The Holy Spirit

Introduction Lesson 1

Introduction

1. This is going to be an exciting study!

A. I am looking forward to this series of studies with great anticipation.

B. I believe God can use this study to bring us all to a deeper understanding of His nature, His will, and His plan.

C. However, for God to use this class we must do our part. We must be willing to open our hearts and our minds to the Word of God. We must be “like clay in the hands of the potter” (Jeremiah 18:6).

D. May God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit be glorified through this effort.

2. This is going to be an important study.

A. “Unless this is properly understood, a large portion of the Bible, and especially the New Testament, must remain unintelligible. On the other hand, a just view of it will do more than a knowledge of any other particular topic to give harmony, clearness, and consistency to what may be learned to all other matters presented in the Word of God” (The Office of the Holy Spirit, R. Richardson, p. 11).

B. “Christianity is differentiated from all other religions by the fact that it offers its followers a spiritual dynamic in living up to its precepts” (The Spirit and the Word, Z. T. Sweeney, p.5).

(1) That “dynamic” is the Holy Spirit, which sets the Word of God on fire, fills the church with enthusiasm, and strengthens the Christian with a power not his own in the great battle between the flesh and the spirit.

(2) Consider Acts 2:38

3. This study is often approached from the negative.

A. Because of the abuses.

(1) “No other subject mentioned in the Bible is surrounded with such unwarranted opinion, false practices, and abominable customs as that of the Holy Spirit” (The Holy Spirit, H. Leo Boles).

(2) Many have concluded that the subject is so “shrouded in mystery” that there is no need to make the effort to understand. The best we can do is defend against what we know is false.

B. Because of controversy.

C. We need to be “set for the defense of the gospel” (Philippians 1:17), however, that is only one half of the equation. We need to lay a solid foundation!

4. A positive approach.

A. We must also “know the truth” (John 8:32).

B. Are we really satisfied with our level of understanding about:

(1) The work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians today?

(2) The work of the Spirit in the assembly today?

(3) The indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

I. Several reasons why this study is vital and essential.

A. Every step that one takes in becoming a Christian is a step directed by the Holy Spirit.

“The Spirit Himself testifies with our Spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory” (Romans 8:16-17).

B. Every step that one takes in living the Christian life is a step directed by the Holy Spirit

“So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit with is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law” (Galatians 5:16-18).

C. The Holy Spirit is a very prominent figure in the Bible.

1. The Old Testament mentions the Holy Spirit 88 times.

2. The New Testament refers to the Holy Spirit 264 times and uses 39 different names or titles.

D. The Bible abounds with evidence regarding the Holy Spirit and to refuse to accept such testimony is to refuse the testimony of the Father and of the Son.

For Your Consideration:

1. What are specific questions you have about the Holy Spirit? Do your questions relate more to His work or His nature?

2. How can the Holy Spirit use this study? How will the Spring Street congregation be different after this study if the Holy Spirit really does use this class?