



## BUILD CHARACTER

---

## STAY CONNECTED

### **Spiritual Outcome Defined:**

Walks through life in communion with God, listening to the Spirit for guidance and trusting the Spirit for strength.

### **Spiritual Outcome Described:**

Maybe one of the more surprising statements made by Christ was when he told his disciples, “It is for your good that I am going away” (John 16:7). What could be better for their lives than to physically walk through life with the Son of God? If they had a question, they could ask him. If they needed help or guidance, he was right there with them. Jesus was unquestionably clear, though, their situation was getting ready to improve, because he was leaving. “Unless I go away,” he told them, “the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” (John 16:7). Jesus had previously hinted at this improvement when he said that this Counselor, the Holy Spirit, “lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:17). So the Spirit that was around them would one day live within them. Jesus later explained that when the Holy Spirit comes upon them, they “will receive power” (Acts 1:8). So although they did not understand it, and although it is commonly misunderstood today, their situation was transitioning from having the presence of God walking beside them to the presence of God residing within them. This certainly would be an improvement, but what are the implications for today? What do the Scriptures teach us about the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives? Scripture offers both examples and teachings about God’s Spirit. When Paul and his companions were looking for guidance, Acts tells us that “they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to” (Acts 16:7). In another place we are taught to “keep in step with the Spirit” (Galatians 5:25), and that when we do, the presence of God’s Spirit will be evidenced by specific fruit in a person’s life. This fruit of God’s Spirit is contrasted in Scripture to the “works of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16-25). The presence of God’s Spirit is evidenced by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, but the evidence of the flesh is seen in sexual immorality, jealousy, fits of anger, dissensions, envy, drunkenness, and more. We see then in Scripture that the authentic follower of Christ discovers the grace of living by the unlimited strength of God’s presence and guidance rather than living by their own very limited strength and perspective of their flesh.

*“God created you to do life with him,  
right now, moment by moment.”*  
-- John Burke

### **Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person’s Life:**

- Ever-increasing presence of the fruit of the Spirit in one’s life.
- A growing conversational relationship with God throughout one’s day.
- An identifiable decrease in sin’s appeal or grip.
- A growing ability to discern God’s guidance throughout one’s day.

## **Guidance**

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

### **Genesis 1:2, Joel 2:28-29**

Observations:

Discernment Question: What are your initial thoughts regarding the Holy Spirit? Is the Holy Spirit a new idea or an old friend?

### **Luke 3:16, Luke 11:11-13**

Observations:

Discernment Question: Have you asked God for his Spirit? If yes, how have you experienced the Holy Spirit in your current season of life? If no, what inhibits you? Knowledge? Insight? Awareness?



## **John 14:15-17**

Observations:

Discernment Question: To what extent do you treasure the Holy Spirit? To what extent do you engage the Holy Spirit?

## **John 15:1-4**

Observations:

Discernment Question: To what extent do you have a day by day, moment by moment, dependence on God's presence as a branch would depend upon a vine?



**Acts 1:8, 4:8**

Observations:

Discernment Question: To what extent have you looked to the Holy Spirit to empower you to make a difference in the world?

**Romans 8:5-17**

Observations:

Discernment Question: In your current season of life, does your mind settle more into thoughts of the flesh or thoughts of the Spirit? How do you see this played out in your life?



## **1 Corinthians 3:16**

Observations:

Discernment Question: How do you view and treat your body? Do you treat it as a temple for the presence of God? How yes or how no?

## **Galatians 5:16-26**

Observations:

Discernment Question: How characterized is your life by fruit of the Spirit? How much more or less is your life characterized by fruit of the Spirit compared to a year ago? Five years ago?



## Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on staying connected to God's Spirit? Include insights offered from others in your Life Group that could be applied in your own life as well.

- 
- 
- 
- 

## Memory Verses:

### John 15: 4-5 NIV

Remain in me [Jesus], as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

### Galatians 5:22 NIV

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™  
Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. [www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)  
The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™ Copyright © 2013  
GatewayCommunityChurch

