the tongues were a fulfilment of Joel 2:17-18? Did this event constitute what we might call a *new norm* or a *unique event*?

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TO JUDEA & SAMARIA (ACTS 8:9-25): At what point would you say that the Samaritans become Christians? Why might receiving the Spirit have been withheld here? Why did the Eunuch (8:26-40) not receive similar treatment? Did this event constitute a *new norm* or a *unique event*?

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TO THE GENTILES (ACTS 10-11): What is the sequence of events for this group of Gentiles (see esp. 10:34-48 & 11:15-18)? Acts 11:16 also quotes John prophecy: what does it show us about whether this was the *new norm* or a *unique event*? Why might the Spirit have been withheld this time?

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AN ANOMALY – JOHN’S DISCIPLES (ACTS 18:24-19:7): This is the key passage used to justify a two-stage experience of the Spirit; how might what happens here and how do you understand the terminology used esp. v1-2 (e.g. disciples, receiving the Spirit)? When did these Ephesian disciples become Christians; what is so special about them?

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ONE BAPTISM OR TWO? What can we conclude about the evidence for a two-stage experience of receiving the Spirit attested by tongues? Whichever view we take what are the dangers of this teaching for Christian unity (Additional Quotes 13)?

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DRAWING IT TOGETHER: Even if we conclude that 'baptism with the Spirit' is not referring to a 2nd blessing we must still recognise the experiential side to our faith. What have we learned about what it means to desire, pursue and most importantly not quench such experiences?

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IDEAS FOR PRAYER: Thank God for the awesome gift of His Holy Spirit and ask Him to continue to fill you with His Spirit day by day. Pray for humility and unity as we approach a thorny issue like this and seek to honour God in both our theology and application thereof.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:13

ADDITIONAL QUOTATIONS

QUOTE 1: “The Holy Spirit’s distinctive role is to fulfil what we may call a floodlight ministry in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ...When flood-lighting is well done, the flood lights are so placed that you do not see them; you are not in fact supposed to see where the light is coming from; what you are meant to see is just the building on which the floodlights are trained...This perfectly illustrates the Spirit’s new covenant role. He is, so to speak, the hidden floodlight shining on the Saviour. Or think of it this way. It is as if the Spirit stands behind us, throwing light over our shoulder, on Jesus, who stands facing us. The Spirit’s message to us is never, “Look at me; listen to me; come to me; get to know me,” but always “Look at him, and see his glory, listen to him, and hear his word, go to him, and have life, get to know him, and taste his gift of joy and peace.” *Packer, pg. 66, Keep in step with the Spirit.*

QUOTE 2: “The Spirit’s full Paraclete ministry began on Pentecost morning, following Jesus’ ascension (Acts 2:1-4). John the Baptist had foretold that Jesus would baptise in the Spirit (Mark 1:8, John 1:33), according to the OT promise of an outpouring of God’s Spirit in the last days (Joel 2:28-32, Jeremiah 31:31-34), and Jesus had repeated the promise (Acts 1:4-5). The significance of Pentecost morning was twofold: it marked the opening of the final era of world history before Christ’s return, and as compared with the OT era, it marked a tremendous enhancing of the Spirit’s ministry and the experience of being alive to God.” *Packer, pg. 145, Concise Theology*

QUOTE 3: “Fill is plainly a metaphor and it fundamentally misleads if pressed literally, as though the human objects of the Spirit’s ministry were reduced to impersonal receptacles, and the blessed Spirit himself to spiritual substance...To be filled with the Spirit implies that the Spirit is the dominant influence in our behaviour”...“since the Spirit who ‘fills’ the believer is the same Holy Spirit whose work is sanctification, the marks of His ‘filling’ will be our likeness to Christ”...“the verb used in Ephesians 5:18 is in the continuous sense: ‘go on being filled with the Spirit’, not ‘have a critical experience of the Spirit’.” *Milne, pg. 198, 247, Know the Truth*

QUOTE 4: “Jesus indicates that entrance into the Kingdom of God involves a radical course of action that cannot be self-initiated; it needs the involvement of the Spirit. Indeed, the birth imagery implies passivity on the part of the one being born and thus entering the kingdom of God. The active agent is the Spirit. Thereafter, those to whom the Spirit gives birth bear the familial characteristics and nature of the Spirit (3:6). They become members not just of a new kingdom but of a new family. They are people of the Spirit, with all the privileges and responsibilities associated with that status. Most significantly, this means that insofar as they engage in a relationship with the Spirit, it is anticipated as involving an experiential dimension.” *Warrington, pg. 88, The message of the Holy Spirit*

QUOTE 5: “So those who would live under the authority of the Spirit must bow before the Word as the Spirit’s textbook, while those who would live under the authority of scripture must seek the Spirit as its interpreter.” *Packer, Keep in Step with the Spirit, pg. 240*

QUOTE 6: “The Word of God is the Spirit’s sword. The Spirit without the word is weaponless; the word without the Spirit is powerless.” *Stott, Message of Thessalonians, pg. 34*

