

## GOALS FOR THE GROUP LEADER

1. Help the group members to believe that God reveals himself as the Father, as the Son and as the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is God or Christ living in Christians.
2. Help them to understand the command “Be filled with the Spirit!”

## I. WORSHIP (14 min.)

### 1. Prayer

Pray that God will guide us through his Spirit; that we will be aware of his presence and that we will listen to what he says.

### 2. Meditation

Worship is to humble yourself before God and confess your sin

**Theme: To confess sin to God**

Read the Bible verses mentioned below and the explanation. Or explain the verses in your own words.

- *Repentance is absolute necessary for the first meeting with God.*

#### Hebrews 12:29

Our God is a consuming fire

#### Hebrews 10:31

It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

God is holy and actively hostile against sin (Psalm 5:4-5; 11:5; Romans 1:18). Because we all have been born in sin (Psalm 51:5), we are by nature alienated from God, separated from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), enemies of God (Romans 5:10) and hostile to God (Romans 8:7).

By nature all people are a slave under the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). By nature people do not submit themselves to God and his Word and also cannot submit themselves to God and his Word (Romans 8:7). Thus the free will of natural man is very limited!

By nature no man can please God. By nature no religious man can worship God in a way that pleases God (Romans 8:8)!

Only by repentance and faith in the message about Jesus Christ) is a person once for all declared righteous and has forever peace with God (Romans 5:1; 8:1).

- *Confession of sin prepares one for a continued meeting with God.*

#### 1 Peter 1:15-16

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, for I am holy’.

Also born-again Christians cannot worship God in a way that is pleasing to him as long as there are issues in his life that are displeasing to God.

When a Christian commits a sin, he is not condemned by God as ‘guilty’ or ‘bad’, because he has already been declared righteous (forgiven). All his sins in the past, present and future have been atoned for.

Wrongdoing is not the problem of a Christian, but is rather the symptom of his real and much deeper problem, namely, separation from his personal and confidential relationship with God and other people.

- *Confession of sin is to have remorse about WHO we are.* When we prepare ourselves to worship, we need to have remorse (contrition) about our sin, confess our sin and break with our sin. This is never pleasant and sometimes radical changes need to take place in our lives.

The problem with confessing sin is often that we have remorse *about what we have done* instead of having remorse *about who we are* especially in our relationship to God and to other people! Isaiah says: “Woe to me. I am a man of unclean lips” (Isaiah 6:5).

#### Luke 18:13

The tax-collector did not even want to look up to God, but beat himself on his chest as a sign of being tormented by deep anxiety. He said: “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

We too need to know our sinful nature and realize that a sinful thought, word or deed causes a temporary break of our personal and confidential relationship with God. When we commit a sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) and it is this fact that ought to cause us pain!

Meeting the holy God in worship ought to cause a personal crisis. Sometimes confessing our sin ought to be a genuine heartfelt outcry of pain!

➤ *Confession of sin is also to have remorse about WHAT we have done or have neglected to do.*

The word ‘confess’ literally means: ‘to say the same thing’, i.e. to call our sin by name as God does. Then we do not merely confess our sin in a general way, but acknowledge for example that we have lied, have been dishonest or lazy or immoral. Then we agree what God says about our sin. When God lays his finger on the rotten place in our life, then we ought to call that rotten sin by its name and acknowledge that God is right.

David says in Psalm 32:3-10 that when he did not acknowledge his sin, bad consequences followed: he became sick, felt depressed and discouraged and experienced spiritual conflict.

But he also says that when he confessed his sin, good consequences followed: God forgave his sin, saved him from a flood of troubles, protected him from anxiety, surrounded him with songs of deliverance, instructed him in the way he should go and caused him to experience God’s unfailing love.

### 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God immediately forgives what we have done and restores the broken relationship!

### 3. Worship

Let everyone worship God silently. Ask God to search your heart and lay his finger on whatever does not please him. Then confess your sin to God and accept his forgiveness.

## II. INTRODUCTION THEME (1 min.)

**The theme for this meeting is: The Person and functions of the Holy Spirit**

*Read or explain in your own words.*

### 1. One God

Christians believe in *one God who revealed himself as one divine nature with three inner distinctions that are never separate from each other*. Therefore the followers of Jesus Christ are also baptised with water in the one name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). The word ‘name’ is in the singular and proves that there is only one God (cf. Isaiah 45:21-22).

