

Message by Pastor Matt Brown
Discussion Guide by Small Group Leadership Team

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Sandals Relational Leadership Conference: **THIS** Saturday the 29th from 9 am – 5 pm.

Don't forget to go to sandalsgroups.com to sign up!! *Registration starts at 8:00am.*

If you need help signing up please contact the office or your minister. Also, if childcare is a problem please don't be afraid to ask your group to watch your kids for you during the conference. You are attending this so that you can be a better leader for their sake; let them know that this request is from Sandals and not just you.

Remember, the questions below are for your benefit, you don't need to use them all, just find the ones that will be most helpful for your group or use these to write your own.

MYSTERY

Why is the Holy Spirit important?

1. What we say about Him can determine our eternal destiny.

Anyone who speaks against the Son of Man can be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come. Matthew 12:32 NLT

DISCUSSION: Have you ever carelessly rejected someone or something? How could this attitude possibly predisposition you in rejecting the Holy Spirit? How could an attitude of openness to others help you in being open to the Holy Spirit?

DISCUSSION: Have you ever thought that your actions against the Holy Spirit could adversely determine your eternity? How does that make you feel?

2. The Holy Spirit is God.

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."
Acts 5:3-4 NASB

DISCUSSION: Do you think of Him as being God? When you pray, do you ever pray with the idea that the Holy Spirit is listening? What would it be like to remember Him often and call upon Him not only in times of need but also in normal times throughout your day?

DISCUSSION: In what ways do you identify with Matt in having two opposing desires to serve God in freedom and to appear normal and in control? What are some specific things that you have thought you should do but refrained from out of fear? Why do you think you have those fears?

3. The Holy Spirit makes God personal to us.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2 Corinthians 13:14 ESV

DISCUSSION: How often do you think about and recognize that the Holy Spirit is present with you at every moment? If you did more regularly, how would some of your decisions and actions be different?

DISCUSSION: After He ascended to heaven Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to be your PERSONAL guide and friend. When was the last time you gave the Holy Spirit credit for helping you, giving you a good idea, or keeping you protected? Share with the group.

4. The Holy Spirit is the point where humanity and God meet.

DISCUSSION: If you were to have an encounter with the Holy Spirit, how would you know? In what way do you open yourself to receiving Him? What disciplines do you practice that keep you in a place of being open to Him?

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 1:18 NLT

The Holy Spirit connects with:

a. People in the Old Testament

*Do not cast me away from Your presence. And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
Psalm 51:11 NASB*

b. Jesus Christ

...the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove... Luke 3:22 ESV

c. The Church

Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit... Acts 2:3-4 NLT

d. Us Today

So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied. Acts 9:31 ESV

When I cry out to God, it is the Holy Spirit who answers.

The Holy Spirit is God and is involved in the Christian life. Therefore, Christians must learn about Him and be careful to treat Him with the utmost respect!

SPIRITUAL TRAINING: Pick a day in the next week and do something that will help you to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit. Maybe you can do a fast and remember Him when you are hungry (if you are physically healthy enough) or maybe you can set your watch alarm to go off each hour, but do something that triggers you to bring the idea of the Holy Spirit's presence to your consciousness. In those moments simply say, "Holy Spirit, what are you doing? What do you want me to become and do if I am to do your will?"

Then, next week, report to the group what you experienced.