



ALPHA ONLINE 2020



**HOSTS &
HELPERS
GUIDE**

**The Holy
Spirit**

THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSIONS

THE HOLY SPIRIT SESSIONS FORM A UNIQUE MOMENT IN THE COURSE. FEEL FREE TO CHECK IN WITH THE TEAM IF YOU NEED ANY HELP TO MAKE THIS TIME SPECIAL FOR YOUR GUESTS.

These sessions (episodes 8-11) are often done on a weekend away. For Alpha online we recommend spreading it over two consecutive evenings or perhaps a Friday night and Saturday morning. Some groups will be watching the intro and *Who is the Holy Spirit?* on their own and only meeting for *What does the Holy Spirit do?* and *How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?*

Please get in touch with Charmaine (084 412 4209) if you need help or advice in deciding what would be the best approach for your group.

Remember to watch the special training video for these sessions.

Icebreakers

STILL BE SURE TO MAKE YOUR GUESTS FEEL WELCOME, EVEN THOUGH YOU MIGHT NEED MORE TIME FOR VIDEOS DURING THESE SESSIONS

See icebreaker or online games ideas at the end of this guide.

Session Guidelines

INTRO video (10 min)

- Focused on loneliness and the Spirit as Comforter, this video sets up these sessions

1. WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT? (24 min)

YOU MIGHT NOT NEED A DISCUSSION AFTER THIS VIDEO, DEPENDING ON THE FLOW OF YOUR TIME TOGETHER

- It is often good to start with: “Did anything from the episode stand out to you?”

1 WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

- The Bible uses many names when referring to the Holy Spirit. Do any of them stand out to you? (Comforter, Advocate, Spirit of Wisdom, Guide, Teacher, Gift of God, Spirit of Jesus, and Helper)
- Do any questions come to mind when you hear about the activity of the Holy Spirit through history?

2 HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE IDEA THAT GOD IS PRESENT WITH US THROUGH HIS HOLY SPIRIT?

3 HAVE YOU EVER HAD SOMEONE PRAY WITH YOU? HOW DID IT GO?

2. WHAT DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT DO? (23 min)

THIS DISCUSSION OF SCRIPTURE IS KEY TO FACILITATING THE REST OF THE TIME:

1 READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11 TOGETHER AND THEN LEAD A SHORT CONVERSATION ABOUT IT

- Have you ever heard of or had any experience with God's supernatural gifts?
- What questions come to mind when you hear this passage?
- What do you think each of the spiritual gifts refers to? (v.8-10)
- What is the gift of tongues? Does anyone have any experience of it?
- How do you feel about the idea of God giving us supernatural gifts?
- Does everybody have the same gifts? (vv.4-6)
 - different gifts, works and service, but the same God
- Why does God give spiritual gifts to people? (v.7)
 - for the common good
 - not for our own glory
- **Mention that there will be an opportunity to hear more on this subject in the next session.**

2 IF YOU COULD HAVE MORE OF ANY OF THESE, WHICH ONE WOULD MOST IMPACT YOUR LIFE TODAY? LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL

- What do you think of the idea that the Holy Spirit produces more love, joy and peace in our lives?
- What do you think about the idea that the Holy Spirit brings freedom to our lives?
- What do you think about the Holy Spirit giving us courage to tell others about Jesus?

Session 3 on next page...

BIG IDEA

The Holy Spirit is God with us. He is God with you! He is a source of strength and freedom. He brings change in our character. The Spirit gives us power to serve, and he fills our hearts with the love of God.

KEY QUOTES & SCRIPTURES

The Holy Spirit isn't some vague supernatural force.
He's a person.

The Holy Spirit was present at the creation of the universe.
He breathed life into the very first people.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you;
I will remove from you your heart of stone and give
you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you...

EZEKIEL 36:26

God says,

In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your old men will dream dreams,
and your young men will see visions.

In those days I will pour out my Spirit
even on servants – men and women alike.

JOEL 2:28-29

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed
me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me
to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of
sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim
the year of the Lord's favour.

LUKE 4:18-19

Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father
promised, which you have heard me speak about. For
John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be
baptized with the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 1:4-5

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 Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love,
joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness, and self-control.