An illustration may be a help: Water is *one* substance: H<sub>2</sub>O, but can be differentiated in *three* distinct states: as gas (steam), as fluid (water) and as a solid (ice). Nevertheless, this illustration is inadequate, because each of these three states of water can exist independent from the

other two. This is never the case with God! The nature of God is unfathomable for man (Job 11:7-8). *God’s nature cannot be defined (as in the science of physics or mathematics), but God can reveal himself (as in the science of history).*

### 2. The appearances of God in creation and history

God revealed himself within his creation and within human history in different ways. During the Old Testament period God appeared to people. These *appearances* of God are visible signs of his presence!

God *revealed* himself to Adam and Eve as *a Spirit* (cf. John 4:24) whose movement in the garden and voice could be heard (Genesis 3:8-10). God *appeared* to Abraham when he was 75 years old and still lived in Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2). God appeared to Abraham *in a vision* (Genesis 15:1) as a smoking fire pot with a blazing torch that passed between the halves of three animals and two birds when he made his covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15:1-18). God appeared to Hagar as the Angel of the LORD (the LORD himself) (Genesis 16:7-14). God appeared to Abraham as a human being (Genesis 18:1-2). God appeared visibly and audibly to Jacob in a dream (Genesis 28:12-13; 35:7,9-11). God appeared to Moses as *the Angel of the LORD in flames of fire from within a bush* (Exodus 3:2). God appeared to Israel *in a pillar of cloud* to guide his people by Day or *in a pillar of fire* to give them light by night (Exodus 13:21). God appeared to Israel on Mount Sinai *in fire amidst thunder and lightning, a thick cloud* (Exodus 19:16-18), or *in a cloud of glory that looked like a consuming fire* (Exodus 24:15-17; 40:34-38). And yet, no one could see God’s face and live (Exodus 33:20)!

During the New Testament period God *took on the human nature* and manifested himself in Jesus Christ (John 1:1,14; Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus said, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). Paul says that Jesus Christ is the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:13).

### 3. An inner differentiation in the unity of the divine being

The expression ‘person’ (Greek: *hupostasis*) does not represent what we understand as ‘an individual person’, but is an indication that there exists an inner differentiation in the unity of the divine being. God revealed his divine being to us in this way, even when we with our very limited human minds cannot form a mental picture of this reality. Hebrews 1:3 says that Jesus Christ is ‘the exact representation of God’s substantial nature (essence, actual being, reality) (Greek: *charaktèr tes hupostaseòs*). In contrast to what merely seems, Jesus Christ is the substantial nature or essence (Greek: *hupostasis*) of God, i.e. he is really God! All the fullness of God (his divine nature) lives in Jesus Christ in bodily form (Colossians 1:19; 2:9).

Likewise the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 4:9; Romans 8:9) or Jesus Christ in believers (Romans 8:10; 2 Corinthians 3:17).

The divine being has in himself three distinct essences or natures:

➤ *God the Father*

The Father is God (the divine nature) dwelling in heaven. Believers belong to his family and ought to pray to him (Ephesians 3:15).

➤ *God the Son*

The Son is God (the divine nature) who took on the human nature without relinquishing his divine nature and dwelt in human history amongst people on earth (John 1:1,14,18; Philippians 2:6-8). He is the Mediator of God's revelation and is the visible image of the invisible divine nature (Colossians 1:15). He is also the Mediator of God's work in creation, salvation and judgment. And he is the Representative of Christians with the Father in heaven (1 John 2:2; Hebrews 9:24).

➤ *God the Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is God (the divine nature) who represents Jesus Christ on earth (John 14:18; 16:13-15) and dwells in the bodies of Christians (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) and in the Church (Ephesians 2:21-22). He applies the salvation, accomplished by Jesus Christ at his death and resurrection, to the lives of Christians throughout human history.

The One true and living God is not only the unfathomable God who is exalted far above human beings, but also 'God with us', who came to dwell among us. He is now the God who dwells and works in the hearts and lives of Christians (cf. Matthew 28:20; John 14:16-17).

#### 4. The same divine being.

The three distinct natures: the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit have one and the same divine nature:

➤ *Jesus Christ is God*

That is why Jesus Christ (the Second Person of the divine being) is called 'God with us' (Matthew 1:23) or 'the Son of God' (John 1:18), or 'God' (Hebrews 1:8-9) and the Bible says that "the fullness of the Deity lives in Christ is bodily form" (Colossians 2:9).

➤ *The Holy Spirit is God*

And that is why the Holy Spirit (the Third Person of the divine nature) is called 'the Spirit of God', 'the Spirit of Christ' or 'Christ in Christians' (Romans 8:9-10) and even 'God' (Acts 5:3-4).

