

# Lesson 6

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## The Spirit who Regenerates

Have you ever looked at a tiny baby and marveled at the miracle of birth? This tiny creation which began as two cells invisible to the naked eye now contains all that is necessary to grow and become a mature, intelligent, responsible adult. Even more amazing, those two tiny cells that joined together to make a new life contained all of the components which would emerge in the child as mother's red hair, father's bone structure, grandfather's disposition, grandmother's teeth, or Uncle Charlie's sense of humor! Yet the child will become an individual with his own distinct characteristics, unlike any other that ever lived, and responsible to God for his own choices.

Provision has been made not only for our physical development but also for our spiritual rebirth. This provision is possible through the activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives, convicting of sin, bringing repentance, coming to dwell within us, and adopting us into the family of God. It is as we cooperate with the Holy Spirit that we are given new life in Christ, and we become joint heirs with Him in the inheritance that our heavenly Father has prepared for us. Spiritual birth brings with it the potential for us to develop His characteristics and be conformed to His likeness.

In this lesson we will see that it is the Holy Spirit who regenerates us, and through Him we have the power to be everything that God wants us to be! He is the Spirit of Life who gives us eternal life and makes us joint heirs with our Savior, Jesus Christ.



### **lesson outline**

The Convincing Spirit  
The Spirit of Life  
The Spirit of Adoption

### **lesson objectives**

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Describe the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting of sin and bringing repentance.
- Explain the results when the Holy Spirit gives life to a repentant sinner and dwells within him.
- Define the terms *sanctification of the Spirit* and *adoption by the Spirit*.
- Recognize privileges and responsibilities of those adopted into the family of God by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit.

## learning activities

1. As preparation for this lesson, reread the first two sections of Lesson 3: *He Convinces* and *He Regenerates*.
2. Study the lesson as instructed in the learning activities for Lesson 1. Read all Scriptures given and answer all of the study questions.
3. Take the self-test and check your answers.

## key words

<i>Abba</i>	partakers	resistance
conform	perish	sanctification
glorified	prophesying	sanctify
heirs	repentance	transgressions

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## lesson development

### THE CONVINCING SPIRIT

#### Bringing Conviction

**Objective 1.** *From given Scriptures, state possible results of the convicting power of the Holy Spirit.*

In Lesson 3 we saw that the Holy Spirit was sent into the world to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. Turn back to Lesson 3 now and reread the first two sections, *He Convinces* and *He Regenerates*, as background for this lesson.

The Spirit alone can convince a sinner of his need for God. David, under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, prayed, “For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight” (Psalm 51:3-4).

The Spirit often uses human witnesses to speak to sinners. Here are some examples from Scripture:

1. *Peter.* On the Day of Pentecost, the great outpouring promised by Jesus had just taken place. Peter, who was full of the

Holy Spirit, stood up and preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to the crowd that had gathered. His sermon is found in Acts 2:14-36.

When the crowd heard the words of Peter, they were “cut to the heart” (v. 37). Peter preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and it was the convicting power of the Holy Spirit which reached the hearts of the people and caused them to ask, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

2. *Paul.* In his letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul tells them what will happen when an unbeliever comes into a meeting where everyone is prophesying under the anointing power of the Holy Spirit. Paul says,

“he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, ‘God is really among you!’” (1 Corinthians 14:24-25).

3. *Stephen.* One of the first deacons chosen by the apostles was Stephen, “a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5). Stephen did many great and miraculous wonders among the people, and Jewish leaders began to oppose him. Acts 6:9-10 records that “These men began to argue with Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by which he spoke.”

Acts chapter 7 contains the sermon Stephen preached to the Sanhedrin. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit was strong, as revealed in these concluding words of Stephen: “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! . . . You always resist the Holy Spirit!” (v. 51).

1 What happened in response to Peter’s sermon (Acts 2:41)?

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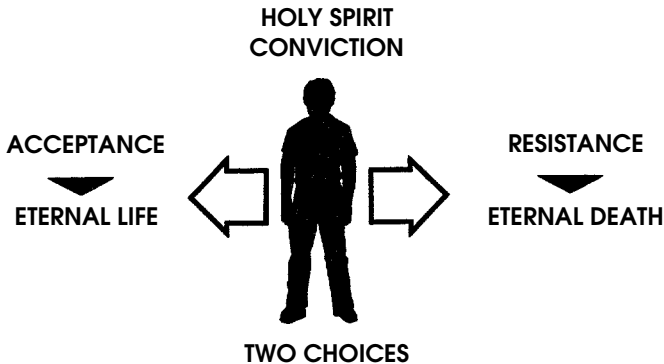
2 Did everyone in Peter’s audience respond in repentance to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit?

