

Life Through the Holy Spirit



SABBATH—MAY 27

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: John 3:3-6; John 15–17; Romans 8:6-11; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:6, 7; Colossians 2:6-8.

MEMORY VERSE: “The Holy Spirit gives life. The body means nothing at all. The words I have spoken to you are from the [Holy] Spirit. They [the words] give life” (John 6:63, NIV).

WE ARE TO RECOGNIZE THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE ONE WHO RENEWS US. “Without renewal, Christ’s sacrifice would have been for nothing. The power of evil had been growing stronger for many hundreds of years. The surrender of people to sin was unbelievable. Sin could be overcome only through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would come in the fullness of God’s power. The Holy Spirit makes sinful hearts pure. Through the Spirit, believers can be re-created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26, 27). Christ gives His Holy Spirit power to help people overcome all temptation to sin and to influence His own character upon His church.”—Adapted from *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.

What a wonderful quote! What powerful words about the importance of the Holy Spirit’s work in renewing people! However, we must always remember that Christ never forces Himself on anyone. In the same way, the Holy Spirit never forces Himself on anyone. We must make a daily choice to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. If we do not cooperate with Him, He can do little for us.

Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, June 3.

SUNDAY—MAY 28**SALVATION AND THE HOLY SPIRIT (Romans 3:21-24).**

The Holy Spirit guides us into truth. So, He guides us to Jesus, because Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6). However, the truth about Jesus is not just that He is God. Jesus became a man. The truth about Jesus is not just that He did not sin. The greatest truth about Jesus is that He died as a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Any teaching that forgets the importance of Jesus' sacrifice is not from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us into "all truth" (John 16:13). Christ dying for our sins is the center of all truth (1 Corinthians 2:2).

What do the following verses tell us about the foundation (basis) of our salvation?

John 3:15-17 _____

Romans 3:21-24 _____

Ephesians 1:1, 7 _____

As Christians, the foundation of our salvation does not come from anything we do or from any fruit of the Spirit we might have. The foundation of our salvation comes only from the righteousness (holiness) of Jesus given to us by faith. Jesus' righteousness is the only sure foundation upon which we can have eternal¹ life. We profit from Jesus' perfect obedience given to us through God's grace. God's grace is His favor toward us as sinners. For this reason, there is no penalty for us either now or in the judgment (Romans 8:1). Of all the truth the Holy Spirit could bring us, this could be the most important truth.

Are you struggling with the promise and hope of salvation? Pray over today's study. Make the Bible promises your own. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you trust Christ's sacrifice as the foundation of your salvation.

MONDAY—MAY 29**DEATH TO SELF: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN US (Romans 8:6-11).**

The Holy Spirit guides us into the truth about Jesus. The Holy Spirit's work for us does not stop there. The first two steps in the Holy Spirit's work are leading us to Jesus and pointing

¹ eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

us to the way of salvation. But the Holy Spirit also works in us by changing us. We are changed when Jesus lives in us.

The only way Jesus can live in us is through His Holy Spirit. Jesus enters our minds by the Holy Spirit. The work of God, in and for us, is through His Holy Spirit. We might know about Jesus' death, but just knowing about Jesus' death cannot save us. We must have Jesus living in us through the Holy Spirit to be saved.

In your own words, write what Romans 8:6-11 says to you. How do these verses help you understand what the Holy Spirit does in the lives of Christians?



The Holy Spirit changes us when He lives in us.

Notice the importance of the Holy Spirit's work in us. Paul is a great preacher of salvation by faith alone,

but he also focuses on holy living and obedience. If we live after the flesh, we will die. If we do not have the Holy Spirit working in us, we do not belong to Christ. So, the work of the Holy Spirit in us is very important!

Paul teaches that we are to be dead to the flesh. Our fleshly desires should not control us. The same powerful Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from death is now working in us. The Holy Spirit is making us dead to sin. He is raising us up to a new life of righteousness (holiness). Paul is not talking about ideas. He is talking about the real experience of salvation in the life of a Christian.

What is your own experience with being dead to sin and alive in Christ? Does death to sin happen only once? Or does it happen day to day? What does your answer tell you about the daily struggle Christians face?

TUESDAY—MAY 30

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND LIFE (Galatians 5:16-25).

Yesterday, we saw Paul connect the Holy Spirit to life. This connection is a theme Paul often used in his writings. Clearly, this was an important theme to him. We who were once dead *in sin* (Ephesians 2:1) are now, through the Holy Spirit, dead *to sin* and alive in Christ (Romans 6:11).

What a great change!

As you read Galatians 5:16-25, notice the difference between works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Summarize Galatians 5:16-25 in one sentence.

Paul is very clear: If you do the things of the flesh, you will die and be lost. The Holy Spirit brings life. The flesh brings death.

Paul also shows the difference between flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. Perhaps Paul was showing how we reap (harvest) from the flesh what we sow (plant) from the flesh. In other words, we work at sin. We suffer with sin. Finally, we reap the results of sin. However, the fruit of the Holy Spirit naturally happens in a person who is under the Holy Spirit's control.

How are we to understand the two sentences: (1) "You are not under the law" (Galatians 5:18), and (2) "Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:23)?

