Leader’s Guide

Living Faithfully
Help is On the Way
John 14:15-31
Pastor Ben Pippen
November 15, 2026

Conversation Goal

To help group members understand the Holy Spirit's role in helping us follow Jesus, examine the attitudes and responses that make loving others difficult, and identify how they can intentionally depend on the Holy Spirit to develop Christlike love and put that love into action.

Synopsis

As Jesus prepares His disciples for His departure, He reminds them that loving Him means obeying His commands. This brings us back to the command He gave in John 13:34–35: to love one another as He has loved us. It's a calling to sacrificial, selfless love that extends beyond the people who are easy to love.

But Jesus knows His disciples cannot live this way through their own strength. He promises to send the Holy Spirit - the Advocate - who will be with them, live within them, teach them, and remind them of His words.

Pastor Sebastiano reminds us that the Holy Spirit's work isn't limited to extraordinary spiritual experiences. The Spirit is at work in the ordinary moments of our lives, helping us respond with patience instead of anger, kindness instead of resentment, and love instead of selfishness.

In Galatians 5, Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit. We continue to experience the pull of our human nature, but we're no longer limited to responding according to those impulses. Through the Holy Spirit, we can increasingly become people whose lives reflect the character of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit doesn't simply help us know what Jesus commands. He helps us become people who can live it out.

Discussion Questions

1. Jesus repeatedly connects loving Him with obeying His commands. Why do you think He makes such a strong connection between love and obedience?

Teaching Point

Jesus isn't describing a relationship in which we earn His love through perfect obedience. He's describing a relationship in which genuine love for Him increasingly shapes how we live.

When we love someone, that relationship affects our priorities, choices, and actions.

Jesus has already given His disciples a new command: Love one another as I have loved you. This isn't simply about feeling affection toward other people. It's about actively seeking their good, even when doing so requires sacrifice, patience, or humility.

Our obedience becomes an expression of our relationship with Jesus. We don't obey to earn His love. We obey because we love Him and want our lives to reflect His character.

Follow-Up Prompts

- What's the difference between obeying someone out of obligation and responding out of love?
- How does Jesus' example change our understanding of what love requires?
- Why is it sometimes easier to express love for Jesus through worship than through our treatment of other people?
- What does sacrificial love look like in everyday relationships?
- How might our willingness to love others reveal something about our relationship with Jesus?

Additional Scripture

- **John 13:34–35** Love one another as Jesus has loved us.
- **1 John 4:7–12** God's love is made visible through our love for others.
- **James 1:22–25** Be doers of the Word.
- **Ephesians 5:1–2** Walk in the way of love, following Christ's example.

2. Paul contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. When you encounter a difficult person or situation, what tends to influence your natural response, and how might that differ from the response the Holy Spirit wants to produce?

Teaching Point

We may sincerely want to love others as Jesus commands, but our natural reactions don't always reflect that desire. When someone disappoints us, we may become defensive. When we feel overlooked, we may grow resentful. When someone disagrees with us, we may become impatient or angry.

Galatians 5 reminds us that these reactions are part of the struggle between our flesh and the Spirit. The goal isn't to pretend we don't experience those emotions. It's to recognize them and become increasingly attentive to how we respond.

Spiritual maturity isn't the absence of difficult feelings. It's learning to surrender our responses to the Holy Spirit rather than allowing those feelings to determine our behavior.

Follow-Up Prompts

- Which works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5 are especially common in strained relationships?
- How do we sometimes justify impatience, resentment, or unkindness?
- What's the difference between experiencing anger and allowing anger to control our response?
- How can we recognize when our desire to be right is becoming more important than our desire to love?
- Which fruit of the Spirit would make the greatest difference in a difficult relationship?
- What might change if we paid more attention to what's happening in our hearts before responding?

Additional Scripture

- **Galatians 5:16–26** The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.
- **James 1:19–20** Be quick to listen and slow to anger.
- **Ephesians 4:25–32** Put away bitterness and practice kindness.
- **Psalm 139:23–24** Invite God to search our hearts.

3. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be our Advocate and Helper. What does it practically look like to depend on the Holy Spirit in ordinary moments rather than simply trying harder to be more loving?

Teaching Point

Jesus knows that His command to love one another is beyond what we can consistently accomplish through our own strength. That's why He promises the Holy Spirit. The Spirit isn't simply an occasional source of encouragement. He is God's presence with us and within us, teaching, reminding, guiding, and transforming us.

Pastor Sebastiano described the Holy Spirit as the One who comes alongside us to help. And he challenged us to become more intentional about inviting the Spirit into our everyday lives. Depending on the Holy Spirit doesn't mean becoming passive. It means recognizing our need for God's help and remaining responsive to His leading. Sometimes that dependence looks like stopping before responding in anger, asking for patience, remembering Jesus' teaching, or finding the courage to have a difficult conversation. The Spirit works within us, and we participate by listening, surrendering, and responding.

Follow-Up Prompts

- How do you typically think about the Holy Spirit's role in your life?
- Why is it sometimes easier to depend on God during major crises than during ordinary frustrations?
- What's the difference between asking the Holy Spirit for help and simply trying to control our behavior?
- How might the Spirit use Scripture, prayer, conviction, or other believers to guide us?

- What could help you become more aware of the Holy Spirit throughout your day?
- Is there an area where you've been relying primarily on your own strength?

Additional Scripture

- **John 14:16–17, 26** The Holy Spirit as Advocate and Teacher.
- **Romans 8:5–14** Living according to the Spirit.
- **Philippians 2:12–13** God works within us to desire and act.

4. Sebastiano challenged us not only to ask the Holy Spirit for help but to act on that prayer. What might it look like for you to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in a specific relationship or situation this week?

Teaching Point

The Holy Spirit's work isn't meant to remain an internal experience. As He transforms our hearts, that transformation should increasingly become visible in the way we live.

Sebastiano described the difference between asking God for help and then taking the practical step of acting on that prayer. We might pray for patience and then need to choose a gentler response. We might ask for help forgiving someone and then need to begin releasing resentment or pursuing an appropriate conversation. We might pray for compassion and then need to notice and respond to someone's needs.

The Holy Spirit produces the fruit, but we are invited to participate in the process of living it out. We don't manufacture spiritual fruit through sheer determination. But neither do we wait passively for our attitudes and actions to change. We listen, surrender, and respond.

Follow-Up Prompts

- What's the difference between praying for change and participating in that change?
- Why can taking action be more difficult than asking God for help?
- Is there a relationship where you've been waiting for the other person to change before considering your own response?
- What might it look like to demonstrate love while still maintaining appropriate boundaries?
- Which fruit of the Spirit might God be inviting you to cultivate more intentionally?
- What is one practical action you could take this week?
- How could this group encourage or support you as you respond?

Additional Scripture

- **Galatians 5:22–25** Keep in step with the Spirit.
- **1 John 3:16–18** Love with actions and truth.
- **Colossians 3:12–14** Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, and love.
- **James 2:14–17** Faith expressed through action.