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.....

**3** What happened in response to Stephen’s sermon (Acts 7:54-60)?

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Although the apostle Paul was well educated, he told the Corinthians, “My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom but on God’s power” (1 Corinthians 2:4-5). Paul had learned by experience to depend fully on the Holy Spirit’s convicting power to bring men to Christ.



**Bringing Repentance**

**Objective 2.** *From examples given, distinguish true statements regarding the meaning of repentance and the Holy Spirit’s part in bringing people to repentance.*

The Spirit alone can convince a sinner of his need for God, but He does not force the sinner to repent. Repentance requires an act of faith on the part of the sinner as he responds to the Holy Spirit’s conviction. Paul told the Corinthians:

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret (2 Corinthians 7:10).

This is the kind of sorrow expressed by the Psalmist David in Psalm 51:3-4. Godly sorrow causes the sinner to see himself as God sees him. It is the Spirit of God who reveals to him how God sees him (1 Corinthians 2:11).

*What Is Repentance?*

Repentance is the act in which one recognizes sin, turns from it, confesses it to God, and forsakes it completely. Repentance affects every part of us: intellect (or mind), emotions (or feelings), and will (expressed in behavior). Repentance is thus a changing of your mind, attitude, and behavior toward sin. It includes the knowledge of the wrong you have done and godly sorrow and grief over the dishonor it has brought to God. It is not merely a deep regret for sin or a promise not to do it again, but it is self-judgment in the presence of a righteous God. This can never happen without an awakening of the conscience to sin and a decision to turn away from sin, prompted by the Holy Spirit.

1. *Change of mind.* This change of mind comes from a *recognition* that one is not right with God. It results from the *knowledge* that he is headed in the wrong direction—that the consequences of this course will prove fatal. Seeing the awfulness of his situation, the prodigal son recognized what he had done and decided, “I will set out and go back to my father” (Luke 15:17-19). Included in repentance is the recognition that Jesus Christ is the only solution to one’s sin problem. It is only through faith in Christ that we can have freedom from the guilt of sin.

2. *Change of feelings.* A realization of his sinful condition brings a feeling of sorrow to the sinner. Paul talked about this in his second letter to the Corinthians: “. . . now I am made happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God [the Holy Spirit] intended and so were not harmed in any way by us” (2 Corinthians 7:9). David expressed his emotion in Psalm 38:18 when he said, “I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.” Regardless of the extent of grief one feels or expresses, the essential thing is confessing one’s sins and deciding to forsake them. No amount of emotion will make up for confessing and forsaking sin.

3. *Change of behavior.* While it is important to *recognize* and *confess* sin, it is equally important to *turn away from it, forsaking it completely.* It was not enough for the prodigal to

*recognize* his awful plight and feel bad about it. The moment of truth in his experience of repentance came when, through an act of the will, “He got up and went to his father” (Luke 15:20). Repentance involves every part of our life. It means not only *recognition* of sins and *sorrow* over the past but also our *intentions* for the future. It is the forsaking of our own way to go God’s way in obedience and fellowship with Him.

### *Who Should Repent?*

The call to repentance is universal. “God has overlooked the times when people did not know him, but now he commands *all of them everywhere to turn away from their evil ways*” (Acts 17:30, TEV). Every person is included in this call. All those who have never believed in Christ are invited to repent, receive God’s forgiveness, and become a part of His family (John 3:15-17; Titus 2:11; Revelation 22:17).

The message of repentance is also for those who have believed in Christ and become His followers. While believers have been changed and are no longer controlled by sin, on occasion they may neglect their spiritual responsibilities, by not responding as they should to the Holy Spirit’s direction for their spiritual development, or by committing a sinful act (compare Romans 8:5-11 with Ephesians 4:17-32). Whatever the problem, repentance is the only solution for failure and sin. God’s promise of forgiveness is directed primarily to Christians in 1 John 1:9, but it can be applied to anyone who is ready to repent. In chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation the call to repentance was repeated to five of seven churches addressed. These five churches were told by the Holy Spirit to repent or lose their witness, repent or be judged, repent or suffer tribulation, repent or suffer loss, and repent or be cast out. The exhortation “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (2:7) is repeated seven times in chapters 2 and 3, emphasizing the importance of listening to the Holy Spirit when He speaks and of heeding His message.

