**“Holy Spirit” Foundations Small Group Study** [**[[1]](#footnote-1) [[2]](#footnote-2)]**

     Scripture tells us that when we accept Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us, yet he is probably the most difficult person of the Trinity to understand. Our ideas about the Holy Spirit may be influenced by many factors, such as upbringing, media, or personal experiences.

This 4-part **Foundations** study of the Holy Spirit looks at another of the core truths of the Christian faith. This study focuses on building your confidence in your relationship with God based on the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. You will see with eyes of faith just how the Holy Spirit is at work in your daily life and how you can be filled with the Holy Spirit each day.

The FOUR sessions include:

1. **God, the Holy Spirit**
2. **The Role of the Holy Spirit**
3. **The Filling of the Holy Spirit**
4. **Being Filled with the Holy Spirit**

**Discussion questions will show up in red**. Use these to prompt your own thinking or share them with a friend or family member. Write down your answers as a kind of journal.

**PLEASE NOTE: This was presented as a DVD study series, but unfortunately, we cannot provide a copy of the studies for your viewing.**

February 16, 2022 **“God, the Holy Spirit”** Pastor Leigh Straiton (Pages 2-6)

**Part 1** of the series **“Holy Spirit” Foundations Small Group Study**

**Scripture Reading**: Joel 2:28; John 16:7 NCV

March 2, 2022 **“The Role of the Holy Spirit”** Pastor Leigh Straiton (Pages 7-9)

**Part 2** of the series **“Holy Spirit” Foundations Small Group Study**

**Scripture Reading**: 1 Corinthians 12:13 NCV

March 9, 2022 **“The Filling of the Holy Spirit”** Pastor Leigh Straiton (Pages 10-14)

**Part 3** of the series **“Holy Spirit” Foundations Small Group Study**

**Scripture Reading**: 1 Corinthians 2:15 NCV

March 16, 2022 **“Being Filled with the Holy Spirit”** Pastor Leigh Straiton (Pages 15-)

**Part 4** of the series **“Holy Spirit” Foundations Small Group Study**

**Scripture Reading**: NCV

**The Holy Spirit: God, the Holy Spirit[[3]](#footnote-3) [[4]](#footnote-4) Part 1 The Holy Spirit – Foundations Study Series**

**Introduction**

We have had some very interesting discussion in the past few weeks as we were looking at Jesus – his name (Saviour, Christ, Lord, et al),

his eternally existent life (pre-incarnation, his incarnation, and post-incarnation),

and about being fully God and fully man.

This week we are going to start another foundational study about the third person of the Trinity – the Holy Spirit.

But before we begin this discussion, please let me ask you this question:

**What do you hope to get out of this small group study?**

As we begin to narrow our focus on the person of the Holy Spirit, let me ask you another question:

**What image comes to mind when you think of the Holy Spirit?**

The concept of the Holy Spirit is probably the most difficult person of the Trinity to understand.

Our ideas about the Holy Spirit may be influenced by many factors, such as upbringing,

media,

or personal experiences.

Diagram

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**Truths About the Trinity**

God relates to us as a Trinity, three persons in one being.

God is one; he is not three Gods, but one God

**“Listen, people . . . ! The Lord our God is the only Lord.”** (Deuteronomy 6:4)

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God.

The three are distinct from one another: separate, but one.

**Historical Background**

**In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came upon people at \_\_various\_\_ times for \_\_specific\_\_ purposes.**

**He never indwelt anyone \_\_permanently\_\_.**

**Diagram

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Biblical scholars list the prophet Joel as a pre-exilic prophet, who ministered before the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel (721 B.C.) or the southern kingdom of Judah (586 B.C.).

Other pre-exilic prophets include Obadiah, Jonah, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Micah.

Joel is one of the earliest prophets – only Obadiah prophesied before his time (845 B.C.).

The prophet Joel spoke to the southern kingdom of Judah and makes no reference to the northern kingdom of Israel.

It's hard to pin down his exact time, because he doesn't mention any other kings or prophets, however scholars date the book of Joel to about 835 B.C. – almost 8 and a half centuries before the birth of Jesus.

The prophet Joel speaks of a time to come where there will be ultimate restoration and blessing.

This latter time will be marked by an outpouring of God's Spirit on all flesh – not only a selected few at selected times for selected duties.

**“After this, I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions.”** (Joel 2:28)

**“But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go away. When I go away, I will send the Helper** [“Counselor” “Comforter.”] **to you. If I do not go away, the Helper will not come.”** (John 16:7)

This had to be difficult for the disciples to believe.

When a loved one is near death we often think it is the best to let death take its course.

