

Th123 A Study of the Holy Spirit

Th123-3 The Spirit of Missions

Someone has rightly observed that any organization rises or falls on the quality of its leadership. This truth applies to the church. The good thing is that the true Church is not led by any man. The true Church is led by the Holy Spirit. Jesus founded the Church—often referred to as the body of Christ. When He went back to heaven, Christ sent the Holy Spirit to lead and guide His Church. Any church that is led by the Holy Spirit will be successful.

In the first lesson, you learned that the Holy Spirit is God and that He is a Person. Then, in the second lesson, we examined some of the titles and symbols that the Scriptures use to represent Him. From these, you discovered that the Spirit of God is holy, powerful, and sovereign. He has the right and the power to do whatever He pleases. No man can ever command or tell the Holy Spirit what He must do.

You further learned that, as the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit has come to enable us. As Christ's followers, we are to fulfill Christ's mission on the earth. In this lesson, we will talk about how the Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of Missions." As such, He fulfills three important missional roles: Executive of the Godhead; Director of the Harvest, and Enabler of the Mission. Let's look more closely at each of these three roles.

First, the Holy Spirit is *Executive of the Godhead*. When we say this, we do not mean that He is the boss of God. We rather mean that the Spirit is that member of the Trinity responsible to put God's plans into effect. He was sent by the Father and the Son to *execute*—or to carry out—God's mission on the earth.

Jesus once told His disciples, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor [meaning the Holy Spirit] to be with you forever" (John 14:16). A few weeks later, the Spirit was outpoured at Pentecost. Peter stood up afterward and explained to the crowd what had happened. He said that Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God. There, He "received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). In other words, the Father and the Son have joined together to send the Spirit into the world to accomplish God's work.

Now, as Executive of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is working in and through the Church to carry out God's mission. He is moving in all the earth carrying out the will of the Father and the Son. Our job is to submit ourselves to the Spirit's leading. We receive His power, and work with Him in fulfilling God's plan for the nations. Someone explained it this way: God the Father sent the Son. The Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit. And now, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit send the Church.

Second, the Holy Spirit is the *Director of the Harvest*. Jesus once referred to himself as the "Lord of the Harvest." He instructed His disciples to "ask the Lord of the harvest...to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt 9:38). Later, He told them that He was going to leave them and return to His Father. However, He would not leave them alone. He would send the Holy Spirit in His place to complete His work. Jesus fulfilled this promise at Pentecost, when He

poured out His Spirit on His church. Now, the Holy Spirit has taken over Jesus' work and is now the "Director of the Harvest."

As Director of the Harvest, the Holy Spirit directs the work of missions. We see Him doing this throughout the Book of Acts. The Spirit calls people into the work. He then empowers them and directs them in the harvest field. Further, when they become discouraged or fearful, He comes to them and encourages them to continue in the work.

This work of the Spirit continues today. In fact, as the Spirit of Missions, the Holy Spirit will direct the harvest until the work is finished and Jesus comes again. That's why it is so important that every Christian be filled with, and remain full of, the Holy Spirit.

This brings us to our final point. Not only is the Holy Spirit the Executive of the Godhead and the Director of the Harvest, He is also the *Enabler of the Missions Force*. He is the one who empowers and equips the harvest workers to accomplish the task. Just before Jesus returned to heaven, He left His disciples with a final command and a final promise. His command was, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my father promised...for John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4-5). His final promise was, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The disciples obeyed Jesus' command and received His promise. On the Day of Pentecost they were all "filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:4). As a result of this powerful spiritual experience, known as the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, they became effective witnesses of the gospel. The Book of Acts tells the exciting story of their Spirit-empowered witness.

The Holy Spirit is indeed the Spirit of Missions. He will inspire, empower, guide, and sustain you in the mission. Have you been empowered by the Holy Spirit? If not, you can be today. Jesus promised that our "Father in heaven [will] give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13).

This lesson is **important** because it teaches the main roles the Holy Spirit plays as the Executive of the Godhead, the Director of the Harvest, and the Enabler of the Missions Force. He calls, enables, directs, empowers, and encourages people to extend themselves in mission for the Lord.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that the church must be led by the Holy Spirit to finish God's work in our generation.

Let's now **review** some important truths we have learned from this lesson.

1. In this lesson you learned three important roles of the Holy Spirit. What are they? [PAUSE]
A. If you answered, "The Holy Spirit is the Executive of the Godhead, the Director of the Harvest, and the Enabler of the Mission," you answered correctly.
2. Describe the Holy Spirit's work as the Executive of the Godhead? [PAUSE]

- A. If you answered that, as the Executive of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is that member of the Trinity responsible to carry out God's work in the world, you are right.
3. Describe the Holy Spirit's role as the Director of the Harvest. [PAUSE]
A. If you answered that, as the Director of the Harvest the Holy Spirit has taken over Jesus' work of directing the work of mission, you answered correctly.
4. Describe the Holy Spirit work as the Enabler of the Missions Force. [PAUSE]
A. If you answered that, as the Enabler of the Mission, the Holy Spirit is the One who empowers and equips the harvest workers to accomplish the task of world missions, you are correct.
5. Tell how every disciple of Jesus must respond to the Holy Spirit as the Enabler of the Mission Force. [PAUSE]
A. If you answered that every disciple must obey Jesus' command to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, you are right.

Your **assignment** is to re-listen to this lesson several times and then teach it to others. Be encouraged as you memorize this Bible verse: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).