



## Lesson 5

To Begin ...

*What is one of your skills, hobbies, or passions that few may know about? How did you become interested in it and how hard have you worked at it?*

Hey Life Group Leaders! Welcome to the 5th week of our Life Group Video Series, "Built Faith Tough," where we have been studying through several different Scripture passages dealing with building faith in Jesus! We hope that this series has been uplifting, challenging, and has helped you find your next step in your journey with God!

You have six questions based the video lesson this final week! Remember that these Leader Notes are to serve as a guide for further and deepening conversation with your Life Group, not as the answers! Enjoy this week's discussion and always remember to ask an extra question such as "Why do you believe that?" to draw out some more conversation from your group members!

To start off this lesson, you have a couple of questions above that everyone in your group should be able to answer. This has great potential to be a very fun time of sharing and maybe a little bragging! Please enjoy this! Please make sure that your group feels the safety of sharing within the group. There is no right or wrong answer here. No snap judgments or quick fixes. And as always, be encouraging and show grace as your group members are working through their salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12).

### Discussion Prompts

1. The Spirit is called the Advocate (some translations use the words Helper and Paraclete). How is the Spirit an advocate for Christians?

Some answers may include that the definition of advocate is to speak or write in favor of; support or urge by argument; recommend publicly. A person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc. A person who pleads for or in behalf of another; intercessor. A person who pleads the cause of another in a court of law. Also, if we read Romans 8:26-27, which reads, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God." From this passage

and the definition above, we see that part of what the Spirit does is be the go between for us and the Father. When we pray, we are never on our own. The Spirit at all times is praying in and for us. This means that the primary energy and influence in our spiritual formation are not our will or knowledge, not our determination or stamina, but the ever present and active Spirit. Prayer involves far more than God's listening to us; the greater part of prayer is the active intercessory presence of the Spirit of God in our lives. As a believer, you are not left to your own resources to cope with problems. Even when you don't know the right words to pray, the Holy Spirit of God helping you to pray and you don't need to be afraid to come before him.

2. Read John 14:15-17; Romans 8:9; and 1 Corinthians 6:18-20. How does the Spirit dwell within believers? What does that mean for believers?

John 14:15-17 reads, "If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

Romans 8:9 reads, "You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ."

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 reads, "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies."

Some answers to the first part of this question may include that a Christian is anyone who has the Spirit of God living in them. This is the very presence of God living in all believers, helping us to live as God wants and building Christ's church here on earth. By faith we can appropriate the Spirit's power each day. You won't know that the Holy Spirit has come if you are waiting for a certain feeling;

you will know he has come because Jesus promised he would. When the Holy Spirit is working within you, you will believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that eternal life comes through him; you will begin to act as Christ directs; you will find him in your daily problems and in your praying; you will be empowered to serve God and do his will; you will become part of God's plan to build up his church.

Some answers to the last part of this question may include that the word sometimes used for the Holy Spirit translated as 'Counselor' combines the ideas of comfort and counsel. The Holy Spirit is a powerful person on our side, working for and with us. He will be with us forever; he lives with us and in us; he teaches us; reminds us of Jesus' words; he convicts us of sin, shows us God's righteousness, and announces God's judgment on evil; he guides into truth and gives insight into future events; he brings glory to Christ; the Holy Spirit has been active among people from the beginning of time, but after Pentecost in Acts 2, he came to live in all believers. The Spirit gives believers a sense of unity with Christ; leads us into all truth, helps us worship God; guides our decision making; illuminates our Bible reading; motivates us to action; gives us the right words to say; softens our hearts and minds. He teaches (John 14:26 and Luke 12:12), intercedes (Romans 8:26), and gives life (John 6:63).

3. How does Genesis 1:1-2 show the Spirit to be active and an agent of order?

Genesis 1:1-2 reads, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."

Some answers to this question may include that the opening verse of the whole Bible affirms the unique power of God to create. God is the only subject to the verb 'to create' in Scripture, and God is the primary subject of all that follows. Over a dark, watery void the Spirit of the divine power hovers, preparing to breathe life and create order out of chaos. God's Spirit was actively involved in the creation of the world and his care and protection are still active. This exclusive work of God's creative power continues through the rest of Scripture.

4. The Spirit works in the life of the believer to help the believer produce the fruits listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Which of these fruits have you worked hard to develop? Which of these fruits are more difficult for you to develop?

Galatians 5:22-23 reads, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."

This question is one that everyone in your group should be able to answer because it is again asking them to share their opinions. Some in your group may have a very negative opinion of themselves or be embarrassed as they share. Be very encouraging and help people to see the work that God is doing in them. Remember please, no snap judgments or quick fixes. And as always, be encouraging and show grace as your group members are working through their salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12).

5. According to John 16:8-11, how does the Spirit prove the world to be wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgement?

John 16:8-11 reads, "When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned."

Some answers may include that first the Spirit will demonstrate that the world is wrong in the relation to sin. In other words, the world is guilty of sin. The evidence for this is that the world has not believed in Jesus. This can only be because it is bent on its own way rather than God's way. Second, the Spirit will demonstrate that the world is wrong in relation to justice. The world thinks it has justice on its side. But the vindication of Jesus himself, which consists of his going away and being exalted to the Father, is the sign that the living God has already given sentence on his behalf. If it's justice you want, we already know the verdict; God has decided in favor of Jesus as the righteous one. All those who follow Jesus share that verdict. Third, the Spirit will demonstrate that the world is wrong in relation to judgement, which here means 'condemnation.' The world supposes that it can and should pass judgment on Jesus'

followers. But the events which are about to unfold, the events of Jesus' death and resurrection, indicate decisively that they are wrong. These events meant that 'the ruler of this world' – the dark power that has kept humans and the world enslaved – has been condemned. His power has been broken. Death itself, the weapon of tyrants and particularly of 'the satan,' is a beaten foe.

6. Read John 14:17; 16:13; Romans 8:27 and 1 Corinthians 2:14-15. Jesus says the Spirit of Truth will guide us in all truth (John 14:17; 16:13). How does the Spirit guide us in truth? What does it mean for the Spirit to speak what He hears? How does the Spirit help us understand scripture?

John 14:17 reads, "the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

John 16:13 reads, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."

Romans 8:27 reads, "And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God."

1 Corinthians 2:14-15 reads, "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments"

Some answers to the first part of this question may include that the those who hear Christ's words and understand the Spirit's power have a whole new way to look at life. The truth into which the Holy Spirit guides us is the truth about Christ. The Spirit also helps us through patient practice to discern right from wrong. The Holy Spirit prays with and for you, and God answers. Without the Holy Spirit, unbelievers are tone deaf to God's communication with them.

Some answers to the last part of this question may include that the

Spirit illuminates Scripture for us. On many occasions, believers who are constantly reading the Bible will come across words, phrases, verses, and chapters that they have read before, but had little impact before the Spirit brings these passages to light for them. Some sudden emphasis is experienced because the Holy Spirit has brought the words to life for the reader.

Pray out your time together as a group. Remember to ask for prayer requests. Encourage one another to take steps, regardless of how small, toward Jesus and his kingdom.