

## THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

(15–20 minutes, easy set-up)

*Use this outline and any of the corresponding activities to share the Biblical Truth with students.*

**Introduction:** Have you seen the GEICO insurance commercial that spoofs horror movies? It shows several young people being chased through the woods. When they come upon a scary house, one suggests they hide in the basement and another in the attic. When a third asked why they couldn't get in the car that was already running in front of the house, another responds something like, "No, let's go behind the chain saws." As the commercial transitions to its sales plug, the announcer reminds his listeners that people in horror movies can make very poor decisions. Unfortunately, that's also a good analogy of what happens to us when we try to live holy lives without accepting the power of the Holy Spirit. We, too, can make poor, even disastrous, decisions that can lead to unholiness.

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### 1. We are called to serve God by spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:1-2).

**Biblical Background:** As Paul began this letter to believers in Rome, he explained that he was both an apostle of Christ and His bond servant who had been set apart to share the gospel with others. By apostle, Paul declared that he had been personally called by the risen Christ for this ministry. By bond servant, Paul explained that he had willingly committed to serving Christ until his own death (v. 1). Paul then reminded his readers that what Jesus had accomplished had been prophesized in the Old Testament long before His birth (v. 2).

**Illustration/Interactive Questions:** Ask: **When a new student comes to school or joins your youth group, how do you get to know them? What questions do you ask to try find out what's important to them and what they enjoy doing?** Paul had probably not met many of the believers in Rome, so he began this letter introducing himself to them as part of his greeting. He told them what he did (that he served the resurrected Lord), how he was enlisted (personally by the Lord), and how long he'd be serving in this capacity (until his death).

**Application:** For Paul, the most significant aspect of his character was his privileged position as a servant of the Lord. If you introduced yourself to someone you don't know, would you include your status as a servant of Christ Jesus over any other title you possess here on earth?

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### 2. We are witnesses of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:3-4).

**Biblical Background:** Paul reminded the Roman believers that Jesus was fully human, had been born in the lineage of David, and, therefore, intimately experienced the shortcomings and temptation of humanity (v. 3). Jesus was also fully God, proven by His sinless life and resurrection from the dead (v. 4). Even though tempted in His humanity, Jesus never fell to temptation because He recognized that **The Holy**

**Spirit is God and Empowerer** and relied upon the Spirit's presence and power to lead a holy and sinless life.

**Illustration:** When you walk through the doors of your school each morning, you become a student for the duration of time spent there and you have to live up to all the rules, expectations, and limitations that go with that position while you're there. Simultaneously, whether or not you are in the same physical location as your parents, you will always be their son or daughter. While your identity as your parents' child is unchanging, you fall under different rules and requirements in other social situations.

**Application:** During Jesus' time on earth, He was fully human and held to all the conditions of being human. He got tired; He needed food and water; He could die. Yet, even though physically separated from His Father in Heaven, Jesus was still fully divine as God's Son during His time on earth. Being fully human, Jesus faced great temptations, yet He overcame them by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit living within Him.

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### **3. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to walk in obedience to God (Romans 1:5-6).**

Paul emphasized that the grace of salvation is offered to all people who call upon the name of Jesus. God's grace is freely given, but it also includes the responsibility of apostleship, of being sent out to share the message of salvation with others (v. 5). All who belong to Christ are called to full obedience as a testimony of their faith (v. 6).

**Illustration:** In 2008, Dick and Rick Hoyt, a father and son team, were inducted into the Ironman Triathlon Hall of Fame. This feat is especially remarkable for Rick because he is a quadriplegic. Dick provided the human strength that Rick lacked in those races: Dick pushed his son in a racing wheelchair, carried him in a special seat on the front of his bicycle, and towed him in a raft attached to his life vest while swimming.<sup>1</sup> Rick desired to participate in these races but could not run, bike, or swim, so he let his father do those things for him.

**Application:** We are as incapable of living in holiness as Rick Hoyt is of accomplishing an Ironman Triathlon without the use of his legs or arms. Yet, we, too, have someone—in our case, the Holy Spirit—who provides strength to us to face temptation, carries us through difficult circumstances, and tows us to safety when we get into dangerous conditions.

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**Conclusion:** As believers, we cannot use our humanity as an excuse for failing to lead lives of holiness. Instead, we must recognize our limitations to be able to surrender to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to produce holiness in us.

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<sup>1</sup>"Interview with Rick & Dick Hoyt," Internet; Accessed 02May09; [www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4ackHJcFW0&feature=channel](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4ackHJcFW0&feature=channel); video available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPLCaAu\\_H2U&feature=channel](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPLCaAu_H2U&feature=channel).