

# Open to the Spirit

5

Empowering Spirit

## Welcome & worship

Pray as you begin, asking God to be at work in your group. You may like to have a short time of worship too (singing, listening to some music, meditating on a psalm together etc.).

## Introduction

- 1) Take a few minutes to feedback (maybe in pairs) anything that struck people from last session. Has anyone any stories to share of their experiences of the Holy Spirit since last time?

We're all capable of studying biblical truth in a way that makes us "smarter" and "more knowledgeable" but doesn't affect anything in our lives. On the other hand, we also have the ability to study in such a way that our lives are never the same because of what we've learned. The end result of this study could be that you walk away knowing more *about* the Holy Spirit. Or it could be that you walk away *knowing* the Holy Spirit, showing the people around you a *Spirit-filled life* Are you eager for more?

- 2) What is the difference between knowing *about* someone and *knowing* someone? Would you say you know *about* the Holy Spirit or know the Holy Spirit?

## Bible discussion time and video.

Being a Christian isn't about knowing a set of propositions – it's about knowing Christ and acting on His behalf in the world. But our beliefs shape our actions. As we study the Holy Spirit, it's vitally important that our understanding of who He is and what He does is accurate. But once our theology is in the right place (or at least headed in the right direction), we need to act on it!

### Watch 'Remembering the Forgotten God Chapter 3' (10 mins)

(This can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8GXgNNpulFE> . OK this is very American... and will feel a little alien... but that is what the Holy Spirit feels too to many!)

- 3) Discuss together the video:
  - What struck you most? What challenged you most?
  - Is there a danger that we focus on 'transferring knowledge' about God rather than living, in the Power of the Spirit *with* God? Has that been true for you?

Think about the football-huddle analogy for a minute. Chan says "Too often the church is like a football team that huddles, 'calls a play' and then sits on the bench – never to run the play [put it into practice and live it out] that they got so excited about. Perhaps we've forgotten the Holy Spirit because we don't need Him. We don't need the Spirit for the huddle; we need Him when we step out of the huddle and 'run the play'." Discuss!

4) Think about St Andrew's & All Saints and your Life Group, in the light of the huddle analogy, have we been running from the 'huddle to the bench' i.e. Have we been taking in teaching, and enjoying worship and Bible study, but then not putting that into practice in our lives? If so, in what ways?

5) God gave the Spirit so that we might change the world through His power. How do you think the church, or your small group, would look if we all began 'running the plays' [Really living this out]? How do you think our friends, our communities and the world would respond?

### **So what does the Holy Spirit do – He Empowers us for mission**

6) God's spirit works in and through us in a variety of ways to glorify himself. Below are a list of verses which describe some of the ways in which the Spirit propel us out and empowers us to join with God in bringing in His kingdom.

Look at each one in turn, describe what the Spirit does, and discuss what it might mean for you as individuals, and for you as a small group to live in the light of this. Have you got any examples of where you have seen the Spirit doing this in your life? Share your stories.

Acts 1:8

Ephesians 3:16-19

Romans 8:26-7

Mark 13:11

Acts 13:1-11

Acts 3:1-10

Acts 4:31

## **Prayer ministry and closing prayer**

Spend a few moments in quiet thinking about your frontlines – the places where you spend your time, the places where God has placed you to be his witnesses and to serve.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what it might mean in those places for you to live more fully in the power of the Spirit.

- Are there any particular situations which you need to pray for His empowering for?
- Do you sense the Holy Spirit prompting you and leading you in any way?
- What do you particularly need to ask the Holy Spirit to give you?

Share anything that you may be sensing, or any situations that concern you with others in your group and pray for each other on your frontlines – that you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit this week.

And finally, are you feeling 'that's all right for them, but I'm just not the spiritual type. God can't use me!'... well, read again how Peter and John were described after healing the paralysed man in Acts 4:13.... God can use any of us!