

AMPLIFY

GROWING A
FAITH THAT LASTS

AMPLIFY: HOLY SPIRIT
LESSON 2: THE SPIRIT'S PROMISE

What we want students to learn: That your students would understand who the Holy Spirit is and what His presence in their life signifies

What we want students to do with what they've learned: To consider how the Holy Spirit's presence makes them feel.

Scripture Focus: Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Genesis 1:1-2, John 1:1-4, John 14:15-17, Ephesians 1:13-14, Titus 3:4-7

Supporting Scripture: John 14:15-17

Overview: Here's something cool we take for granted: We can know the God who created the universe! But there are times when certain aspects of God are too awesome to comprehend fully. For many of us, this is most evident when we consider the Trinity and the Holy Spirit. When we spend time looking at these aspects of God, we end up marveling at the truth that our wonderful, awesome, and sometimes mysterious God is so much MORE than we can fully comprehend. Yet, in His goodness, God has given us enough in His Word that we can grasp a specific understanding of His nature. While it might stretch our mind's capacity, we know that God is One, but that He exists in three Persons. The Holy Spirit, traditionally referred to as the third Person of the Trinity, is the focus of this study. In Lesson 1, your students will be given a brief introduction to the concept of God's "three-in-one" nature and will understand the primary role the Spirit plays in their lives. You'll challenge your students to respond to the Holy Spirit and be aware of what He is doing in their lives.

TEACHER PREP VIDEO

Each **Amplify** lesson comes with a Teacher Prep Video. These are short videos designed to help you grasp the main point of the lesson as you prepare to teach.

To access your **Holy Spirit** lesson 2 Teacher Prep Video, login to your Lesson Manager, navigate to lesson 2, and click on the "Background" tab. You'll notice the Teacher Prep Video near the top of the Lesson Manager window.

BIBLE BACKGROUND

The **Bible Background** is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you'll be studying. The Details gives you background info for each book, The Setting informs you what's happening in and around the passage, and The Main Point gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by "context"?** In every **YM360** Bible study lesson, you'll notice we make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By "context" we mean at the very least helping students know **who** wrote the book, **when** it was written, and **why** it was written.
- **What's the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don't get a "big picture" understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God's plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

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THE DETAILS

Genesis and Deuteronomy

- **Author:** While there's no specific author named within the text, Moses is the accepted author for these books, with some editing and additions done after his death (such as the account of his death!).
- **Timeframe:** It's difficult to establish with any certainty a date for the completion of the Pentateuch (a name for the first five books of the Bible, of which Genesis and Deuteronomy are a part.) Most of the material originated from Moses himself and depending on the date of the Exodus (which is also not known for sure) that would make the date for the writing of Genesis and Deuteronomy sometime in the 1400s or the 1200s BC
- **Purpose:** Genesis and Deuteronomy are parts of the Pentateuch, a group of five books (including Exodus, Numbers, and Leviticus) that are viewed as a unit. Genesis details the earliest history of our world, including creation and Adam and Eves' fall. It also focuses on the emergence of Israel, not only as God's people, but as the group, God would work through to bring redemption to the world.

John

- **Author:** The Gospel of John was written by John, son of Zebedee, a fisherman who left his trade to follow Jesus. John also penned the book of Revelation as well as the three letters in the New Testament that bear his name.
- **Timeframe:** The Gospel of John was probably written between 85 and 95 AD. John most likely wrote his gospel in Ephesus before he was exiled to Patmos.
- **Purpose:** John's stated goal for writing this book can be found in John 20:30-31, the last two verses in his Gospel: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that by believing you may have life in his name." John's goal seems to have been to communicate a full theology of Jesus as the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

Ephesians and Titus

- **Author:** The Apostle Paul wrote the letters to the Ephesians and Titus. Of course, we know Paul as the one-time chief enemy of the Church. After his miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul would go on to have a position of great importance in the early Church and beyond. He wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament.
- **Timeframe:** Ephesians and Titus were probably both written by Paul in the latter years of his life, with Ephesians being written from prison around 60 or 61 A.D. Many think Paul wrote Titus before a final arrest and eventual execution, perhaps sometime between 62 and 67 A.D.
- **Purpose:** Paul had planted the church in Ephesus, and his letter focuses on the nature of the Church as Christ's bride and our identity in Christ. Titus is one letter in a group of three by Paul that are known as "the pastorals." Paul wrote this letter to Titus, who had been a companion of Paul's. Titus was a Gentile convert to Christianity.

