



## Discussion Guide Holy Spirit — Part 1 LEADER GUIDE

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*Hey leaders! We began a new series this week called “[Holy Spirit](#)”! In this series, we’ll learn how to walk in step with the Spirit and live with purpose beyond our own ability. The Holy Spirit is God’s presence in us—fueling our faith, guiding our steps, and empowering us for His mission. Through the Holy Spirit, we are filled with the power to serve, love, and share the gospel.*

***Thank you for shepherding a group of people to Love God, Love Others, and Live Sent!***

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?  
Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or [discipleship@rockbridge.cc](mailto:discipleship@rockbridge.cc)

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**“When the Spirit fills us, we become channels, not reservoirs.”**

[Catherine Booth]

**LEADER RESOURCES ||** **Leader Note** *We do our best to equip, empower, and encourage you to shepherd your group well. Access a resource by clicking on the underlined title and share them with your group!*

- **Passage Summary**
  - Paul closes his confrontational letter with a powerful and unique benediction to the church at Corinth. This is the only place where the entire Godhead is mentioned together in this type of blessing. Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to be completely blessed by all of who God is—grace, love and fellowship.
- **2 Corinthians Ch. 13 Commentary & What Does "Communion of the Holy Spirit" Mean?**
  - Use the commentary and short video for background and encouragement. These would be good resources to share before you gather.
- **A Trinitarian Blessing**
  - This would be a good resource to share with your group after you gather.

**ENGAGE & CONNECT ||** **Leader Note** *The goal for the icebreaker is to prepare your group for the conversation ahead by connecting with one another’s hearts and building joy together.*

If our small group was stranded on a desert island, what would you be in charge of and why?

**BEGIN WITH PRAYER ||** **Leader Note** *Begin your time together thanking God for his presence and praying His word back to Him. Ask a few people to pray, taking a posture of humility and dependence!*

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.”*

[John 14:16-17]

**BIG IDEA || Leader Note** Read this aloud so your group knows the theme of today's reading and discussion.

God's incredible Christ-centered grace and fatherly love are applied to and experienced by us in the fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit.

**PASSAGE & DISCUSSION || Leader Note** Have people read aloud the passage as instructed. Your role is to FACILITATE, so keep your group moving along, encourage people to share, and look for opportunities to point out the grace and glory of God! Here are two reminders: 1) Every question does not have to be answered ... go where the Spirit leads! 2) Answers do not have to be read aloud ... they're for guidance!

1. In the sermon we heard, *"When we think of the Christian life, we need to think more about who than what."* How do you find yourself focusing more on the "what" of your life's circumstances than the "who" is in control of those circumstances?

Have someone read aloud 2 Corinthians 13:11-14 (only goes to v. 13 in the CSB). Ask another person to read it aloud again, possibly in The Message version.

2. What do the three elements in this benediction (grace, love, fellowship) tell us about the nature of God's relationship with us? *They show that God offers a relational, immersive blessing: Christ gives grace (unearned favor), the Father gives love (identity and belonging), and the Spirit gives fellowship (presence and partnership). This is not theological theory—it's daily spiritual reality.*
3. What does the term "fellowship of the Holy Spirit" mean? *Fellowship refers to participation, communion, and partnership. It's not about spiritual gifts or power alone—it's about an ongoing, relational experience of God's presence, through the Spirit, in everyday life.*
4. For many, the Holy Spirit is the "forgotten person of the Trinity." How is that true or not true for you? *Answers will vary: many Christians find it easier to relate to a Father or a Son, due to human experience. The Holy Spirit can feel abstract—like a force or emotion. This misunderstanding leads to avoidance or neglect of the Spirit's personal role in our faith.*
5. What difference would it make to view your Christian life not as a list of tasks to do, but as intimacy with God? *This is a good opportunity to go first! Answers will vary: it shifts the focus from performance to relationship. Instead of earning approval or completing duties, life becomes about abiding, listening, responding, and loving.*
6. How do you tend to think of the Holy Spirit—more as a force, a feeling, or a person? How might that shape your relationship with Him?
7. In the sermon we heard, *"Ask God to make His presence the controlling reality of your life."* What specific habit or spiritual practice is God inviting you to lean into to help you live in "fellowship with the Spirit"? *Answers will vary: practices like meditating on Scripture, prayerful listening, worship, and confessing sin help attune us to the Spirit's presence. The goal is relational engagement.*
8. What specifically would change if you lived the coming week as if the Holy Spirit were truly with and in you? *This is a good opportunity to go first! Challenge your group to not speak in generalities, but to name something specific from their actual life.*
9. How can our group become more intentional about experiencing and acknowledging the fellowship of the Spirit together? *Answers will vary: by inviting the Spirit into our gatherings through prayer, sharing moments of His guidance, and listening for His leading in decisions and conversations.*

10. How can we bless one another with the fullness of the Trinity, as Paul does in his benediction?

*Answers will vary: by speaking grace, affirming love, and cultivating spiritual fellowship—praying over one other, reminding one other of Gospel truth, and welcoming the Spirit's movement in real time.*

**STEP OF OBEDIENCE || Leader Note** *This is an opportunity for people to put into practice what the Spirit is inviting them to do and live in obedience to God for the sake of love! You can encourage your group to be accountable to one another and use these to follow up with one another throughout the week.*

Paul's benediction is a profound summary of the Christian life: **rooted in grace, grounded in love, and empowered by fellowship with the Spirit**. The Christian life is not just about rules, knowledge, or behavior—but about being drawn into the relational life of the triune God. The Holy Spirit is not an accessory to faith but the **presence of God** that brings Jesus near and makes God's love real.

**As you consider your next step, here are two questions to reflect on:** 1) In what area of my life do I live as if I am alone, rather than indwelt by the Holy Spirit? 2) How am I being more focused on knowing about God than walking with Him?

*Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 3-4 for this question. The possible next steps of faith below are not for discussion, but simply a resource for your group members.*

### Possible Next Steps of Faith

1. **Begin each day this week with this prayer:** "Holy Spirit, help me walk with you today—aware, listening, and present."
2. **Identify one spiritual discipline** (e.g., journaling, listening prayer, quiet worship) to help you deepen your fellowship with the Spirit this week.

**PRAYER FOCUS || Leader Note** *Be intentional about saving at least 5-7 minutes for prayer at the end of your gathering each week to pray together. **THIS SUMMER, we will share creative and unique ways for your group to pray together.** Give these a try or simply pray for one another's personal requests!*

### Grace, Love, Fellowship

Today, let's prayerfully reflect on how God's grace and love are made real in our lives through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit—especially in community.

- Have someone read 2 Corinthians 13:14 aloud slowly.
- Read aloud to the group: *"This blessing reminds us that God doesn't just give us grace, love, and fellowship as ideas—but as gifts to be experienced, together. Take a moment in silence to reflect on how you've received one of those from someone in this group."*
- Then, invite each person to affirm someone else by saying, "I've seen God's grace/love/fellowship in you when \_\_\_\_." Encourage the group to be sincere but simple, reinforcing that God often meets us through one another. Here are a few examples:
  - "I've seen God's grace in you when you shared your story."
  - "I've felt the Father's love through you when you prayed for me."
  - "The Spirit's fellowship was real in the way you listened."
- Close with this simple prayer: *"God, make us a community that helps each other experience your love more deeply. Amen."*