

WHO IS GOD?

Ephesians 4:4-6

FATHER • SON • HOLY SPIRIT

Who Is God?



EVERY NATION
P R O D U C T I O N S

Who Is God?

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Contributors: Pastor Julius Bungcaras, Pastor Michael Custodio,
Pastor Jun Divierte, Pastor Brandel Manalastas

Published by EVERY NATION PRODUCTIONS

Email: productions@everynation.org.ph

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Produced in the Republic of the Philippines

CONTENTS

Introduction v

1. God Is Holy 1

2. God Is Great 6

3. God Is Good..... 12

4. God Is One..... 17

5. Who Is God the Father?23

6. Who Is Jesus?.....28

7. The Work of Jesus34

8. Who Is the Holy Spirit?.....41

9. The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 1)45

10. The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 2)50

INTRODUCTION

The question “Who is God?” has been asked and pondered upon by people for centuries. The desire and need to know God may spring from several needs, including knowing our purpose and meaning in life, understanding the world and its complexities, seeking comfort and solace in times of trouble, and finding a sense of belonging and community. But whether our question is asked out of a sincere desire to address these needs or merely out of curiosity, our personal answer to it affects every aspect of our lives.

As Christians, we are aware that the primary way we can truly know God is through His word, the Bible. We are to read and meditate on His word day and night and spend time with Him in prayer. We have the assurance that God will never turn His back from those who come to Him. In Jeremiah 29:13, God said that *you will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

The way we perceive God varies significantly based on our own personal experiences. Those who grew up in a Christian home with loving authority figures and positive experiences are more likely to develop a positive perception of God. On the other hand, those who experienced traumatic or negative events such as abuse or neglect may have a negative perception of God or struggle with putting their faith in God. Even after we have put our faith in Christ and surrendered our lives to Him, how we relate to God is still heavily influenced by our personal perception of who He is and our life experiences. This is why it is important to have a biblically accurate knowledge of God.

This material aims to give a foundational description of who God is according to the Bible. God is continuously drawing us closer to Him and revealing more of Himself not just to us, but to others around us. Our goal is that as Christians, we will go beyond our own perceptions and see God for who He really is. We may never fully comprehend the depth of God’s nature and character, but through the Bible, we can gain a greater understanding and

appreciation of who God is, His great love for us, and what He has done and continuously does for humanity.

As we get to know the greatness of God and the depth of His love through this material, may it create in us a greater hunger to know Him more and a greater passion to be used by Him to draw other people to Himself.

Other materials available for Victory groups, which can provide a foundational understanding of the work that God is doing in our lives:

- *Imago Dei*
- *In Us*

1 God Is Holy

WARM-UP

- What is the most valuable thing that you own? Why do you treasure it so much?
- What is one thing that fascinates you about nature? What draws you to it?
- Who is the person you look up to the most? What are some things you admire about this person?

WORD *²⁵To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. ²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. ²⁷Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"? ²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. **ISAIAH 40:25-31***

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."

DEUTERONOMY 6:4

Our understanding of God is foundational to all aspects of our lives. It determines how we perceive the world around us. Different cultures have different belief systems that are ingrained in the norms of society and even family life. These norms shape

an individual's worldview and way of living. "Who is God?" is a question innate to every human being because we all have an inner sense of God.

The answer to this may vary due to the abundance of information about God. However, one truth remains: there is one God—the God of the Bible. He is set apart from other gods and man-made beliefs. Isaiah highlights that the Lord, Yahweh, is set apart and incomparable to anything that is created. To be set apart is to be holy. For God, this means that He is a cut above everything and no one else is like Him. Today, let's look into these two aspects of God's holiness and what this means for us believers.

1

God's holiness is the essence of His being. He is set apart above all.

To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. ISAIAH 40:25

God is incomparable to humans or anything else that we can ever conceive. Unlike us, God is not limited by nature. He does not have a physical body. God is Spirit. In John 4:24, Jesus declared, *"God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."* God's spirituality means that He is not made of any matter. He does not have any limitations that are intrinsic to having a physical body. God does not have any parts or dimensions that can be perceived by our bodily senses.

Another aspect that sets God apart is His eternal nature. God is our uncreated and uncaused Creator. Isaiah calls Him the everlasting God. He existed before the foundation of the world. All that we are and all that we have in this world are because of Him. Nothing can ever be compared to Him. Everything is under His sovereign rule and glorious might. Our confidence is that the God that we worship is above and

beyond all things. Why is it important for us to know that God is holy? How does this truth affect our relationship with Him?

2 | God's greatness can never be matched.

*Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. **ISAIAH 40:26***

When you look at the vastness of the heavens, it is so wonderful to see how the stars continue to shine every night. The prophet Isaiah emphasized this, the reality of God's power as our Creator, the one who calls each star by name and providentially sets and sustains them in place. Isaiah's questions of "*Have you not known?*" and "*Have you not heard?*" are intended to awaken God's people to the reality of His holiness (Isaiah 40:28). None of the gods can compare to Him; no power, physical or spiritual, can ever be parallel to God.

This matchless greatness of our God should encourage us that nothing in this world—even our personal problems—is beyond God's reach; He is above and beyond any difficulties that we could ever face. How does this truth empower you to fully entrust your life to God?

3 | God's goodness is incomparable.

²⁹He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. ISAIAH 40:29-31

God's divine attributes—His omnipotence (all-powerful), His omniscience (all-knowing), His omnipresence (all-present), and many others—are not just theological facts but realities of who He is. That means we can encounter and experience Him in such ways as we live our lives under His care. God is a person. He is a relational God. He is able to share these attributes to His creation.

The prophet Isaiah emphasized that the Lord gives power to the faint and increases the strength of a person who has no might. He is not just stating this fact about God but invites people to *wait for the LORD* for their strength to be renewed. The word *wait* in verse 31 is synonymous with “trust.” Even as youths or men faint or fall exhausted, those who trust in God can experience His strength that is like no other. How have you seen God's goodness in your life? What are some ways you have experienced His character in your daily life?

Ultimately, Isaiah 40:25-31 points to the truth that God is holy, our incomparable everlasting Creator who is willing and able to give us the strength that we need. In turn, we need to fully trust Him.

