8-SESSION BIBLE STUDY

WHY THE SPIRIT INSIDE YOU IS BETTER THAN JESUS BESIDE YOU

J. D. GREEAR

AND TREVIN WAX

Biblical Solutions for L.

J. D. GREEAR AND TREVIN WAX

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JESUS, CONTINUED...

A LETTER FROM J.D.

For years I struggled to make sense of the Holy Spirit. What was He like? How could I know when He was speaking to me? What did His voice sound like? Some Christians seemed to obsess over Him, always "hearing" His voice in strange confluences of events or mysterious feelings. Others seemed to ignore Him altogether. They believed in Him, but related to Him in the same way I relate to my pituitary gland: I'm glad it is in there; I know it is essential for something; I wouldn't want to be without it; but don't really interact with it.

According to Jesus, however, the Holy Spirit would be to us, in many ways, what Jesus was to His disciples. According to Him, He is an indispensable part of the Christian experience. So indispensable, He said, that given the choice, we should choose the Spirit inside us over Jesus Himself beside us. That is a staggering promise.

This study is an attempt to discover the truth undergirding that promise. Through this study, you will learn how the Bible says the Holy Spirit speaks, how to experience His power, and how to follow Him faithfully when you don't feel or hear anything.

The Christian life is not a set of assignments to accomplish for God, but yielding yourself to Him so that He can do His work in and through you. In Him, God wants to give you victory over sin, and He has a special part of the mission just for you.

I am excited to see you get into this study, because I know that our Heavenly Father wants to draw you into His presence and fill you with His power. And I know that when members of a church operate in the power of the Spirit, they will turn their community—and their world—upside down.

For me, learning what it means to follow Jesus through the Holy Spirit revolutionized my walk with God. It transformed Christianity from a task list into a relationship. I pray that it does that for you, as well.

A LETTER FROM TREVIN

Bible studies fail if, when we close the book, we've grown in our knowledge about God but not in our knowledge of God.

Ever since I was a kid, I've been doing Bible studies—all kinds of studies, with all kinds of people, in all kinds of environments. The ones that I remember most are those that helped me study the Scriptures for myself, and in my study of the Scriptures, I encountered and experienced God.

I am praying that Jesus, Continued will be such an experience for you. I'm praying that, as you take this journey through the New Testament teaching of the Holy Spirit and His role in the believer's life, you will see His guiding hand in the past, rely on His power in the present, and be filled with His passion as you spread the news of King Jesus.

When it comes to the mighty rushing wind of God's gospel blowing through God's messengers and to all the nations of the world, Jesus says it's better that we be indwelled by the Spirit than for Jesus to be here physically present with us. We need the Spirit's power for this task.

The Spirit inside of us is better than Jesus beside us, J.D. Greear says. For now, that's true. But one day, it won't be one or the other. We'll be filled with the Spirit of God *and* face-to-face with the Savior who sent Him. I can't wait for that day.

Working on Jesus, Continued has deepened my gratitude for the Spirit's work in my life, and as to be expected when the Spirit is doing His job, it's a study that has increased my love for Jesus. I hope it does the same for you.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Welcome to this 8-week study on the Holy Spirit. This study will lead you to understand what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit and what it's like to live in His presence and to experience His guidance. Here's how the study works:

INTRODUCTION: Each session begins with an overview of the weekly topic. Read this before your group meets so that you can better understand the topic and the context for your time together.

WARM UP: Begin your group time here with the discussion starter that is designed to help you ease into the study and to get everyone talking. Answer the questions that are provided and allow the group to dialogue about their personal study from the week before.

VIDEO TALKING POINTS: The video talking points serve as an outline of the main teaching points to help you follow along with J.D. They also serve as a reference point for further discussion.

GROUP BIBLE STUDY: The components of the group study reinforce J.D.'s teaching video. Read the focal passage, discuss the context, and then discuss the focal verse. The provided questions are designed to lead the group deeper into their understanding of the Holy Spirit as members apply what they're learning to their own lives.

PERSONAL STUDY: Five devotions are included for each session. These devotions allow group members to spend more time studying the Holy Spirit for themselves, enriching their Bible study experience.