Paul is not saying Christians should no longer obey the Ten Commandments. That would not agree with what he wrote in other places and what other parts of the New Testament teach us (Romans 3:31; Matthew 19:17; John 2:3; et cetera). Instead, Paul is saying that if you

show the fruit of the Spirit, you are automatically obeying the law. He also is saying that when you are obeying the law, you are not being penalized by the law. The fruit of the Spirit reflects the law. The works of the flesh break the law. The Galatians were Jews who were falling back into legalism.² Paul was trying to lead them toward something higher than legalism. Their works could not save them. So Paul was encouraging the Galatians to live in the Spirit. To live in the Spirit is to obey the law by love.

WEDNESDAY—MAY 31

"BORN OF THE SPIRIT" (John 3:3-6).

In John 3:3-6, what does Jesus mean by showing the difference between being born in the flesh and being born in the Spirit?

By nature, we are all born in the flesh. In the Greek, "born again" really means "born from above" by and through the Holy Spirit, but we remain in the flesh and will die in the flesh, too.

Our only hope is the new birth.³ The new birth is a renewal and having God's image restored⁴ in us (Galatians 1:26, 27). God's image is sent by the Spirit through the Word (the Bible). Renewal is not our natural life brought up to the highest level of human ability. Instead, renewal is a

²legalism—believing you must obey God to be saved.

³new birth—receiving forgiveness and having the Holy Spirit live in your life to guide you; when God takes your life of sin, forgives your sins, and then helps you not to sin.

⁴restored—to have made something as it was in the beginning.

godly life from above given to those who were “living in [their] sins and lawless ways” (Ephesians 2:1, NIV). Renewal comes only through the power of the Holy Spirit working in us (Titus 3:5).

The new birth is not the end of salvation. The new birth is the beginning of salvation. The new birth changes everything. We must daily live out that experience.

What does Colossians 2:6-8 say about what it means to live out our new-birth experience?

Experiencing the new birth includes self-denial (Luke 9:23), self-sacrifice (Romans 12:1), and a surrender of our sinful desires (Romans 6:19). In and of ourselves, we cannot do these things, but the Holy Spirit working in

us will help us do them. When we choose to surrender to the Holy Spirit, He will give us the power to do them.

The next time you are tempted to sin, think about the choices you have. You can choose to sin. You can choose to obey God. Which choice will you make? Pray for help in surrendering to the Holy Spirit, in claiming His power, and in winning the victory!

THURSDAY—JUNE 1

CONNECTION (John 14:18).

Before Jesus died, He said to His disciples, “I [Jesus] will not leave you like children who don’t [do not] have parents. I will come to you” (John 14:18, NIV). What did Jesus mean when He said, “I will come to you”?

Jesus is no longer here in the flesh, but He is here in the Holy Spirit. His Holy Spirit is now His Representative on earth. By being close to the Holy Spirit, we are close to Jesus. The Holy Spirit keeps Jesus alive for us. Through the Holy Spirit, we can have a very close walk with Jesus.

This walk is a very important issue of life. We want to serve God because we love Him. We want to be cleansed of sin because we love God. We know what sin has done to God’s creation. But the Holy Spirit lives in us. He will



help us to remember daily the great sacrifice Jesus made for our good. Then we will receive power to live as God asks us to live. To live righteously (holy) is to be “set apart” for God, to live for Him in faith, repentance,⁵ and surrender. We can live this way only when we are connected to God. “We may stop many bad habits but not be truly righteous. This is because we do not have a connection with God. We must unite with Christ.”—Adapted from *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Jan. 24, 1893.

What things connect you to Christ and help you to know and love Him better? What Bible verses can you find that support these things?

FRIDAY—JUNE 2

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, pp. 226–231; *Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 373, 374; *Selected Messages*, book 2, pp. 38, 39; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 171–176, 209, 210, 388.

“The gift of righteousness (holiness) is given to people through the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8). The Holy Spirit is the difference between the false righteousness we try to learn through works and the true righteousness that comes only

through faith. The Holy Spirit has no part in righteousness by works. This is because righteousness by works is through human effort only and completely separate from God’s grace.”—Adapted from *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 977.

“Every time a person is converted, he or she learns to love God and keep His commandments. Then the promise of God is fulfilled, ‘I [God] will give you new hearts. I will give you a new spirit that is faithful to me’ (Ezekiel 36:26, NIrV). The change in human hearts and human characters is a miracle that shows an ever-living Savior who is working to rescue souls. A faithful life in Christ is a great miracle. In preaching the Bible, the sign that should be clearly seen now and always is the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes the Bible a renewing power to those who hear.”—Adapted from *The Desire of Ages*, p. 407.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As a class, go over your answers to Thursday’s last question. What points do the answers have that are almost the same? What can you learn from each other’s answers? What is the key to a true connection with Christ?
2. What advice would you give to someone who says to you, “I love

⁵repentance—to be sorry for your sins and, with the Holy Spirit’s help, to want to stop sinning.

Jesus, and I want to obey Him, but I keep falling into the same sin over and over”?

3. In studying the Holy Spirit’s work in

us, how easy might it be to forget that the basis of our salvation is what Christ did for us at the Cross? What dangers do we face if we ever forget about Christ’s death for us?