

# Session 1

# Who is the Holy Spirit to me?

## INTRODUCTION

- Greet everyone as they arrive. After a few minutes of fellowship, begin the session.

**SAY** Welcome to today's discussion on *Living in the Spirit*. Today we'll focus on the Holy Spirit and His relation to you.

**?** **If you could ask God any question about the Holy Spirit, what would you ask?** (Allow responses. Write them on the board for later reference.)

- Give everyone a handout for this session.

**SAY** As we talk about who the Holy Spirit is, let's see how many of these questions we're able to answer. To get us started, let's look at what a person named George says about the Holy Spirit. Listen to his story to see if his view of the Holy Spirit is similar to or different from yours.

- Ask someone to read the first segment of George's story.

## George's Story...

*Living in the Spirit, page 29*

As a kid growing up in a Pentecostal church, emphasis on the Holy Spirit sometimes filtered through to me in odd ways. I had a very difficult time relating to the Holy Spirit as a child and young person. I knew that Jesus loved me. But I felt the Holy Spirit didn't like me at all because He seemed to fill everyone but me.

**?** **Does George's experience surprise you? Why?**

**?** **How is your view of the Holy Spirit like George's?**

**?** **How is your view of the Holy Spirit different from George's?**

**SAY** Let's see what else George had to say about the Holy Spirit.

- Ask someone to read the next segment of George's story.

### GETTING READY

- ☐ Dry erase or chalkboard
- ☐ Dry erase marker or chalk
- ☐ Session 1 handout from the **Living in the Spirit: Discussion CD-ROM** (one per participant)
- ☐ DVD player and projector or television
- ☐ **Living in the Spirit: Discussion DVD**
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Session 1 Talk About It from the **Living in the Spirit: Discussion CD-ROM** (one per participant)

☀ George shared parts of his testimony in the book *Living in the Spirit*. You'll use portions of it throughout this discussion guide for practical, real-life examples.

☀ Your main role in this part is to participate in the discussion. Opportunity to explain further will follow in the Check It Out section.

## George's Story...

*Living in the Spirit, page 29*

His name didn't exactly ring a bell with me either, because He was often called the Holy *Ghost*. I was frightened of ghosts because they hung around dead people and they were spooky and mysterious. I didn't know the Holy Ghost—the Holy Spirit—as a loving Person who was already in my life and who was continually seeking to fill me more with the presence of God and make my personality like Jesus. So, I had a very warped view of the Holy Spirit.

**? Do you think George had a warped view of the Holy Spirit? Why or why not?**

**? How does George describe the Holy Spirit at first? (as a ghost) Have you ever thought of the Holy Spirit like that?**

**? George also describes the Holy Spirit as a Person. Does the Holy Spirit seem like a person to you? Why or why not?**

**? If we were reading your story instead of George's, how would you describe the Holy Spirit?**

## VIDEO SEGMENT

**SAY** We've talked a lot about the Holy Spirit already. Let's watch as three people discuss who the Holy Spirit is to them.

**DVD** Play DVD track 1. No time to watch the video? Here's a summary to share with the group:

*Jamie explains that the Holy Spirit is her guide. She relies on Him to tell her the things she needs to change in her life. Jamie is a teacher, and she also says the Holy Spirit sometimes gives her the words to say to her class.*

**? Who is the Holy Spirit to you?**

**? How do you know when it's the Holy Spirit speaking to you and not just your own feelings or emotions?**

## CHECK IT OUT

**SAY** Jamie described the Holy Spirit as her guide, and George described the Holy Spirit as a Person. But it's important that we don't just listen to what others think or what we think. Let's see what God has to say about the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

**? Do you think of the Holy Spirit as a "He" or an "It"?**

**SAY** Let's see how the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit.

- Ask someone to read **John 16:7,8**.

**?** In these verses, what is the Holy Spirit called? (*Counselor, Him*)

**?** How does your view of the Holy Spirit change if you think of Him as a “He,” rather than an “It”?

**?** Why is the way we think about the Holy Spirit important?

**SAY** The Bible also shares many things that the person of the Holy Spirit does.

- Ask someone to read **John 14:26**.