JESUS, CONTINUED...

Jesus is still working today.

The Savior who cried "It is finished!" from the cross has purchased our salvation and accomplished the Father's will. His atoning work on our behalf is complete, but His mission to gather people from every tribe, tongue, and nation is going forward.

That's where we come in. Our service to God's kingdom is an extension of Jesus' works. It's something we do *with* Him, not just something we do *for* Him. Or better said, it's what He does through us.

At the beginning of the Book of Acts, Luke writes: "In my former book ... I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven ..." (Acts 1:1, NIV). The "former book" to which Luke refers is his Gospel, in which he recorded all that Jesus did during His earthly incarnation. Luke says that these things were only what Jesus began to do and teach, however. The Book of Acts recounts what Jesus continues to do and teach—no longer through His incarnated body, but through His Spirit in the church.

In other words, it's not that *Jesus* worked while He was here and now the church works in His absence. *Jesus* worked then through His bodily incarnation, and He works now through His church. In other words, He is as much at work through you in your city now as He was then in the streets of Jerusalem.

As believers, we possess the same Holy Spirit that Jesus had while on earth. We have access to that *same* power; we are in communion with the *same* person! In this study, we hope to ignite your passion for the Holy Spirit—knowing His ways, discerning His voice, and joining His mission. We'll be looking at how Jesus continues His work today, through ordinary believers like you and me, filled with the all-powerful Spirit of God.

JESUS, CONTINUED ...

WHY "GOD IN US" IS BETTER

"How are you doing spiritually?" Now, there's a question likely to make you uncomfortable, and one that will probably elicit a "less than honest" response!

Your regular answer is "Everything's fine." You only missed your quiet time twice this week, pretty good considering your schedule. You prayed several times. You attended the worship service last weekend and served in the kids' ministry. You sent an encouraging email to a friend at church who suddenly lost a job. You had a spiritual conversation with a coworker who you hope to share the gospel with at some point.

But deep down, the question gnaws at you. Sure, you can check off your churchy behaviors, but something is missing. You did read your Bible this week, but you can't remember the last time you felt God actually speaking to you from His Word. You prayed this week, but it was like talking into the air. You went to church, but during the week, you lost your temper, gossiped, entertained lustful thoughts, and lied about something. So much for "everything's fine."

But what if the key to the question, "How are you doing spiritually?" isn't about what you are *doing* and more about the last word—*spiritually*? Emphasis on *spirit*. What if it's not that something is missing in your life, but Someone?

Feeling burned out? Disconnected from God? Unable to discern His voice? We've been there, too. And the good news is that God has a remedy for these problems—His gift of Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit. That's why, in this study, we hope to show you how you can encounter the Holy Spirit in God's Word and in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and then how you can receive His guidance as you seek to join His work in the world and in your life.

WARM UP

DISCUSSION STARTER: The subtitle of the study says: "The Holy Spirit inside you is better than Jesus beside you."

How does this statement strike you? Right? Wrong? Surprising?

Why does this statement affect you in this way?

What do you think must be true of the Holy Spirit if the Spirit's presence *in* you is truly better than having Jesus Himself *beside* you physically?

VIDEO TALKING POINTS

VIEW SESSION 1 on the DVD and use the following bullet points as a guide.

- If you had the choice between Jesus beside you or the Spirit inside you, which would you choose?
- When you put Word and Spirit together, you get explosive Christianity.
- We desperately need a recovery of the Holy Spirit.

GROUP BIBLE STUDY

READ THE FOCAL PASSAGE: JOHN 16:4-15

DISCUSS THE CONTEXT

Jesus spoke these words on the night He was betrayed, while He was instructing His disciples in the hours before He would suffer and die for the sins of the world.

What emotions do you think the disciples were feeling in this moment? What does Jesus say to encourage them?

Instead of encouraging them by telling them He would soon be raised from the dead, Jesus told them of the Spirit's coming.

Why do you think He chose to comfort them with news about the Spirit's coming instead of His own resurrection or ascension? What does this tell us about the importance of the Spirit's work?