THE MAIN POINT

These passages work together to provide an overview of the idea of the Trinity, as well as a glimpse into the role the Holy Spirit plays in the life of Christ-followers. Since the Bible is not organized topically, no one section provides a

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concise definition of the Trinity. However, there are several points at which the Bible speaks about the Holy Spirit. As a leader, you'll help your students gain an understanding of the Trinity and the Holy Spirit by "collecting" a series of passages that together reveal a sample of what God has shown us about Himself: He is one God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) who is three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17).

Given that you'll be spending three lessons on the Holy Spirit, it's essential to lay down the foundation of the three-in-one God, especially the fact that the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and the Father are all one. However, don't feel like you have to be able to answer every question about the Trinity. Neither this lesson nor this study allows for the "scope" to deal with such a great, and deep topic. (A topic that theologians have wrestled with for centuries!) The critical thing to keep in mind about this lesson is that you want your students to understand that if they have a saving relationship with Jesus, then the Holy Spirit dwells inside of them.

The "bottom line" is that Jesus' saving work on the cross not only means that we'll be with God one day in heaven, but that for those who, by faith, have accepted Jesus' gift of salvation, we are guaranteed God's presence in our lives today through the gift of the Holy Spirit. An in-depth understanding of the Holy Spirit does us no good if we don't understand the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells inside of us as Christ-followers. That's why you'll spend the bulk of the lesson in the Ephesians and Titus passages to drive this point home.

LESSON PLAN

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called **The Lead In**; the Bible study section called **The Main Event**; an application-focused segment called **The Last Word**.

THE LEAD IN

- **Goal:** The idea is to get the students thinking about what it's like to be separated from a loved one for a long time, and then suddenly reunited.
- **Set-Up:** Search YouTube for "Soldier Surprise Reunion," and choose a video of an Armed Service member coming home to surprise a loved one (or a compilation). If possible, have a laptop or tablet available to show a clip on YouTube.

FIRST, explain to students that you'll be watching a short video clip, or a series of short clips depending on how many of these you want to show, of a very special reunion. Then, show the clip.

THEN, when you've finished, have students share what emotions they felt as they watched the reunion(s). Ask students the following questions:

- **Imagine how the daughter (or son) felt to have their parent be away for so long? What do you suppose would be different in the child's life once his or her parent came home as opposed to how life was while he or she was away?**

o Answers may vary.

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- **Who has experienced a reunion like this (could be due to anything, not just military service) that would share the details?**
 - Answers will vary. If applicable, lead students to talk about their emotions in addition to the details surrounding the reunion.
- **Is there anyone who is currently separated from someone you love for a specific? If you feel like sharing, what is it like to be away from that person?**
 - Answers will vary.
- **What do you miss most about that person?**
 - Answers will vary.

FINALLY, ask if students ever feel like God is far away from them. Allow space for students to answer this question honestly. Answers may range from silly, to surface-level, to vulnerable responses about difficult times in their lives when God seemed distant. Make sure you validate students' feelings and feel free to simply let them talk without attempting to correct any thoughts or emotions.

Explain to your students that most—if not all—Christ-followers experience moments where God doesn't feel near. Say something like:

- **But the truth is that regardless of how we feel, God is never far from us. By the time this lesson is finished, we'll be reminded of just how near God truly is. Let's jump in, and I'll show you what I mean.**

Transition into the *Main Event* portion of your lesson.

THE MAIN EVENT

- **Goal:** For students to understand who the Holy Spirit is and to acknowledge what it means that, if they have a saving relationship with Jesus, the Holy Spirit dwells inside of them.
- **Set Up:** None

FIRST, explain to students that a lot of people talk about God in the general sense, and Jesus gets a lot of press as God's Son. But, many Christ-followers often neglect to focus on the Holy Spirit. Ask:

- **When I say the word, "Holy Spirit," What comes to mind?**
 - Possible Answers: In addition to "The third person of the Trinity," other answers might include the Counselor, or Pentecost, or concepts such as speaking in tongues, miracles, charismatic denominations or churches, peace, doves, etc. The purpose of this question is not to get a "correct" answer, but to establish that there are both a variety of things that come to mind and a little bit of vagueness about the identity of the Spirit.
- **Can you easily define who the Holy Spirit is?**
 - Tell students to think about this for a second, but tell them to hold their responses.
 - Let them know that by the end of the study, they'll not only be able to answer that question, but they'll see how God cares for Christ-followers through the Holy Spirit, as well.