We say, “It will be better for them to go, and to stop the suffering . . . it is to their advantage to go away.”

But when someone we love is near death, we usually don’t think that it is to ***our*** advantage that they go.

Yet Jesus here said that it wasn’t for his advantage, but to your advantage that I go away.

If the disciples really understood what was about to happen, it would be even more difficult for them to believe.

* To your advantage that Jesus is *arrested*?
* To your advantage that Jesus’ ministry of teaching and miracles *is stopped*?
* To your advantage that Jesus is *beaten*?
* To your advantage that Jesus is *mocked*?
* To your advantage that Jesus is *sentenced for* *execution*?
* To your advantage that Jesus is *nailed to a cross*?
* To your advantage that Jesus *dies in the company of notorious criminals*?
* To your advantage that his lifeless body *is laid in a cold and borrowed grave*?

Nevertheless!

This word meant a challenge to their sorrow and even their unbelief.

Nevertheless is one of the great words of the Bible, meaning “despite all of that”.

Jesus knew they were filled with sorrow because of what He told them.

But, *despite all of that* He wanted them to know that it was to their advantage.

**“It is better for you”**, implies that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a more blessed manifestation of God than was even the bodily presence of the risen Saviour.

**"John baptized people with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."** (Acts 1:5)

This is part of Jesus' final instructions to the disciples just before he ascended into heaven.

He has nothing else for the disciples to do other than to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

He knows that they really can do nothing effective for the Kingdom of God until the Spirit comes.

The idea of being baptized is to be immersed or covered over in something; even as John baptized people in water, so these disciples – and all true believers would be "immersed" in the Holy Spirit.

**“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a noise like a strong, blowing wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something like flames of fire that were separated and stood over each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages by the power the Holy Spirit was giving them.**

**There were some religious Jews staying in Jerusalem who were from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a crowd came together. They were all surprised, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were completely amazed at this. They said, “Look! Aren’t all these people that we hear speaking from Galilee? Then how is it possible that we each hear them in our own languages? We are from different places: Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the areas of Libya near Cyrene, Rome (both Jews and those who had become Jews), Crete, and Arabia. But we hear them telling in our own languages about the great things God has done!**

**About three thousand people were added to the number of believers that day. They spent their time learning the apostles’ teaching, sharing, breaking bread, and praying together.”** (Acts 2:1-11, 41-42)

Pentecost was a Jewish feast held fifty days after Passover.

It was a time to celebrate the first fruits of the harvest.

At Passover, the first sheaf reaped from the barley harvest was presented to God.

But at Pentecost, the first fruits of the wheat harvest were given to God; therefore, Pentecost is called the day of first fruits.

**“On the first day of the Harvest Festival, when you present the offering of new grain to the Lord, you are to gather for worship, and no work is to be done.”** (Numbers 28:26 GNT)

**“Some of us are Jews, and some are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some are free. But we were all baptized *into one body through one Spirit*. And we were all made to *share in the one Spirit*.”** (1 Corinthians 12:13)

**Do we have to have an \_\_experience\_\_ to be filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit?**

**No.**

**What is the Role of the Holy Spirit Today?**

**The Holy Spirit \_\_regenerates\_\_ me.**

* **Definition: To give \_\_rebirth\_\_.**

**“. . . he saved us because of his mercy. It was not because of good deeds we did to be right with him. He saved us through the washing that made us new people through the Holy Spirit.”** (Titus 3:5)

* **Before I came to Christ, I was \_\_spiritually dead\_\_.**
* **Now I am \_\_spiritually alive\_\_ through the new birth.**

**"It is the Spirit that gives life. The flesh doesn’t give life. The words I told you are spirit, and they give life."** (John 6:63)

**Discovery Questions**

**How has the teaching you heard in this session helped you better understand the reality of the Holy Spirit?**

**Has it helped you see him as God himself, rather than as a force or emotion of God?**

**What difference does this truth make to you personally?**

Look again at **John 3:1-16**.