APPLICATION

- Take time to reflect on Isaiah's words about the greatness of God. Imagine a life lived in full trust to God's holiness. Ask God to reveal more of Himself to you in areas of your life that you would want to experience His greatness even more.
- Recall at least three instances when God has given you strength. Give thanks to God for these experiences and praise Him for His goodness toward you.
- Encourage your family and friends with God's greatness and goodness in your life. Pray for their hearts to be open to know Him more and experience Him in their lives.

PRAYER

- Thank God for letting us know Him and experience His goodness every day. Pray that you would grow in faith as you look to Him and trust Him in every area of your life.
- Ask God for the grace to live a holy life as He is holy. May we heed the Holy Spirit as our guide and keep in step with Him.
- Pray for the boldness and strength to be a witness of God's greatness to those around you. May your words and actions be an encouragement to your friends and family.

2 God Is Great

WARM-UP

- What is one thing you wish were limitless? Tell us why.
- If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- Tell us about a quality or character trait that you like best about yourself.

WORD *³For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. ⁴In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. ⁵The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. PSALM 95:3-5*

The greatness of God is not a foreign concept for Christians. God's ability to do all things is something that is deeply ingrained in us. Our knowledge of God's power gets deeper as we intimately walk with Him.

Our understanding of the greatness of God should be viewed in terms of His natural abilities and His qualities that do not necessarily relate to God's moral nature. Having a clearer picture of God's greatness elevates how we perceive Him. For example, from only seeing Him as our heavenly Father who leads and guides us, we also revere Him as the one true God who is powerful and worthy of our praise, worship, and adoration. A deeper knowledge of God will energize our prayer life and position us to believe Him for things that we have deemed impossible.

In the passage above, the Psalmist states how God is incomparable and His greatness is all-encompassing and abounding.

1 | God is limitless.

In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. **PSALM 95:4**

Our God is not limited by anything we perceive. Nothing can hinder His will and He is able to do anything that He pleases (Psalm 115:3). Nothing is ever difficult for Him to do (Jeremiah 32:17). He sovereignly governs everything and He is able to intervene in the events of our lives as He pleases. He is able to do all things that will result in His desired outcome. This includes our physical world, all creation. The only limitations that God has are those that He voluntarily places on Himself. This is God's omnipotence.

God is also omnipresent. He is able to be present in all places at the same time (Psalm 139:7-8). He is not confined to any spatial limitations, not bound by the universe. Creation cannot contain God, yet His presence also fills the whole universe. Apart from being all-powerful and all-present, God is also omniscient. He knows all things (1 John 3:20). Nothing that we deem to be hidden is unknown to Him.

Nothing can limit Him in what He can do. We worship a limitless God. Though His greatness is unsearchable (Psalm 145:3) and we are limited in our ability to perceive the totality of God, we can bank on His character in our daily lives.

Knowing God's attributes and His limitlessness empowers and emboldens our prayer life. The content of our prayers can be more faith-filled. Is there an area in your life that feels like a dead end? How does the truth about the

limitless nature of God encourage you to believe God for a breakthrough?

2 | God is perfect.

“This God—his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.” 2 SAMUEL 22:31

God is perfect in all of His being and in all of His ways. He is complete and whole in His essence, and is without flaw, deficiency, or error. God is not lacking in any aspect of His being. He is never lacking in His greatness and goodness. Everything that flows out of Him is from all that He is. He does not lack knowledge because He is all-knowing. He does not lack goodness because He is all-good or omnibenevolent. This makes us secure because God’s dealing with us will always be perfect.

The Bible is breathed-out by God and His words are perfect (Psalm 19:7). His way with us is also perfect (2 Samuel 22:31). His will (Romans 12:2), His love (1 John 4:18), and His gifts to us (James 1:17) are likewise perfect.

God’s perfect nature is our assurance in every possible crossroad that we may face. His abilities are not just limitless but perfect. God will never wrong us because His ways are perfect. We should not worry about our future because His will for us is perfect. We can anticipate great and wonderful things in our walk with Him because His love and gifts for us are perfect. The truth that God is perfect can be intimidating.

What does the last part of 2 Samuel 22:31 say that can be our assurance?

3 | God is unchanging.

"For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed." **MALACHI 3:6**

God Himself said that He does not change. Theologians call this the "immutability of God." The unchanging nature of God is a solid foundation that we can build our life of faith upon. We can always bank on who He is. We are always assured that His power will never wane. His ability to deliver will never fall short. He will always be all-powerful, all-present, and all-knowing. At the same time, His love, mercy, righteousness, and justice are attributes that we can always expect from Him. He will always be pure in His moral character; truthful in all that He said and promised (Psalm 89:34).

God's unchanging nature is a relief for all of us. He is not like us, who are sometimes subject to our moods, needs, availability, resources, and capacity in the way we relate with others. The way we respond is relative to our external situation and the condition of our hearts, which either propel us to or hinder us from showing love and kindness. This is not the case for God. It is His nature to be loving and kind. He is always good and He never goes against His nature (1 Chronicles 16:34).

How does knowing that God's greatness and goodness is limitless, perfect, and unchanging change your perspective of God?

APPLICATION

- How can knowing God's unchanging character help you exercise faith in dealing with the different circumstances in your life?
- Having a deeper knowledge of who God is affects our lives and can help us change for the better. What are some ways you can live out the truths you've learned, starting today?
- Do you have a family member or friend who needs to be encouraged with the truth that God is limitless, perfect, and unchanging? Commit to share the gospel with him or her this week.

PRAYER

- Take a few minutes to pray and give thanks to God for His unchanging goodness.
- Ask God for the grace to grow in your understanding of His limitless, perfect, and unchanging nature. Pray that you will live out these truths daily.
- Pray that as you continue to trust God and bank on His character, people will see who He is in your life. Pray for the boldness to tell those around you about God.

3 God Is Good

WARM-UP

- Tell us about a movie you watched that had a plot twist. What about that story do you like?
- How would you describe a good person? What makes them good?
- What does it take for you to trust someone?