**4** In this exercise, match the church and message of repentance from the Holy Spirit (right) to the reason repentance was necessary (left). (See Revelation 2 and 3.)

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|---|---|
| <p>.... <b>a</b> <i>You tolerate that woman Jezebel, whose teaching misleads my servants into immorality.</i></p> | <p>1) Church in Ephesus: “Repent and do the things you did at first.”</p>   |
| <p>.... <b>b</b> <i>You are dead . . . I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.</i></p>       | <p>2) Church in Pergamum: “Repent therefore! Otherwise I will . . . fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”</p> |
| <p>.... <b>c</b> <i>You have lost your first love.</i></p>  | <p>3) Church in Thyatira: “I will make those who sin suffer intensely, unless they repent.”</p>                         |
| <p>.... <b>d</b> <i>You are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold.</i></p>  | <p>4) Church in Sardis: “Wake up! If you do not wake up, I will come like a thief . . .”</p>                            |
| <p>.... <b>e</b> <i>You have followed after false teachers.</i></p>   | <p>5) Church in Laodicea: “Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline, so be earnest, and repent.”</p>                   |

Repentance brings forgiveness for one sin or for many (Matthew 18:21-22). God cannot tolerate sin. The measure of God’s forgiveness is not determined by the kind or number of sins committed, but on sincere repentance—a change of mind, feeling, and behavior regarding sin. The time for repentance is *now*. The Holy Spirit, we have seen, is constantly convicting sinners to repent of their disobedience to God and to surrender their lives to Him. The Spirit is also at work in believers’ lives entreating them to let Him have complete control of their lives and to keep in step with Him (Galatians 5:16-18, 25).

The opposite of repentance is resistance to the entreaties of the Holy Spirit. Stephen’s message to the Jews, which we discussed earlier in this lesson, brought resistance and anger. This shows that it is possible for people who spend their whole lives in religion to resist the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51). A review of Hebrews 10:26-31; Revelation 3:16, 19; and Proverbs 29:1



indicates that God loves man and willingly disciplines him to correct his misdeeds and conform him to the likeness of Christ. If he resists God's overtures and deliberately keeps on sinning, the only alternative is judgment: dreadful and final.

An illustration of this is someone calling you by telephone. If you continue to ignore ring after ring, he may eventually hang up the phone and quit trying to reach you. If you resist the Holy Spirit time after time, He may eventually stop trying to speak to your heart and call you to repentance. If you have unconfessed sins, *now* is the time to repent and receive full forgiveness.

- 5** Circle the letter preceding each TRUE statement concerning repentance and the Holy Spirit's part in bringing repentance.
- a** Repentance is a feeling of guilt for something you have done.
  - b** The Holy Spirit's function in bringing the sinner to repentance is to cause him to see himself as God sees him, which produces godly sorrow.
  - c** The sinner must change his mind, his feelings, and his behavior—this is what it means to repent.
  - d** After salvation there is no further need for repentance.
  - e** The message of the Holy Spirit to the seven churches in the book of Revelation was directed primarily to unbelievers.
  - f** God's forgiveness is based on sincere repentance.
  - g** It is possible to resist the Holy Spirit's convicting power to the point that He may eventually withdraw it from you.

## THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

### Giving New Birth

**Objective 3.** *From given Scriptures explain what happens when the Holy Spirit gives life to the sinner.*

When Nicodemus visited Jesus one night, Jesus told him he needed another birth (John 3:1-12). Nicodemus immediately thought of his natural birth, and asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" (v. 4). Then Jesus explained that He was speaking of a spiritual birth, saying, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (v. 6). In other words, if one would enter God's kingdom, he must have this kind of spiritual birth.

Adam, the first man, had been given spiritual life in the beginning, but he sinned and lost it. By Adam’s sin, Paul tells us, death came to all men, not only because of Adam’s sin, but because all are guilty of sin (Romans 5:12).

