

A Sure Foundation

The beliefs that we build our lives on

The Spirit in Me

MONTH 2

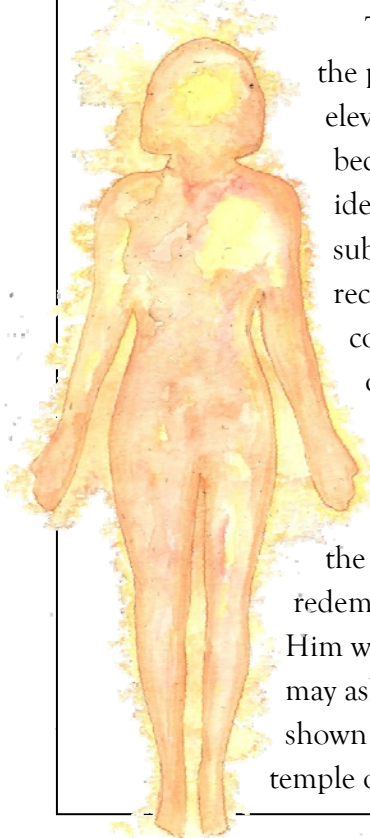
WEEK 4

READ:

Acts 21-28

Psalms 139

I can look in the mirror and see the color of my hair and my eyes. I can get on the scales and see how much I weigh. But I can't really know my soul without the help of the Spirit. I would like to think that I know myself; my thoughts, my motives, the purity of my conscience- but I really don't. Only God knows because there is nowhere I can go that His Spirit is not present with me to guide me with His light through the dark nooks and crannies of my character. Often it is not a pleasant journey, but it is at the same time exhilarating to be drawn into the transformation into His likeness with ever-increasing glory. That transformation cannot be contained within us anymore than we can contain God's Spirit. What is inside becomes visible on the outside. It affects those around us and may even become part of God's transforming process in them, for the Spirit does not work in isolation but among the community of His believers. The evidence of the Spirit within me is going to be evident in my relationships with others as well as in my personal relationship with God.



The Spirit infuses us with power, but it is not the power to control or manipulate others or to elevate ourselves. The power of the Spirit is in becoming a healing light that shows others the identity and Spirit of God. It is the power to submit and therefore be in the position to receive. It is the power to wait for the light to come when the days are dark. It is the power of being set free, because there is no need of law for those controlled by God's Spirit, who desire no greater delight than to be obedient and pleasing to our Lord. It is the power to speak boldly the message of redemption that God has given us and to follow Him wherever He may lead, at whatever cost He may ask that we pay. It is the power to bear being shown clearly who and Whose we are, as the temple of God's Holy Spirit.

MEMORY VERSE:

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

2 Corinthians
3:17,18

THE MIND OF CHRIST

1 Cor. 2:9-16

It turns out that man too was created “according to their kind,” and that was God’s kind, as a spiritual being made to receive God’s Spirit, that we might understand the deep things of God like what He has prepared for us and given us. The man without God’s Spirit cannot understand the spiritual truths because they are expressed and understood in spiritual words.

What do the things of the Spirit seem like to the person without the Spirit? _____

