



# Wind of the Spirit

Wind is a powerful force in nature. Witness the terrifying power of a tornado, the damaging winds of a hurricane or even the warming gales of a Chinook and you see the power of moving air particles. It is fitting that the Bible uses wind as an image to describe the Spirit of God. It is at Pentecost, where the Spirit is revealed in power, that the wind is described as a "mighty, rushing wind."

Perhaps more than ever, we need to know the power of God in our lives. Often, however, we are nervous about too much emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. This series is intended to take a Biblical look at the person and ministry of the Spirit. We need to avoid looking at this from a dry, academic perspective and consistently ask ourselves how we can strengthen our own relationship with the Spirit. We need to let the wind blow...

## Study #1 The Spirit Who Isn't A Ghost

*The growing influence of the New Age Movement has proliferated a view that spiritual forces play a large role in our lives. Those forces, however are nothing more than just that, forces or energy. The Holy Spirit is so much more than that. He is a personality within the Godhead. This study will look at the theology of who the Holy Spirit is.*

1. What are some of the names for the Holy Spirit?

2. How is the Holy Spirit often perceived? (by Christians and by unbelievers as well)?

How is the Spirit often described and what does each description say about the Holy Spirit:

- John 3:5-8 cf. Acts 2:1-2
- Luke 24:49
- Mark 1:10
- 2 Corinthians 1:22
- Acts 2:3-4
- Ephesians 1:13 cf. 4:30
- John 7:37-39

3. Personality has been described as the combined existence of intellect, emotion and will. Read the following texts, and express how the Holy Spirit possesses all three elements of personality.

- 1 Corinthians 2:10-13
- Romans 8:27
- Ephesians 4:30
- Romans 15:30
- 1 Corinthians 12:11

4. Why is it important that the Holy Spirit is a person and not just a force, influence or energy source?

5. The Spirit is first referred to as the Holy Spirit in Psalms 51:11. Why is the designation "holy" so important?

What is advantageous about the fact that the Holy Spirit is a spirit?

6. The following verses indicate attributes of God that are present in the Holy Spirit. What attribute of deity is being explained?

- 1 Corinthians 2:11-12
- Psalm 139:7-9
- Job 33:4 & Zechariah 4:6
- 1 John 5:6
- Luke 11:13
- Romans 8:2,11

7. The following verses identify a number of actions performed by the Holy Spirit. Identify what is being accomplished and why that confirms the deity of the Spirit.

- Genesis 1:2 cf. Psalm 104:30
- 2 Peter 1:21
- Luke 1:35
- John 3:6
- Romans 8:26

8. How do Matthew 28:19 and 2 Corinthians 13:14 give evidence of the deity of the Holy Spirit?

9. How important do you think the Holy Spirit is in the life of most Christians?

Why do you think He's often ignored or downplayed?

In light of His deity, how do we need to change how we view the Holy Spirit?

## Study #2 He's Been Around a Long Time

*The work and ministry of Jesus took on a different character when He was born into the world some 2000 years ago. That ministry changed again when Christ ascended into heaven 34 years later. The same holds true for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's ministry was different in the Old Testament and changed dramatically at Pentecost. It is important to understand the role the Holy Spirit played prior to Pentecost so that we don't misunderstand some biblical texts and so that we get a more beautiful picture of the One who was promised - the Spirit of God!*

1. Have you ever been told that something special was going to happen and it turned out to be a disappointment?

Have you ever had things turn out even better than you could have imagined?

Describe them to each other.

2. The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was given in special circumstances to assist in a special task God had for his people.

What tasks in the following verses warranted the giving of the Spirit?

Exodus 31:3

Judges 3:10

Judges 6:34

1 Samuel 16:13

1 Peter 1:10-11

3. Read the following verses and note the activity of the Holy Spirit. (Judges 13:24-25 cf. 16:20 and 1 Samuel 10:9-11 cf. 16:14)

4. In light of the previous verses what possibility is David entertaining in Psalm 51:10-12?

How does that compare to the Holy Spirit after Pentecost? (John 14:16-17)

5. The Old Testament also reveals the Holy Spirit's role after Pentecost. What do the following verses say about the work of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost?