In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, he says, “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). But he goes on to say, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith” (v. 8). The reason, then, that everybody must be born again to enter God’s kingdom is that all sinners are spiritually dead.

We have already seen that the Holy Spirit brings repentance by showing the sinner his need for the pardoning grace of God. As the sinner responds, confessing his sins and accepting God’s salvation, the Spirit of life brings new life—spiritual life—to him. We say that the sinner has been *born again*, that is, he has experienced spiritual birth. What a wonderful change! Now he has the Holy Spirit of God within him, and he is free from the burden of guilt and sin.

There is no other way to become a Christian. Anything apart from this work of the Spirit of God is the effort of the flesh, and Jesus said that flesh can only give birth to flesh. Without the help of the Holy Spirit, it is impossible for spiritual change to take place in a person’s life.

**6** Read each of the following Scriptures and write what each says about the activity of the Holy Spirit in giving spiritual life to the repentant sinner:

- a** John 6:63 .....
- b** Romans 8:2 .....
- c** Galatians 4:4-6 .....
- d** Galatians 5:16-18, 25 .....

These Scriptures reveal that it is the Holy Spirit who imparts spiritual life. All we have to do is cooperate and accept this gift of life.

- 7 Read Romans 8:1-11 and fill in the blanks.
- a When you are set free from the law of sin and death by the Holy Spirit, you no longer live according to the sinful nature, but according to the .....
  - b When you live in accordance with the Spirit, your mind is set on what the Spirit .....
  - c The only way to please God is to be controlled by the.....
  - d If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to.....



**I AM  
GOD'S  
TEMPLE**

Everyone who is born of God receives the Spirit of God. “The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children” (Romans 8:16). This is what God had in mind from the very beginning. He wants man to be His temple, His dwelling place. Paul reminded the Corinthians of this: “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

In Romans 8:9 the Holy Spirit is called the *Spirit of Christ*, and rightly so, because He represents Christ in us. He was given by the Father to be with us in Christ’s stead. Paul also calls the Holy Spirit the “Spirit of his Son” (Galatians 4:6). That is why he could also say, “Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20).

*Dwelling Within Us*

**Objective 4.** *Select true statements concerning the indwelling Spirit in the life of a Christian.*

When Jesus said of the Spirit, “He lives with you and *will be* in you,” (John 14:17) His disciples apparently did not grasp the significance of the statement. The apostle Paul speaks to the issue, stating that such a privilege requires responsible living on the part of each believer (John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:16-17). He emphasizes this in Romans 8:12-17, where he says, we have an obligation to put to death the misdeeds of the body (vs. 12-13). Recognition of the Spirit’s control over our lives brings *awareness* of our sonship (vs. 15-16) and of our future spiritual inheritance (v. 17). The idea of the Holy Spirit living within us means that He is there all the time. This gives consistency to my relationship with Him. He is not just a divine visitor; He has taken up full-time residency in me. Let’s summarize briefly the benefits that are ours as a result of the indwelling Spirit.

Part of the function of the indwelling Spirit is to act as our counselor and teacher. In this capacity, He enables us to grasp the truth and He instructs us concerning the teaching of Jesus, bringing His teaching to our minds (John 14:26; 16:13-15). The indwelling Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for us according to the will of God (Romans 8:26-27).

One of the most important aspects of the Spirit’s work in the believer is related to an experience which takes place *after* the believer has experienced the new birth. It is referred to as the baptism with or in the Holy Spirit (we will discuss this in depth in Lesson 7). Jesus told the Twelve shortly before His ascension that they were to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49). A bit later He clarified this: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised . . . in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:4-5). Following this baptism with the Spirit, Jesus said His followers would receive power to be witnesses not only in their own lands but also throughout the whole world (Acts 1:8). The book of Acts records the truth of Jesus’

statement, for Spirit-filled believers became a powerful instrument for evangelism throughout the world.

Also associated with the Spirit baptism is the development of spiritual gifts. The apostle Paul refers to spiritual gifts in Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12 and 14; and Ephesians 4:11-16. These gifts serve to edify and build up the body of Christ. (We will discuss these in depth in Lesson 9.)

Finally, as the Spirit dwells within He produces spiritual fruit, which some see as the development of Christian character (Galatians 5:16-25). Spiritual fruit is contrasted with the works of the sinful nature and results from living by and keeping in step with the Spirit. (We will discuss the fruit of the Spirit more fully in Lesson 10.)