Although the nature of this One God remains unfathomable (indefinable, immeasurable) for human beings, Christians may have a personal and intimate relationship with God the Father through the accomplished work of salvation in Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### III. SHARING OF QUIET TIMES (30 min.)

*Let everyone in the small group take a turn to share (or read) what he has learned from one of the assigned quiet times.*

#### Theme: The Person and functions of the Holy Spirit

Day 1	Ezekiel 36:25-27 The promise of the Spirit in the Old Testament
Day 2	John 7:37-39 The promise of the Spirit in the New Testament
Day 3	Acts 2:1-11 The outpouring of the Spirit
Day 4	Titus 3:4-8 Regeneration through the Spirit
Day 5	Acts 11:14-18 The baptism with the Spirit
Day 6	Ephesians 5:15-21 The filling with the Spirit
Day 7 <sup>BS</sup>	Galatians 5:16-26 The fruit of the Spirit
Day 8	Romans 12:3-8 The gifts of the Spirit
Day 9	Romans 8:1-17 Living through the Spirit
Day 10	1 Corinthians 6:13-20 Your body is a temple of the Spirit

### IV. ADDITIONAL SHARING (15 min.)

Part IV is optional.

If after sharing quiet times there is still time left over, the following may serve as subjects for conversation.

#### 1. Discussing the study

*Discuss* the study with reference to the questions mentioned below:

#### Theme: The Person and functions of the Holy Spirit

- Who is the Holy Spirit within the divine nature?
- Who is the Holy Spirit in relationship to Jesus Christ?
- What are the most important works of the Holy Spirit in individual people?
- What are the important works of the Holy Spirit in the Christian Church?
- What are the important works of the Holy Spirit in Christian missions?
- What does the expression 'baptism with the Spirit' mean?

in the Bible mean?

- What is the implication of the command: “Be filled with the Spirit”?
- How does a Christian ‘walk in the Spirit’ (Galatians 5:16)?

## 2. Commitment

*Search yourself*; consider the following questions and record your answers:

- Ephesians 5:18 says: “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead be filled with the Spirit”. “Are you filled with the Spirit?”
- “Which area in your life do you need to surrender to the control of the Holy Spirit?”

## 3. Personal sharing

*Discuss* personal growth and commitment. Who would like to share a difficulty or blessing in his/her personal life? What are your thoughts or feelings?

## V. MEMORISATION (5 min.)

### 1. Review of previous Bible verses

*Let* pairs of group members review each other’s previously memorised Bible verses (the last memorised Bible verse or the last 5 memorised Bible verses).

### 2. Memorisation of the new Bible verse

*Explain* the meaning of the new Bible verse.

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT John 16:8

When he comes,  
he will convict the world of guilt  
in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.

John 16:8 (NIV)

### 3. Review of the Bible books

*All 39 books of the Old Testament*

*The 5 books of the Law:* Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

*The 12 historical books:* Joshua, Judges, Ruth  
1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings,  
1&2 Chronicles, Ezra,  
Nehemiah, Esther

*The 5 poetical books:* Job, Psalms, proverbs,  
Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs

*The 5 major prophets:* Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations,  
Ezekiel, Daniel

*The 12 minor prophets:* Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah,  
Jonah, Micah, Nahum,

Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai,  
Zechariah, Malachi

*All 27 books of the New Testament*

*The 4 Gospels:* Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

*The 1 historical book:* Acts

*The 13 Letters of Paul:* Romans, 1&2 Corinthians,  
Galatians, Ephesians,  
Philippians, Colossians,  
1&2 Thessalonians,  
1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon  
Hebrews, James, 1&2 Peter,  
1&2&3 John, Jude, The 1

*Apocalypse:* Revelation

## VI. BIBLE STUDY (45 min.)

**Theme: The fruit of the Holy Spirit**

### 1. Bible Study

*Make use of the method of studying parables in the Bible:*

#### Galatians 5:13-26

<sup>13</sup> You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. <sup>14</sup> For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” <sup>15</sup> If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

<sup>16</sup> So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

<sup>19</sup> The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup> idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup> and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

### 2. Emphasis

- The Holy Spirit is *not* an impersonal power, but a Person with whom you have a personal relationship.
- It is important to walk in the Spirit.

### 3. Explanation for the group leader

**5:13.** ‘Freedom’ is not doing what you want to do, but doing what you ought to do (what God wants you to do). Genuine freedom of sin and the enslavement by your old nature (the flesh) is being bound to Jesus Christ (John 8:32-36). Absolute freedom in which one is detached

from everyone and everything does not exist. The root meaning of the word 'sin' is independence (being detached from) God.

