

# LESSON 10 Continuing in Community

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During World War I, a professor in a European university was teaching his students when an order came to dismiss classes because of the war. The students were not able to meet again as a class for a number of years. When at last the school reopened, the professor began his first teaching session with the words: “As I was saying . . .”

He just continued where he had left off before the classes were stopped. This attitude of continuation shows certain determination. We need to have similar determination to keep an ongoing relationship with our community.

In this lesson you will study ways in which you can continue to practice the principles taught in this course. The most important way is to depend on the Holy Spirit.

## ***The Plan***

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- A. Be Yourself
- B. Make Your Witness Personal
- C. Depend on the Holy Spirit

## ***The Goals***

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1. Explain the importance of having a personal and reliable Christian witness.
2. Give examples of ways to show a positive personal witness.
3. State reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

### **A. BE YOURSELF**

**Goal 1.** Explain the importance of having a personal and reliable Christian witness.

A young woman was going to a foreign country to work for the Lord as a missionary. On a radio program she was asked, “What are you going to do over there?” Her reply was, “I’m just going to be what I say I am.”

Are you what you say you are? You are really best at being yourself. The best way to influence your community toward God is to give a true image all the time. If what you are is not something you can be happy with, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a new image. Be a person of worth and value, one that people can rely on at all times. Ask God to make you what you ought to be, and what He wants you to be.

Do people see you one day as a cheerful, happy person, and the next day as an unpleasant, moody person? Do you have a steady, reliable witness every day, regardless of the unpleasant things that may happen from day to day?

People who keep the right attitude all the time give the best witness. The Holy Spirit is the greatest agent for changing one’s

character. If your nature is not cheerful, ask God to change it. Then begin to act as you know God wants you to.

My friend, John, was a grouchy, complaining person. Even though he was a Christian, he made excuses for his attitude, and said he could not help being the way he was. When he eventually realized that God could help him to be a different person, he practiced being pleasant, kind, and considerate until it became natural.

Your life must give others a true picture of what a Christian should be. If people are not sure that you are living a Christian life, you will not be an effective witness for Christ. Make your call clear—then others will follow you.

### ***Application***

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**1** How can people change their personalities if they do not like the way they are?

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**2** Why is it important to develop the right image in order to represent Christ to your community?

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**3** The best witness is given by Christians who

- a)** study the best ways to talk to people.
- b)** carry their Bibles everywhere they go.
- c)** keep the right attitude at all times.



## B. MAKE YOUR WITNESS PERSONAL

**Goal 2.** Give examples of ways to show a positive personal witness.

When I was 17 years old, I graduated from secondary school and took a job with a large company in my hometown. The first morning, as I left for work, my mother called me aside and said, “Remember, son, any old dead fish can go with the tide. It takes a live one to swim against it.”

I have never forgotten my mother’s words. Ever since that time, I have tried to make sure that I was not just drifting with the tide. It is not always easy to be different from the crowd. Sometimes in our work or other activities we may be the only Christian in the group. If we want to have a personal witness, we must be willing to stand for our Christian principles even when it would be easier to go along with the group.

In 1 Peter 3:15 we are advised to “always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” Our hope is in Jesus Christ, who died and rose again that we might have eternal life. We must maintain a good personal testimony at all times if we want to help others find Christ.

Do you realize that God knows you better than you know yourself? Consider this verse of Scripture:

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Hebrews 4:13)

God wants us to show the world what He is like. Make your witness for Christ a personal thing. Let people see the results of God’s grace in your life. God has made His Holy Spirit available to help us do this.

If you are to reach your community for God, you will have to be transparent—open before people. They must see what you really are. The apostle Paul said, “Follow my example, as

I follow the example of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). Can you say the same thing to those in your community?

## Application

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- 4** Which of these are TRUE examples of a positive personal witness?
- a)** Doing something you know is not right because a friend asked you to, and you do not want to offend him.
  - b)** Saying no when saying yes would harm your Christian testimony.
  - c)** Showing you are upset when your plans do not work out the way you want them to.
  - d)** Doing more than your share of work in a project.
  - e)** Being friendly and kind even when you do not feel like it.
- 5** Which of these attitudes represents the most personal concern for those who do not know Christ?
- a)** I will do my best to witness for the Lord, but I cannot help it if people do not show an interest in following Christ.
  - b)** My whole life should be a testimony to those who do not know Christ, so that I will not cause them to turn against Him.



## C. DEPEND ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Goal 3.** State reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

### The Revealer

Before Jesus went back to heaven, He told His disciples, ““It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you”” (John 16:7). *Counselor* is one name given in the Bible for the Holy Spirit.

When we understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we can trust Him more. For example, if you put two people who speak different languages in the same room, they will have a

hard time communicating with each other. But if their language is the same, they will be more able to get to know one another. Talking together will help them understand each other.