**“There was a man named Nicodemus who was one of the Pharisees and an important Jewish leader. One night Nicodemus came to Jesus and said, “Teacher, we know you are a teacher sent from God, because no one can do the miracles you do unless God is with him.”**

**Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot be in God’s kingdom.”**

**Nicodemus said, “But if a person is already old, how can he be born again? He cannot enter his mother’s womb again. So how can a person be born a second time?”**

**But Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born from water and the Spirit, you cannot enter God’s kingdom. Human life comes from human parents, but spiritual life comes from the Spirit. Don’t be surprised when I tell you, ‘You must all be born again.’ The wind blows where it wants to and you hear the sound of it, but you don’t know where the wind comes from or where it is going. It is the same with every person who is born from the Spirit.”**

**Nicodemus asked, “How can this happen?”**

**Jesus said, “You are an important teacher in Israel, and you don’t understand these things? I tell you the truth, we talk about what we know, and we tell about what we have seen, but you don’t accept what we tell you. I have told you about things here on earth, and you do not believe me. So you will not believe me if I tell you about things of heaven. The only one who has ever gone up to heaven is the One who came down from heaven – the Son of Man.**

**“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, the Son of Man must also be lifted up. So that everyone who believes can have eternal life in him.**

**“God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.”**

**Why do you think it was so difficult for a religious man such as Nicodemus to understand spiritual rebirth?**

**How do Jesus' words to him help you grasp what it means to be born of the Spirit?**

Sometimes our religion keeps us from seeing what is truly spiritual.

Religion has been called "man's attempt to reach to God.”

When our relationship with God is shielded by man-made rules and traditions, it

is difficult to see what the Spirit is doing.

Jesus encouraged Nicodemus to return to the simple truths, beginning with birth.

He wants us all to realize that Christianity is God reaching out to man.

**Did You Get It?**

**How has this week's study helped you to see God's Spirit as a person with whom you have a relationship?**

**Share with Someone**

**Think of a person you can encourage with the truth you learned this week.**

**Write their name down where you can see it daily and pray for them . . . and share with them.**

Next week, **“The Role of the Holy Spirit” – Part 2, God, the Holy Spirit**.

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**The Holy Spirit: The Role of the Holy Spirit[[5]](#footnote-5) [[6]](#footnote-6) Part 2 The Holy Spirit – Foundations Study Series**

**Introduction**

Last week, we started our discussion on the Hoy Spirit.

I just want to remind you of some of the truths about the Trinity.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

**Truths About the Trinity**

God relates to us as a Trinity, three persons in one being.

God is one; he is not three Gods, but one God

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God.

The three are distinct from one another: separate, but one.

**Catching Up**

**Were you able to share last week's truth with someone last week?**

**Did you notice that you were more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence in your life as a result of last week's lesson? Share any opportunities or insights you may have observed.**

**Show video**

**Key Verse**

**“Some of us are Jews, and some are Greeks. Some of us are slaves, and some are free. But we were all baptized into one body through one Spirit. And we were all made to share in the one Spirit.”** (1 Corinthians 12:13)

**The Role of the Holy Spirit Today**

**The Holy Spirit \_\_*baptizes*\_\_ me,**

1. **The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the placing of the Christian into the \_\_*body of Christ*\_\_ and into \_\_*Christ himself*\_\_.**
2. **The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a \_\_*one-time event*\_\_ occurring at the moment of salvation.**
3. **The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a \_\_*universal experience*\_\_ for all believers.**

**“You were all baptized into Christ, and so you were all clothed with Christ. This means that you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”** (Galatians 3:26-27)

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a universal gift to believers.

Nowhere in the Bible are Christians instructed to desire or seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We should not pray for it,

seek it,

or try to achieve it.

We already have it.

Much of the confusion over the baptism of the Holy Spirit comes about because of the failure to make a distinction between the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is something God does for us in establishing our relationship with Jesus Christ.

The filling of the Holy Spirit is the daily experience of our yielding to the Holy Spirit's control.

We will discuss the filling of the Holy Spirit in detail in the next session.

**The Holy Spirit \_\_*indwells*\_\_ me,**

**“You should know that your body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in you. You have received the Holy Spirit from God. So you do not belong to yourselves, . . .”** (1 Corinthians 6:19)

**The Holy Spirit \_\_*seals*\_\_ me.**

**“So it is with you. When you heard the true teaching – the Good News about your salvation – you believed in Christ. And in Christ, God put his special mark of ownership on you by giving you the Holy Spirit that he had promised.”** (Ephesians 1:13)

1. **Sealing implies \_\_*ownership*\_\_ and \_\_*protection*\_\_.**

**The Holy Spirit is the \_\_*deposit of God’s promise*\_\_ .**

**“That Holy Spirit is the guarantee that we will receive what God promised for his people until God gives full freedom to those who are his – to bring praise to God’s glory.”** (Ephesians 1:14)

**“This is what God made us for, and he has given us the Spirit to be a guarantee for this new life.”** (2 Corinthians 5:5)

**“If we are not faithful, he will still be faithful, because he must be true to who he is.”** (2 Timothy 2:13)

**Key Personal Perspective**

**Putting Knowledge into Action**

1. You may have realized that you have never been born again;

you have never experienced the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

Come to God, repent of living life to please yourself,

and ask him to give you a new birth and eternal life with him.

