

Lesson 36

Question

What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?

Memory Verse

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. John 14:16–17

Answer

That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son

Main Idea:

The Holy Spirit is God, and He is an eternal member of the Trinity.

Lesson Outline

Open in prayer

Introduction: Ask the children what it means to help someone. Invite them to name members of the helping professions. They will most likely think of:

Doctor Nurse Firefighter Police Officer Paramedic Teacher Soldier

Explain to the children that this lesson is all about the special helper that God sends to his people in his world. God knew that his people would always need his help, and so he promised to be with them to the end of the age. Introduce Question 36: "What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?"

Remind the children that Question 3 of the catechism teaches that there are three persons in one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Tell the children that this question will help them to learn more about God the Holy Spirit, who is the promised helper.

Activity: Explain to the children that you are going to make some statements about the Holy Spirit and they must decide whether the statement is true or false. Instruct the children to go to the left-hand side of the room if they think the statement is true and the right-hand side of the room if they think the statement is false. Tell the children they can stand in the middle of the room if they are unsure of the answer.

1. The Holy Spirit first appears in the New Testament.

False The Holy Spirit is coeternal with God and was present at the creation of the world (Gen. 1:1).

2. The Holy Spirit is a person.

True The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity.

3. The Holy Spirit lives in all people.

False The Holy Spirit dwells in those who have been born again (Rom. 8:9–10).

4. The Holy Spirit first appeared on the day of Pentecost.

False Holy Spirit came upon believers on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1–13), but he has existed eternally and been active throughout history (1 Sam. 16:13).

5. Holy Spirit is the promised helper.

True Jesus promised to send someone in his place when he ascended into heaven (John 14: Holy Spirit is that promised helper).

6. The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in the Trinity.

True Yes, the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in the Trinity. The Trinity is made up of three equal persons in one God.

7. The Holy Spirit loves the Father and the Son.

True The members of the Godhead have always existed in a loving relationship (1 John 4:16).

To conclude this activity, ask the children to finish these statements:

The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is ? (Answer: God)

The Son is not the Father, the Father is not the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the? (Answer: Son or Father)

Lesson: Read John 14:15—31. Provide Bibles for the children to read along.

Explain to the children that in this passage in John, Jesus is speaking to his disciples. He is explaining that one day he will have to leave them, but he promises that he will send someone else to be with them. Jesus describes the One who will come as another helper, a person like Jesus.

In verse 17, Jesus makes it clear who this helper will be; he calls him the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit is the promised helper. Tell the children that sometimes people think the Holy Spirit is just a life force or strange power, but in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is always portrayed as a person. That means he has a will and he acts. Even more, the Holy Spirit is described as God (Acts 5:3—4).

The disciples were very sad at the thought of Jesus leaving them, but he reassured them that they would never be alone in life because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. And they would one day be in Jesus's presence again.

Highlight for the children that this is a most amazing gift to Christians! The Holy Spirit lives in them at Jesus's request. The people in the helping professions assist others only on occasions of need, but the Holy Spirit is with God's people all the time to help because he lives in them!

Ask the children how significant they think the presence of the Holy Spirit is in the life of the Christian. Explain that there is no similar idea in any other religion. The fact that God the Holy Spirit lives in Christians is truly unique.

God the Holy Spirit comes to live in Christians to help them learn more about Jesus and understand more about Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the teacher of truth (v. 26) and he is a bringer of peace (v. 27).

Conclude this teaching time by explaining to the children that the Holy Spirit:

is personal

is God

is a gift for Christians, but the rest of the world cannot see or understand him

reveals more of Jesus to God's people

Recite: Help children memorize this week's verse, question and answer.