

Digging Even Deeper: Investigating the Holy Spirit

This extra study section is an introduction to a huge subject. These 2 pages look at places where the phrase Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Bible and ask you questions about what they might mean. If you can do this with other people to talk to you will find it easier and learn more. Use the space around the questions to jot down your answers and to make notes about what you think. Some of your answers may be “don’t know” or “not sure”. That’s fine. Write down questions you need to ask to get the answer and make sure you ask your Sunday school teacher about them.

In some translations, particularly the Authorised Version, or King James version, the phrase “Holy Spirit” is translated as “Holy Ghost”. It means the same thing.

In John’s Gospel

Look up these verses in John and say what you think the word “Spirit” refers to in each of them:

- 1:32-33
- 3:5-6
- 3:34
- 4:23
- 4:24
- 6:63
- 7:37-39
- 11:33
- 13:21

In John 14:26 what does Jesus call the Holy Spirit? In that verse Jesus promises his disciples that this Comforter (the NIV has ‘Counselor’) would come to them. Who does he say will come to them in verse 18?

Who do you think Jesus means when he says in verse 17 that his disciples know him and he lives with them and will be in them?

Who does Jesus say will dwell with them in verse 23?

How do you think Jesus and his Father come and live with those who love Jesus and keep his commands?

In the Old Testament

The expression “Holy Spirit” is found only twice in the Old Testament (AV) - though the phrases “Spirit of God “ and “Spirit of the Lord”, which mean the same, are found a lot.

Look at both these passages and say what you think the phrase “Holy Spirit” refers to in each case:

Psalm 51:11

Isaiah 63:9-11

Read Psalm 139. What do you learn about God’s spirit from the psalm?

In the book of Acts and the Letters

Did having the Holy Spirit make the disciples infallible? Did they automatically know what to do and what was right? See Acts 10 and Gal 2:11

How did they decide what was right?

Did all the disciples have the same special gifts or abilities from the Holy Spirit? See 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28-31

Were all the special gifts what we would call miraculous?

If someone did something you thought was a miracle, would you always be right to follow what they teach and do? See Matthew 7:21-23

Read 1 Corinthians 2:16 using and A.V or R.S.V Bible. Look up the part of Isaiah 40:13 which he is quoting. What do you learn about the Spirit of the Lord from this?

(if you look up this passage in the N.I.V. you will see that the word spirit has been translated mind)

Does this help in understanding 1 Corinthians 2:11-12

Can you write a summary of what you have learned about the Holy Spirit?