**?** What does Jesus say the Holy Spirit will do in this passage? (*teach us, remind us of what Jesus has said*)

**SAY** These are just some of the things the Holy Spirit does. I’m going to list several more things that the Holy Spirit does, but even this isn’t everything. As I read the list, think about a time you’ve seen the Holy Spirit in action in your life or someone else’s life. For example, the first thing on the list is that the Holy Spirit speaks.

- Ask someone to read **Acts 13:2**.

**?** How might the Holy Spirit speak to us? (*through our thoughts, through our conscience, through prophecy, through the Bible*)

**?** Can you share a time that the Holy Spirit spoke to you or someone you know?

**SAY** Now I’m going to list more things the Bible says the Holy Spirit does. We’ll pause after each one and I’ll ask a question to help us talk about times we’ve seen the Holy Spirit work in that way.

1. He testifies about Jesus. **Have you ever met or known someone who was not a Christian, but said that he felt like he was being drawn by something to become one? What part do you think the Holy Spirit played in this drawing?**
2. He teaches about Jesus. **Can you share a time that the Holy Spirit helped you know the right thing to do or how to become more like Jesus?**
3. He convicts. **Give an example of how the Holy Spirit helps you know when you are doing something wrong.**
4. He intercedes for us. **How do you think the Holy Spirit could help you when you don’t know what to pray?**
5. He guides us into truth and directs our steps. **Can you share a time that the Holy Spirit let you know what to do in a tough situation or when you needed direction for your life?**
6. He reveals God’s Word to us. **Can you share an experience where the Holy Spirit helped you remember a Bible verse when you needed it?**

## NOTES

☀ Bible verses are provided on the Session 1 handout.

☀ Some Bible translations call the Holy Spirit by the title of Comforter or Helper, rather than Counselor.

☀ Scripture references for each of these examples of how the Holy Spirit works are also included on the discussion handout.

- He testifies. (John 15:26)
- He teaches. (John 14:26)
- He convicts. (John 16:8–11)
- He intercedes for us. (Romans 8:26,27)
- He guides us into truth and directs our steps. (John 16:13; Acts 16:6,7)
- He reveals God’s Word to us. (2 Peter 1:21)

**SAY** That was a great discussion on how the Holy Spirit is with us and can help us just like Jesus promised.

**? How do you think the Holy Spirit is able to do all these amazing things?**

**SAY** Let's look at a few Bible verses that tip us off to the power of the Holy Spirit and who He is. As you hear these verses, try to catch what they tell us about the nature of the Holy Spirit.

- Ask a few volunteers to read **Psalms 139:1,7,8; John 16:12,13; Hebrews 9:14.**

**? What do each of these verses tell us about the Holy Spirit's nature? (Psalm: He is present everywhere; John: He knows the thoughts of God; Hebrews: He is eternal)**

**SAY** There's only One whose nature fits all of those—God. This clears up a lot about the person of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit is God, He has the abilities and power of God. This allows the Holy Spirit to be the Helper for all Christians, all the time! It also means that He is always with us and can always help us no matter the situation.

**? Now that you know that the person of the Holy Spirit is God, has anyone changed any of your opinions about Him? How so?**

**SAY** We all look at things from a slightly different perspective. Maybe you were like George and didn't really think about the Holy Spirit as a loving Person. Or maybe you see yourself needing to ask Him to fill you with more of His presence so that you can be more like Jesus. We could probably all use that! No matter where we are in our relationship with God, the Holy Spirit is waiting for each of us to invite Him into our life in new and deeper ways.

At the beginning, we made a list of questions we'd like to ask God about the Holy Spirit. Hopefully, we've answered some so that you can open yourself more to the person of the Holy Spirit. As we close, please take a few moments to think about the Holy Spirit, how you're currently relating to Him, and how you can be more open to His work.

Feel free to write down your thoughts on the back of the discussion handout.

- Option: Ask everyone to spend time in prayer individually as time allows.

**SAY** The last part of the handout asks us to make notes about how we see the Holy Spirit at work this week. Let's try to write down our thoughts on the back of the handout and plan to share what we discover next time.

In our remaining time, let's look at our list of questions about the Holy Spirit one more time and see if we've answered any of them.

- Close in prayer.

## *Prayer*

Dear God, thank You that the person of the Holy Spirit is available to us as a Helper and Comforter. As we continue to discuss and learn about the Holy Spirit over several weeks, please help each of us to be aware and open to His working in our life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

- Distribute the Talk About It take-home page to everyone as they leave.

## NOTES