



# A Sure Foundation

The beliefs that we build our lives on

## MYSTERY AND MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE SPIRIT

MONTH 2

WEEK 3

READ:

Acts 13-20

**charisma:** the ability to inspire enthusiasm, interest, or affection in others; a divine gift

Satan loves to divide, and differing views about the identity, roles, and activity of God’s Spirit seems to be one of his favorite and most successful battlefields. In avoiding the fray, we unfortunately have also found ourselves avoiding the Spirit as well. We find ourselves reacting to the divisive work of Satan rather than reacting to the unifying work of the Spirit. Instead of letting the mysteries and misunderstandings about the Spirit ruin our appetite for Him entirely, we must allow the Spirit to guide us into all truth as Jesus promised us He would do (John 16:13). We must search Scripture, pray, listen and learn to recognize the Spirit’s voice. We must not be so quick to throw out differing opinions that we throw out questions of the Spirit as well. I love how the children I teach can come with open and honest inquiry, uncluttered with the notion of avoiding “wrong” questions about the Spirit of our Holy God. In regard to those we disagree with, let’s borrow the wise words of the Pharisee Gamaliel:

“ if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” (Acts 5:38,39)

What remains, then, is for us to learn all we can about the Spirit, and about how He is at work in our lives. We must not fear the differing ideas of others, but must be diligent in examining for ourselves what we believe the Spirit’s identity and vocation is. With a knowledge based on the resources that God gives us, we can be confident in our dependence on the Spirit of God and the freedom that He gives us to reflect God’s glory as we are transformed, by the Spirit, into the likeness of God. Notice as you read how this happens in the lives of those early followers of Christ. How is what is offered to us the same? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How is it different? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### MEMORY VERSE:

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

2 Corinthians

## THE FILIOQUE ISSUE

One of the biggest splits in church history occurred over a word. The theologians of the Eastern church insist that there is only one source of divinity in the Trinity or Godhead, and that is the Father. In 381 AD the Nicene Creed was written. In 589 it was modified with the addition of the Latin word filioque which means “and the Son” in reference to the source of the Holy Spirit being from the Son as well as from the Father. After a long debate, the Catholic Church split with The Eastern Orthodox Churches refusing the word filioque in their creed of belief. The controversy has not ended there since Protestant churches inherited the filioque issue from the Catholic church from which they split. Many churches recite the Nicene Creed, but some have recently rejected the idea that the Holy Spirit was begotten by the Father and the Son. (Collins)

What do you think? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



What are some of the divisive issues surrounding the Holy Spirit in churches today? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is He really worth all the trouble? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE?

How well do you know what you believe about the Holy Spirit? For each of these statements, choose whether you more agree, or more disagree and why. What is your reason based on?

The Holy Spirit indwells believers who have received a second baptism, separate from salvation.

AGREE

DISAGREE

Those who are disobedient can lose the presence of the Holy Spirit.

AGREE

DISAGREE

The believer's new life in Christ is the work of the Spirit within.

AGREE

DISAGREE

The Spirit convicts unbelievers of their sin.

AGREE

DISAGREE

The gifts of the Spirit are still given to believers today.

AGREE

DISAGREE

The Holy Spirit can be likened to electricity, a force that can be adopted to perform a great variety of operations.

AGREE

DISAGREE

**THE ACTIVITY OF GOD'S SPIRIT Acts 13-20**

What specific instructions did the Holy Spirit give about Saul and Barnabas in Acts 13:2-4? \_\_\_\_\_

What did they do? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Spirit filled Paul say to Elymas? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened to Elymas that caused those watching to believe? \_\_\_\_\_

What is one enemy of the work of the Spirit (13:45)? \_\_\_\_\_

Who enables people to do miraculous things (14:3)? \_\_\_\_\_

How? \_\_\_\_\_

What mistake might people make about those who possess God's Spirit (14:8-11)? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you seen this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Were Paul and Barnabas people like us? \_\_\_\_\_

What did these same people do to Paul? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some other dangers when the Spirit is misunderstood? \_\_\_\_\_

In what way did God give the Gentile believers His seal of approval (15:8)? \_\_\_\_\_

Who does 15:28 say that the decisions of the Jerusalem Council seemed good to? \_\_\_\_\_

How did they know that? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the Holy Spirit keep Paul from preaching in Asia and Bythynia (16:6,7)? \_\_\_\_\_

The Charismatic Movement is generally traced back to the early 1900s. The term Pentecostal came into popular use to describe those who were said to have an experience like that of the believers on the Day of Pentecost. Some denominations are specifically Pentecostal, while others who have the same experiences within mainline denominations are said to be charismatic. A charismatic service is characterized by prophesying and healing. Its popularity is on the rise and has made a significant mark on worship styles and music even in churches that would not consider themselves "charismatic". (McGrath 94)

**MYSTERIES?**

Which activities of the Spirit did only the apostles seem to have? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

How did the believers know who had been filled with the Spirit and who hadn't? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Does the Holy Spirit give us specific instructions today? \_\_\_\_\_

How? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did it often require the laying on of the apostles hands for the Spirit to be received? \_\_\_\_\_

**THE HOLY GHOST**

The King James version uses the word Ghost instead of Spirit. How is that a good description of the Holy Spirit? How might it confuse our view of the Holy Spirit?

**WANT TO READ WHAT I READ?**

**THE FILIOQUE ISSUE p. 2**  
Collins, Ken. "The Nicene Creed." Ken Collins' Web Site. 18 Jan 2008  
<<http://www.kencollins.com/why-07.htm>>.

**THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT p.3**  
McGrath, Alister. Zondervan Handbook of Christian Beliefs. Oxford: The Zondervan Corporation, 2005.