THEN, choose one volunteer to read from Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and another to read from John 14:15-17. While students

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are finding the books in their Bibles or Bible apps, provide the context for the books using the Bible Background. When your students have found the passages, have the first student read Deuteronomy 6:4-5. Have the second student follow it up with John 14:15-17. Once both passages are read, ask something similar to the following:

- **So, Deuteronomy 6:4-5 says, “God is one.” But John 14:15-17 talks about Jesus (the Son), His Father, and the (Holy) Spirit, who is the Helper (Greek: parakletos; some translations say “counselor” or “advocate”). The Bible refers to not just the Father as God, but Jesus and the Holy Spirit as well. So, how can Deuteronomy say that God is one? What’s your understanding of this?**
 - Answer: The point of Deuteronomy is that there is one God. When the Bible talks about Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it’s not suggesting that they are three separate Gods, but rather the same God in three persons. There’s only one God. But, He exists in three distinct and yet undivided persons—each with His attributes: the Father, the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit.
- **How does this truth about God sit with you? Is it something you struggle to understand? Or is it some thing you feel good about?**
 - Allow students to answer freely. Don’t necessarily feel like you have to answer every question or any of them at this point. Just encourage students to share their thoughts. And feel free to express yours, as well!
 - You may want to explain to students that this lesson doesn’t lend itself to an exhaustive treatment of the Trinity, and remind them that the purpose of the lesson is instead to focus on the Holy Spirit. But this opening discussion is a good one to help you get started.

Depending on the way this little discussion kicks off, you may want to remind students (and yourself) that Christians have been struggling to understand God’s “three-in-one” nature ever since the time of Jesus! Explain to students that it’s OK to wrestle with this concept, and it’s OK if there are some questions you can’t answer. (It provides an excellent opportunity for follow-up discussions with students!)

You also may want to ask if there are any analogies anyone has encountered that have been helpful in understanding how God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit can all be one God.

- Some people use water as an example, i.e., how ice, liquid water, and steam are all different but still water.
- Others use an apple, i.e., the peel, the “meat” or the fruit, and the core are all different parts of the apple, but still an apple.

Feel free to utilize analogies to help you better understand God’s “Three-in-One” nature, but remind students that even word pictures like these fail to capture the nature of the Trinity perfectly.

When students have had a chance to talk, ask a student to read Genesis 1:1-2, and ask another to read John 1:1-4. (If you want, explain to students that the context for Genesis is virtually the same as Deuteronomy.) Then explain:

- **We won’t go into much more depth today about the Trinity, but what these four passages show us is that God—from the beginning—has existed as One God, in three distinct persons. It may not be something we think about in our everyday lives or something that we even talk about at church every week. But a part of knowing God is knowing who he is in three persons.**

NEXT, tell your students that you’ll focus on two passages the rest of the time and that they should bookmark them in their Bible or their Bible app: Ephesians 1:13-14 and Titus 3:4-7. Provide some brief context for these books, then

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read or ask a student to read Ephesians 1:13-14. Then, ask:

- **How does Paul describe our relationship to the Holy Spirit?**
 - Answer: We've been marked, or sealed.
- **According to Paul, when does the Holy Spirit mark us?**
 - Answer: When we believe in Jesus.
- **How does Paul describe the Holy Spirit in this verse? What words does he use?**
 - Answer: A deposit guaranteeing our inheritance. Explain that the idea of a deposit is a way of showing you are serious about buying an item. In fact, we have many ways of doing that today.
- **What are some examples of when the concept of a deposit comes into play?**
 - Answer: When shopping for a house or an apartment, you put a deposit down as a pledge that you're interested. When you sign up for a trip or camp, a deposit is often needed to hold your spot.
- **Paul says specifically that the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance. What "inheritance" do you think he's referring to?**
 - Answer: Our inheritance encompasses eternal life with God. The Holy Spirit a guarantee of what's to come. He's a taste of what it's like to be with God permanently. All the time. The cool thing is that being with God forever starts the moment someone accepts Jesus as their savior and receives the Holy Spirit.
- **How does having been given the Holy Spirit to permanently live with us serve to make us more confident in our relationship with God?**
 - Answer: The Holy Spirit is God's proof to us that God didn't just say, "Hey, one day I'll be back." He guaranteed it by having the Holy Spirit dwell in us.

