

We Believe in the Holy Spirit

Lesson 4

In the Believer

Lesson Guide



thirdmill

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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON GUIDE

This lesson guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video. If you do not have access to the video, the lesson guide will also work with the audio and/or manuscript versions of the lesson. Additionally, the video and lesson guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**

- **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
- **Schedule viewing** — The Notes section of the lesson guide has been divided into segments that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.

- **While you are watching the lesson**

- **Take notes** — The Notes section of the lesson guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each segment and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
- **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
- **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.

- **After you watch the lesson**

- **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
- **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Notes

I. Introduction (0:20)

Salvation is a fully Trinitarian work:

- The Father planned our salvation.
- The Son accomplished our salvation through his perfect life, death, resurrection and ascension.
- The Holy Spirit applies the various elements of salvation to believers.

Soteriology – the doctrine of salvation

- *historia salutis* (history of salvation) – God’s saving events and actions that accomplish salvation for his people
- *ordo salutis* (order of salvation) – the logical and chronological order in which the Holy Spirit applies the various aspects of salvation to individual believers

II. Conversion (3:28)

Conversion – changing from one thing into another

A. Regenerating (4:44)

Regeneration – recreation or rebirth; the event in which a human being moves from a state of spiritual death into a state of spiritual life

We all enter the world in a state of spiritual death and remain spiritually dead unless and until the Holy Spirit regenerates us.

Adam was our representative before God, so we all share in his guilt and in the consequences of physical and spiritual death (Romans 5:12-19). Only Jesus avoided this curse (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26).

As a result of our spiritual corruption and death, human beings are morally incapable of pleasing God and desperately need salvation (Romans 8:6-8).

“All people are conceived in sin and are born children of wrath, unfit for any saving good, inclined to evil, dead in their sins, and slaves to sin; without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they are neither willing nor able to return to God, to reform their distorted nature, or even to dispose themselves to such reform.”

– Canons of Dort, Third and Fourth Main Points of Doctrine

In regeneration, our souls pass from spiritual death into spiritual life (John 5:24; Ephesians 2:4, 5; Colossians 2:13).

Jesus described regeneration as “rebirth” in John 3:3-6.

When the Holy Spirit regenerates us, he gives life to our spirits and inclines us toward God.

Regeneration is a gracious and miraculous work of the Holy Spirit that overturns the normal workings of the natural world.

B. Convicting (13:08)

Conviction – awareness of the guilt and wrongness of our sin

Conviction is one of the Holy Spirit's first works when he calls unbelievers to faith.

Repentance is necessary in order for people to be redeemed (Isaiah 59:20).

The Spirit's convicting work doesn't just prepare us to hear the gospel, but actually applies salvation to us. For example:

- When Peter preached the gospel at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit convicted many of their sin and thousands came to faith (Acts 2:37-41).
- When the Holy Spirit was poured out on Cornelius and his household, they received salvation (Acts 11:18).

1. Preponderance of sin (18:24)

The Holy Spirit's convicting work makes us aware of the preponderance of our sin.

2. Repulsiveness of sin (21:00)

The Holy Spirit shows us that our sin is repugnant, detestable and sickening.

Sin is so awful that it required the death of God's only Son to save us from it.

- Isaiah 64:6 – Even the works that the people of Israel thought were righteous were nothing but filthy rags.
- Matthew 23:27 – Jesus rebuked the lawyers and Pharisees, comparing them to whitewashed tombs full of corpses and filth.
- Romans 7:13 – Paul taught that sin's repulsiveness can work toward our repentance and salvation.

3. Offensiveness of sin (24:09)

The Holy Spirit's convicting work makes us aware that sin offends God's holy character, violates his law, and deserves his wrath (Ezra 9:6; Isaiah 59:12; Jeremiah 14:7).

This aspect of conviction makes us realize our lost and condemned state.

4. Hopelessness of sin (25:45)

The Holy Spirit's saving conviction shows us the hopelessness of sin.

Sin makes us incapable of pleasing God or of earning his blessings.

Our hopeless condition makes us completely dependent on God's grace for forgiveness and salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Holy Spirit's convicting work drives us to repentance, believing in faith that God will forgive our sins and receive us as his beloved children in Christ.

C. Justifying (28:04)

Justification – legal declaration acquitting a sinner from the guilt of his or her sin and crediting him or her with the righteousness of Christ

Words related to the Greek verb *dikaioō* (meaning “to justify”) regularly refer to God’s act of forgiving sinners and declaring them to be righteous.

Sinners are justified by means of faith, on the basis of Christ’s atoning sacrifice on our behalf (Romans 3:22-24).

The Holy Spirit applies the justifying benefits of Christ’s work to believers (1 Corinthians 6:11; Romans 14:17; Titus 3:5-7).

The “negative” and “positive” elements of justification:

- Negative – justification cancels, or negates, our guilt by forgiving our sins, so that we’re no longer subject to God’s condemnation (1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5).
- Positive – justification declares us to be righteous in God’s sight, so that we have a right to an eternal inheritance along with all its associated benefits (Ephesians 1:13-14).