WORD ⁸The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. **PSALM 145:8-9**

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you.

PSALM 89:14

As Bible-believing Christians, we know that God is able to do all things. He is sovereign and all-powerful. However, the prevailing question sometimes is, “Will God show His greatness in my situation?” or “I know that He is able, but is He willing?” Because of our different situations and finite understanding of God, we, at times, fail to fully trust Him and do not see His loving nature as our heavenly Father. We sometimes see Him as one who is only transcendent, that we miss His immanence, His nearness and involvement in His creation.

God’s greatness is not just an attribute that describes Him. It is something He allows us and the world to see and experience. Today we will look at God’s goodness: He is righteous, loving, and perfect.

1 | God is always righteous and just.

Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; steadfast love and faithfulness go before you. PSALM 89:14

While God is holy and set apart in His greatness, He is also holy and set apart in His goodness. He is always righteous and just. He is untouched and unstained by evil; exercising absolute purity in all that He does. His righteousness is His holiness applied to all of His relationships. In His thoughts, motives, words, and deeds, nothing will ever qualify as unrighteous. He is always just. He provides justice to all impartially.

His righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. Yet He is also our God who is fueled by His steadfast love and faithfulness.

God's righteous character serves as an immovable assurance for us that though the world's ways may not always be righteous and just, our God will always be righteous and just in His dealings with us. How is God's justice different from the world's concept of justice?

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2 | God is a loving and benevolent God.

⁸The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. PSALM 145:8-9

Because of the Fall of man, there has been separation between God and man. Sin alienated us from God. Despite

this, God continued to love and sustain fallen humanity. He also continued to initiate relationships with His creation. As the Psalmist states in verse 9, *The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.*

We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and are unable to meet His moral standards. Yet even when we were unworthy to experience God's goodness, Jesus died for us (Romans 5:8). We are pardoned from our sins through faith in Jesus and given a new life in Him. Through His rich mercy, grace, and love, God has made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:4).

If God were not merciful and gracious, it would be fair for all of humanity to perish but God continues to bring people to the saving knowledge of Jesus. He is slow to anger (Psalm 145:8) and has been patient towards us, not wanting people to perish but come to repentance and have a relationship with Him (2 Peter 3:9).

Faith in Jesus is the premise in which one becomes a child of God. This is a right that we have the moment we place our faith in Jesus for salvation (John 1:12). This act of faith not only positions us as children of God but also allows us to experience how God lavishes His love to His children (1 John 3:1). God's predisposition is to extend His love and goodness to us. We are able to know Him personally and walk this life with security in the love, mercy, and grace that He has bestowed upon us. In what ways have you experienced God's unconditional love in your life?

3 | God is perfect and never changes.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. JAMES 1:17

Unlike us, God is unchanging in His being and will always be holy in His greatness and goodness. His character as a good and loving God never changes. He is not fickle-minded or someone driven by moods when He relates with us. The unchanging nature of God gives us the security that His benevolent disposition toward His children is always constant. There is nothing in this world that can influence God or hinder Him from showing His love and faithfulness to us. He will always be perfect in His ways (Psalm 18:30), faithful in all that He does (Psalm 33:4), and worthy of our trust in every aspect of our lives. Why is it important for us to know that God does not change?

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APPLICATION

- Take time to reflect on God's goodness in your life. List some significant seasons in your life that you have felt His presence and take time to thank and praise Him for His love and faithfulness.
- Search your heart and ask God for specific areas of your life that need to be surrendered to Him. Repent for the times that you failed to give your full trust to Jesus and confess your trust and loyalty to Him.
- Pray for specific people to whom you can share God's love and goodness. This may be through words or acts of service.

PRAYER

- Thank God for the unconditional love He has shown to us through Jesus even when we were still sinners. Pray that you would never take His love and sacrifice for granted, and instead you would be a channel of this love to others.
- Ask God to show you how you can take part in advancing His justice and righteousness to the world. Pray that you would grow in your understanding and appreciation of these.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to continue to reveal to you who God is and to help you lead others to the saving knowledge of Christ. Ask Him for His love and wisdom to flow through you.

4 God Is One

WARM-UP

- If you were in a movie or band, would you take the lead or the supporting role? Why?
- For you, what makes a team great or effective?
- Who are the people closest to you? What similarities do you have with one another?

WORD *⁴"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."* **DEUTERONOMY 6:4-5**

To the world, the concept of God is not something difficult to describe. He is known to be the one who created the world and continually takes care of His creation. However, the Bible does not define God as just that. We worship a triune God. He is one who eternally exists in three distinct persons, and each person is fully God.

This seems to be a complicated idea but as Christians, we need to know the God that we worship. Knowing the Trinity empowers us to have a vibrant relationship with God, which goes beyond knowledge or a mere theological concept.

1 | There is one God.

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus . . . **1 TIMOTHY 2:5**

God is a triune God, but there is one God. The word "triune" means three being in one. There is one God, who exists in three persons. This seems to be mathematically impossible to reconcile, unless we know what is being referred to by one and by three. The apostle Paul states it in 1 Timothy 2:5, *For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God*

and men, the man Christ Jesus . . . This is in reference to His being, essence, or substance. On the other hand, though there is only one God, there are three distinct persons. The Bible is clear that the Father is God (Genesis 1:1), Jesus is God (2 Peter 1:1), and the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:1–4), but there is one God. All three share the same essence and are one Being.

In the Old Testament, this truth is emphasized to the people of Israel: *the LORD is one* (Deuteronomy 6:4). The all-capitalized mention of the Lord means Yahweh; Yahweh is One. In Deuteronomy 6, God calls His people to love and be loyal to Yahweh. The Lord was calling them to hear and obey Him because He is the only God. In their time, there was a tendency for people to worship other gods, so we can see this call as an indicator of God's desire for His people to walk in a covenant relationship with Him. Today, while we may not be in the same paganistic culture, the reminder applies to us as well. We ought to love God with our all, heart, soul, and might. Share how you realized that God deserves our all.

2 | God eternally exists in three persons.