DISCUSS THE FOCAL VERSE

Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

JOHN 16:7

Take a look at different ways "to your advantage" can be translated:

"It is to your advantage that I go away" (ESV, NASB, NKJV).

"It is for your benefit that I go away" (HCSB).

"It is for your good that I am going away" (NIV).

"It is expedient for you that I go away" (KJV).

"It is better for you that I go away" (GNT).

"It is best for you that I go away" (NLT).

What thoughts and images do these different translations evoke as you consider Jesus' words?

As a group, make a list of all the activities Jesus attributes to the Holy Spirit in verses 8-15. Then, discuss how each one of these activities is "to the benefit" of the believer.

APPLY GOD'S WORD

What is the advantage of your relationship with the Holy Spirit?

Would you say your church is more likely to seek the Spirit apart from God's Word, or to read God's Word with little awareness of the Spirit? What are the dangers on either side?

What is the problem with thinking you can fulfill God's Word apart from the help of God's Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is described as "the Helper" in this passage. When you have sensed the Spirit's help? When have you sensed the Spirit's guidance in your life?

CLOSING PRAYER

Consider closing your group session by summarizing the discussion and then by praying this prayer of A. W. Tozer out loud as a group:

O God, I have tasted Your goodness, and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. I am painfully conscious of my need of further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire. O God, the Triune God, I want to want You; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still. Show me Your glory ... so I may know You indeed. Begin in mercy a new work of love within me.¹

Day 1

BEYOND ALL KNOWLEDGE

EPHESIANS 3:14-19

The Holy Spirit tends to be the forgotten member of the Trinity. Most Christians know He's there, but they are unclear about exactly what He does or how to interact with Him—or if that's even possible. Yet, as we discussed in our first group study, something was so important about the Holy Spirit that Jesus told His disciples it was to their advantage that He go away—if His departure meant the Spirit came (John 16:7). The Spirit's presence inside them, He said, would be better than even Himself beside them. In fact, they needed the Spirit's presence so much that Jesus told them not to raise a finger toward the Great Commission until that Spirit had arrived.

Forgetting the Holy Spirit affects how we view the Christian life. If we are unaware of the Spirit's presence and power in us, we are more likely to think of God as someone we know *about*, not someone we really *know*. In other words, we're likely to see God as more of a doctrine than a person. And that's when we stop expecting to feel God's presence in our lives. We stop expecting to interact with God personally. We stop expecting God to do mighty things in and through us, things we see Him doing through the early Christians in the Book of Acts.

On a scale of 1-10, answer this question: Is Christianity more of a set of beliefs to which you adhere and a lifestyle to which you conform, or is it a dynamic relationship in which you walk with the Spirit and move in His power?

Write about a time you felt like you were interacting with God personally, hearing Him speak clearly to you through His Word.

Do you expect to sense the presence of God every day and hear Him speak to you? Why or why not? Knowing about God isn't what changes your life. After all, James 2:19 says, "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!" In other words, you can connect all your doctrinal dots and cross all your theological T's and still be no better than a demon. Knowing about God isn't what's central to Christianity.

Doing things for God isn't what changes your life either. Jesus warned that people will point to various "mighty works" on the Day of Judgment, works they performed in His name. And yet He will tell them to leave His presence, for He never *knew them* (Matt. 7:21-23).

Despite these clear warnings in Scripture, many of us persist in believing our Christian life can be summed up in what we know about God and what we do for Him. But we deceive ourselves. The Christian life isn't what we know about *God* and what we do for Him; it's about knowing God and what He does through us. This is love that goes beyond all knowledge. It's not just about filling our minds with theological truth, but having our whole beings filled with the God whom all our theology is pointing to! Take a moment to read these words from the apostle Paul to the church in Ephesus:

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS 3:14-19

Summarize in your own words Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers in Ephesus.

CLOSING PRAYER

Turn these words of Paul into a personal prayer to God for your own life as you begin this Bible study.