D. Sanctifying (34:08)

Sanctification – the act of making people and things holy

The Spirit's sanctifying work includes setting people and things apart for God's use, purifying them, and making them fit to be near God's unveiled glory.

Definitive sanctification – a one-time event wherein the Holy Spirit applies sanctification to us at conversion:

- The Holy Spirit sets us apart and purifies us by uniting us to the perfectly sanctified Christ so that we too become sanctified:
 - John 17:19 – Jesus' sanctification is necessary to ours because ours flows from his.
 - 1 Corinthians 1:30 – Christ is our holiness.
- Jesus becomes the source of our spiritual life and strength now, and our physical life later in the general resurrection:
 - John 15:1-5 – Jesus is the vine, and believers are the vine's branches.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:15-17 – Our bodies are members of Christ himself, and we're also one with him in spirit.
 - Ephesians 4:15, 16 – Christ is the head and believers are his body.
- We receive new life, we die to sin and sin's mastery, and we gain the abilities to resist sin and to obey God.
 - Romans 7:5-6 – We die to sin and serve in the Spirit's new way.
 - Romans 8:9 – The Holy Spirit remakes us so that we're free to become more and more like Christ.

III. Christian Living (39:43)

Many aspects of the Spirit's work continue throughout our lives as believers.

A. Indwelling (40:38)

Indwelling – the Holy Spirit's special presence within, and spiritual union with, believers

When the Holy Spirit regenerates us, he takes up residence within us and gives life to our spirits (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Timothy 1:14; James 4:5; Romans 8:9-11).

Closely related to “indwelling” is what the New Testament calls the “filling” of the Holy Spirit.

All branches of the church can agree:

- The Holy Spirit always indwells true believers.
- His filling, or the level of his influence in our lives, varies.

The Scriptures never command us to be indwelt by God's Spirit, but they do command us to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

Through the filling and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, believers are empowered to:

- perform works that God approves (Romans 8:5-9)
- worship rightly (John 4:24; Philippians 3:3)
- properly acknowledge and honor God's persons, works and attributes

Indwelling believers has been part of the Holy Spirit's task in every age.

The Holy Spirit's indwelling presence grants believers insight into God's revelation (1 Corinthians 2:12-16).

Two types of spiritual insight associated with Holy Spirit:

- Illumination – a divine gift of knowledge or understanding that is primarily *cognitive*
- Inward leading – a divine gift of knowledge or understanding that is primarily *emotive* or *intuitive*

B. Sanctifying (48:47)

Ongoing sanctification – sanctification that continues throughout our lives because our ongoing sin constantly requires forgiveness and cleansing

The Holy Spirit doesn't completely remove sin's corruption and influence from our lives when he regenerates us (Romans 7:14-25; Galatians 5:17; 1 Peter 2:11).

Even though we continue to stumble because of sin, we also do good works because of the Spirit's influence (Philippians 2:13).

The Holy Spirit continually applies forgiveness and cleansing to us when we sin and continually turns us away from sin and toward righteousness.

Throughout Scripture, the metaphor of fruit is often used to describe spiritual maturity (Matthew 3:8-10, 7:16-20; John 15:1-16; Galatians 5:17-25).

Paul taught that the only way to obey God from the heart and to manifest righteous characteristics, is to be indwelt by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5; Romans 6–8).

The fruit of the Spirit is not the same as spiritual gifts:

- The Holy Spirit gives different gifts to each believer.
- The fruit of the Spirit is the obedient living the Spirit produces in *all* believers.

Progressive sanctification – process of progressing in holiness, becoming more and more godly throughout our Christian lives

Christians *should* progressively get more spiritually mature, but even true believers can fail to grow in this way (2 Peter 1:5-9).

C. Interceding (57:59)

Intercession – petitioning the Father on behalf of believers

When the Spirit searches the hearts of believers, it's always for our benefit (Romans 8:26-27).

The Spirit always intercedes in accordance with God's will and the Father always honors the prayers of the Spirit because the Spirit is God.

D. Preserving (1:01:55)

Preservation – the Holy Spirit's continuous, gracious work of ensuring that believers persevere in faith until our salvation is complete

The Holy Spirit's preserving work flows from his indwelling presence making our salvation secure, because he maintains saving faith within us (Romans 8:11-14; Philippians 1:6).

Scripture compares the Spirit's preserving work to a legal seal, which authenticates and authorizes the object to which it was applied.

The Holy Spirit functions as God's seal of ownership, demonstrating that those who possess the Spirit truly belong to God (Exodus 21:6; 2 Corinthians 1:22).

When we receive the Holy Spirit, we receive God's promise that guarantees our final salvation and our inheritance — our glorification when Jesus returns (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Our glorification will be our final state, when we are completely free from sin, and we finally enter into the glorious blessings of the new heavens and new earth.

We can — and *should* — rest in the promise that the Spirit will be faithful to complete the work he began.

