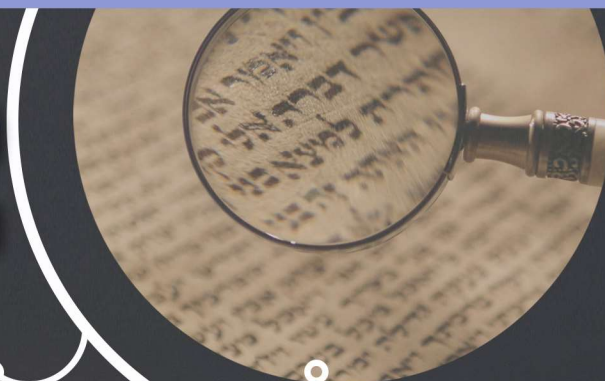


MY JOURNEY TO LIFE THE HOLY SPIRIT



My Journey to Life, Step 11

Foreword

My Journey to Life provides the keys for living every day with peace of mind, harmony of body and wonderful relationships. As you read through each lesson guide, your daily outlook will be transformed and renewed by the Spirit. We pray you will experience a growing adoration for the greatest Teacher this world has ever known. Let's begin walking, step-by-step, on the pathway towards a new life together with Jesus.

Preface

Who is the Holy Spirit? In our lesson today, we will study His role in the Godhead, His influence in the writing of Scripture, His power in the early Church, and His significance in our spiritual walk.

Step Eleven—God, the Holy Spirit

What does the Bible say about God, the Holy Spirit? “God the eternal Spirit was active with the Father and the Son in Creation, incarnation, and redemption. He is as much a person as are the Father and the Son. He inspired the writers of Scripture. He filled Christ’s life with power. He draws and convicts human beings; and those who respond He renews and transforms into the image of God. Sent by the Father and the Son to be always with His children, He extends spiritual gifts to the church, empowers it to bear witness to Christ, and in harmony with the Scriptures leads it into all truth.”—*Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, p. 69

Bible Discovery: Genesis 1:1, 2; 2 Samuel 23:2; Psalm 55:11; Isaiah 61:1; Luke 1:35; 4:18; John 14:16-18, 26; 15:26, 27; 16:7-13; Acts 1:8; 5:3; 10:38; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Peter 1:21

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings*, p. 26.3

1. Who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, whose Trinitarian nature has never changed or had an origin. He is a distinct entity of the Godhead—able to strive, teach, convict, direct church affairs, help, intercede, inspire, and sanctify.

After Jesus’ death and resurrection, His friends were devastated to learn He would return to heaven and no longer be with them. They were beginning to understand His purpose and mission and couldn’t imagine being separated from Him. Not only was Jesus their comforting Friend and eternal Savior, they also loved His teaching and felt complete in His presence.

Jesus reassured them that the gift of the Holy Spirit in mighty power would be with them when He left. Though He remained fully God after His resurrection, He chose to have the Holy Spirit be His representative on Earth. As Christ's representative, the Spirit would be comforting, teaching, and guiding every person who seeks to know Christ. Thus, the work of the Holy Spirit is by nature Christ-centered, not Spirit-centered!

Bible Discovery: Genesis 6:3; Matthew 28:19; Luke 12:12; John 16:7, 8; Acts 13:2; Romans 8:26; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:21

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Adventist Home*, p. 350.3; *In Heavenly Places*, p. 336.2; *Our High Calling*, p. 150.3

2. Does the Bible teach that the Holy Spirit is equal to God? Yes, Scripture describes the Holy Spirit as God. Peter told Ananias that in lying to the Holy Spirit, he had lied not “to men but to God” (Acts 5:3, 4). The Holy Spirit is considered equal to God in the baptismal formula (Matthew 28:19), the apostolic blessing (2 Corinthians 13:14) and the spiritual gifts discourse (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

The works of God are also associated with the Holy Spirit. Creation and resurrection both involve Him. Elihu said, “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life” (Job 33:4). And the psalmist said, “You send forth Your Spirit, they are created” (Psalm 104:30). Paul claimed, “He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11).

Think about the divine attributes Scripture applies to the Holy Spirit: life, truth, love, omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. What a privilege to have such a Being with us continually!