Day 2

THE PERSONAL SPIRIT

1 JOHN 4:13

According to recent research, almost 60 percent of self-identified evangelicals believe the Holy Spirit is a force, not a personal being. Another 10 percent aren't sure. This means that 7 out of 10 evangelical Christians are either wrong or at least muddled about who the Holy Spirit is and what He does. It's also possible that many Christians who know the correct doctrine (that the Holy Spirit is a Person) still *act like* He is merely a force. Perhaps that's why so many "Bible-believing Christians" slip up and refer to the Spirit as an *it* rather than by the personal pronoun given to Him in Scripture—He.

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He told His disciples, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). At the ascension, Jesus did not become an absentee God. He, as God, simply came to His disciples through a different Person. The mystery of the Trinity is that only one God exists in three Persons. Each person is distinct from the other two, but in experiencing one, you experience the one God who is them all. (If your mind feels as if it just exploded, that's OK. Christian theologians have been wrestling with that for centuries!)

In the same way that Jesus could tell His followers, "If you have seen Me, you have seen the Father," so it would be true for Him to say, "When you hear from the Spirit, you hear from Me" (see John 14:7). This Spirit, He said, would bring to their minds all that He had said and taught. In other words, He would make the Word of God come alive in their hearts, *applying* that Word to their questions and doubts. The Spirit would lead them through the Word, and they would gain the ability to obey that Word by His power.

Why do you think so many Christians find it easy to conceive of God the Father and God the Son as Persons, but find it difficult to conceive of God the Spirit in the same way? What hinders you from seeing the Spirit as a Person?

Jesus spoke of the Spirit as One who teaches us (John 14:26), and Paul warned against grieving Him (Eph. 4:30). How does considering the Spirit as a Person rather than a force make a difference in your attentiveness to His teaching or your desire to please Him?

Encountering the Spirit as a Person is vital to our Christian life. Why? Because the Spirit is the One who makes possible our life in Christ. His presence ensures that our Christian life is not merely a dutiful obedience to Christ's commands, but a delightful experience of Christ Himself.

Take a moment to meditate on the following verse from the apostle John:

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.
I JOHN 4:13

According to this verse, how can you know if you are abiding in Christ?

What role does the Spirit's activity play in providing evidence that you know God?

Stop and marvel at this truth for a moment: *God wants you*. He doesn't just want your obedience or acknowledgment. He wants *you*. He has always known you through and through, but now He wants you to know and experience *Him* so that you find in Him your greatest and most satisfying joy.

We'll return to this truth in greater detail next week, but for now, it's important to make sure we are thinking of the Spirit of God as a Person we *know*, not just a force we feel or a doctrine we learn. God has always desired a close, growing relationship with His people. He has always been a God who is close and present—but only since Jesus returned to heaven has He taken up residence *inside of us*. And that makes Him closer than ever.

CLOSING PRAYER

As you pray today, remind yourself that you are not simply speaking words but are interacting personally with the God who made you, the God who has saved you, and the God who now lives in you.

Day 3

SCARED OF THE SPIRIT

ROMANS 14:17

In some circles, talking too much about the Holy Spirit might cause people to question your doctrinal credentials. We're scared to go too deep in our experience of the Spirit's presence and power because we've seen other people go to extremes.

There are several reasons for caution. First, seeking an experience with the Spirit apart from God's Word leads people into dangerous territory. They listen for voices in their hearts or seek "signs" from God in the heavens. They always seem to be talking about what God "said to them" through a stirring in their spirit or in a strange confluence of circumstances. Their worship gatherings devolve into chaos, with strange experiences distracting from God's Word and His gospel.

In reaction to these unfortunate expressions, we rush to the other extreme. We don't want to go there, we think, and so we minimize any expectation of hearing from God's Spirit or experiencing Him at all.

In your own experience, would you categorize your church as being more susceptible to seeking the Spirit apart from God's Word or seeking to obey God's Word apart from the Spirit? Why?

Secondly, another reason we may be scared of the Spirit is because He is controversial. Christians come to different conclusions regarding the gift of tongues, or the Spirit's baptism, or the Spirit's filling. Often you'll find that people in the same congregation differ on these questions. In order to keep controversy from breaking out in a church, the members keep quiet about the Spirit altogether. They think that affirming the basic truths about the Spirit is sufficient. Anything more may lead to disunity.