¹⁰And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." **MARK 1:10–11**

While God is one being, He exists in three distinct persons. Each person of the Trinity is distinct from each other. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have their own identities and each possess a mind, will, and emotions. Every person is

capable of a real relationship with one another. This means that the Father is not Jesus, the Holy Spirit is not Jesus, and the Father is not the Holy Spirit. They relate with each other in unity but are distinct from each other.

We can see this in John 1:1: *the Word was with God and the Word was God*. This is a distinction between Jesus being with God and Jesus as God. In Genesis 1, we can also see that in the beginning, God was already present and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Lastly, in Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit and God the Father were there together (Mark 1:10–11).

The Trinity exists in perfect harmony with one another. Being created in the image and likeness of God, what does this say then about how we are to approach our own human relationships?

3

Each person shares the same attributes of being God.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit . . .” **MATTHEW 28:19**

God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are of equal power and greatness. They have the same attributes of being God. Each person in the Trinity is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present. Each person is uncaused and uncreated but rather eternally existed and are creators of all things. This means that God the Father is God (Genesis 1:1), Jesus is God (2 Peter 1:1), and the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:1–4). We can see this equality when Jesus commissioned the disciples

to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth. He had sent and baptized them in the name of three distinct persons of the Trinity.

Each person of the Trinity likewise possesses the attributes of God. Each person is a God of holiness, love, and truth; capable of relating with us and can be known personally and intimately. Is there a difference in the way you relate to God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit? How so?

4 | Each person of the Trinity has different roles.

¹⁰And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." **MARK 1:10-11**

Though the persons of the Trinity are equal in being and essence, each person has a distinct role that is not superior or inferior to one another. This can be likened to a family where each person is equal as human beings, but each member of the family plays a different role.

Differences in roles between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit appear consistently in the Bible. The pattern of Scripture shows the distinction of roles this way: the Father plans, directs, and sends; the Son is sent by the Father to die on the cross to save fallen humanity from sin. Jesus, in unison to the Father's will, obeys and subjects Himself under the Father's authority (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21). The Holy Spirit is directed and sent by the Father and Jesus to carry out their will to the world by being the Helper (John 14:26).

Despite the difference in roles, love and unity are the essence of their relationship. How does the knowledge of the different roles of the Trinity help us see our own place in the kingdom of God?

APPLICATION

- While we may not necessarily worship other gods, there are things that we turn into gods which deviate us from worshipping the one true God. What can these things be in your life? What steps can you take to turn your eyes only to the one true God?
- How does knowing the essence of God help you cultivate your relationship with Him?
- How does a growing understanding of God and the relationship in the Trinity help you understand your other relationships? How can you apply these truths to your relationships?

PRAYER

- Thank God for giving you the perfect example of a loving relationship in the Trinity. Pray for your relationship with Him to continue to grow.
- Pray for your understanding of God and the Trinity to deepen further as you spend time in His word and in prayer every day. Ask for a fresh revelation of who He is.
- As you grow in your understanding of God, ask Him to help you follow the loving example of the Trinity in your own relationships. Pray that God will use you to demonstrate and declare who He is to those around you.

5 Who Is God the Father?

WARM-UP

- What do you look for in a father figure? What draws you to those kinds of people?
- Name one trait you like about your father or a father figure. Why do you think this stands out to you?
- Can you tell us about your parenting or leadership style? Recall a specific instance explaining this.

WORD *⁹“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread, ¹²and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.’”* **MATTHEW 6:9–13**

The Bible reveals God as our Father. He loves us, and He calls us His children. While this may be widely known, this is not automatic for every person. Since the Fall, not every person is a child of God. Jesus is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). Because of Jesus, we are given the great privilege of being adopted into God’s family and are now called His children (Galatians 4:4–6; John 1:12). We can confidently call God our Father in the truest sense.

We know that God is great and holy. We are to fear the Lord and revere His name. We ought to honor Him when we pray to Him. Yet in the same breath, He is our Father in heaven, with whom we have a loving relationship. With this in mind, when we look at the Lord’s prayer—the words that Jesus taught to His disciples to pray—it resonates in our souls and we grow in the understanding that we can come to God as our heavenly Father.

1 | Our heavenly Father leads and guides.

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." **MATTHEW 6:10**

God has designed fathers to be leaders and the head of the family. Jesus wants us to view God as our heavenly Father who has a purpose and will for us, the one who calls the shots and leads our lives. He has given us the Bible that serves as a guide for us to know Him and walk in His will. Through Jesus, we have access to Him. Through the Holy Spirit, we can hear Him. When we pray, we also begin with submitted hearts that long to know and obey His will. Recall an instance when God's guidance helped you through a difficult situation.

2 | Our heavenly Father is our provider.

"Give us this day our daily bread . . ." **MATTHEW 6:11**

God is the creator of all (Genesis 1:1), He is the owner of all things (Psalm 24:1), and His resources for us are inexhaustible (Genesis 8:22). There is nothing that He cannot provide for us. Every need that we have will be provided for. We can confidently trust Him for our daily needs because even the birds of the air and the flowers of the fields which are not made in His image and likeness are well provided for (Matthew 6:25–30). So imagine how much more God will

provide for us, His children. Do you have any stories of God's miraculous provision in your life?

3 | Our heavenly Father is our loving God who forgives.

"... and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." **MATTHEW 6:12**

We are loved by God not because of our own doing. This is a good thing because it helps us see that we do not have to earn His love. It is God's nature to love us. God demonstrated this when He sent Jesus, His only begotten Son, to die on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Even now as Christians, we still struggle with sin every day. We sin and we fail. But when we fall short, God's forgiveness is still available.

Jesus encourages us to come before the Father and ask for forgiveness. Our relationship with Him flourishes when we humble ourselves before God for forgiveness. He loves us. He is love (1 John 4:9). We shouldn't be afraid to approach God because His love casts out every fear of condemnation and judgment (1 John 4:18). How does God's love and forgiveness encourage you to see Him as a heavenly Father?

4 | Our heavenly Father is our deliverer.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

MATTHEW 6:13

The nature of a father is to protect His children. The difference between God and our earthly fathers is that He is sovereign and able to deliver us in every situation, without conditions and limitations. We can trust Him that in all things, He is our deliverer. He can save us from the evil, pain, and suffering in this world because He, our heavenly Father, is holy and mighty.