- 8** Based on the Scriptures we have discussed in this section, which of the following statements are TRUE?
- a** Although the sinner does not realize it, the Holy Spirit dwells within him because he is a temple of God.
  - b** Now that the Holy Spirit has begun to dwell within you, you have an obligation to bring your manner of life into conformity with His desires.
  - c** The Holy Spirit's indwelling brings His assistance as Counselor, Teacher, and Intercessor.
  - d** The Holy Spirit baptism is given primarily to empower believers to witness effectively for their risen Lord.
  - e** The gifts of the Spirit serve to build up the body of Christ.
  - f** The fruit of the Spirit results from the good intentions of believers to make themselves acceptable models of the Christian faith.

### *Sanctifying Us*

**Objective 5.** *Identify correct explanations of "sanctification by the Holy Spirit."*

Another work of the indwelling Spirit is to *sanctify* us. In its simplest form, *sanctification* means that the Holy Spirit makes the believer holy by separating him from sin and setting him apart for God. This happens as the believer submits himself

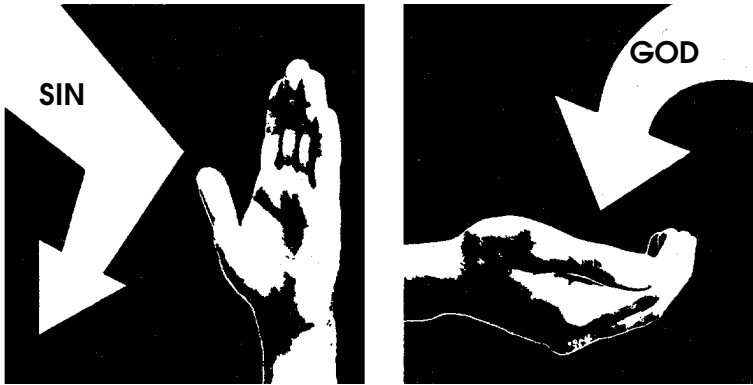
totally to the guidance of the Spirit so that the control of sin is stripped from his life (Romans 8:2, 9).

Paul speaks of the Gentiles becoming an offering acceptable to God, *sanctified by the Holy Spirit* (Romans 15:16). He tells the Corinthians they were washed, justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and *by the Spirit of our God* (1 Corinthians 6:11). To the church in Thessalonica he writes these words:

But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth. He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14).

When we experience the new birth, the Holy Spirit makes us acceptable to God, and we stand before Him on the basis of Christ's completed work of redemption. We are declared righteous and our position before God is just as if we had never sinned. Yet, we must work out in practice what has been declared. We are newly born spiritual infants, and we are admonished to grow and mature (2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2-3). Thus, the work of the Holy Spirit in us has just begun. Being spiritually alive, we have the ability to respond to God. We are destined for eternal life, and in route to that goal we are admonished to mature and develop in Christlikeness. We are to be the copy of the One who has saved us and whose seed remains in us (1 John 3:9). As we have seen in our consideration of Romans 8:5-16, Galatians 5:16-25, and Ephesians 4:20-32, the putting off of the old self and the putting on of the new self is a progressive work that has as its goal the development of the image of Christ in each of us (Romans 8:29). Now, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we must learn daily to separate ourselves from the things which He shows us are not pleasing to God. Progressively we are being conformed to His image. One day we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him just as He is (1 John 3:2). Until then, we endeavor to be ever more sensitive to the Spirit's control; we are in the process of being perfected.

## SEPARATION = SANCTIFICATION



**9** Choose the correct completions: *Sanctification by the Spirit* means that we

- are made instantaneously perfect and cannot sin henceforth.
- have been set apart unto God and from sin.
- are daily being conformed to the image of Christ by allowing the Holy Spirit to direct us in all that we do.
- allow the Spirit to help us do the things that are pleasing to God.

## THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION

**Objective 6.** *Examine your own experience of regeneration and the work of the Spirit of adoption in your life.*

### Making Us Heirs

Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation—but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship [adoption]. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory (Romans 8:12-17).