In what way do we have the mind of Christ? _____

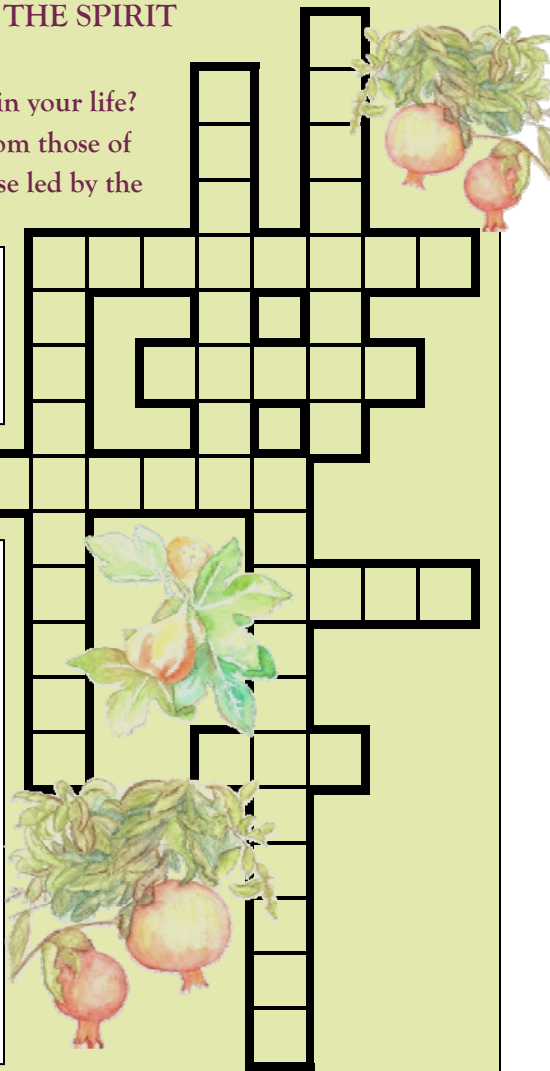
KEEPING IN STEP WITH THE SPIRIT

Gal. 5:16-26

Is the Spirit’s work evident in your life?
 How are His fruits different from those of the sinful nature? Why are those led by the Spirit not under law?

List the fruits of the Spirit (from the NIV translation) and use them to fill in this puzzle.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____



ARE YOU FANNING THE FLAME, OR QUENCHING THE SPIRIT? 1 Thessalonians 5:19

What does Paul tell Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 1:6,7? _____

What gift was he talking about? _____

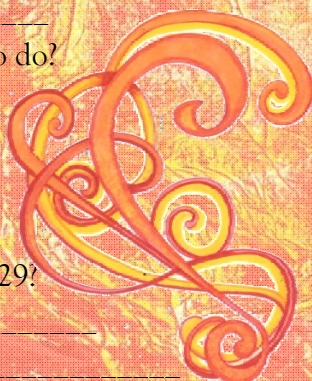
What happened to the Israelites in Isaiah 63:9,10? _____

What is the church at Thessalonica warned not to do? _____

What does God think of believers who are lacking fire and have become lukewarm (Rev. 3:16)? _____

What is an unforgivable sin according to Mark 3:29? _____

How do we do that? _____



SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Eph. 6:17

What is the sword of the Spirit? _____

How does the Spirit use this as a sword (Heb. 4:12,13)? _____

What happens if we have not armed ourselves?



TROUBLE IN JERUSALEM Acts 21-23

Paul was only in Jerusalem for a few days before the trouble that Agabus had foretold began. Why was Paul so determined to go there?

What did Paul do to try to reassure the Jews in Jerusalem? _____

What happened instead? _____

Do you think he was mistaken about the Spirit's instructions to him? _____

Who did Paul speak to? _____

What did Paul say that they got upset about? _____

As I read about Paul's determination to speak God's message, I have to reexamine my own commitment to do the same. The idea of making someone angry, or even in disagreement, is usually enough to deter me from speaking up. To what can we credit Paul's boldness and zeal? _____

How is that same passionate faith expressing itself in your life? _____

FAITH ON TRIAL Acts 24-26

Paul spent two years speaking to Felix whenever he had the opportunity. Do you think that Felix ever responded to the message that Paul presented? _____

Do you ever get discouraged when your efforts seem to have no result? _____

When have you spoken the truth and it seemed to be unwelcome, ineffective, or even dangerous? _____

I think Paul was able to speak so boldly because he really had no choice. He was totally consumed, poured out, with his love of God and desire to preach. Shutting up was really not an option for him. When the Spirit fills us with such a desire, the things that normally motivate us fade into the background. We act not on what will bring results of measurable "success" to our ministry, but on what the Spirit leads us into. We are guided by the Spirit into things that we can't even imagine the outcome of. The thrill is simply in desiring to pour out all that the Spirit gifts us with: life, salvation, abilities, voice and love. How are you being poured out? _____

SHIPWRECKED AND SIDETRACKED Acts 27,28

I've never been shipwrecked, but I have certainly been side-tracked. I usually tend to see it as an interruption to my **real** purpose and mission, but on occasion it dawns on me that the stormy detour **is** part of my purpose and mission. It is the disasters, the shipwrecks, the unwelcome detours that really serve to help me get where I want to go. They are the route that my Sovereign God takes me on to teach me and to position me for where He alone knows I will be called.

We may never know all the reasons that Paul needed to visit Malta, or what the long term results of that visit would be. We don't know the impact of that storm at sea, or the shipwreck, on the kingdom of God, but we can be sure that our Lord knows. I know the Spirit of the Lord is working in my life this very moment and whatever may lie around the corner, I can welcome as part of the journey He has for me.

