

# Further Steps – Week 6 – The Holy Spirit

Connect and review	Notes
<p>Last week, we explored the significance of the Bible to our lives as Christians – how is that journey going? Have you had any new thoughts, or tried any new approaches to reading and studying?</p> <p>This week, we are going to discover a bit more about who the Holy Spirit is. When we accept Jesus as Saviour, He sends the Holy Spirit to live within us and help us become like Jesus.</p> <p>It is important to realise that the Holy Spirit is not just a force (like the ‘force’ in the <i>Star Wars</i> movies). He is actually God Himself. There is only one God, but He known as “God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.”</p> <p>We shall look briefly at what the Bible reveals about these three ‘persons’ of God, which might throw some light on Who the Holy Spirit really is.</p>	
Inspire and engage	
<p><b>1. <u>God, the Father.</u></b></p> <p>Reading: <a href="#">Matthew 11 verse 27</a>.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> ‘God the Father’ refers to God in heaven, ruling over all of His Creation. We have already seen (in Sessions 2 and 3) that, once we are <i>born again</i>, we can relate to God as our Father. Jesus always spoke of God as His Father, but His relationship was unique (as we shall see shortly).</p> <p><i>Question 1:</i> Read the <a href="#">1<sup>st</sup> Letter of John, Chapter 3 verse 1</a>. What characteristic of God the Father is spoken of here?</p> <p><i>Thought:</i> Those who, sadly, do not enjoy a good relationship with their human father may struggle to appreciate the loving nature of the Heavenly Father.</p> <p><b>2. <u>God, the Son.</u></b></p> <p>Readings: <a href="#">Hebrews 1 verses 1-3 and John 10 verse 30</a>.</p> <p><i>Comment:</i> ‘God the Son’ refers to God as we know Him on the human level. For a while God lived on earth as a man whom people could see and whom we can visualise. His name is Jesus. As Jesus was fully obedient to His Father in heaven, we can learn of God’s character through what we read and know of the character of Jesus. As Jesus Himself told His disciple Philip “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14 verse 9).</p> <p>Readings: <a href="#">John 17 verse 5 and John 16 verse 17</a>.</p> <p><i>Questions 2,3:</i> Jesus is no longer here in the flesh, but He is still alive in the spirit. According to these two Scriptures, where was He before He came to earth, and where is He now?</p> <p><i>Exercise:</i> What characteristics of God do you think are most evident in the following actions of Jesus, selected from the list below? (There is no need to turn to the Bible verses unless you need to.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) He forgave people’s sins. (John 8 verse 11)</li> <li>b) He healed those who were suffering. (Matthew 14 verse 14)</li> <li>c) Sinless and truthful. (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2 verse 22)</li> <li>d) Knowing who would betray Him. (John 6 verse 64)</li> <li>e) He died to save us. (John 15 verse 13)</li> </ul> <p>Characteristics: All knowing                      Compassionate                      Loving  Merciful    Perfect</p> <p><b>3. <u>God, the Holy Spirit.</u></b></p>	

Readings: [John 16 verse 7](#), [Acts 2 verses 1-4](#) and [Acts 2 verse 38](#).

*Comment:* The *Holy Spirit* refers to God's presence and activity everywhere. He is especially present in the lives of Christians and active in and through us to accomplish what we cannot do ourselves. Ten days after Jesus had left this earth and gone back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us in His place. (In John 16 He is called 'Counsellor,' 'Comforter' 'Helper' or 'Advocate', depending on the translation.)

*Question 4:* Jesus had said it would be of benefit if He were to go away so that He could send the Holy Spirit in His place. The Church expanded rapidly across many lands through the preaching of Spirit-filled Christians. Why do you think Christians could accomplish this faster than Jesus?

## Explore and apply

### Explore

*Comment:* Just four of the many things that the Holy Spirit enables Christians to do are:

- (a) To learn and recall the teaching of Jesus. Read [John 14 verse 26](#).
- (b) To witness, i.e. to give evidence of the reality of the truth of the claims of Jesus. Read [Acts 1 verse 8](#).

*Question:* Witness is usually through testimony (telling others of what Jesus has done for you). But how will people know you are telling the truth?

- (c) To help the Church function and grow, by using abilities given by the Spirit. Read [1st Corinthians 12 verses 4-11](#).

*Comment:* These abilities are called *Gifts of the Spirit*: 'gifts,' because they are given by God, not the products of human intellect or skill. They can be used outside the Church, but they are primarily to help in worship and ministry.

- (d) To develop a Christlike character. The Bible calls these characteristics *Fruit of the Spirit*. Read [Galatians 5 verses 22-23](#).

*Thought:* Fruit on a tree takes time to grow and develop. So too might the Fruit of the Spirit.

### Apply

*Discussion:* Read John 15 verses 5-8. How can we help the Fruit of the Spirit grow in our lives? Conversely, what might we do that could hinder its development?

## Reflect and review

*Personal reflection:* Consider the fruits of the Spirit. What needs to grow? What could we submit/surrender/ask so that this can happen?

*Suggested activity:* be reflective this week. Reflect back and see how the Holy Spirit has helped you – and ask Him before the day starts! Consider and re-read the verses about the fruit of the Spirit. What is growing inside of you?