

LIGHTHOUSE GROUP CURRICULUM

Jeremiah 31:33-34; 1 Cor. 2:11-16

LEADER'S STUDY

The Holy Spirit is Unchanging

Jeremiah 31:33-34; 1 Cor. 2:11-16

What is happening?

In Jeremiah, God promises a new covenant, in which He will write His instructions on the hearts of His people. They will no longer have to teach each other to know God, because they will all know Him. We see this promise fulfilled today in the lives of believers. Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 2 just how intimate our relationship with God now is through the work of the Holy Spirit.

There are some core truths that are helpful to know about the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit is a person; the third person of the Trinity and equal member of the Trinity; was present at creation and active in the world, especially in the life of believers. As a member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit's identity and role has not changed from Old Testament to New, merely our relationship to the Spirit.

Where is the gospel?

In the Old Testament, we often see the Holy Spirit at work in powerful, glorious, overwhelming and terrifying ways: the Shekinah glory, the prophets, judges and kings. King David pleads in Psalm 51 that God would not take His Holy Spirit away from him, yet in Psalm 139, he is torn between wanting to escape God's presence and knowing that God gives him strength and guides him. Mercifully, in the Old Testament, not everyone had equal, complete access to the Holy Spirit: as sinners, we would not have survived God's Holy presence. We both longed for His presence and feared it.

When Jesus came, he announced the time of God's favor: the Spirit of the Lord was on Him to announce Good News, to free us and heal us (Luke 4). Because of His sacrifice on the cross, He was able to give us the greatest gift. Eternal life means *knowing* God (John 17:3), and the Holy Spirit is our guarantee of this future relationship. Because of Jesus, we have all the benefits of knowing God and none of the consequences for our own sin. We no longer have to fear being in God's presence. The Holy Spirit lives inside of us. By the grace of God, through faith in Jesus, we are one with God. Union with God is the greatest gift; every other work of the Holy Spirit merely overflows from this. The fruit of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are all designed to reveal truth and to bring all mankind in unity under Jesus, as we were created to be.

As you prepare for this week, ask yourself questions like these: How is God calling me to depend on Him more? How is God calling me to respond based on this scripture?

Spend some time reading and meditating on these truths as you prepare for your meeting. Be willing to share this with your group and invite them to join you in sharing how God is asking them to respond to His word. Be willing to share areas that He is calling you to "follow Him" and make clear "I" statements about how you are going to align with Him.

Some helpful scriptures: Luke 4:18-21; John 14:16; John 16:5-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14

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INTENTIONAL BIBLE READING

READ Jeremiah 31:33-34 and
1 Corinthians 2:11-16
and meditate on it.

Read in the ESV or similar word-for-word translation. Read it again in the NLT to get a thought-for-thought perspective.

Consider the historical context:

Before Jesus came to establish the new covenant, we both longed for God's presence and yet feared it. His Holy Spirit brings life, yet our sin brought us death, condemnation and eternal separation from Him.

To establish the old covenant, God came down on Mount Sinai in fire and darkness, smoke and thunder, and the Israelites were absolutely terrified. He had chosen them and his being near them was actually a sign of His favor, and yet they could not stand in His presence, they were still dead in their sins.

POTENTIAL STUDY QUESTIONS

These are just questions you might ask to help your group discussion. Don't feel like you need to answer all of these as a group

What seems to be the main point of this passage?

How has our relationship to the Holy Spirit changed since Jesus came?

Who empowers unbelievers to come to faith in Jesus?

What truths does the Holy Spirit reveal to the entire world (John 16:8-10)?

Why does the Holy Spirit reveal God's thoughts only to believers?

In John 14-16, what are different names for the Holy Spirit and what are the actions of the Holy Spirit?

What did you discover or learn about God and His character from this passage?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

How do I know the Holy Spirit is active in my life?

In 1 Cor. 12:4-11, why does the Spirit give us different gifts and how should we use those gifts?

How is God calling you to obey, based on this passage?

With whom are you going to share what you have learned?

(This is a critical part of growth that is often overlooked. If we can share it with someone else it means we really understand it, it cements it in our own minds, it makes us accountable to the truth and it blesses the one who hears it. Rom 10:17)

Based on this passage, what can we pray about and how should we pray?