**LifeGroup Study**

**2024-01-21**

**OPEN TO THE SPIRIT**

**A Formal Introduction**

**Participant Notes**



**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome back to our study, Open to the Spirit. Over the six weeks of our series we are exploring who the Holy Spirit is, how He is at work in our lives and how we can follow his lead. For this week, our topic is “A Formal Introduction”. Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Bible teach us about his identity within the Trinity? The goal of today’s study is that we would have a formal introduction to the Spirit of God by learning what the Bible teaches about him.

**ICEBREAKER:** That Famous Person I Met – Or Would Like to Meet!

Several years ago my wife (Merlene) and I attended Saddleback Church in California, where the well-known pastor and author, Rick Warren, was pastor. At a break between the services, I was standing in line to purchase a CD when Rick Warren showed up and said, “I’m going to hug everybody in this line!” So, I can now say that I have been hugged by Rick Warren! ☺ Who is someone famous you have met? Or, who would you like to meet? Share your story with the group!

**STUDY:**

THE BIBLE PROJECT – THE HOLY SPIRIT THEME VIDEO

In this video, the authors of The Bible Project explore the original meaning of the biblical concept of “spirit” and what it means that God is physically present in all creation. Watch this video together and then discuss the questions that follow.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNNZO9i1Gjc>

READ: Genesis 1:1-2

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. **2**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.” NIV

In the first verses of the Bible we are introduced to the Spirit of God. In the video, we learned the Hebrew word for Spirit is *Ruakh*.

1. **What did the authors tell us about the meaning of this word?**
2. In verse 2 we read that the earth was formless and empty (dark and chaotic) and the Spirit was there, hovering over the waters. **What is the significance of God’s Spirit being present in this situation?**
3. In the video, the author’s go on to talk about how the Spirit would come upon certain people in the Old Testament to equip them for a task. For example, the Spirit empowered the prophets in the Old Testament to speak for God. **What was the message God gave them about a coming Messiah?**

THE TRINITY – FATHER, SON AND HOLY SPIRIT

In the Bible, we see God made known to us in three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Trinity at Jesus’ Baptism

READ: Matthew 3:16-17

**16**As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. **17**And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

1. **What can we learn from these verses about how God is three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?**

One God – Three Persons

The Trinity is the term we use to describe the Bible’s teaching that there is one God in three distinct Persons. In Scripture, we see the Father, the Son and the Spirit are each described to us as God.

The Father is God

READ: John 6:27

**27**Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval. NIV

READ: Romans 1:7

**7**To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. NIV

READ: 1 Peter 1:2

**2**who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to be obedient to Jesus Christ and sprinkled with his blood: Grace and peace be yours in abundance.

1. **What do you notice in these verses about some of the activities of God the Father?**

The Son is God

READ: John 1:1, 14

**1**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **14**The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. NIV

READ: Romans 9:5

**5**Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised![[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+9%3A5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28161a)] Amen. NIV

READ: Hebrews 1:8

**8**But about the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. NIV

1. **What can we learn from these verses about Jesus, God the Son?**

The Holy Spirit is God

READ: Acts 5:3-4

**3**Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? **4**Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.” NIV

READ: 1 Corinthians 3:16

**16**Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst? NIV

1. **What do we learn in these verses about the Spirit of God?**

READ the following quote:

“The doctrine of the Trinity is not an explanation but a definition of the being of God and life of God.  The Trinity itself remains a mystery even to faith.  It reflects the truth that God is intelligible but incomprehensible.  It bears witness to the affirmation that God is known truly, but not exhaustively, in his self-revelation in Jesus Christ.” -  Donald G. Bloesch

1. **What do you think of the idea that God, as revealed to us in the Trinity, is “intelligible but incomprehensible?”**

**PRAYER:**

For today’s prayer, spend some time thanking God for how he has revealed himself to us as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Thank him for what his Spirit is doing in your group members, shining his light in your hearts and showing you who he is.