



THE STORY Sermon Study Guide

Week 11: The Holy Spirit – Knowing and Experiencing God Adam Southwood

12 October 2025

Visit the [NewHope Teaching](#) page to find this week's sermon

Who is the Holy Spirit to you? Do you know Him as the living, active presence of God at work in you, or is He more like a familiar stranger?

This week we reflect on the third person of the Trinity and the call to move beyond simply knowing about the Spirit, to living in daily relationship with Him and making space for a fresh outpouring of His presence in our lives and community.

Read John 14:16-17 and 16:7

Before His crucifixion, Jesus promised to send “another Advocate” to be with His followers forever. The word “another” here means “just like the first.” Those who have said yes to Jesus are given the gift of another who is just like him—the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is not an optional extra or a spiritual add-on. He's the ongoing presence of Jesus in our lives. Many people grow up hearing about the Spirit, yet struggle to see Him as more than a mysterious force or a theological concept. But The Holy Spirit is a real person who desires relationship with us—an advocate, a helper, a comforter, a counsellor. A friend to be known.

1. Who is the Holy Spirit to you? A familiar stranger; a fragile heirloom meant to be admired but untouched; a complex theological concept; or a close friend?
2. How would you have answered this true/false statement before today's sermon: “*The Holy Spirit is a force, not a person*”? Have there been times when you've related to the Holy Spirit more as an idea than as a person?
3. Have you ever wished you were around when Jesus was on earth and feel like you've missed out? How does understanding the Spirit as “just like the first” change your perspective?



Read Acts 2:1-4 and 4:18-31

Sometimes it's easy to think that the Holy Spirit works most powerfully through the "spiritually elite" who seem to have it all together. But Jesus poured out His Spirit on *all* who believe. There's no bench in God's kingdom—everyone is on the field. You're already part of God's mission team and invited to participate in the Spirit's work in your family, in your neighbourhood, in your everyday life.

The Spirit moves powerfully among believers who are willing to pray bold prayers. The disciples in Acts 4 weren't asking for safety or comfort, or even for the threats to stop. They prayed for a deeper courage to follow Jesus no matter what came their way. And God's response was a fresh outpouring of His Spirit.

That's where the simple prayer "Come, Holy Spirit" takes on deep meaning. It's not a plea for the Spirit to arrive from somewhere distant—because if you've placed your faith in Jesus, the Spirit already lives in you. Instead, it's a way of saying, "I'm here. I'm open. Do what you want to do." Being filled with the Spirit is a rhythm we live in as we walk in His presence each day.

1. Do you ever feel like you're sitting on the sidelines spiritually? How might God be inviting you to recognise that you're already "in the game"?
2. What would it look like to pray for a fresh move of the Holy Spirit in our homes, neighbourhoods, church and lives? How might God be calling you to step out in faith and boldness as part of that?
3. How might your life look different if you made space each day to pray, "Come, Holy Spirit"?

Getting to know the Holy Spirit

John 14:16-17: The Holy Spirit is our *Paraclete*. Often translated as Advocate, but this word could also be translated as Comforter or Helper.

Romans 8:26-27: The Holy Spirit intercedes for us and helps to align our prayers to God's will.

John 14:26: The Holy Spirit reminds and teaches us, coming alongside us to bring to mind what Jesus has said.

John 16:7-8: The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgment, leading us into truth and alignment with God's will.



Acts 1:8: The Holy Spirit empowers and equips us with spiritual gifts for the building up of the church.

Galatians 5:16-25: The Holy Spirit produces the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control as we remain in step with Him.

And all of this is only possible because the Holy Spirit lives in us. The Spirit is the mark of belonging to Christ—an incredible gift that we freely receive when we confess Him as our Lord and Saviour.

1. In what areas of your life might you need to be reminded of the Spirit's presence and help right now?
2. What is one practical step you could take this week to grow in your relationship with the Holy Spirit? (For example, starting a simple conversation with Him in prayer, or slowly reading through Acts 2-4 or other passages about the Spirit's work throughout Scripture.)

Closing Activity (Optional)

You might like to close in a time of worship by singing or quietly reflecting on a chosen song such as:

- *Holy Spirit (You Are Welcome Here)* – Francesca Battistelli
- *Spirit Break Out* – Kim Walker-Smith
- *Fresh Wind* – Hillsong Worship

Suggested Closing Prayer

God's invitation is the same for all of us: *open the gift again*. Pray for boldness. Seek a fresh outpouring. Whether it's your first time consciously speaking to the Holy Spirit, or you've been walking with Him for decades, there's always more of God to experience. There's always a deeper level of courage, love, and presence available.

Let's pray:

"Holy Spirit, we thank you that you are good. We thank you that you move among us. We thank you that if we have declared with our mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord, we have received the gift of the Spirit forever. Come, Holy Spirit. Move in this place. Fill us afresh. Empower us for your mission, in the name of Jesus. Amen."



Bible Reading Plan & Resources

As we engage in this sermon series and reflect on 'The Story' of God's redemptive pursuit of humanity, we invite you to practise the discipline of regular Bible reading. You may like to use the [NewHope Bible Reading Plan](#) which has been developed to accompany each sermon over the next 12-weeks. Get a physical copy at church, download a digital copy from our website or follow NewHope in the Bible App for daily updates.

There are also many other wonderful ways to engage with Scripture and you can find a collection of resources, such as books, apps, courses, and more at newhope.net.au/the-story.