GALATIANS 5:22-23

3. HOW CAN I BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT? (28 min)

**THERE ARE NO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THIS EPISODE.
THIS EPISODE IS MEANT TO SERVE AS PREPARATION FOR A TIME OF
PRAYER.**

- For many, this prayer time is the most impactful part of Alpha. Set aside 15-45 minutes for prayer following the episode. The goal is to make space for God and to give everyone the opportunity to receive prayer if they would like.

BIG IDEA

God wants all of us to experience being filled with his Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit fills our lives, our experience is marked by a profound sense of God's love and power, boldness to tell others, and a renewed desire to praise God. This experience is unique for each person.

Prayer tips on next page...

How to Pray

1. RESPECT THE INDIVIDUAL

- Offer to pray for each member of your group in turn
- Ask if there is anything specific you can pray for
- They may want to pray a prayer of commitment to Jesus
 - you could use a simple prayer: 'sorry,' 'thank you,' 'please'
- They may want to receive a gift of the Spirit
- Confidentiality is important:
 - exceptions: if in doubt, seek the advice of Alpha leaders or church team/staff
- Explain what will happen

2. REMEMBER THE BIBLE

- Pray in line with the word of God: the Spirit of God and the Bible never conflict
- Build on the Bible's promises to encourage and strengthen
 - freedom from guilt (Romans 8:1)
 - assurances of repentance (Psalm 51)
 - release from fear (Psalm 91)
 - God's guidance (Psalm 37:5)
 - power to overcome temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - peace in times of anxiety (Philippians 4:6-7)
 - faith in times of doubt (Matthew 7:7-11)

3. RELY ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

'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.' (Romans 8:26)

- Pray simple prayers: 'Come Holy Spirit'; 'Thank you that you love [guest's name]'
- Trust in Jesus' promises: expect the Holy Spirit to come (Luke 11:13)
- Don't be afraid of silence – wait and listen to God
- If you feel God is saying something, ask yourself:
 - is it in line with the Bible
 - is it strengthening, encouraging, comforting?
- Keep your eyes open (if possible online): watch what is happening
- Avoid intensity: no special 'prayer voice', religious language, eccentricity
- Avoid laying unnecessary burdens on guests, eg lack of faith
- Avoid praying about sensitive subjects: relationships, children, jobs, money
- Avoid criticising other denominations or churches

'... the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort' (1 Corinthians 14:3)

4. RELAX AND TRUST GOD

- Ask: 'What do you sense is happening?' or 'Do you sense God saying something?'
- Refuse to believe that nothing has happened
- Hold on to God's promises (Matthew 7:11)
- Reassure guests that God's promises do not depend on our feelings – some may have physical manifestations, others may feel nothing but God is still at work

Icebreakers

Laughter is food for the soul! Here are some fun icebreakers you can use each week:



- Do you squeeze the toothpaste tube or roll it? What's the advantage of your method?
- When was the last time you square-danced or line-danced? Rate your dancing ability on a scale of 1 to 10.
- What's one fashion trend you hope never comes back? Which ones have come back that you wish hadn't?
- What magic tricks do you know? Perform one now.
- Do you have a collection? If so, what do you collect and why?

- Are you more inclined to "build your own empire" or "unleash the potential of others"? Explain.
- What's your preference: plane, train, boat, automobile, horse, or camel?
- What was your favorite recess activity: dodgeball, kickball, foursquare, hopscotch, freeze tag or jump rope?
- What's your pick: hang glide, sky dive, bungee jump, hot air balloon, or kite?
- What is one of your favorite souvenirs brought back from your travels? Where do you keep it?

- What is your favorite bumper sticker or t-shirt slogan?
- As a child, did you ever peek into a wrapped gift before you actually received it? Did you ever get caught? Explain the details.
- What room in your house best reflects your personality? Why?
- Who's the most famous person you've ever met? What famous person would you most like to meet?
- What's your favorite kind of candy?

- What's the wackiest belief you held as a child?
- Which movies have you watched over and over again?
- What do you admire most about your best friend?
- What items do you currently have stored in the trunk of your car?
- Are you an early bird or a night owl? Why?