It's true that getting hung up on secondary questions can distract us from our mission. But avoiding the Spirit in order to avoid the secondary issues is another way of keeping us from experiencing His presence and power.

When have you had a disagreement with another believer over a doctrinal matter? Under what circumstances are doctrinal debates helpful? Under what circumstances are they distracting?

There is a third reason why we may be scared of the Spirit, and this reason is more personal. Perhaps we are afraid of the Spirit because of what He may ask of us. We see how the Spirit worked in the early church, how He guided and empowered believers, and rather than be excited by such activity, we're frightened. We find it more comfortable to keep God at arm's length, to focus on our behavior rather than our hearts, to focus on Him doctrinally rather than experientially, because we're afraid He will call us to step out of our comfort zones.

Out of the three reasons listed that we are often afraid of the Spirit's working, which one most resonates with you? Why?

In his letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul encouraged believers to avoid causing unnecessary offense to other believers. He spoke specifically about how Christians should avoid passing judgment on one another by what they eat and drink. But then, he described the kingdom of God in a unique way:

¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 14:17

According to this verse, the kingdom of God is righteousness (Christ's righteousness given to us in salvation and the righteous behavior He is working in us), peace (with God and with others), and joy granted by the Holy Spirit. Too often, we associate the Spirit with crazy manifestations, division in the church, or fear of what He may ask of us.

But this verse flips our way of thinking upside down. The Spirit's presence doesn't lead to distracting and self-focused practices of piety, but the righteousness of God's kingdom. The Spirit's presence doesn't stir up division, but peace with God and with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The Spirit's presence doesn't grant us fear, but joy in fulfilling His will.

CLOSING PRAYER

Spend some time asking God to soften your heart and prepare you for experiencing the presence and power of His Spirit.

Day 4

THE NECESSARY SPIRIT

LUKE 24:49

What if we told you we've gotten the Great Commission all wrong? What if Jesus' instructions aren't first "go and tell" but "go and wait"? Perhaps we'd be overstating our case, but maybe not. Notice how Luke recounts the commissioning of the disciples, especially the last verse:

⁴⁵ Then [Jesus] opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, ⁴⁶ and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

LUKE 24:45-49, NASB

The fact that Jesus' command before His ascension is "go and wait" rather than "go and tell" underscores the importance of the Holy Spirit's role in enabling the disciples to live up to the identity Jesus has given them. What happens if we miss this point? We will overestimate the work we can do in our own power. And we will downplay the necessity of the Spirit in the work of taking the gospel to the nations.

Does the idea of taking the gospel to the ends of the earth invigorate you or exhaust you? Why?

Write about a time when you felt burned out or exhausted by the work you were doing for God while feeling disconnected from His presence and power. What factors played into this experience?

Christ's command to follow Him and to take His gospel to the ends of the earth is an obligation for every believer. But this is an obligation that comes with a gift. And this gift is a Person—the Holy Spirit, who was promised in the Old Testament.

Consider Ezekiel 36:

²⁵ I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.

²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

EZEKIEL 36:25-27

In the passage above, underline everything God promises to do for His people. Circle any reference to the Spirit.

Do you see how the gospel grants us not only forgiveness, but also the Spirit's presence? The promise of God in the Old Testament was that His people would be given new hearts and be empowered for ministry through the Person and work of the Spirit. Apart from supernatural intervention, the disciples were powerless to accomplish the task Jesus set before them.

Sometimes, we focus so much on methods and tools for sharing the gospel, funding mission work, and building up the church that we lose sight of an important truth: Far more important than having a plan is relying on a Person. Tools and methods are optional and interchangeable, but the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.

Our reliance on the Holy Spirit can be measured not by the number of books we read and strategies we implement, but by the time and energy we spend in prayer for the Spirit's power and work to be manifested in our lives. Relying on the Spirit does not negate the importance of planning, prioritizing, and strategizing (as is evident in the way the apostles made plans as they took the gospel to the nations), but it keeps methods and tools in proper perspective. What matters most is cultivating a holy desperation for the Spirit to accomplish God's will in and through us.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank the Lord for fulfilling His promise to give you the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to reveal to you today your utter dependence on Him as you seek to fulfill His will.