IV. Conclusion (1:10:32)

Review Questions

1. What role does each member of the Trinity play in our salvation?
2. What is the formal theological definition for “regeneration”? Describe a person’s condition and nature before regeneration. How does this change after regeneration?

3. How does the Holy Spirit convict us of sin? Include four common elements or aspects of the Holy Spirit's work of conviction in your answer.
4. What does the technical term "justification" mean in Protestant theology? How does the Holy Spirit apply justification to believers?

5. In simple terms, what is sanctification? Describe the Holy Spirit's work of "definitive sanctification."
6. What is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? What effect does the Holy Spirit's indwelling have on our corporate and personal worship?

7. Why is “ongoing sanctification” necessary? Describe the goal of ongoing sanctification using Paul’s metaphor of fruit from Galatians 5.
8. How does the Spirit intercede for believers? Why is his intercession always successful?

9. How does the Holy Spirit's work of preserving believers make our salvation secure? Explain Paul's comparison of the Spirit's work of preservation to a legal seal.

Application Questions

1. Reflect on your conversion. What were the circumstances the Spirit used to bring you from a state of spiritual death to spiritual life?
2. What has the Spirit used to convict you of sin? Should the church play an active role in convicting people of sin? Why or why not?
3. Scripture tells us that all human beings, even redeemed human beings, don't just sin occasionally; we sin all the time. So, in regard to sin, what is the difference between someone who is redeemed and someone who isn't?
4. How can we become aware of sin's repulsiveness without becoming judgmental and harsh toward other fallen human beings?
5. Recall a time when someone or something greatly offended you. How did you feel? How did you respond? In what ways does this experience help you understand God's response to sin?
6. Does the fact that we are completely dependent on God's grace for forgiveness and salvation mean that we should do *nothing* to try and please God? Explain your answer.
7. In Ephesians 1:14, Paul tells us that we have received the Holy Spirit as "a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance." How does this affect you personally? How might you use this truth as you teach and disciple those around you?
8. Through sanctification, the Spirit purifies us and makes us holy. In what ways should our sanctification change us, including how we act, think and interact with others?
9. Why do you think that the Holy Spirit doesn't completely remove sin's corruption and influence from our lives when we are regenerated?
10. How have you matured throughout your ongoing sanctification? Where would you like to see greater growth and maturity in yourself in the future?
11. What does the Spirit's ministry of intercession mean to you? Describe a time or times when this ministry has been particularly important or precious to you.
12. How might you use Scripture references that point to the Holy Spirit's work of preservation to counsel someone who is in a state of spiritual doubt?
13. What is the most significant thing you learned in this lesson?

Glossary

anōthen – Greek word (transliteration) meaning “again” or “from above”

Canons of Dort – Judgment written by the Synod of Dort in 1619 that outlined and defended the Five Points of Calvinism in response to the Arminian controversy

conversion – Changing from one thing to another; in theology, the beginning stages of salvation when a person comes to saving faith in Jesus Christ

conviction – In theology, an awareness of the guilt and wrongness of our sin

definitive sanctification – Sanctification we receive at conversion; a one-time event wherein the Holy Spirit sets us apart and purifies us by uniting us to Christ

dikaioō – Greek word (transliteration) meaning to declare righteous, to justify, to vindicate

effectual calling – A work of the Holy Spirit in which his gracious influence (or call) produces true repentance and salvation; sometimes called “irresistible grace”

fruit of the Spirit – Metaphor used in Scripture (e.g., Galatians 5) to describe the manifestation of spiritual maturity in believers

glorification – The final stage of our salvation, when we receive a perfect eternal body and fully become what we were meant to be, having complete victory over sin and death

historia salutis – Theological term meaning “history of salvation”; the ways God accomplished the salvation of his people in history

holy – Morally pure; set apart for use in special service to God

illumination – Divine gift of knowledge or understanding, primarily cognitive, attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit

indwelling – The Holy Spirit’s special presence within, and spiritual union with, believers

intercession – Mediation or petition through prayer on behalf of another

inward leading – Divine gift of knowledge or understanding, primarily emotive or intuitive, attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit

justification – Initial declaration of righteousness when a believer is acquitted of the guilt of sin and is credited with the righteousness of Christ

ongoing sanctification – Sanctification that occurs throughout our lives wherein the Holy Spirit continually applies forgiveness when we sin and turns us toward righteousness

ordo salutis – Theological term meaning “order of salvation”; the order by which salvation is applied to individual believers

paliggenesia – Greek word (transliteration) meaning “rebirth” or “regeneration”

Pentecost – Jewish festival, often called the “Feast of Weeks,” that celebrated the early harvest; celebrated by Christians as the day the Holy Spirit was poured out on the early church

preservation – In theology, the Holy Spirit’s continuous, gracious work of ensuring that believers persevere in faith until our salvation is complete

progressive sanctification – Sanctification wherein we move steadily forward in holiness, becoming more and more godly throughout our Christian lives

regeneration – Recreation; rebirth; in theology, the event in which a human being moves from a state of spiritual death into a state of spiritual life

sanctification – The act of making people and things holy

soteriology – The doctrine of salvation