

Week Two Training Tips: The Ultimate Supplement The Holy Spirit

personal / group study for use with the message on January 23, 24, 2010

Use these tips as a Monday through Friday study guide.

Introduction.

While the spiritual growth process requires discipline, commitment and effort on the part of the believer, we are not left entirely to ourselves. God has placed His Spirit within us to empower us to live as he wants us to live. Many believers live without tapping daily into the Spirit's power. We need to know who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does, and how to "walk in the power of the Spirit".

Read.

Day 6: Get to know the Holy Spirit. Study the passages listed below.

The Holy Spirit is a Person, not a force, or a power, or a substance. He is the third Person of the Trinity. Yet, many Christians live in total neglect of the Holy Spirit. Take some time to get to know the Holy Spirit this week. You can't live without Him! Take a look at the following verses.

He inspired the Word of God (2Peter 1:20,21).
 He makes you alive to God (Titus 3:5).
 He illumines the Bible for you as your read it (John 16:13).
 He teaches you the things of God (1Corinthians 2:12).
 He prays for you when you don't know what to pray (Romans 8:26,27).
 He convicts you when you are sinning (John 16:8).
 He gives spiritual gifts to you for serving (1Corinthians 12:7).
 He fills you with hope in times of trouble (Romans 15:13).
 He washes you with spiritual cleansing (1Corinthians 6:11).
 He produces godly character in your life (Galatians 5:16-25).
 He seals and secures you as God's child (Ephesians 1:13).
 He creates harmony in the family of God (Ephesians 4:3).
 He gives you boldness in living for Christ (Philippians 1:19).
 He creates an atmosphere of true worship (Philippians 3:3).
 He brings about true love in the body of Christ (Colossians 1:8).
 He produces joy in the midst of suffering (1Thessalonians 1:6).
 He gives special power to endure persecution (1Peter 4:14).
 He empowers your testimony for Christ (Acts 4:31).
 He empowers you for everyday living (Ephesians 5:18).
 He can be grieved when you disobey His promptings (Ephesians 4:30).
 He can be quenched when you ignore His workings (1Thessalonians 5:19).

The best book I have ever read on the Holy Spirit is, *The Wonderful Spirit-filled Life*, by Charles Stanley. I highly recommend that you put this on your 'must read' list.

Day 7: See what Jesus said about the Holy Spirit. Read John 13-17.

On the last night of His life Jesus gathered alone with His disciples in the upper room. He began teaching them about how they would live after He was gone (John chapters 13-17). He was giving them their "marching orders" for life after He left. He instructed them concerning many things. But one of His recurring themes was that He would send them the Holy Spirit who would be their Helper so that they could live the kind of lives that God wanted them to live. He said:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you (John 14:16,17).

Half a dozen times that night He talked about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He used a Greek word to describe the Spirit. The word "Paraclete" means "one called alongside to help." One called alongside to empower. To encourage. To embolden. To equip.

In John 14:17 Jesus points to that day when the Holy Spirit would come and live inside of His followers. It would be such a revolutionary change in their whole way of life that Jesus actually said it was to their advantage that He should go away so that the Holy Spirit could come and begin His work in them:

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you (John 16:7).

The Holy Spirit was so important that Jesus told His disciples not to even try to live life without Him. He said,

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49).

He did not tell them to go out and attempt to live the Christian life in their own human strength. He told them to wait until they were clothed with God's power, and then they could go out and try to change the world. If you want to go the extra mile in your study/training this week, make it your goal to read all of John chapters 13-17 (the "Upper Room Discourse") where Jesus was giving His final marching orders to the disciples. Take note of everything that Jesus said about the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit. You will learn a lot, and you will see just how important the Holy Spirit was in Jesus' mind!

Day 8: Are you living empowered, or in your own strength??? Read Romans 7 & 8.

Introducing his Letters to Young Churches J. B. Phillips states:

"The great difference between present-day Christianity and that in these letters, is that, to us, it is primarily a performance; to them it was a real experience. We reduce the Christian religion to a code . . . a rule of heart and life. To them it was quite plainly the invasion of their lives by a new quality of life altogether." J. B. Phillips

The invasion of their lives by a new quality of life. That's what happened to the early church. Their lives were invaded by the power of the Holy Spirit. And the impact they made on their world in just one generation testifies to the fact that they were living and ministering in the power of the Spirit! As you read Romans 7, can you relate to the struggle Paul describes in his own experience? (Isn't it comforting to know that he also experienced failure?) Read Romans 8. Look at the emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. What do you think is the key verse in this section? Read all the way to the end of Romans 8. This chapter is one of the mountaintops of the New Testament. Personally, it is one of my favorite chapters in the whole Bible.

Day 9: The fruit of the Spirit. Read Galatians 5.

The Holy Spirit invaded the coal mines of Wales. There was a great spiritual revival that took place in Wales at the turn of the 20th century. 100,000 people were added to churches. But something astounding happened in the behavior of people when the Holy Spirit began to invade their lives. Drunkenness was immediately cut in half. Crime was so far down that judges were presented with white gloves signifying that there were no cases to consider. They had to lay off police. And stoppages occurred in the coal mines, not due to problems between management and labor, but because so many foul-mouthed miners were being transformed by the power of God that their vocabulary changed and the horses used to haul the coal trucks could no longer understand what was being said to them and transportation ground to a halt.

