



Session 1: Spirit lyfe introduction



Stepping into the Spirit lyfe stream...

The Spirit lyfe zone focuses on the power of God’s Spirit moving in and through us. We want to live a life immersed in, empowered by, and under the direction of God. Just as a car requires fuel to run, and our bodies require food for survival, so our souls rely upon the Spirit of God. Through the Spirit we are able to do more than we could under our own steam. Through the Spirit we are spurred on to pray, to meditate and study the Word. We are enabled to live an authentic life, to develop compassionate hearts, to share our faith and to live with God every day. It is the Spirit that enables us to grow in love, joy and peace.

Previous session review

- Recap on your experience of the previous challenge. How did it go? Was it helpful?
- If you weren’t able to try the challenge, explore the question: Where and how did you experience God last week?

Read

Read the passage several times through, slowly and prayerfully. It might help to use your imagination to picture the scene. At the end of the text you will find helpful background information in our ‘Setting the Scene’ section. As you read, look out for shockers and blockers.

Shockers – a phrase, word, image or something from the text that resonates, stands out or connects with you.

Blockers – something from the text that raises questions for you.

John 14.15–17, 25-26, 15.26-27, 16.7-15

Jesus said to his disciples: If you love me, you will do as I command. Then I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you. The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don’t see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you...

I have told you these things while I am still with you. But the Holy Spirit will come and help you, because the Father will send the Spirit to take my place. The Spirit will teach you everything and will remind you of what I said while I was with you...

I will send you the Spirit who comes from the Father and shows what is true. The Spirit will help you and will tell you about me. Then you will also tell others about me, because you have been with me from the beginning...

But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin and God’s justice and the judgment. The Spirit will show them that they are wrong about sin, because they didn’t have faith in me. They are wrong about God’s justice, because I am going to the Father, and you won’t see me again. And they are wrong about the judgment, because God has already judged the ruler of this world. I have much more to say to you, but right now it would be more than you could understand. The Spirit shows what is true and will come and

Setting the scene:

- Jesus is preparing his disciples before he leaves them. But he has good news and great comfort to offer them too: the Holy Spirit will dwell among them and bring strength and help.
- The idea of the Holy Spirit dwelling in people in a constant way was new. Previously the Holy Spirit would come, engage and go.
- The Holy Spirit’s character and action affirms what is good, true, holy and pure. The Holy Spirit also teaches us, revealing more about God, helping us to pray, discern spiritual gifts, how to use them and grow in the fruit of the Spirit (see Galatians 5.22).
- These passages paint a vivid picture of the Holy Spirit’s role and work. They also reveal that we can experience God’s enduring presence in our lives.

guide you into the full truth. The Spirit doesn't speak on his own. He will tell you only what he has heard from me, and he will let you know what is going to happen. The Spirit will bring glory to me by taking my message and telling it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine. That is why I have said that the Spirit takes my message and tells it to you.

Contemporary English Version (CEV)

Reflect

After you have all had time to read the text, pause and be still to listen to God through the Scriptures.

Begin your reflection time by each naming your shockers and blockers. Listen carefully to each other, share your thoughts and reflect on this passage together.

You might also like to explore these questions:

Q1. The Holy Spirit is often said to be the 'forgotten' person of the Trinity – why might this be?

Q2. In what ways have you experienced the power of the Holy Spirit?

“We do not live our lives
“under our own steam”;
we were never created
to do so. We were
created to live our lives in
cooperation with another
reality... quite simply life
in and through the Spirit.”

Richard J Foster,
Streams of Living Water

Respond

Spirit lyfe challenge: As a group, create a challenge that will help you increase your interaction with the Holy Spirit this week or choose one of the following challenges.

Challenge ideas:

1. Asking

In Luke 11.13, Jesus explains that we should ask God for the Holy Spirit. If you feel that God's Spirit has taken a back seat in your life, spend some time asking God to give you his Spirit. You could ask God to help you grow in awareness of his dynamic, life-giving, energising presence as he works in and through you.

2. Reflection

Galatians 5.22-23a lists nine fruits of the spirit such as love, joy and peace. This week, set aside 15 minutes each day to read and meditate on each of the fruits described in those verses. Ask God to show you which ones represent your most significant areas for growth. Ask the Holy Spirit to begin to work in your heart and mind. God is faithful, and he will transform us as we intentionally spend time with him becoming increasingly open to the Holy Spirit's work in every part of our lives.

3. Lectio

One of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to be our teacher, helping us to connect with God when we read the Bible. This week, find a quiet space, and choose a passage from the Bible to reflect on. Read carefully and slowly, then close your eyes and wait for a word, phrase or picture to come to mind. Take some deep breaths, wait awhile and then ask the Spirit to reveal what he might want to tell you through what he has brought to mind.

Group Prayer

You might like to commit to praying for each person in the group this week as you look to explore and experience more of the Spirit.