

## The Holy Spirit . . . Who's That?

The following passages and discussion questions are divided into two parts that demonstrate the work or activity of the Holy Spirit prior to a person becoming a Christian and after a person becomes a Christian.

### Before and Up to the Point of Becoming a Christian

<p><b>John 16:8</b> "When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment." <b>1 Thessalonians 1:5</b> "our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Someone recently said, "Opinions are something we hold, while convictions are things that hold us." Describe a deep conviction you have.</li> <li>2. Describe how you might feel if you were convicted in a court of law, pronounced guilty, and sentenced to death for a crime you committed?</li> <li>3. How does the Holy Spirit impact unbelievers/non-Christians?</li> </ol>
<p><b>1 Corinthians 2:6-14</b></p>	<p>In an effort to apprehend the significance and import of the gospel message, the unaided human mind can only conclude that this message is foolishness. And, since the Holy Spirit was instrumental in the writing of Scripture, believers can comprehend the truth of Scripture since God's Spirit illuminates it for them.</p>
<p><b>John 3:3-8</b> "Jesus declared, 'I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.' (4) "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. 'Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!' (5) Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. (6) Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. (7) You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' (8) The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.'"</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does Jesus say must happen before one can enter the kingdom of God?</li> <li>2. Although we hear the wind blowing, we don't know which direction it came from nor where it is going. Is it possible Jesus is telling us that God's Spirit moves in unexpected ways, like the wind? Or, that it is unmistakable when God's Spirit changes a person's life, just like it's unmistakable that the wind is blowing when we hear it?</li> <li>3. To be "born again" or to experience a second birth involves God's Spirit. Can you explain this experience? What changed when you became a believer?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Titus 3:5</b> "He [God] saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there anything whatsoever that you can do to win God's favor?</li> <li>2. What two activities describe the work of the Holy Spirit in our rebirth or salvation?</li> </ol>

In summary: *Being born again is that activity of God whereby He radically transforms our moral, mental, emotional, volitional, and relational fiber through the unique power of the Holy Spirit. Our value systems are wholly renovated, not just altered. Old impulses and habits are gradually, but certainly replaced with new ones (Gal. 5:19-24; Col. 2:11-12). In our second birth a spiritual death takes place of the old self or nature (Gal. 2:20), which was dominated by sinful desires and activities (Rom. 6:1-11), and we are given a new life that is inclined to love and serve the living God who by grace alone through faith alone saved us to a living hope that is never to be corrupted (1 Pt. 1:4). Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift (2 Cor. 9:15)!!*

### After Becoming a Christian

<p><b>Romans 8:9</b> "You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ." <b>Ephesians 5:18</b> "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How does it look when we're controlled by something(one)?</li> <li>2. Who should be the controlling influence in the believer's life?</li> <li>3. Is it possible to be a Christian and not possess the Holy Spirit?</li> <li>4. Do you see references to the Trinity in Romans 8:9?</li> <li>5. What other things besides alcohol seek to control us?</li> <li>6. Is the filling of God's Spirit a one-time-only occurrence?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Galatians 5:22-23</b> "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control".</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you see any heroic human efforts here? Whose fruit is this?</li> <li>2. From this list do you find any basis for the Christian life being bleak, boring, and unfulfilling?</li> <li>3. These virtues are evidences of the Spirit's presence in a believer's life. Can you <i>honestly</i> say that you have grown in these Spirit-enabled qualities?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Ephesians 1:13-14</b> "And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, (14) who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What happens when one hears the gospel and believes it?</li> <li>2. How long is the Holy Spirit present with the believer?</li> <li>3. Is it true that everyone who believes the gospel will receive the Holy Spirit as God's promise of eternal life?</li> </ol>
<p><b>See:</b> <b>1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:11</b></p>	<p><b>Spiritual Gifts:</b> <i>What they are</i>—special gifts or abilities given to believers by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11) <i>Why they exist</i>—to build up or encourage faithful Christian living in all of God's people (Ephesians 4:16).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What kind of gifts should believers constantly pursue (1 Corinthians 14:12)?</li> <li>• According to 1 Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:7, and 1 Peter 4:10 God's Spirit endows every believer with at least one gift. Do you know your gift(s)?</li> </ul>