Joel 2:28 & 29

Ezekiel 36:26 & 27 and 37:14

Isaiah 59:21

6. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit in a new way. When was that to happen? (John 7:39; 16:7 cf. Acts 1:4 & 5)

7. Why does Jesus say that it would be advantageous if He leaves and the Spirit comes? (John 16:7)

8. Take a brief look at the time when the Holy Spirit came. (Acts 2:1-8) What indication is there that it was a special event?

9. Who received the Spirit? (Acts 2:38 & 39)

10. What made the Spirit such a special gift?

Why do the prophets and Jesus spend so much time foretelling what the Spirit will be like?

11. How can we encourage each other to properly emphasize the tremendous gift of the Holy Spirit?

## Study #3 How The Spirit Speaks

*Imagine a small child lost in Disneyland. Two things are necessary if that child is to find his parents. Firstly, he needs to know that he is lost and he needs to have somebody lead him back to his parents. That is precisely what the Holy Spirit does. "He is the champion of the lost and found. His unique task is to bring ... the unbeliever into a saving relationship with Christ and to keep the believer in constant fellowship with Christ." (The Promise by Tony Evans, p. 138) For this session, it will be necessary to pray after the study. Questions 13 and 14 will give direction to that prayer time.*

### **Read John 16:5-11 and Acts 2:1-4, 36-47**

1. Describe an incident in your childhood, where your conscience ate at you until you finally decided to do what was right.

2. Who is being convicted in this passage?

What are they convicted of? (John 16:8)

3. What three things does the Spirit use to bring conviction?

4. What connection is there between guilt regarding sin and the fact that people don't believe in Jesus? (v. 9)

5. What connection is there between guilt regarding righteousness and the fact that Jesus was going to be with His Father and wouldn't be seen any longer? (v. 9 & 10) See also; Acts 3:14

6. What connection is there between guilt regarding judgment and the fact that Satan stands condemned? (v. 11)

7. Given how the Spirit convicts people, how should we approach the unbeliever with the gospel?

8. How should we pray for those who are not believers?

9. Looking at the passage in Acts, what activity by the Holy Spirit and the believers led to the response contained in 2:37?

10. Why is it important to emphasize that the Spirit is the One who convicts? (both in the Acts 2 passage and in our current Understanding)

11. Two passages indicate that the Spirit seeks to convict believers as well. (Ephesians 4:29-31 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19)

What do believers do that grieves the Holy Spirit (dampens His fire)?

12. How can we avoid grieving the Spirit? (Ephesians 4:31 - 5:2)

13. Spend some time discussing unbelievers that your group comes into contact with.

Then pray that God will convict them and that you will be faithful as those whom the Spirit is filling. (Acts 2)

14. Talk about a few areas where the Church (global and local) needs to be sensitive to the Spirit's conviction. Pray for these areas.

## **Study #4 The Spirit at Salvation**

*One big temptation we have as believers is to compartmentalize our faith. Consequently, we often think of God the Father being in charge and creating the world. We think of Jesus largely in relation to the cross and salvation and we relegate the Spirit to the ministry of the Church. In reality, the Spirit of God is significantly involved in our salvation and it is an integral part of His ministry. This study we will try to get an understanding of the Spirit's role in salvation.*

1. Other than salvation, describe the most transforming event in your life.

### **Rebirth - Titus 3:4-6**

2. According to these verses, how is each member of the Trinity involved in our salvation?

3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit?

4. Why do we often fail to see the Holy Spirit's role in our salvation?

### **Indwelling - 1 Corinthians 3:16 & 6:19-20**

5. Is it possible to be a Christian and not have the Spirit dwelling inside? (Romans 8:9)

Conversely, is it possible to not be a Christian and yet have the Spirit?