When we pray for God's will to be done in our lives, we have to be reminded that His will is always for our own good. We can surrender our will to Him. He is sovereign in all things and providentially demonstrates His care for us. Nothing in this world can ever thwart His purposes (Job 42:2). His ways are always perfect and His words are always true. He is our shield who will protect and deliver us from the works of the enemy. In what ways have you experienced God's deliverance?

APPLICATION

- Do you see and relate with God as your heavenly Father? What mindsets could be hindering you from embracing God as your Father and your identity as His child? Ask God to open your mind and heart to Him as your loving Father so you can grow in your relationship with Him.
- Take time to search your heart for areas that the Father is leading you to submit to Him. He is more than willing to show His love for you in this area.
- How can you grow in following God's leading and will, knowing that He is your heavenly Father? Who can you encourage today to see God as a Father?

PRAYER

- Thank God for adopting you into His family through Jesus Christ. Pray that you would live out your identity as His child and confidently share the opportunity for others to be adopted into His family as well.
- Ask God to show you areas in your life that need to be submitted to Him and restored by Him. May His grace help you obey His will and heed His guidance.
- Pray for your relationship with your heavenly Father to continue to grow and flourish. Pray for those around you who need to know God as their Father.

6 Who Is Jesus?

WARM-UP

- Share about a main character in a story you've recently heard. What made them important? Why did they stand out to you?
- Who do you think is the greatest person you know? How would you describe their personality and accomplishments?
- Have you ever believed someone you've never met? Where do you get your information about this person?

WORD *⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **PHILIPPIANS 2:5-11***

The question “Who is Jesus?” is answerable in many ways. Most people would probably say He is the Son of God who came to the world to die on the cross to save us from our sins. Some may say that He is our Lord and Savior. Others would say He is God. While all of these are true, there are other questions that need to be answered: What qualifies Jesus to be our Savior? How can I be saved just by believing in Him, as the Bible says? These are significant questions that need to be answered to bring clarity to our understanding of Jesus and our salvation. Today, let's take a closer look at the person of Jesus and the importance of both His divinity and humanity.

1 | Jesus existed as God even before the beginning of time.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. JOHN 1:1-3

John's Gospel opens with God and the Word being in the beginning together. This means that Jesus eternally existed as the second person of the Trinity together with God. He already existed as God even before He was born through Mary's virgin conception. Why do you think John refers to Jesus as the Word?

2 | Jesus is God.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. JOHN 1:1

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God . . . PHILIPPIANS 2:5-6

The Bible clearly establishes that Jesus is God in every respect. Other religious sects discount this truth despite Scripture's clear references of Him being God. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul writes that Jesus is in the form of God. The author of Hebrews says that Jesus is the exact imprint of God's nature (Hebrews 1:3). Peter clearly states in his letters that He is our God and Savior (2 Peter 1:1). John mentions in the book of Revelation that He is the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).

The truth about Jesus' deity—the fact that He is God—should give us peace and confidence that He is worthy of our worship and obedience. It should also bring us to our knees knowing that the God who created the universe (Colossians 1:15–18) loves us and gave His life to save us. He resurrected and conquered sin for us. In view of the cross, how does the truth about Jesus being our God resonate with you?

3 | Jesus entered our world to be human like us.

⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5–7

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us . . . **JOHN 1:14**

In the fullness of time, Jesus entered our world to dwell among us as a human being (John 1:14). Paul echoes this in his letter to the Philippians that though Jesus is God, in His humility He became like us to die on the cross (Philippians 2:5–7).

The Bible describes Jesus' life as a human being. He was one who had a human mind, grew in wisdom, had real emotions, and experienced pain and suffering like us. Luke describes Jesus as a child who physically grew, became strong, and increased in wisdom (Luke 2:40). Like us, Jesus felt physical pains and emotions. He was hungry (Matthew 4:2) and thirsty (John 19:28). He wept (John 11:35) and had a troubled soul (John 12:27). He was also tempted like us, but did not sin (Hebrews 4:15).

Knowing that Jesus lived a life like us human beings, we can take comfort that Jesus understands us. He knows our pains and weaknesses. He also modeled to us what a life of obedience to God looks like and we ought to emulate how He lived His life here on earth. This is a hard truth to reconcile and, at the same time, humbling for us to embrace. Jesus, who is God, became fully human in order to be the perfect sacrifice. He lived a perfect life for us and died the death that should have been ours so that we can be saved and forgiven from all our sins. How does Jesus' ability to truly know what it means to have our human pain and suffering bring you comfort in praying to Him?

4 | Jesus is fully God and fully man.

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily . . .

COLOSSIANS 2:9

Jesus being God and man is essential to our faith. It makes our salvation possible. As a man, Christ could represent man and die as a man. This means that despite our failure to live a perfect life, Jesus lived it for us. The wrath of God towards sin that was supposed to be ours to experience was laid on Jesus on the cross (Isaiah 53:4–6; 2 Corinthians 5:21). As God, He is sinless and the perfect sacrifice for our sins. His death also could have infinite value, sufficient to provide redemption for the sins of the world, not just for us

individually. He is both God and man. How does this affect the kind of relationship we can have with God?

APPLICATION

- How does the understanding of Jesus' perfect divinity, perfect humanity, and perfect sinlessness help you see Him as your Savior? Write your thoughts and a prayer of thanksgiving to Jesus for saving you.
- Learning more about God and growing in our relationship with Him helps us grow in our ability to share Him with others. How do you think the things we learned today help you as you preach the gospel and make disciples?
- To whom is God leading you to share these truths about Jesus? Commit to pray for and share your testimony to this person this week.

PRAYER

- Thank God for sending Jesus in order to be the sacrifice for our sins and the way for us to know and be restored to Him. Pray that you would continue to surrender to His Lordship and follow Him.
- Ask God for the grace to grow in your knowledge of who Jesus is and what He has done for us. Pray that you would always go back to Him even in the highs and lows of life, seeking His guidance and direction.
- Pray for an opportunity to preach the gospel to a family member or friend. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you words and insights into the person's life so you can effectively make Jesus known to him or her.