QUOTE 7: “Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as a seal (2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 4:30), a word in the first century world for something which guaranteed security, such as a locking device (Mt 27:66, Rev 20:3). It had the allied meaning of a mark of ownership. Something of this is expressed in the Spirit’s coming on Jesus at his baptism, when the Father affirmed Jesus as his own Son (Mt 3:1f). It is applied to

Christian experience in verses concerning the Spirit's witness within the believer (Rom 8:16, Gal 4:6, 1 John 3:24, 4:13, 5:10)." *Milne, pg. 239, Know the Truth*

QUOTE 8: "Holiness is the fruit of the Spirit, displayed as the Christian walks by the Spirit (Gal 5:16,22,25). Holiness is consecrated closeness to God. Holiness is in essence obeying God, living to God and for God, imitating God, keeping his law, taking his side against sin, doing righteousness, performing good works, following Christ's teaching and example, worshipping God in the Spirit, loving and serving God and men out of reverence for Christ. In relation to God holiness takes the form of a single-minded passion to please by love and loyalty, devotion and praise. In relation to sin, it takes the form of a resistance movement, a discipline of not gratifying the desires of the flesh, but of putting to death the deeds of the body (Gal 5:16, Rom 8:13). Holiness is, in a word, God-taught, Spirit-wrought Christian likeness, the sin and substance of committed discipleship, the demonstration of faith working by love, the responsive outflow in righteousness of supernatural life from the hearts of those who are born again. *Packer, pg. 96-97, Keep in step with the Spirit*

QUOTE 9: "We may define spiritual gifts as follows: *A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.* This broad definition includes both gifts that are related to natural abilities (such as teaching, showing mercy, or administration) and gifts that seem to be more "miraculous" and less related to natural abilities (such as prophecy, healing, or distinguishing between spirits). The reason for this is that when Paul lists spiritual gifts (in Rom 12:6-8, 1 Cor 7:7, 12:8-10, 28; & Eph 4:11) he includes both kinds of gifts. Yet not every natural ability that people have is included here, because Paul is clear that all spiritual gifts must be empowered "by one and the same Spirit" (1 Cor 12:11), that they are given "for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7), and that they are all to be used for "edification" (1 Cor 14:26), or for building up the church...Spiritual gifts are given to equip the church to carry out its ministry until Christ returns." *Grudem, pg. 396-7, Bible Doctrine*

QUOTE 10: "We immediately understand not only how love can serve as 'the more excellent way', but also how the presence of love as Paul is describing it, is an infallible test of the Spirit's presence. The various spiritual gifts as important as they are and as highly as Paul values them, can all be duplicated by pagans. This quality of love cannot be." *Carson, pg. 65, Showing the Spirit*

QUOTE 11: "Speaking in tongues is prayer or praise spoken in syllables not understood by the speaker. This definition indicates that speaking in tongues is primarily speech directed *toward God* (that is prayer or praise). Therefore it is unlike the gift of prophecy, which frequently consists of messages directed *from God* toward people in the church. Paul says, "One who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God" (1 Cor 14:2), and if there is no interpreter present at the church service, Paul says that someone who has a gift of speaking in tongues should "keep silence in church and speak to himself and to God (1 Cor 14:28)...we may define the gift of interpretation as reporting to the church the general meaning of something spoken in tongues." *Grudem, pg. 421-3, Bible Doctrine*

QUOTE 12: "A fresh examination of the NT teaching on this gift will show that it should be defined not as 'predicting the future', nor as 'proclaiming a word from the Lord', nor as powerful teaching' but rather as 'telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind' " *Grudem, pg.408, Bible Doctrine*

QUOTE 13: "Many non-charismatics, reacting against the excesses of second blessing theology, have so resolutely set themselves to be open only to the one endowment connected with their conversion that no further pursuit of the Lord or of profound spiritual experience is thought wise or necessary. But there is firm, Biblical evidence of NT believers who seek the Lord in disciplined, self-abased prayer and who consequently come into a distinct, further experience of the Spirit." *Carson, pg. 159, Showing the Spirit*

MEMORY VERSES

STUDY 1: WHO IS THE SPIRIT, THE ESSENCE OF HIS MINISTRY

¹⁶As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” **Matthew 3:16-17**

STUDY 2: THE PERSON AND FILLING OF THE SPIRIT

¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. ¹⁹Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. ²⁰Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. **Ephesians 5:18-21**

STUDY 3: MINISTRY OF TEACHING, ILLUMINATION & NEW BIRTH

⁴For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction.

1 Thessalonians 1:4-5

STUDY 4: MINISTRY OF ASSURANCE AND HOPE

²¹Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²²set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

STUDY 5: TRANSFORMATION AND MISSION

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. **Galatians 5:22-23**

STUDY 6: SPIRITUAL GIFTS PART 1

¹⁰Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. ¹¹If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ...**1 Peter 4:10-11**

STUDY 7: SPIRITUAL GIFTS PART 2

So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church.

1 Corinthians 14:12

STUDY 8: EXPERIENCING THE SPIRIT

For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. **1 Corinthians 12:13**