**5:16.** Christians have the responsibility to walk in dependence of the sovereign reign of the Spirit of God. It is the responsibility not to give in to the desires of the old sinful nature, but rather to put it to death by the power of the Spirit (Romans 8:13).

**5:17.** The fact that the Spirit stands opposed to the old sinful nature (the flesh) in your body and in your life (Galatians 5:17) and the fact that the law of sin in the members of your body wages war against the law of your mind and makes you a prisoner of the law of sin (Romans 7:23) (thus, the fact that you are experiencing spiritual conflict), is a proof that you are born-again!

The spiritual conflict is experienced in the realisation that you do not always do the good you wish to do, and that you sometimes do the evil you do not wish to do (Romans 7:19). You love God's moral law, but at the same time you hate the evil (sin) that still lives in you (Romans 7:15,20).

**5:18.** Every born-again Christian is led by the Holy Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:1,13). He is not 'under the law'. This means that he no longer tries to be justified by keeping the law. This is the reason why he also no longer experiences *continual* defeats, enslavement, curses and spiritual impotence (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:13; Galatians 3:10; Romans 6:6).

Born – again Christians are still under the moral law (the Ten Commandments), not as something by which they will be justified, but as God's rule for living as justified (saved) people.

**5:19-21.** The following are examples of the expressions of the old sinful nature without the Holy Spirit. It is called 'the flesh' (Greek: *sarx*):

- *sexual immorality* (Greek: *porneia*) in all its forms (cf. lesson 26, 1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- *impurity* (Greek: *akatharsia*) is the opposite of holiness and is connected to unnatural or sexual depravity
- *debauchery* (Greek: *aselgeia*) is boundless excesses, immoral perversity, enslavement to sinful desires: enslaved to much eating and drinking, enslaved to a particular genre of music and bands, enslaved to buying and spending, enslaved to sport, etc.
- *idolatry* (Greek: *eidololatreia*) is serving other gods and consulting oracles (the sayings or revelations of false prophets or other gods than the God of the Bible, which may be found in other religious books).
- *witchcraft* (Greek: *farmakeia*) is dabbling in magic, the mixing of poisons, drugs, magic formulas and

amulet's

- *hatred* (Greek: *exthrai*) means hatred and hostility.
- *discord* (Greek: *eris*) means disunity and quarrelling
- *jealousy* (Greek: *zèlos*) is striving to be what the other person is, to possess what belongs to him or to attain what he accomplished
- *fits of rage* (Greek: *thumoi*) means outburst of anger
- *selfish ambition* (Greek: *eritheia*) is selfish striving to a social, political or spiritual position, especially by dishonest means
- *dissentions* (Greek: *dichostasia*) is causing divisions
- *factions* (Greek: *haireisis*) means a school of thought, a party, a sect and finally erring in Christian doctrine
- *envy* (Greek: *fthonos*) means to begrudge what another person has and to give with reluctance
- *drunkenness* (Greek: *(methai)*) means indulging in excesses with respect to alcohol
- *orgies* (Greek: *komoi*) means indulging in excesses with respect to feasting, eating and drinking

**5:22.** The various manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the new regenerated nature of the Christian are:

- *spiritual manifestations* as love, joy and peace
- *social virtues* as patience, kindness friendliness and goodness
- *and virtues in three relationships:* faithfulness towards God, gentleness toward other people and self-control with respect to yourself (Romans 8:9-16)
- *gentleness* (Greek: *prautes*) means a gentle attitude, easy to comply with another's wishes, and taking care of other people
- *self-control* (Greek: *engkrateia*) means inner power that curbs and controls passions and tempers and abstains from wrong things

**5:23.** There exists no law against the virtues of the Spirit. This is a stimulation to bear the fruit of the Spirit (the virtues of the Spirit) and in this way to cancel the acts of the sinful nature (the vices or depravity of the flesh).

True Christians are not focussed on the expressions of their old nature, but on the Spirit of Jesus Christ in them and the fruit he produces in them (Romans 7:25; Galatians 5:16,18,25).

## VII. PRAYER (8 min.)

*Pray* with one another in response to what God said to you during this gathering. Let every group member take a turn to pray one or two sentences about what God taught him during this meeting.

*Pray* with one another for one another (Romans 15:30) and for other people (Colossians 4:12).

## VIII. THE NEXT MEETING (2 min.)

*Hand out* the preparation for the next gathering.