Bible Discovery: Matthew 12:32, 33; John 14:16; 16:13; Romans 8:2; 15:30; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11; Ephesians 4:30

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 616.5; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 671.2

3. What is the function of the Holy Spirit within the Godhead? From eternity, God, the Holy Spirit lived within the Godhead as the third member, equally self-existent as the Father and Son. The Spirit's function focuses on representing Christ. His activity centers on Christ's mission to redeem us. The Holy Spirit was actively involved in Christ's birth (Luke 1:35), confirmed His public ministry at His baptism (Matthew 3:16, 17) and brought the benefits of Christ's atoning sacrifice and resurrection to all of us (Romans 8:11).

In human terms, we could say that in the Godhead, the Spirit fulfills the role of executor. For example, when the Father gave Jesus to the world (John 3:16), He was conceived of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-20). Only an omnipresent, personal God, not an impersonal influence,

energy or created being could perform the miracle of bringing the divine Christ to Mary. The Holy Spirit came to initiate the incarnational plan of salvation conceived from eternity (Ephesians 3:11).

It was through the Spirit that Jesus became universally present and active in all willing recipients at Pentecost. God originated Scripture through the agency of the Holy Spirit so we can understand and love the covenant-keeping Father who longs to save us for eternity. The Spirit is continually speaking to our hearts, striving to draw us into a close relationship with Jesus.

The Holy Spirit leads sinners to salvation in Christ. Those who are in Christ will produce the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23) in their lives. The special work of the Holy Spirit within the community of believers is shown by spiritual gifts which equip them for witnessing (1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Ephesians 4:11-14).

Bible Discovery: Matthew 1:18-20; 3:16, 17; Luke 1:35; John 3:16; Romans 8:11; 2 Peter 1:21

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 388.1; 671.2; *Our High Calling*, p. 152.3

4. How essential is the Holy Spirit to our existence? The Holy Spirit was present at the creation of our world. We are dependent upon the Spirit to bring understanding and guidance “into all truth” (John 16:13). It is the Spirit that recreates in the believer a spiritual knowledge of God.

Maybe you have known someone whose life was “off the rails” until they invited Jesus to be Lord of their life. It is the Spirit who makes this heart transformation and enables them to live it out in their actions. It is the Spirit who calls us to God, gives repentance for sins and changes us to be like Jesus.

In John 3, Nicodemus struggled with this concept, which Jesus called being “born-again.” Over and over, Jesus patiently helped Nicodemus understand that without the Spirit, no amount of wisdom, leadership ability, education or wealth would enable a person to know God and be changed into a true follower of Christ.

Bible Discovery: Genesis 1:2; Compare Job 34:14, 15 with Job 33:4; John 3:5, 6; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Colossians 3:10

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 672.1; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 64.5; *Our High Calling*, p. 154.3

5. Can we grieve away the Spirit of God? It has been God's purpose from the beginning of Earth's history that humanity be dwelling places for the Holy Spirit. But sin, from which we do not repent and turn away, can separate us from God, the Spirit (Isaiah 59:1, 2). Resisting the impressions of the Holy Spirit can be spiritually fatal, as He is the agency that leads us to Jesus (John 16:13, 14), to repentance and to truth.

When Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and suffered immediate death (Acts 5:1-11), Peter pointed to the divinity and personality of the Spirit. In grieving the Spirit, the pair had grieved God Himself.

Scripture warns us about grieving or quenching the Spirit of God: "Today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15).

Bible Discovery: Genesis 6:3; Matthew 12:31, 32; Luke 12:10; John 15:5; Acts 7:51; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 321.3-322.1

6. What relationship is there between the outpouring of the Spirit of God at Pentecost and the outpouring of God's Spirit just before Jesus' second coming? Though the Spirit was at work in Old Testament times and genuine believers have always been aware of His presence, prophecy predicted a special outpouring of the Spirit after Christ's atoning sacrifice, resurrection and glorification in heaven. When, at His ascension, Jesus began a work of intercession in heaven's sanctuary, the Spirit began a new role as representative of both the Father (John 14:16, 17) and the Son (John 16:13, 14).