1. You may have been confused about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

You've prayed and sought another experience with God that would change you forever.

Now you see that the miraculous has already happened to you.

Thank God for putting you in Christ where you belong with all in God's family.

Thank him that his work is so powerful and complete that you never have to repeat it.

Thank God that because you are in Christ, he now sees you covered by Jesus' righteousness.

You are pure, spotless, and holy before him.

1. Thank God that his promises are faithful and that his pledge to keep you forever is true.

Thank the Holy Spirit for sealing you so that you are safe from losing your salvation.

Spend a few moments thinking of the time when you will receive all that has been promised to you; when God's engagement ring becomes a wedding ring, and you will sit with him at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in heaven.

**Discovery Questions**

**1 Corinthians 12:13** and **Galatians 3:26-27** indicate that all believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

**What does it mean for you that you are "totally immersed" in the Spirit of God?**

**How does it affect your perspective on other believers when you realize that we are ALL baptized – "totally immersed” – in the Spirit of God?**

The knowledge that we are sealed by the Holy Spirit is a tremendous source of security in our lives as believers.

What is one place in your life you regularly need to draw upon that "account" for your security?

**Did You Get It?**

**How has this week's study helped you see the importance of the fact that you are baptized, indwelt, and sealed by God's Spirit?**

**Discipleship**

Being a believer in Christ does not mean living the Christian life on our own power.

We must rely on the daily power that comes from a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit.

There is likely nothing more important you could do for one another as a group than to be aware of and to pray for one another's needs in this all-important area.

Next week, **“The Filling of the Holy Spirit” – Part 3, God, the Holy Spirit**.

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**The Holy Spirit: The Filling of the Holy Spirit[[7]](#footnote-7) [[8]](#footnote-8) [[9]](#footnote-9) Part 3 The Holy Spirit – Foundations Study Series**

**Introduction**

A couple of weeks ago, we started our discussion on the Hoy Spirit.

I just want to remind you of some of the truths about the Trinity.

Diagram

Description automatically generated

**Truths About the Trinity**

God relates to us as a Trinity, three persons in one being.

God is one; he is not three Gods, but one God

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Spirit is God.

The three are distinct from one another: separate, but one.

**Catching Up**

**Were you able to share last week's truth with someone last week?**

**What did you learn about daily fillings with the Holy Spirit during the past week?**

**If you could pick one place in your life where you would like to see God working in greater ways, where would it be?**

**Was there ever a time when you were closer to God than you are right now?**

**Can you remember what it was like?**

**What happened to change that closeness?**

**If you are presently as close to God as you've ever been, what has brought about that closeness?**

**Key Verse**

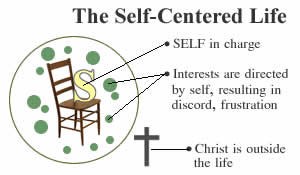
**“But the spiritual man has insight into everything, and that bothers and baffles the man of the world, who can’t understand him at all.”**

(1 Corinthians 2:15 TLB)

**“Whoever has the Spirit can evaluate all things, but they themselves cannot be evaluated by others.”** (1 Corinthians 2:15 adapted)

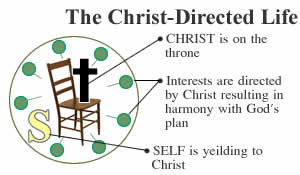
**Our Need for the Filling of the Holy Spirit**

The Bible says that everyone is in one of three spiritual positions:[[10]](#footnote-10)

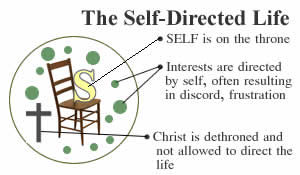
1. **The \_natural­\_ mап**

**“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.”** (Ephesians 2:1-2 NIV)

**“But the man who isn’t a Christian can’t understand and can’t accept these thoughts from God, which the Holy Spirit teaches us. They sound foolish to him because only those who have the Holy Spirit within them can understand what the Holy Spirit means. Others just can’t take it in.”** (1 Corinthians 2:14 TLB)

1. **The \_spiritual\_ mап**

**“But the spiritual man has insight into everything, and that bothers and baffles the man of the world, who can’t understand him at all.”** (1 Corinthians 2:15 TLB)

1. **The \_carnal\_ mап**

**“Brothers and sisters, in the past I could not talk to you as I talk to spiritual people. I had to talk to you as I would to people without the Spirit – babies in Christ. The teaching I gave you was like milk, not solid food, because you were not able to take solid food. And even now you are not ready. You are still not spiritual, because there is jealousy and quarreling among you, and this shows that you are not spiritual. You are acting like people of the world.”** (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