What does the apostle Paul mean in these verses when he calls the Holy Spirit the *Spirit of adoption*? Adoption concerns a person's *position* in the family of God and concerns his *privileges* as one of God's sons. One aspect of adoption for the Romans referred to a child who was legally adopted into a family. Often poor parents who could not provide adequately for their child would give him over for adoption by a wealthy family. The adoptive parents were given full control of the child, and the child was given the same rights in the family as any of the other children; however, during their minority (before they came of legal age) all the children (natural and adoptive) differed little from household servants (Galatians 4:1-2). The full benefits of sonship were deferred until they came of age.

By means of the new birth the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of life, makes us actual partakers of the nature of God. Then, by the Spirit of adoption, we are given immediate standing in the family of God. This means that all of the privileges normally associated with family membership are ours. However, in contrast to the Roman system, we don't have "deferred benefits" that must await our coming of age. Rather, through His act of adoption God places us in His family in the rank or position of adult sons (Galatians 4:1-7). Thus, we have all the privileges of being sons and are regarded as true sons.

Paul refers to this positional aspect of adoption in his letter to the Galatians. (See Galatians 3:26-29 and 4:1-7.) Children, he says, are no different from the servants, even though they are the heirs of everything. They are subject to guardians and trustees until the time appointed by the father. Then they are placed as adult sons. He tells the Galatians, who are acting like children under the bondage of the old Jewish ordinances, that they have received *full rights as sons*. He continues,

"Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.' So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir" (Galatians 4:6-7).



One of the immediate benefits of our adult status as adoptive sons is the inner spiritual assurance that we are God's sons. The Spirit testified to this when we received Him (Romans 8:12-17; 1 John 3:24; 4:13-14), and because of this witness we are able to call Him *Father*. John reinforces this teaching, noting that *now* we are the children of God (1 John 3:2). No one must await Christ's coming or future judgment to determine his spiritual status. Having received Christ as his Savior, he has both the inner witness of the Spirit and the external witness of the Word of God that he is a son of God.

While we are now sons of God with all the rights and privileges of adult heirs, we yet await a full realization of sonship when we stand in God's presence and receive our glorified bodies. Paul affirms this in Romans 8:23 when he says,

“We ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

This is further explained by the apostle John in 1 John 3:2:

“Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he [Jesus] appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

John later says that “anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; neither is anyone who does not love his brother” (1 John 3:10, 21-24; 5:1-3). Being apart of the family of God carries with it certain responsibilities as well as privileges. It is the Spirit of God within you who makes it possible for you to fulfill these responsibilities. He puts divine love in your heart and gives you a desire to do those things which please your heavenly Father.

**10** Based upon our discussion in this section, choose the best answer. The term *Spirit of adoption* refers to

- a) the act of the Holy Spirit by which I become a child of God at the time of regeneration.
- b) the Holy Spirit’s right to place me in the position He chooses in relation to other believers.
- c) the Holy Spirit’s complete control over the believer the moment he experiences new birth.

**11** Adoption into the family of God takes place when I

- a) receive my glorified body.
- b) cry out, “Abba, Father.”
- c) experience the new birth.

**12** From the following Scriptures, name three ways you can know that you are a child of God, that you have been born again of the Spirit (Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:10, 21-24; 4:13-14; 5:1-3).

.....  
.....

**13** Examine yourself by writing *yes* or *no* in the blank spaces below.

- a** I have repented of my sins .....
- b** By faith I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.....
- c** I know that even though I am a Christian, I need to repent for occasional failures and receive forgiveness .....
- d** I know that repentance means turning away from sin and toward God .....
- e** Because I have been set free from the law of sin and death, I want to do what the Spirit desires .....
- f** I want the Holy Spirit to sanctify me and make me more like Jesus every day .....
- g** I know that I am a Christian because I have the witness of God’s Word and the witness of God’s Spirit within.  
.....
- h** I realize that adoption into the family of God gives me certain responsibilities as well as rights .....

This might be a good time to meditate on each of these statements and determine whether you have experienced all that is available to you in Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to make real to you your place in God's family, with all the rights and duties that are yours as a child of God.

**self-test**

ALTERNATE CHOICE. For each subject below two statements are made. Select the statement which is most complete and accurate based on this lesson. Circle the letter preceding your choice.

**1** *Regeneration:*

- a) This is a work of the Holy Spirit in which He brings new spiritual life to the repentant sinner who confesses his sin and accepts Jesus Christ as Savior.
- b) This is a change of mind and feeling regarding one's spiritual condition, and a desire to live a life free from sin.