7 The Work of Jesus

WARM-UP

- What is one thing you get excited talking about with other people?
- To whom did you recently give a gift? Why? How did you determine what to give this person?
- What would you be willing to sacrifice for someone you love? Would you still be willing to sacrifice it even if the person did not love you back?

WORD *"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

MARK 10:45

Our understanding of Jesus being both God and man helps us grasp how we are saved. As a man, Jesus lived the perfect human life that we should have lived and died the death that was supposed to be ours. He became the perfect and sinless sacrifice for our sins by dying on the cross on our behalf. As God, Jesus conquered death through His resurrection. His finished work on the cross earned us forgiveness for our sins and eternal life is with Him. This is the message of the gospel.

Jesus coming to the world not only paved the way for us to be saved and go to heaven, but also for us to know and have a relationship with God, through Him. Jesus is the revelation of God (John 1:18; 14:9). He revealed the Father to us. His work is to bear witness that He is the One the Father sent to reveal to those who believe (John 5:36). He was on a mission to bear witness about God and redeem the world from sin and give us true life in Him (John 10:10; 20:31). Today, we will look at how Jesus' finished work on the cross redeems all of humanity and how this empowers us to share this message of salvation with others.

Jesus died on the cross to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins.

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” **MARK 10:45**

Man is separated from God by his sins and deserves to bear God’s righteous wrath against sin. In order for us to be forgiven from our sins and be declared righteous before God, someone needs to pay for the penalty of our sins. We do not qualify to be sacrificed for our own sins. Our good works will never be enough to meet God’s holiness and moral standard. We are not sinless; only Jesus is. He willingly did the work for us on the cross. He is the only one qualified to be the ransom for our sins. Peter mentioned this in his speech to the priests of Jerusalem, saying that salvation is found *in no one else* but Jesus (Acts 4:12). No one is qualified to save us from our sins. Jesus’ perfect divinity, perfect humanity, and perfect sinlessness satisfied the requirement to pay for the penalty of our sins.

This sacrifice, or atonement, is the act by which God restores a relationship of harmony and unity between Himself and human beings. The idea of atonement is something that we can see in the Old Testament. Animal sacrifices were made in order to be forgiven from sins. Paul mentions in his letter to the Roman church that we are justified and declared righteous before God’s sight, because God has put Jesus as a propitiation for our sins (Romans 3:24–25). Propitiation is a term the Bible uses to describe Jesus being the appeasement of God’s hatred of sin, instead of us. Jesus being the receiver of God’s wrath positions us to be guiltless and righteous before Him. Jesus, who did not know sin, was made sin for us *so that in him we may be righteous before God* (2 Corinthians

5:21). Why did not Jesus simply forgive sin without dying on the cross?

2 | Jesus destroyed the works of Satan.

He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him. COLOSSIANS 2:15

Trusting Jesus and His finished work on the cross does not only bring us salvation but gives us the right to be under God's care as His children. The moment we believe and accept Jesus as our Savior, we are adopted into God's family (John 1:12; Galatians 4:4–6). However, as Christians, we still battle with sin and evil. Part of Jesus' work on the cross is to destroy evil and the works of the enemy (1 John 3:8) and bring sanctification for every Christian believer. Jesus' death on the cross has disarmed and defeated Satan and his fallen angels.

Our daily battles to fight sin and evil have already been won. Although sin and evil is still a reality to face, they no longer have dominion over us because Jesus has conquered them on the cross. This should give us confidence when we are in the face of sin and evil. We are fighting from a standpoint of victory and there will come a time when Jesus returns, sin and evil will be decisively defeated and will come to a

permanent end. How does knowing this give you confidence to live a godly life?

3 | Jesus intercedes for us and our lives are united in Him.

Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ROMANS 8:34

Our position in God's family is always secure, despite our human fallen condition. One thing that we can take comfort from is that our righteousness before God is not hinged on our own doing. It is still through Jesus. What He began, He will secure. This is comforting because we do not have to carry the burden of trying to save ourselves. This is because Jesus has already done it and continuously works in us, keeping us righteous in God's sight. Our sins and failures may make us feel and think that we are disqualified to be called God's children, but Jesus stands in the gap for us. Our lives are hidden in Him (Colossians 3:3). We remain righteous in God's sight because He intercedes for us. He also ensures we are blessed *with every spiritual blessing* that God has intended for us to have (Ephesians 1:3). By virtue of our union with Christ, we are assured of all the promises of God,

in Christ, made real for every Christian believer. How does this assurance comfort you?

4 | Jesus calls us to preach the gospel.

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **MATTHEW 28:18-20**

In Jesus' earthly life, He revealed God to the world. He proclaimed the message of the gospel that brought salvation to many. Before He ascended to heaven, He gave the disciples a command to *go* and *make disciples of all nations*, with the assurance that He will always be with them.

The gospel is the *power of God for salvation to everyone who believes* in Him (Romans 1:16). It is the only way a person can truly experience forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life. It is also the only truth that can place a person in a true relationship with God. This same truth can bring true wholeness to our soul. It is the only way that one can have true hope and joy in this world.

Jesus called His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. Even today, Jesus is at work calling His disciples to make disciples in different nations of the world and in different sectors of society. He also assures us that as He commissions us to go and make disciples, His presence, power, and authority comes with it. We are doing this with Him. He is with us as we boldly share Jesus and His message

of salvation to the world. Share how you learned to respond to Jesus' command and Great Commission.

APPLICATION

- Reflecting on Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, what does it mean for you that Jesus willingly gave His life as a ransom for your sins? How does this impact your understanding of God's love for you?
- In what ways have you experienced the victory of Jesus over sin and evil in your own life? How does knowing that Jesus has already conquered sin and evil give you confidence in your daily battles?
- What does it mean to you personally to respond to the call to make disciples? How have you been fulfilling the Great Commission in your own life? Share a specific experience or opportunity where you shared Jesus and His message with others.

