you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you." Think of the power that it took to raise Jesus from the dead. Paul says that the same Holy Spirit who brings life out of death *lives inside of us!*

How have we missed this? I'm guessing that you've heard these verses before. But most of us have probably come to accept our experience of the Christian life as normal. It's time to question what we've always thought. None of us is as biblical in our thinking as we'd like to believe.

Think about it for a minute. Why do you believe what you believe? What process do you follow in forming your beliefs? Most of us would probably say that our beliefs are based on the Word of God, but really, our beliefs are often born more out of convenience and consistency than a careful study of the Scriptures. This is certainly true when it comes to our views about the Holy Spirit.

Chances are, you owe most of what you believe about the Holy Spirit to what you've seen and heard from the people around you. It's important to learn from other people, but at times we need to challenge our way of thinking. We are all in constant need of bringing our lives in line with the Scriptures.

1. Take a minute and list some of your beliefs about the Holy Spirit. (Even if you don't consider yourself a theologian, most of us have at least a few ideas about who the Holy Spirit is and what He does.)

2. Being as open as possible, do you think your beliefs are shaped more by the Scriptures or by what you've come to experience as the normal Christian life? What makes you say that?

At some point, we all need to get past what we think we know about the Spirit. If we are going to rediscover the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, we will need to begin listening to His voice and following His leading—not in the ways we think He should speak and lead, but in whatever He may call us to do.

If you have the *Forgotten God DVD Study Resource,* watch the video for session 1 now, particularly if you are meeting with a group. After the video, work through the rest of this section.

In the busyness of our lives, we have developed a remarkable ability to miss the obvious. We overanalyze the things that don't deserve a second thought, and we blow right past the clear, obvious, important things in life.

We assume that we know what the Christian life ought to look like. But have you ever sat down and considered the way Scripture describes the Spirit-filled life?

3. The following passages offer a brief overview of what the Holy Spirit does in a person's life. Quickly flip through these passages and make some notes. (If you don't want to look up all of these passages, feel free to choose just a few at random.)

   Acts 1:4–8

   Acts 2:1–13

Acts 4:31

Romans 8:1–17

Romans 8:26–27

Romans 15:13

1 Corinthians 2:12–14

1 Corinthians 3:16

1 Corinthians 6:9–11

1 Corinthians 12:7–11

2 Corinthians 3:17–18

Galatians 4:4–7

Galatians 5:16–25

Ephesians 3:14–16

1 John 4:13

4. If you disregarded your own experiences and just read these passages, what would you expect to observe as the Holy Spirit entered a person's life?

5. For so many people in the church today, everyday life does not match these biblical descriptions. Why do you think that is?

The statement is so familiar to us that we sometimes overlook its significance: "The Spirit of God dwells in you" (Rom. 8:9). One obvious truth that we frequently overlook is that there should be a huge difference between someone who has the Spirit of God living inside of them and someone who does not.

Have you ever observed Christians and non-Christians interacting? In many cases, it is all but impossible to discern who has the Spirit and who doesn't. Sure, the Christians may be a little nicer or more morally conscientious, but is that really *all* the Holy Spirit came to do in our lives? Shouldn't the difference be supernatural?

Read Galatians 5:16–25.

Paul is telling the Galatians what the Christian life ought to look like. In Christ, we have been set free from the law. But without the law, how do we please God? How do we love our neighbors as ourselves? For Paul, the answer is simple: Walk by the Spirit.

6. According to Galatians 5:16–25, what does it look like to walk by the Spirit?

7. Based on what Paul says here, what should distinguish a Spirit-filled person from a non-Christian?

If the Holy Spirit is being neglected in our churches and in our lives, is it any wonder that we don't look much different from the rest of the world? Too often we work in our own strength to be the kind of people who stand out—the kind of people who look like Jesus. This is the right goal, but when we try to do this without relying on the Spirit, we're missing the whole point. Doesn't it strike you as odd that although we want to live out the attributes of Galatians 5:22–23, we don't rely on the Holy Spirit to produce the fruit *of the Spirit?*

Look at Galatians 5:16 again: "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh." Perhaps we've gotten so caught up in trying to live the Christian life that we've overlooked the Source. Life-change comes through the power of the Holy Spirit. At times we try so hard—but if we have forgotten about the Holy Spirit, then we're missing the whole point.

8. Every day, people try to live the "Spirit-filled" life without the Spirit. Based on your experience, what good things can we accomplish merely through human strength?

9. If the Spirit works through us, how should the supernatural results differ from what we can accomplish on our own?

I know that there are people in the church who live every day in the power of the Spirit, depending on and following Him in every aspect of life. Maybe you're one of those blessed few. Praise God if that's the case! But we all have room to grow. None of us has too much of the Spirit. We are all in danger of pursuing supernatural results through our own strength.

It's time for us to stop assuming that we know everything we need to know about the Holy Spirit. Some of us need to study a little deeper and find out who the Spirit is and what He does. This is an important step in the process. But all of us need to begin applying the obvious biblical truths about the Holy Spirit to our lives. Maybe you haven't missed the obvious doctrinally—maybe you've missed it practically. Until we actually apply a truth to our lives, we can't claim to believe it—at least not with any integrity.

Look again at the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22–23. Add to that list a host of other godly characteristics that we are called to pursue (such as faith, hope, compassion). These are not just abstract concepts. These fruits should be evident in our actions toward the people around us.

10. Don't just think about what the Holy Spirit can do for you. What are some clear and practical ways that the Spirit can work through you to bless the people around you?

Chapter 1 of the book *Forgotten God* ends with a powerful analogy about the confusion a caterpillar must experience:

> For all its caterpillar life, it crawls around a small patch of dirt and up and down a few plants. Then one day it takes a nap. A long nap. And then, what in the world must go through its head when it wakes up to discover it can *fly?* What happened to its dirty, plump little worm body? What does it think when it sees its tiny new body and gorgeous wings?
>
> As believers, we ought to experience this same kind of astonishment when the Holy Spirit enters our bodies. We should be stunned in disbelief over becoming a "new creation" with the Spirit living in us. As the caterpillar finds its new ability to fly, we should be thrilled over our Spirit-empowered ability to live differently and faithfully. (*Forgotten God,* 37)

11. For all practical purposes, we seem to have forgotten that the Holy Spirit is powerful—He radically transforms lives. Are you open to being transformed, no matter what that may mean for your life? If you do want to be changed, why do you desire this? If you don't, what is keeping you from desiring change?

12. Spend some time praying that God will give you the humility to be open to what He wants to teach you—even if it means you've spent years overlooking the obvious. Then ask Him to begin using these truths to change the way you live.