Jesus instructed His disciples, along with Christ's other followers, to "tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). They were to pray for the promised outpouring of the Spirit which would give power to their witness. After ten days of deep heart searching, confession, prayer and worship, the one hundred twenty assembled believers received the mighty outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

This gift of the fullness of the Spirit, appearing as tongues of fire, enabled the joyous recipients to preach the good news of the gospel with power and persuasion—whether in their own language or in languages they could not previously speak. Signs and wonders followed the believers and thousands were converted in one day.

This Pentecost experience is referenced in the Bible as the early rain. Just before Jesus comes, the Spirit will again be poured out on God's people in a supernatural event known as the Latter Rain (Joel 2:23).

Bible Discovery: Joel 2:28; Luke 24:49; John 7:39; 16:7, 13; Acts 1: 5, 8, 14-16; 2:2-4; 5:12, 14

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 38.1; *The Great Controversy*, p. 611.2-3

7. What is the purpose of the Latter Rain? The culture was largely agrarian during the time the Bible was written. People understood references to crops, seasons, planting and harvest. Thus, the Inspired Word uses rain as a metaphor to explain the work of the Spirit in the Latter Rain. The literal early rains were to germinate the seed, causing it to spring up. This symbolizes the early rain of God's Spirit at Pentecost, with the subsequent explosion of the good news as the disciples of Christ carried His name to many places. It also represents the beginning process of individual spiritual growth, as the Spirit awakens an interest for God in the heart.

Those working the fields understood that the late rain, or Latter Rain, ripened the grain and prepared it for harvest. In the same vein, the Holy Spirit will be poured out on His followers with mighty power near the close of Earth's history, which enables Earth's inhabitants to understand the issues in the great controversy between Christ and Satan and proclaim the three angels' messages of Revelation 14.

In addition, the Latter Rain will spiritually strengthen those who receive it, sustaining them through the great time of trouble that will come on the Earth just before the coming of Christ.

Bible Discovery: Daniel 12:1; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:23, 28; Zechariah 10:1; Acts 8:4

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 506.1; *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 1055.4; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 8, p. 21.2; *Early Writings*, p. 85.3

8. What are the conditions to this special endowment of the Spirit in the Latter Rain? The Holy Spirit came in response to the prayers and confession of the believers preceding Pentecost, therefore He is already present in God's church as the promised Gift (Acts 2:38). But the Spirit has not come in the fullness that God hopes to impart to every genuine believer today.

God waits for His people to surrender fully to His lordship so that the final outpouring of His Spirit can occur in their hearts. This surrender involves confessing all known sin to God and accepting His gracious forgiveness. Additionally, it includes confessing our wrongdoing to those we have hurt and restoring as far as possible what we have defrauded others.

Every day we are to individually pray for fresh supplies of grace, that we may reach higher and still higher toward perfection in Christ. Then, as God's people, we should put away all dissension and give ourselves to God for the saving of those without Christ. We can pray, united in faith, for the promised blessing and it will come.

Bible Discovery: Zechariah 4:6; Luke 19:8-10; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 508.1; *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 121.1; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, p. 214.2

9. What relationship is there between the Latter Rain of God's Spirit and the Loud Cry of Revelation 18? As we have seen, the Latter Rain is the special outpouring of the Spirit of God on His people just before Jesus comes. This anointing enables the people of God to announce with power the message of the three angels of Revelation 14. Let's look briefly at those messages:

- 1st Angel (Revelation 14:6, 7) *The judgment is come.* (See: My Journey to Life, Step 5—The Sanctuary)
- 2nd Angel (Revelation 14:8) *Babylon is fallen.* In Scripture, Babylon represents confusion or false doctrines. The angel of Revelation 18 that represents the Loud Cry is God's urgent message to come out of all religious organizations that teach salvation through any means other than Christ alone, that reject the judgment message of the 1st angel and that teach that God's Ten Commandment Law is not binding on Christians today.
- 3rd Angel (Revelation 14:9-12) *Those who receive the mark of the beast will be tormented with fire and brimstone in contrast to the saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.*

God still has His people in mystical Babylon. The Loud Cry will be the final warning given to the inhabitants of the Earth. Through this warning message, every person will understand that the seventh-day Sabbath has become the central issue in the great conflict between Christ and Satan which culminates in Jesus coming to rescue His faithful followers.