Day 5

WORD AND SPIRIT

2 PETER 1:16-19

The vibrant Christian life is a union of clarity in the Word and openness to the Spirit. If we seek the Spirit of God apart from the Word of God, our faith will end in shipwreck. More havoc has been wreaked in the church following the words, "The Spirit of God just said to me ..." than any other phrase. God's Spirit never operates independently of His Word. Why would He?

But, in the same way, if you seek to obey the Word apart from the power of the Spirit, not only will your spiritual life be lifeless and dull, you'll also miss out on the help God wants to give you and the most exciting things He has planned for you. You'll miss out on the dynamism of *relationship*.

So, seek the Spirit in the Word. His guidance functions something like steering a bicycle: It works only once you're moving. The Spirit steers as you obey God's commands. You rely on His power to start pedaling in obedience, and then as you pedal, you watch Him start directing.

Or here's another way to think about it: The Spirit of God draws upon our knowledge of the Word of God to counsel and encourage us like a gunner draws upon a stash of ammunition. If no ammunition waits in the chamber, the gunner simply has nothing to work with. The most powerful gun with no ammunition is impotent.

If you want to be led by the Spirit of God, then devote yourself to the Word of God. When it comes to the voice of God, the Scriptures are in a class all by themselves. God is always speaking clearly and reliably there.

You won't know the Spirit any more than you know the Word. So if you want to walk with the Spirit of God, get on your knees and open your Bible.

Consider the state of your walk with God right now. What role does reading Scripture play in your spiritual life?

On the right, write down a list of Bible verses or passages you have memorized or know well enough that the Spirit could use to counsel and encourage you. On the left, write down a few passages of Scripture you'd like to memorize or know better, in order to have more "ammunition in the chamber."

Consider what the apostle Peter said about God's Word:

¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," ¹⁸ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

2 PETER 1:16-19

Peter described the Scriptures as "the prophetic word more fully confirmed" than even the voice he heard at Jesus' baptism. How is your reading of the Bible impacted by knowing that Scripture is "more sure" than if you were to hear an audible voice from heaven?

Throughout the remainder of this study, we want to show you how God's Word and God's Spirit operate together in one powerful dynamic. While pursuing one without the other leads to spiritual ruin, pursuing one *in* the other leads to power and life. We see this interdependent relationship of Word and Spirit again and again throughout Scripture.

In the beginning, God established the world by His Word, but the Spirit hovered over the expanse and brought order and beauty to the firmament God had spoken into being. That's a good example of how the two relate: the Word issues the command and establishes the foundations; the Spirit quickens and makes alive.

The Spirit takes God's timeless truths and makes them come alive in us. He helps us understand them, shows us how to implement them, and empowers us to accomplish them. He transforms task lists into a relationship.

CLOSING PRAYER

Confess your tendency to settle for a Christian life centered on obeying tasks rather than cultivating a relationship. Ask God to take the truths you know and make them come alive in your heart.

JESUS, CONTINUED ...

Why does God often feel more like a doctrine we know *about* than a Person we *know?*

Why do so many of us think of Christianity as a lifestyle to which we conform, rather than a God with whom we commune? Jesus promised His disciples that His return to heaven was to their advantage because the Holy Spirit could then come to live inside of them. How many of us consider our connection to the Holy Spirit so strong and so real that we would call His presence in us better than Jesus beside us?

In this eight-session Bible study, J.D. Greear and Trevin Wax help you relate to the Holy Spirit in new ways, and you will see how you can have a satisfying, powerful relationship with God through the Holy Spirit over the course of the study.

ALSO AVAILABLE

JESUS CONTINUED KIT includes resources for leading an eightsession group study: one Bible study book, *Jesus, Continued...* paperback book, and two DVDs. The DVDs feature teaching videos from J.D. Greear, content for social media, and shareable sessionteaser clips. ITEM 005748700

DIGITAL RESOURCES: E-book and video sessions available at www.lifeway.com/JesusContinued

Bible Study / General Bible Studies