**What is the Filling of the Holy Spirit?**

**“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”** (Ephesians 5:18-21 NIV)

**Four Truths from Ephesians 5:18-21**

1. The verb used for "filled" is plural, implying \_**all**\_ are to be filled.

2. The verb used for "filled" is present tense (be filled), implying \_**repeated action**\_.

3. The verb used for "filled" is passive, implying the filling is something done \_**to you**\_.

4. The verb used for "filled" is imperative, implying \_**a command**\_.

**Closer Look**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***What’s the Difference?*** | |
| **Baptism of the Holy Spirit** | **Filling of the Holy Spirit** |
| A positional\* truth | An experiential truth |
| Not commanded | Commanded |
| A one-time event | A continuous event |
| Puts believer in the position to receive power | Power itself |
| * Positional truth is who we are because of our faith in Christ. Experiential truth is how we are to live based on that position. One is ***root***, the other is ***fruit***. | |

**Signs of the Filling of the Holy Spirit**

There is often confusion over "signs" that indicate the Holy Spirit has filled someone.

***1. Personal experiences that may or may not accompany filling (mistaken signs):***

a) \_**emotionalism**\_: emotion or feeling is not necessarily part of being filled.

b) \_**exceptional**\_ ability: God works within the framework of our limitations and natural

abilities.

c) Personal \_**charisma**\_; may be mistaken for filling,

d) \_**tranquility**\_ of mind and spirit: great Spirit-filled believers have experienced frustrations,

discouragement, and disappointments.

e) Speaking in \_**tongues**\_ (**Acts 2**, **Acts 9**): throughout history, some Christians speak in tongues when filled, others do not.

***2. False teachings concerning what must accompany filling:***

a) \_**Freedom**\_ from problems, filling doesn't make all problems disappear, but it does give us the strength and wisdom to better face our problems.

b) Total freedom from \_**temptation**\_: Jesus faced one of the greatest times of temptation immediately after the Spirit came upon him following his baptism. Some who are filled

experience more temptation than when not filled.

c) Sinless \_**perfection**\_: Obviously this is not true! Every Christian sins and must trust in God's forgiveness and as for renewed filling every day.

***3. Biblical and universal signs of filling***:

a) The \_**gifts**\_ of the Spirit

**“A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.**” (1 Corinthians 12:7

NLT)

b) The \_**fruit**\_ of the Spirit

**“But the Spirit produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”** (Galatians 5:22-23)

c) The \_**power**\_ of the Spirit

**“But when the Holy Spirit comes to you, you will receive power. You will be my witnesses – in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world.”** (Acts 1:8)

**“With God’s power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.”** (Ephesians 3:20)

**“And now, Lord, listen to their threats. Lord, help us, your servants, to speak your word without fear.”** (Acts 4:29)

**". . . My power works best in weakness.”** (2 Corinthians 12:9 NLT)

**Discovery Questions**

It has been said that up to 95 percent of believers are living worldly lives – lives characterized by some of those struggles we talked about in this session. **Why do you believe it is so easy and common to settle for less than God's best in our spiritual lives?**

**Did You Get It?**

**How has this week's study helped you understand the difference between the baptism of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit?** The real test of that understanding is being able to explain it to someone else.

**Share with Someone**

Think of a person you can encourage with the truth you learned this week.

**Living On Purpose**

**Fellowship**

Paul reminds us:

**“You show that you are a letter from Christ... written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”** (2 Corinthians 3:3 NIV)

How do you see God "writing on your heart? Use this thought as your basis: “This is one way I see God's Spirit in my life."

Perhaps you might try this exercise with another person or a small group. This may feel a little uncomfortable at first, but if we cheer someone for hitting a home run or applaud a promotion at work, how much more important is it to recognize God's work in the lives of others?

**Prayer Direction**

Take a few minutes to express your praise to God for the work the Holy Spirit is doing in you.

Praise him, corporately, for his guiding hand upon you and within you, keeping you from living a life based on pointless pursuits.

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1. Taken and adapted from **Foundations: HOLY SPIRIT Study Guide** 2004, 2008 by Tom Holladay and Kay Warren, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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3. Taken and adapted from **Foundations: The HOLY SPIRIT Study Guide** 2004, 2008 by Tom Holladay and Kay Warren, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
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5. Taken and adapted from **Foundations: The HOLY SPIRIT Study Guide** 2004, 2008 by Tom Holladay and Kay Warren, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
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