PRAYER

- Thank Jesus for His sacrifice that has brought us back to right standing with God and saved us from the consequences of our sin. Pray that you won't resort to trying to earn your salvation and will completely rely on Jesus.
- Ask God to show you areas in your life that need to be surrendered to Him completely. Pray for the grace to continually be restored to Him and sanctified by Him each day.
- Pray for boldness and wisdom as you preach the gospel and make Jesus known to your family and friends and beyond. May the truth that God is with you give you the confidence to step out in faith.

8 Who Is the Holy Spirit?

WARM-UP

- How do your friends usually introduce you to their other friends or relatives?
- What does it mean to be wise? How is wisdom different from knowledge and understanding?
- Who do you go to for advice? What makes you trust this person?

WORD *¹But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, ²and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. ³But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."*

ACTS 5:1-4

In many ways, Christians can have a limited understanding of the Holy Spirit, probably because it is not a topic that is easy to study. Sometimes, the Holy Spirit is misunderstood as an impersonal force or a spiritual principle. For others, the work of the Holy Spirit is seen in a very mystical way that is not aligned with who the Bible claims the Holy Spirit to be. While others have their own perspective on the Holy Spirit, it is important for every believer to know who the Holy Spirit truly is according to the word of God. Today, we will talk about two foundational truths on the Holy Spirit.

1 | The Holy Spirit is God.

³But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." **ACTS 5:3-4**

In this short passage, Peter clearly states that Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit by stealing from the sale of the land and emphasizes that the act of lying was not done to man, but God. In the Bible, the Holy Spirit is associated equally with the Father and the Son, meaning that He is the third person of the Trinity. All the attributes of the Father and Jesus are also attributed to the Holy Spirit. When Jesus gave the Great Commission to the disciples, He told them to baptize new believers in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). Paul ends his letter to the church of Corinth with a word of blessing from God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 13:14). As we worship the Father and Jesus, we are called to give reverence to the Holy Spirit as well. Why does Jesus mention the Holy Spirit to His disciples every time they are sent out to preach the gospel?

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2 | The Holy Spirit is a person.

³But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? ⁴While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." **ACTS 5:3-4**

We see in the story of Ananias that the Holy Spirit can be lied to. He is not an impersonal force but a person who is able to know. Paul writes that the Holy Spirit is able to have intellect and able to know and comprehend (1 Corinthians 2:10-11). The Holy Spirit also has emotions. He is grieved when we live in a manner that is contrary to God's word (Ephesians 4:30). He is also able to exercise personal volition. Like any person, He wills and can act on His desires.

The Holy Spirit has the ability to love, see, and think. He also has the ability to hear, talk, desire, mourn, and rejoice. Because the Holy Spirit is God and in unity with Jesus, we can connect with God through Him. How does this help us understand how God relates with us?

APPLICATION

- Why is it important for us to know the Holy Spirit and cultivate a relationship with Him?
- How have you viewed the Holy Spirit before? What is one thing you can do this week to grow in your knowledge and in your relationship with Him?
- Read and reflect on Galatians 5:16–25. How do you think you can *keep in step with the Spirit* on a daily basis? Ask God for the grace to walk according to the Spirit and not by the flesh.

PRAYER

- Thank Jesus for sending the Holy Spirit to be with us. Thank Him that the Holy Spirit is able to relate with us and allows us to connect with God.
- Take time to pray and ask God to fill you with His Spirit. Pray for a renewed love and appreciation for the Holy Spirit.
- Ask God to open your mind and give you wisdom to know and understand the Holy Spirit. Pray that you can be a witness to others as you keep in step with the Holy Spirit.

9 The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 1)

WARM-UP

- Who is your closest friend? How much do you know about this person?
- If you could go back in time and start something over, what would it be? Why and how would you do it?
- Recall a time you were assured of something important. How did it make you feel?

WORD *⁹But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”—¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. . . . ¹⁶“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ. **1 CORINTHIANS 2:9-11, 16***

Knowing God is not just a matter of human effort. When people read the Bible, it doesn’t mean they automatically understand the things of God. There are many verses in the Bible that we have been hearing or reading for a long time but don’t necessarily resonate with our souls. However, the moment we became Christians, something supernatural happened. The verses in the Bible start to make sense. The word of God starts to resonate with our souls. Jesus’ message of salvation suddenly becomes so real for us. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. God opens our eyes to His truth and the gospel. Today, let’s look at what the Holy Spirit does for us as we continue walking with God.

(For more works on the Holy Spirit, see the *In Us* set of small group materials.)

1 | The Holy Spirit enables us to know God.

. . . ¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 1 CORINTHIANS 2:10-11

Paul states that it is the Holy Spirit who reveals to us the depths of God. He illuminates Scripture. Has that ever happened to you? Sometimes, a biblical truth that is seemingly difficult to understand suddenly makes sense as you read Scripture. The Holy Spirit helps us know God when we study Scripture. Like Jesus' promise to the disciples, He will be our Helper who will bring to remembrance what Jesus has taught. The Holy Spirit does the same for us. He teaches us and guides us in all truth (John 14:26). When this happens, God opens our eyes to the wonderful things in His law (Psalm 119:8). This is encouraging because when we try to learn about God by reading Scripture, we are not left to our own capacity to understand. The very Spirit of God opens our eyes to know Him. What is one thing about God you struggled with at first, but made sense when you found out more about Him?

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2 | The Holy Spirit enables us to experience new birth.

⁵Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." JOHN 3:5-8

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Knowing God truly starts with the gospel. To be a Christian is not just a matter of a change of belief. God made a work through the Spirit that opens the possibility of new birth to happen. We have been born again by the work of the Spirit. God does a radical transformation in our inner being that changes our state from being spiritually dead in sin to being alive in Christ. When we put our trust in Christ, the Holy Spirit did an initial cleansing work and empowered us to decisively break from the patterns of sin in our lives. Paul states this truth to the church of Corinth that we were *washed, sanctified, and justified* in the name of Jesus and by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:11). Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, we can never experience what it means to be truly born again. We died to our old selves and are now a new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). What were the first things that changed in your life when you started believing in who Christ is and what He did and then entrusted your life to Him?

The Holy Spirit seals and assures us of our salvation.