Explain that the presence of the Holy Spirit in a Christ-follower's life is a permanent, irrevocable (meaning it can never, ever be undone) sign that we are God's and that God will fulfill His promise that we will be with Him one day forever. In fact, the cool part about the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is that it means God has never *left* us.

THEN, have a student read Titus 3:4-7.

- **Again, we read that the Holy Spirit is given through Jesus. Take a look at the word "heirs" in verse 7. What is an heir?**
 - Answer: Someone who is in line to inherit a fortune, or already has. Explain that an heir whose family has a vast fortune has hope for the future. If you know you're going to inherit a considerable fortune, you don't worry about the future much.
- **What, according to Paul, will the heirs inherit?**
 - Answer: Eternal life.
- **Why should that give us hope?**
 - Answers vary but try to prod for deep answers. Make the point that without eternal life in God, no one has any hope.

FINALLY, explain to students that in the next lesson, you'll look a little deeper at how we came to have the Holy Spirit living inside each of us and exactly what that means. But for now, explain that it's enough to be more than a little blown away that we have God living in us, and that His presence is a promise of more awesomeness to come! Say something like:

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- **Here is what I want you to remember from today, if you don't remember anything else: The Holy Spirit is given as a promise to those who, in faith, have accepted Christ's sacrifice on their behalf and have been rescued by God. The Spirit's presence in your life is a permanent and personal sign that you are God's, and that God will never, ever leave you. God is not far off. He is literally within you.**

Allow a few minutes for questions, or ask a few questions to see if that point has sunk in. Students may have some more specific questions about the Holy Spirit. Affirm their questions, but know that in the next two lessons, more time will be spent on the specifics of who the Holy Spirit is and the role that He plays in our life.

Ask if there are any questions, then transition into the **Last Word**.

THE LAST WORD

- **Goal:** The goal of this section is to allow students to reflect on what it means for them that the Holy Spirit is a sign that they are forever God's.
- **Set-Up:** You'll need some string or some rubber bands, enough that every person in your group can have one to go around his or her wrist. If you choose the string, pre-cut lengths so students can tie them around their wrists.

FIRST, share a personal story about a time that you doubted God's presence or His promises, or maybe a time when you felt like He just wasn't there. Then, share a time when you were reassured of God and His promises by feeling His presence in your life.

NEXT, explain that feeling distant from God, as you mentioned in the opening activity, or wondering if God will keep His promises, is something that all Christ-followers experience at some point in their life with God. That's why the guarantee of the Holy Spirit is so important, and why it can give us so much comfort. Ask:

- **Think about the last few weeks. If you could go back and remind yourself all day for the last few weeks that God is super close by you, that you are without a doubt HIS forever, how would that have changed the way you approached each day?**
 - Encourage students to think about what they've been going through. Help them understand that their lives can be much more productive when they begin to develop the practice of recognizing or remembering the presence of the Holy Spirit.

THEN, distribute the rubber bands or the string to your students. Explain to them that you want to challenge them to do something to help them remember the Holy Spirit's presence in their lives. Say something like:

- **I want to challenge you to put these around your wrist, and to wear them all week. Whenever you notice it, I want you to think something similar to this thought: "God is near. The Holy Spirit is with me. Above all else, I am God's." When we gather next week, I want to ask you how this little activity helped you dwell more on the Holy Spirit's presence in your life.**

FINALLY, tell students that your hope for their upcoming week is that in their good days and their bad, they would recognize that the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives means that they are God's and that they are God's forever. Allow for students to ask any questions or make any comments. Then, close in prayer.

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- Don't forget to distribute the devotions to your students this week. If you're posting them on Instagram, or some other means of electronic distribution, make sure you inform students of when they will be receiving them.
- Use the **Social Media** guide to stay in touch with students via text or Instagram, and to encourage them to follow through with reading their devotions.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU . . .

- Do you have questions about a lesson?
- Something that worked particularly well you want to share?
- Something that didn't work you want to bring up?

We value your feedback! Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions, comments, or concerns, at feedback@youthministry360.com.