6. How does the Spirit live with us and in us? (see also John 14:17) Is there a difference?

7. How long will the Spirit remain with the believer? (John 14:16)

### **Baptism - 1 Corinthians 12:12-13**

8. All five historical records in the New Testament record Jesus predicting a baptism of the Holy Spirit. It occurred at the beginning of Christ's ministry (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33) and after His resurrection (Acts 1:4-5). In what way is Jesus the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit?

9. According to the following verses, what are the results of Spirit baptism?

1 Corinthians 12:13

Galatians 3:27-28

Colossians 2:12

Romans 6:4

10. When does baptism of the Holy Spirit take place?

### **Sealing - Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30**

11. What is the function of a seal? In what way are we sealed by the Spirit?

12. At what point is a person sealed in the Holy Spirit? (1:13)

13. What is the intention of the Holy Spirit's sealing?

14. Each of these four activities point to the Spirit's ministry of transformation. If we are participants of all this, how should it change our lives?

## Study #5 - The Spirit's Filling

*Jesus promised that the one who believed in Him would have "streams of living water" flowing within him (John 7:38-39). He was speaking of the Spirit, and His analogy leaves us longing for that fulfilled in our lives. Unfortunately, we often seem more familiar with deserts in our inner being. We long to realize the fullness of the Spirit in our lives, but either don't know how that happens or we fail to realize it through our own neglect. We want to sing with our children, truthfully, "My cup is full and running over." This study seeks to examine how the Spirit's filling happens and how it can change us.*

### **Read Ephesians 5:1-21**

1. Describe a time in your life that you were overwhelmed with the fullness of the presence of God.
2. What imperatives does Paul mention in the context of the Spirit's filling? (5:1, 2, 8, 15)
3. Why do you think it is a command to be filled with the Spirit (5:18)?
4. One key word in this verse is the word, "*instead.*" Contrast drunkenness and being filled with the Spirit.
5. Is the Spirit's filling something you do or is it a result of something you do?
6. Is the Spirit's filling a one-time event that puts you on a higher spiritual plane or is it a continual process of filling?

Support your argument.

7. Ephesians 5:19-21 give some of the results of the Spirit's filling. What are they?

8. Two times in the book of Acts, Stephen is mentioned as one who is full of the Holy Spirit. What, in his life, indicated this filling? (Acts 6:3-15; 7:51-60)

9. How can we keep on being filled with the Spirit?

10. To what degree is the Spirit's filling grace and what part of it involves our own effort?

11. How can we encourage each other to keep on being filled with the Spirit?

## Study #6 The Spirit's Fruit

*Imagine being in the middle of the desert and having spent five days without any food and only dirty water to drink from a small canteen. You've walked miles without any nourishment whatsoever. You're hot and quickly dehydrating. But wait! On the horizon you see a white dot. You move quickly toward it and discover it is a refrigerator plugged into a generator. You open the door to find a jug of Old South Florida orange juice sitting beside numerous cartons of SunRype Blue Label apple juice. You look further to discover clusters of burgundy grapes, fresh peaches and strawberries, mangoes and Japanese Mandarin oranges. Do you want to eat? The world is a desert. It longs to see the Spirit's fruit. Christians need to be enriched by that fruit in their lives. This study takes a look and the wonderful fruit of a spiritual life!*

### **Read Galatians 5:16-26 & 6:7-9**

1. What is your favourite fruit? \_\_\_\_\_ How do you like it (hot, lukewarm, cold, in a dessert, raw, overripe,

2. Take note of all the times life with the Spirit is referred to in this passage. How is this life described (eg. living by the Spirit - 5:16)?

What does each description imply?

