Main Idea: This week, we begin a new series called “Greater: A Study of the Holy Spirit.” In this series, the goal will be for you to get closer to God by understanding and accessing the gift of God’s Holy Spirit living in you.

Opening Discussion Question: What were your impressions when you first heard the term “Holy Spirit?” Was it vague, puzzling, confusing, real, imaginary, scary, or something else? What influenced your initial concept of the “Holy Spirit?”

Read: John 14:16-18; John 16:7 (NLT)

John 14:16-18 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives in you now and later will be in you. No, I will not abandon you as orphans- I will come to you.”

John 16:7 “But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don’t, the Advocate won’t come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you.”

1. Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the Advocate (From the Greek-,”Parakletos”, which means “called to one’s side”; Para; “from close beside”; and Kaleo: “to make a call”). How does this give you some clarity about the Holy Spirit?
   A. The Holy Spirit is like a legal advocate who makes the judgment calls because he is close enough to the situation to make the right call.
   B. It’s like giving someone the power of attorney.
   C. You sign over your right to control.
   D. You give control to someone you trust, someone who’s close enough to you to make the right call for you.
   E. This is how Jesus describes the Holy Spirit, as an Advocate.
F. Jesus said that it is best for us if he leaves us and sends a second Advocate, so he can make the calls in our lives that God knows are best for us.

G. Jesus is God "WITH" us, while the Holy Spirit is God "IN" us.

2. With whom was Jesus speaking in this setting in John 14 and John 16, and why is the context so important to help us understand this passage?

A. Jesus was speaking to his disciples.

B. His disciples knew that Jesus was the Son of God, God in the flesh, God with us, Immanuel.

C. They knew him well and had done life together for 3 years and could not imagine anything better than what they had experienced with him at their side.

D. Yet Jesus said it was BEST if he left them and sent another Advocate.

E. The Advocate is the Holy Spirit, who is God IN us.

F. Jesus (God WITH us) leaves, and he sends us the Holy Spirit (God IN us).

3. Why do you think Jesus did this? Why did he not stay with his disciples and with others in this world?

A. Jesus knew that he had not yet fulfilled his mission (1 Peter 2:24-25; John 19:30).

B. There is one God three distinct persons. The Holy Spirit is one person of the triune God or the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, & Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:19-20).

C. The Holy Spirit is God IN us (John 14:17).

D. The Holy Spirit has a unique function; he speaks to us, for us (John 14:25-26).

E. The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth (John 16:13-15).

Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.”

4. Understanding that my body is home to the Holy Spirit, how should this change how I think and live?

A. When the Holy Spirit comes into my life, my body is no longer my own.

B. My body becomes His Temple, His dwelling, his home.

C. The Holy Spirit doesn’t want to fight me for control of what Jesus paid for with his Life.

D. The Holy Spirit is God’s seal of ownership (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

E. The Holy Spirit has Lordship over our lives so he calls the shots!

F. He convicts us and guides us into all truth.

G. We also need to yield to him, to submit to him.

H. He is our advocate from God who comes close to us to make the calls.
Read John 3:8. In this passage, Jesus gives us an incredible analogy of the Holy Spirit, The Wind. He says in v8 “The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” (NIV)

5. How does understanding and accessing the gift of God’s Holy Spirit living in you help you get closer to God?
   A. The wind controls us, we don’t control the wind. The wind blows wherever it pleases!
   B. The Holy Spirit is like the wind. We don’t control him, he controls us.
   C. We need to surrender to the Pneuma of God, the wind, the breath, the spirit of God and say “I’m yours. You’re in control.”
   D. It’s about surrender/submission.
   E. When we surrender to His spirit and let that fresh wind of God blow in our lives, that’s when things start to change. Mountains start to move. Miracles start to manifest.
   F. Change the direction you’re facing. It’s all about surrender.
   G. Let go and ask God to take control.
   H. Fly forward with all the grace of God. It’s a great feeling.
   I. “No one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit ...The wind blows wherever it pleases...so it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:5-8)

Next Steps: Greater: A Study of the Holy Spirit- Week 1
Pastor J gave some great advice this week on how we can surrender control of our lives by letting the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us. Here are some next steps for you to take which will help you “live by the Spirit.”

1. Spend some time (quantity time & quality time) alone with God this week. Look deep inside yourself to see if you’ve ever truly received Jesus as Lord of your life and also invited the Holy Spirit into your life. If you’re ready to make a faith response and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and Forgiveness, please talk with your group leader or the church for next steps. If you need to surrender control to the Holy Spirit, pray to God the Father and ask him to help you surrender your own desires and give it all over to his Holy Spirit. Invite him in: "Here I am, Lord. I’m yours. You can have it all. Take me. Make me. Mold me. Use me. Come Holy Spirit. I invite you in."

2. Repent! Do an about-face with some aspect of your life. What needs to be gone from your life? What needs to change in your life? What needs to be added to your life? What kind of change will be pleasing to God?

3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17 Become a new creation, a Changed Life! God wants his Holy Spirit to live IN you, to come alive in you, to make your life his home. And it’s the
best thing! Jesus said it’s BEST for us. It’s even better than Jesus being here with us - His Holy Spirit living in us. The Holy Spirit wants to give you access to the Father. He wants to give you intimacy with the father. He wants to give you power from the father. Let him in.

Reading Plan:

Sunday- Genesis 1:1-2; 1:26-27
Monday- John 14:15-21; 25-27
Tuesday- 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; John 3:1-8
Wednesday- Luke 1:26-45
Thursday- Matthew 3: 11-17
Friday- Romans 8:1-39
Saturday- Galatians 5:13-26