Understanding brings confidence. It is the same with the Holy Spirit. As you understand Him and His ministry, you will learn to trust Him. One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to reveal or show Christ to us. When Christ is made known to us, we realize our need of Him. John writes,

When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. (John 15:26)

Another purpose of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin and draw people to God. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would speak about repentance and would “convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8).

Joe Smith had never known of God. One day he heard the story of Jesus and His love for men and women. A week went by, and Joe could not get this story out of his mind. Why? The Holy Spirit had revealed Jesus to Joe and had caused him to be sorry for his sin. Joe felt that he had to do something. It was not long until he gave his heart to the Lord and became a Christian.

The Holy Spirit has a ministry of calling people to Jesus. Are you not glad He brought conviction to your heart and revealed Jesus to you? And as we witness to others, we can depend upon the Holy Spirit to do His work in their hearts also.

## ***Application***

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- 6** Repentance is the act of
  - a)** getting to know someone.
  - b)** feeling sorry for sin and confessing it to God.
  - c)** being drawn to God by the Holy Spirit.

**7** When we learn to trust the Holy Spirit we can

- a)** depend on Him.
- b)** leave the work of soul winning to Him.
- c)** live without sin.

**8** Write three reasons why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit.

- a)** .....
- b)** .....
- c)** .....



## Our Teacher and Reminder

Read the words of Jesus recorded in John 14:26:

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”

In this verse two more ministries of the Holy Spirit are mentioned. Firstly, the Holy Spirit will teach us what the Word of God means and how to apply it to our lives. The Holy Spirit is wise, and He can give us wisdom, too.

Tom Green was not an educated man, but he was teachable. After the day’s work was done, Tom would read and study his Bible. He learned many things from the Bible. Tom and Betty Green had two sons. The instructions in the Bible helped them raise these sons so that they, too, loved God and wanted to obey Him. Both of their sons are now married and have children of their own. They are raising their children in the same way. Because Tom and Betty Green studied God’s Word and allowed the Holy Spirit to teach them, their family was blessed.

The Bible shows many ways that the Holy Spirit will teach us. Find the verses listed below in your Bible and write them down so that you will remember them.

1. Ephesians 1:17—He gives us wisdom and reveals God to us.
2. Ephesians 6:18—He teaches us to pray as He leads.
3. First Corinthians 2:10–12—He teaches us truths about God and His purposes.
4. Galatians 5:16, 22–23, 25—He directs our lives and produces in us love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

Secondly, according to John 14:26, the Holy Spirit will also help us remember the things Jesus said. As we study the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will bring the Word to our minds when we need it. We cannot remember all of the things we read in the Bible. However, when we need to remember, the Holy Spirit brings to our minds those teachings that will help us at that particular time.

Have you ever talked to someone about the Lord, and it seemed you had all the right answers? Or the Holy Spirit brought to your mind exactly the right Scripture verse to fit the occasion? It is very rewarding to feel God’s help in such times. Without the Holy Spirit’s help, many times we would feel lost as we tried to witness to someone.

Sometimes when we are tempted to do wrong, the Holy Spirit shows us how to obey God. He reminds us to keep a good attitude in our relationships with other people as we seek to maintain the spirit of community.

### ***Application***

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**9** Why do you need to rely on the Holy Spirit to be your teacher and reminder?

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**10** Look over this lesson, and write in your notebook all the ways the Holy Spirit helps us. Review your list and underline all the ways that He has personally helped you.

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## Check Your Answers

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**6 b)** feeling sorry for sin and confessing it to God.

**1** They can ask the Holy Spirit to change them, and then they can practice being the kind of person they want to be.

**7 a)** depend on Him.

**2** Because people will not want to follow your example and accept Christ if they do not like what they see in you.

**8** Any of these: The Holy Spirit came to draw us near to God; to convict of sin; to reveal Jesus; to tell us about God's judgment; to help us witness to others.

**3 c)** keep the right attitude at all times.

**9** Your answer. We need His help in witnessing, in our ministry to our community, and in making the right decisions so that our lives will glorify God.

**4** Statements **b)**, **d)**, and **e)** are true.

**10** Your answer

**5 b)** My whole life should be a testimony.

You have come to the end of this study. I hope you have received much help for your Christian walk through these lessons. You have begun a new understanding of the ministry of Christians in their communities. You can only put all of these teachings into practice as you allow the Holy Spirit to help you. Only by the Holy Spirit's power can we do the things we should do. Trust Him, and He will help you apply these teachings in your life and ministry to others. Be encouraged by the following Scriptures:

Continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it. (2 Timothy 3:14)

See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. (1 John 2:24)

Now you are ready to fill out the last half of your student report for Lessons 6–10. Review these lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. When you send your answer sheets to your instructor, ask him or her about another course of study. May the Lord bless you as you continue to practice the spirit of community.