Bible Discovery: John 14:15; Galatians 2:16; 3:11; Romans 3:20; Revelation 14:6-12; 18:2, 4, 5

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 190.3; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 6, p. 19.1; *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 619.1

10. How often do we need to be converted by the Holy Spirit? When Paul said, "I die daily," he meant he chose every day to crucify self and his old life of sin and live a new life by the Spirit. Many Christians are unaware how essential the Spirit of God is to knowing Christ and living victoriously in His presence.

The Spirit is not divine energy; He is a personal Being who longs to be our Comfort, Counselor, Intercessor and Guide for every challenge we face. Even the writing of truth in our mind is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Every believer should be born of water and of the Spirit. Every believer's baptism should include a prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Without Him, we can do nothing.

Bible Discovery: John 3:5; 14:16-18, 23; 15:5; 16:6-8; Acts 1:8; 2:38; 13:1-4, 9; 15:28; 16:6, 7; Romans 8:26; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Titus 3:5, 6

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 207.3; *Our High Calling*, p. 152.2; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 172.3

11. Is it possible that there could be a counterfeit Spirit not sent by God? Yes, for every good and beautiful gift of God, Satan attempts a counterfeit to draw us away from the real source of life and truth. The Bible tells us Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light, speaking beautiful words and even performing mighty miracles.

Because the Latter Rain of the Holy Spirit will be an agency to draw us to Jesus and a decision to follow Him with undivided allegiance, Satan will try to prevent this blessing. He will try to bring individuals and churches under his deceptive power. Many will think God Himself is doing the miracles when the work is that of another spirit altogether.

God's people will be able to differentiate between Satan's false revival and the genuine Loud Cry of the Spirit. Satan's counterfeit will focus on emotional excitement that mingles parts of a true revival but ends in false outcomes. The testimony of God's word will focus on Jesus as our only hope for salvation, encourage self-denial and renunciation of the ungodly elements of the world, and uphold God's Ten Commandment Law as still binding upon humanity. If a movement of revival does not contain these key elements, it is not the work of the Spirit of God.

Bible Discovery: Luke 17:23; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Revelation 12:9; 16:13, 14

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 464.1; *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 62.1

12. How does the Spirit help us live our lives as followers of Jesus? Jesus promised His disciples they would not be left as orphans (John 14:18). Neither are we! In our loneliness, the Spirit brings the comforting presence of Christ. When we are tempted to sin, the Spirit brings conviction. When we are lagging in spiritual energy, the Spirit brings inspiration. When we lack holiness, the Spirit brings sanctification. When we're uncertain of our talents, the Spirit reveals our spiritual gifts. When we feel clueless about the deep things of God and redemption, the Spirit reveals them.

It is through the Spirit of God that Christ walks with us through all of life, and even through the valley of the shadow of death.

Bible Discovery: Psalm 23:4; Matthew 28:20; John 16:8; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:21

Further Reading: Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, October 26, 1897, pars. 14, 15

Reflection...

God is eager to impart more of the Holy Spirit's power to those who ask for it. It is through the Spirit's influence that we can walk closer with Jesus, revealing His love to others through our words and actions.

Next Step...

In the book of Genesis, we see a beautiful picture of the triune God as They thoughtfully create the world in six days, culminating in Their crowning handiwork—two humans made in Their image. In our next lesson we will discover what the creation story means for us today.

Discussion Questions

1. The Holy Spirit seemed to be Jesus' favorite topic! Why do you think He talked about the Holy Spirit so frequently?
2. Why do you think Scripture states the only unpardonable sin is grieving of the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28, 29)?
3. Have you experienced the comfort of the Spirit (John 14:16)? If "yes," share your experience with your study group.

Further Reading

Official Adventist Website: <https://www.adventist.org/holy-spirit>

Contact Information

Ellen G. White Estate: mail@whiteestate.org

Request a personal Bible study: <https://www.bibleschools.com/en/personal-studies>

Visit your local Seventh-day Adventist Church: <https://www.adventistlocator.org>

Online prayer room: <https://www.wepray.mobi>