

Care Group Homework
(For the week of October 25, 2009)
John 16:7-13 - What We Believe About the Holy Spirit

Getting to know one another:

1. What is the longest you have walked in a day? What is the longest you have driven?

Getting into the Word:

2. Read John 16:8. In what ways does the Holy Spirit convict the world of sin?

There isn't really a "right" answer to this question. I certainly wasn't looking for a strictly biblical answer, but just people's thoughts on how the Holy Spirit goes about convicting the world of sin.

3. Read I Corinthians 12:13, how do you understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit? When does the Baptism of the Holy Spirit occur?

I understand the baptism of the Holy Spirit to occur at conversion and to be the entrance into the family of God. In Acts 2 at the initial coming of the Holy Spirit upon the believing Jews, there some accompanying visual signs (tongues of fire resting on each of them) and unusual abilities (the speaking in other "tongues" and the ability to hear the word spoken in their own language). There is an assumption that in Acts 8, when the Samaritans had accepted the word of God and then received the Holy Spirit, that there were some outward signs - but those signs, if visible, are not indicated in scripture. It can be well argued that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is nothing more and nothing less than receiving the Holy Spirit.

4. Read Ephesians 1:13 and II Corinthians 1:21-22. What is the sealing and anointing of the Holy Spirit? What do they accomplish?

In some ways it seems to be a mark upon us. The exact nature of that mark is not explained. The scripture is using language which would have been understandable to the audience which would relate to the seal placed upon official documents as a seal of authenticity, ora guarantee of ownership. The sealing and/or anointing of the Holy Spirit provide a guarantee of our redemption.

5. Read I Corinthians 12 4-11 and Ephesians 4:11-13. Do you think these lists of spiritual gifts are exhaustive? What spiritual gift do you think you have? Why does the Holy Spirit give us gifts?

No, the gifts listed in those two texts are not exhaustive. We know that because there are other gifts mentioned in Romans 12 as well. The gifts are given to help the body function properly. Romans 12 says we use our gifts for the benefit of one another. I Corinthians says that the gifts are given for the common good. Ephesians tells us that the gifts listed there are given to prepare God's people of works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up - until we reach unity and maturity in Christ.

6. Read Ephesians 5:15-20. In this passage we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. How do we do that? What does it mean to be filled?

The context of Ephesians 5 would suggest that the key to being filled is in living a pure life (5:3-4, 11-12, and 15) and useful life (5:16) which is marked by wisdom and understanding (5:10,17).

7. Read John 14:26 & 16:7-13. How does the Holy Spirit teach and guide us?

Through giving us personal insight into the study of scripture, through listening to the proclamation of God's word, through the advice and encouragement of faithful friends. Whatever methods the Holy Spirit uses, the ultimately will relate back to God's word. The scriptures are God's primary communication with us, enlivened and understood through the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us.