

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Intro: In both the Hebrew and Greek languages, the word for Spirit is the same word as wind or breath. In the New Testament and Christian iconography, the Spirit is symbolized by a dove representing gentleness and peace. In the ancient Celtic faith, the Spirit is symbolized as a wild goose that can neither be caught nor tamed. In all of these metaphors the Spirit is represented by elusiveness and mystery. It's like we can't quite put our finger on what the Spirit is and what it/he is about. The Spirit is like the wind—you can see it's evidence, but where it came from or where it's going....

And yet the Bible is clear about the existence of the Holy Spirit. From the Old Testament through the end of the New Testament, the Spirit is clearly at work in the world empowering God's people to do their ministry and mission. This week you'll explore what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit and have the opportunity to put into words your own beliefs and understandings.

What the Bible Teaches: Break into Groups of Four, read the following Bible verses, and discuss the questions. You may want to jot down notes and thoughts on the back of this page.

Genesis 1:2; Exodus 31:1-5; 1 Samuel 10:6-10. What does the Old Testament teach you about the Holy Spirit?

John 14:15-18; John 16:12-15; Matthew 28:19-20. What did Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit?

John 3:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 9:31; 1 Corinthians 12:1-13. What does the Bible teach about what the Holy Spirit does?

Luke 11:9-13; Acts 2:38. What does the Bible teach about our "receiving" the Holy Spirit?

What I Believe: Take ten minutes for silent reflection and thought. Ask yourself what you believe about the Holy Spirit. Use the back of this page to formulate a response to the question:

"Who is the Holy Spirit?"

Write your final response here: _____

Articulations: Pair up with one other person and share your response with one another. Take five minutes each. Try to *not* look at your written statement; instead, try to tell your beliefs from your heart. This will prepare you to share whenever you are asked about what you believe.

Therefore: Jesus said His followers should Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). One of the first steps in making disciples is being ready and able to share the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15), in other words, knowing what we believe, why, and then being able to share it. Sharing your faith is important. This week, find someone—it can be *anyone*—and articulate your belief about this issue. If you have an unchurched/unreached friend whom you can share with, all the better (you can always say you have a homework assignment from church and you'd like to share it with them). Be ready to talk about your experience next week over the meal at your House Church.