Whenever and wherever people begin to take heed to the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, awesome changes occur. In people. In character. In communities. In the number of conversions. In service opportunities. In life missions.

But it never happens where people neglect and evade the Holy Spirit. He is the ignored person of the Trinity. Most Christians don't know who the Holy Spirit is, what the Holy Spirit does, why the Holy Spirit is critical to the Christian life, or how to draw on the power of the Holy Spirit.

Study Galatians 5:16-25 in detail. Read it carefully. Mark it up if necessary. You need to master the concept of the Spirit-filled life. Clearly, Paul's idea of living a victorious Christian life is NOT you pulling yourselves up by your bootstraps and trying to put on a better performance. The answer is living by the Spirit; being led by the Spirit; keeping in step with the Spirit. Bearing fruit by the Spirit.

Jesus said virtually the same thing on His last night . . .

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:4,5).

Branches don't produce fruit by themselves. They just bear fruit by staying attached to the vine. Jesus was telling the disciples that they would need to stay firmly attached to Him in order to bear fruit.

It is so critical that we learn to walk in the Spirit. I can say that you will never succeed in the Christian life if you don't tap into the power of the Spirit.

Day 10: Being 'filled' with the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18. (Why not read the whole chapter!)

Now let me make an important distinction here, because many people go wrong in their thinking about the Spirit right at this point. They say, “I knew it! I need to GET the Holy Spirit.” No, that's not it. You don't need to get the Spirit. If you are a Christian then you already have all of the Spirit you will ever get.

I am telling you that the Holy Spirit needs to GET YOU! The Holy Spirit is resident in you, if you are a Christian. But He may not be president within you. And that is the key to experiencing His power. The key is not you getting more of the Holy Spirit. The key is letting the Holy Spirit get more of you.

Questions.

ThinkAboutIt...

J. Gordon, one of the founders of Gordon Conwell Divinity School, told of being out walking and looking across a field at a house. There beside the house was what looked like a man pumping furiously on one of those hand pumps. As Gordon watched, the man continued to pump at a tremendous rate; he seemed absolutely tireless, pumping on and on, up and down, without ever slowing in the slightest, much less stopping. Truly it was a remarkable sight, so Gordon started to walk toward it. As he got closer, he could see it was not a man at the pump, but a wooden figure painted to look like a man. The arm that was pumping so rapidly was hinged at the elbow and the hand was wired to the pump handle. The water was pouring forth, but not because the figure was pumping it. You see, it was an artesian well, and the water was pumping the man! When you see a man who is at work for God and producing results, recognize that it is the Holy Spirit working through him, not the man's efforts that are giving results. All he has to do—and all you have to do is keep your hand on the handle!

ReflectOnIt...

As a Christian, the Holy Spirit is resident in you,
but He might not be president in you.

Review the important teaching we covered on Ephesians 5:18 at the end of last week's sermon:
How do I tap into the power of the Holy Spirit?

1. You must be indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This happens at the moment of spiritual re-birth.

“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life” (Titus 3:4-7).

2. You must invite the Holy Spirit to fill you on a regular, moment-by-moment basis.

“Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18 New Living Translation).

“be filled . . .”

PRESENT TENSE: “Keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit” (continuous action).

PASSIVE VOICE: “Allow yourself to be filled” (you receive; the Spirit gives).

IMPERATIVE MOOD: “DO THIS!” (A command, not an option; a necessity.)

“Keep on inviting the Holy Spirit to fill (control, empower, guide) your life.”

3. You must learn a technique called “spiritual breathing.”

- Exhale: Confess any sin(s) you are aware of. (See 1John 1:9).

- Inhale: Ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit by faith. (See Ephesians 5:18).

A. W. Tozer called the Holy Spirit “buried dynamite.” It’s true. The average Christian muddles along struggling over various issues, never drawing on the rich resources of the Holy Spirit. We live as if God is not resident within us. But He says He is!

RespondTolt...

When the American West was opened up, many a traveler passed over Nebraska. The early travelers thought this land would be good for nothing because they couldn’t see water anywhere. One writer even called it, “The Great America Desert”. Nebraska is now serious about farming. It has been called a bread basket for our nation. More wheat, and more corn are grown there than almost any other state in the union. What happened? What made the difference that those early travelers couldn’t see. They failed to realize, that under the state of Nebraska, is an underground lake, an aquifer that lies under 2/3’s the state of Nebraska. Some one got the bright idea to dig down and found all the water they needed to turn the “Great American Desert” into the bread basket of America!

You might feel like your life is the Great American Desert. And maybe it has been. But that’s not because God’s power is lacking. Maybe you need to realize that a spiritual aquifer has been buried inside of you. Jesus even referred to the Holy Spirit as a fountain of living water that would spring up within us. Maybe you just need to learn to dig a well and start tapping moment-by-moment into this spiritual reservoir God has place in you!

**All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.*