3. If a person is living by the Spirit, two things are not happening. What are they? (vv. 16 & 18)

4. What is significant about the fact that vv. 22-23 lists the fruit (*singular - not the fruits*) of the Spirit?

5. Why do you suppose Paul chose fruit as an analogy of the spiritual life?

What about fruit is applicable here?

6. Look at the list of fruit in vv. 22-23 and answer the following questions about each. How does each fruit nourish and encourage you in your spiritual walk?

How is each fruit relevant in your personal relationships (friends and family)?

How does each fruit strengthen your witness?

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-Control

7. Is the fruit something we aim for?

Is it a product of another goal?

If so, what is that goal?

8. Is this list a sample or is it an exhaustive list?

Are there any other "fruits" of the Spirit that you can think of?

9. Galatians 6:7-8 continues this analogy. What is our responsibility in this fruit-bearing metaphor?

10. Where do you find the fruit more abundant in your life and what fruit may be lacking?

Pray for each other after you've shared where you need to see a better crop.

## Study #7 The Giver of Gifts

*Most of us love to get gifts. Usually those gifts are for our own benefit. We receive perfume that we can use. We're given a tie to wear. We smell the flowers that were given. We eat the chocolates that someone generously gave us. Some people (not just children) are even so bold as to suggest possible gifts so that they can be enjoyed more enthusiastically. The Holy Spirit gives gifts to individual believers, not just to benefit themselves, but to build up, encourage and mature other believers. This study is intended to look at why gifts are given and how the Spirit gives them.*

### **Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-27**

1. What talent, if you could choose, would you like to have more than anything else?

What would you want to use it for?

2. In the passage, try to note any references to the fact that there are a variety of spiritual gifts.

3. How do believers obtain spiritual gifts? (vv. 7-11 cf. Ephesians 4:7-11)

4. What role does the Spirit play in relation to spiritual gifts? (vv. 4-11)

5. How are spiritual gifts divided amongst the believers? (v. 11 cf. Ephesians 4:7-8)

What if I don't really like the gifts I have and would like others.

What does the scripture say to me then?

6. Why does Paul seem to emphasize the singularity of one Spirit and one body so often? (especially vv 12 & 13)

7. Why is it important that there is a variety of spiritual gifts? (v. 14)

8. Paul's analogy of gifts being part of the body (vv. 14-24) teaches what lessons?

9. Why have spiritual gifts been given to individual believers? (Ephesians 4:11-13, 16)

10. How are spiritual gifts related to and different from natural talents? (Ephesians 4:12-13)

11. Should we aspire to have all of the gifts?

Are there some gifts that are better to have than others?

12. List each gift from the New Testament passages (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 & 28-30; Ephesians 4:11).

Give a brief description of how it can serve the Church?

## Study #8 What Are Your Gifts?

This study is a little different. The biggest section of time will be spent identifying and encouraging spiritual gifts in one another. The time spent at the study will be best used if each person has filled out his/her spiritual gift inventory and identified which gifts they seem to have prior to coming to the study. These questions also seek to provide some outside input into where individual gifts may lie. For this reason, it is a good idea to be open and encouraging.

***Read Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 & 28-30; Ephesians 4:11***

1. Kenneth Kinghorn has identified the following gifts from the above scripture. Please give a brief definition of each spiritual gift. Are there any others?

- Administration
- Apostleship
- Compassion
- Discernment
- Evangelism
- Exhortation
- Faith
- Giving
- Healing
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Teaching
- Tongues
- Interpretation of Tongues
- Serving
- Shepherding
- Word of Knowledge
- Word of Wisdom

2. What is Paul's caution about gift assessment? (Romans 12:3-6)

3. Should only those who are gifted in a certain area serve in that area?

How can we let others know that they may not be gifted in an area where they'd like to be gifted?

4. Often we want gifts that we don't have and don't want the gifts we have. What is Paul's response to this? (Romans 12:3, 6-8)

How can we be content with the gifts we have?