**2** *Conviction:*

- a) The convicting power of the Holy Spirit is so strong that a sinner has no choice but to respond to it by turning away from his sin and obeying God. It is often accompanied by feelings of guilt and by recognition that it is impossible to live a sinless life.
- b) While the Holy Spirit often convicts a sinner directly and convinces him of his need for God, He often works through an anointed public message or a personal witness to speak to the sinner's heart.

**3** *Repentance:*

- a) Repentance is godly sorrow which makes the sinner see himself as he really is. He recognizes that he must change his ways if he wants to have eternal life, and he tries to stop doing the things that will lead to eternal death.
- b) Repentance involves a change of mind regarding sin, a change of feeling which includes sincere sorrow for a sinful life, and a change of behavior which includes turning away from sin and toward God. There is inward change as well as outward change. The sinner must repent of sins in order to receive God's salvation; the believer must repent of any failure or shortcoming that may hinder his spiritual development toward Christlikeness.

**4** *Results of spiritual life:*

- a) I am set free from the temptations of the devil so that I am no longer bothered by the desire to do sinful things.
- b) I no longer live according to the sinful nature, but my mind is set on what the Holy Spirit wants me to do.

**5** *The indwelling Spirit:*

- a) When the Holy Spirit takes up residence within me, I receive many personal benefits. He makes my sonship real, He helps me pray appropriately, and He convicts me of misdeeds and helps me overcome them.
- b) When the Holy Spirit dwells within me and makes my body His temple, He takes complete control, so that all of my choices, actions, and thoughts are really His choices, actions, and thoughts. I am no longer bothered by human needs and desires because He takes all of that from me.

**6** *Sanctification by the Spirit:*

- a) As I yield myself to the Holy Spirit's control, He enables me to separate myself from sin and unto God. This is a progressive work which conforms me to the image of Christ as I yield to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to develop in me the fruit of the Spirit.
- b) This is a special act of the Holy Spirit in which I am suddenly conformed to the image of Christ and given the fruit of the Spirit.

**7** *The Spirit of adoption:*

- a) When I reach full Christian maturity, I am considered worthy of adoption into the family of God, with all the rights and responsibilities of an heir. It is the Holy Spirit who determines when I am ready for adoption and witnesses to my heart that I am a child of God.
- b) When the Holy Spirit gives me new birth, He makes me an actual partaker of the nature of God. He also adopts me into God's family, giving me the full rights of sonship, and I become a joint heir with Jesus Christ of all of the privileges of the children of God. I know that I am born again into the family of God because His Spirit witnesses to my spirit, because I want to do what is right, and because He gives me love for my brothers and sisters in Christ.

**answers to study questions**

- 7 a** Spirit.  
**b** desires.  
**c** Spirit.  
**d** Christ.
- 1** Many accepted his message and were baptized.
- 8 a** False.  
**b** True.  
**c** True.  
**d** True.  
**e** True.  
**f** False. (Spiritual fruit results from living by and keeping in step with the Spirit.)
- 2** No, the Scripture “Those who accepted his message” (2:41) implies that some resisted the Holy Spirit.
- 9** Answers b), c), and d) are correct.
- 3** Those who heard him became very angry and resisted the Spirit of God. They stoned Stephen until he was dead.
- 10 a)** the act of the Holy Spirit by which I become a child of God at the time of regeneration.
- 4 a** 3) Church in Thyatira.  
**b** 4) Church in Sardis.  
**c** 1) Church in Ephesus.  
**d** 5) Church in Laodicea.  
**e** 2) Church in Pergamum.
- 11 c)** experience the new birth.
- 5 a** False. (Repentance involves change.)  
**b** True.  
**c** True.  
**d** False.  
**e** False.  
**f** True.  
**g** True.

- 12** The Holy Spirit bears witness with my spirit. I will do what is right. I will love my brother (fellow Christians).
- 6 a** The Spirit gives life.
- b** The law of the Spirit of life sets me free from the law of sin and death.
- c** The Spirit gives substance to our spiritual life and makes our sonship real.
- d** We live by the Spirit and we are led in acceptable Christian living.
- 13** Your answer. I hope you were able to answer *yes* to each statement.

**For Your Notes**