¹³In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

EPHESIANS 1:13-14

The Holy Spirit's initial work in us is sustained throughout our life as Christians. In one of his letters to the Corinthian church, Paul asks them if they are aware that their bodies are God's temple where the Holy Spirit dwells (1 Corinthians 6:11). Because the Holy Spirit dwells in us, He assures us that we are saved. He is the guarantee of our salvation.

The Holy Spirit's seal and assurance is something that is given to us not just from a theological perspective but in relational terms. We know that we are children of God and are able to commune and cry out to our heavenly Father because the Holy Spirit bears witness to this truth (Romans 8:15-16). What was your initial response when you learned that the Holy Spirit dwells and makes His home in you?

APPLICATION

- How do the works of the Holy Spirit help change the way you view Him? What are some practical ways you can live this out every day?
- What are some things about God you want to know about? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding and wisdom on these things.
- How can we be certain of the Holy Spirit's leading or guidance in our lives, even when it is possible to mistake it for our own desire? What are some ways we can discern this?

PRAYER

- Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to guide us as we understand God's word and grow in our knowledge of Him.
- Praise God for the sanctifying work in our lives done through the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to continue working in you so that you may do away with sin.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you share the gospel to others with confidence, knowing that He is with us and assures us our salvation. Pray for the right words to say and for Him to open the hearts of those around you.

10 The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 2)

WARM-UP

- What is one skill or character trait you want to develop? What makes this stand out over everything?
- Think of one person you would want everyone to meet. What makes this person so special?
- What is the best gift you've received? How did you feel when you received it?

WORD ¹⁷*"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."* **JOHN 17:17-18**

Our Christian life is a miracle in itself. We won't be able to truly know God without the work of the Holy Spirit. He awakened us to the truth of Scripture and the gospel in a way that our natural selves cannot achieve. Our knowledge of God is not merely intellectual but relational. The Holy Spirit enabled us to experience our new birth or what it truly means to be born again, and seals and assures our future inheritance in God.

The work of the Holy Spirit does not stop there. As Christians, our goal is for us to be conformed in the image of Christ as we live out our lives. The Holy Spirit takes part in the process of our Christian transformation called sanctification.

Jesus prayed to the Father to sanctify His disciples in truth and for His followers to live a life that is like Him and for Him. This sanctification is not only personal but also for missional purposes. It is often said that ministering to others comes from an overflow of our relationship with God. The apostle John somehow gives us a picture of this—to be sanctified in the truth as the disciples were sent into the world to bear witness for Jesus (John 17:17–18). The same goes for us. Jesus desires for us to be sanctified

and be sent to the world and bear witness about Him. Today, we will look at the Holy Spirit's sanctifying work in us and how He empowers us to make Jesus known to the people around us.

1 | The Holy Spirit sanctifies and transforms us.

¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. **2 CORINTHIANS 3:17-18**

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. **ROMANS 8:26-27**

To be sanctified is to be Christlike. It is an impossible undertaking apart from God's work in us. It is of great comfort that the weight of sanctification is not purely on us. Apostle Paul mentions in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that when we behold the glory of God, we are progressively transformed from one glory to another. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in us.

In the book of Romans, Paul mentions the same idea of being conformed to the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29) and describes it as the call of every Christian. This is premised with the work of the Holy Spirit who helps us in our weaknesses. He helps us pray and intercedes for us.

How does the Holy Spirit's work in our transformation help alleviate you from the burden of being transformed on our

own? How does this help us operate in God's grace in the way we view others?

2

The Holy Spirit empowers us to be witnesses for Jesus to the world.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." **ACTS 1:8**

People's reception to the gospel varies. Some will intently listen when we share our faith and respond to receive Jesus. Others will casually listen, but not completely take in what we say. There are instances that people will respond negatively, in a hostile and persecuting manner. Like the disciples facing a challenging world to share Jesus with others, we face the same challenges.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to be witnesses of Jesus in a variety of ways. First, He convicts the world of sin (John 16:8). This means the Holy Spirit will expose sin and point out the truths concerning sin and righteousness to the entire world. As we become witnesses for Jesus, we are not starting from zero. The Holy Spirit does an initial work of reproving the world of sin.

While the Holy Spirit does an initial work, He also helps us with the actual work of preaching the gospel. He empowers us with spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7-11), boldness (Acts 1:8), and guidance in what to say (John 16:13) to proclaim God's word with power (Acts 4:31). What were some of the

ways that the Spirit had helped you be a witness for Christ in the past year?

APPLICATION

- How is a transformed life related to being empowered to be a witness for Christ? How important is our personal testimony in proclaiming the gospel to others? Share a time when a positive change in you led to an open door to talk about God to people you know.
- How does knowing that the Holy Spirit is actively working in your life to make you more like Jesus bring you comfort and hope? Share a specific area in your life where you desire to see transformation and ask the Holy Spirit to help you in that process.
- Is there someone the Holy Spirit is leading you to preach the gospel to? How do you think you will broach the topic with him or her? Ask God for boldness and faith to speak life to this person this week.

PRAYER

- Thank God that we are able to know Him relationally through the Holy Spirit.
- Pray that God would continue to transform you more into the image of Christ. Pray that every word you say and action you do would honor God.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you as you make Him known. Pray that your life would be a living testimony of His love and goodness.

⁴There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. **EPHESIANS 4:4-6**

The question “Who is God?” has been asked and pondered upon by people for centuries. The desire and need to know God may spring from several needs, including knowing our purpose and meaning in life, understanding the world and its complexities, seeking comfort and solace in times of trouble, and finding a sense of belonging and community.

We may never fully comprehend the depth of God’s nature and character, but through the Bible, we can gain a greater understanding and appreciation of who God is, His great love for us, and what He has done and continuously does for humanity. As we get to know the greatness of God and the depth of His love through this material, may it create in us a greater hunger to know Him more and a greater passion to be used by Him to draw other people to Himself.

TOPICS

- God Is Holy
- God Is Great
- God Is Good
- God Is One
- Who Is God the Father?
- Who Is Jesus?
- The Work of Jesus
- Who Is the Holy Spirit?
- The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 1)
- The Work of the Holy Spirit (Part 2)



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