What gives them significance? (1 Corinthians 12:20-26)

5. How can we learn what our gifts are (beyond doing a spiritual gifts inventory)? (Romans 12:3; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10)

6. Go around the room and follow this agenda:

- Share with the group which three top gifts were identified in the inventory you did.
  
- Share with your group whether you think that accurately reflects your giftedness (remembering that sober judgment is demanded - it is not a pride issue to discuss your gifts - do so freely and honestly.
  
- The group will then spend a few minutes confirming what you've said or giving you other areas to think about. Remember to give concrete ideas if you are inputting, and be encouraging.
  
- After everyone has shared, spend a few moments in silent prayer for the person on your left. Pray that they would continue to discover and use their spiritual gifts for the glory of God and the building up of the Church.

## **Study #9 Those Controversial Gifts**

*Much controversy has surrounded the "sign gifts" as they have often been called. Cessationists argue that they have ceased and that Satan is capable of masking similar behaviour. Charismatics argue that they are continuing and are part of a full participation in the fullness of the Spirit. A host of views scatter the middle ground. In this study, we will begin to look at the issues surrounding this hot topic.*

1. Share any experiences you may have been exposed to in relation to the following sign gifts.

### **Tongues and Interpretation - 1 Corinthians 14**

2. According to Acts 2:4-11, what characterized the gift of tongues?
3. What is the purpose of tongues as mentioned to the Corinthians (v. 5)
4. What does Paul warn against in the use of tongues? (vv. 4, 9, 11, 28)
5. What does Paul say is more important than tongues? (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:1)

### **Healing and Miracles - James 5:13-16**

6. Can God heal? Does God heal?
7. Does God always heal? 2 Corinthians 12:7-8 cf. Philippians 2:26-27
8. According to James, who is the one to show initiative in the desire for healing?
9. What connection is there in this passage between sickness and sin?

How is the sin condition dealt with?

What happens to the infirmity?

10. Who is responsible for the ministry of special prayer for healing?

**Prophecy - 1 Corinthians 14:1-5**

11. What is the purpose of the gift of prophecy? (v. 5)

12. What is prophecy? (Acts 11:27-28 and 1 Corinthians 14:5)

13. Paul, in extolling the way of love, points out that tongues, prophecies and knowledge will all pass away when that which is perfect comes (1 Corinthians 13:8-12) When do these gifts cease?

## **Study #10 The Spirit Is Giving Directions**

*Imagine being lost in downtown Detroit in the middle of the night. Dangers abound and even a quick stop could be hazardous. Which would you prefer - a map of Detroit or a long-time friend who drove taxi in Detroit for 35 years? God has given us both. The Word of God is our map and the Holy Spirit is our Guide and Helper. In fact, He is also the Map maker. Let's look at how the Holy Spirit gives us the guidance we need.*

1. In what ways do people rely on their feelings to guide them?

    Their intellect?

2. Read the following accounts and note how the Spirit guided the individuals involved.

Acts 8:29-31

Acts 10:19-23

Acts 13:2-4

Acts 16:6-7

Acts 20:22-23

3. What is the primary way God leads us? (John 14:26; 16:13)

    How does this happen?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-15. What does God's Spirit desire of us, in order to guide us?

    What role does inner conviction (prompting) play?

5. What role does "sanctified common sense" play?  
(See Acts 15:28 in the context of a difficult decision at the Jerusalem Council).

6. How does the Spirit use circumstances in guiding us? (Acts 16:6-7 cf. Colossians 4:3)

7. Much of God's guidance is based on our submission to His leading and obeying in areas we know already. Read Romans 8:12-14.

What is required to be Spirit-led?

8. How can we respond to the following types of statements.

*"God told me to do this."*

*"The Spirit spoke with me about these things."*

*"God showed me in a dream what we should do."*

9. How can God use other people to show us how the Spirit is leading? (Acts 6:2-7)

10. What is the role of prayer in seeking the Spirit's guidance? (Acts 13:2-4)