



LESSON 1: The Spirit of Holiness

1 John 5:1-5

In the Disney classic movie *The Lion King*, the young lion cub Simba is next in line to become king of the jungle. Knowing his future position emboldens him to embark upon a journey that is far too treacherous for such an inexperienced cub. Due to his lack of experience and strength, Simba finds himself cornered by a pack of vicious hyenas. Intimidated by the pack, Simba attempts to scare them away in the same way he has no doubt seen his father the king do on countless occasions: Simba takes a deep breath and releases the most intimidating roar he can muster. Unfortunately, Simba's roar sounds more like a whisper and has no effect on the threatening hyenas. Simba decides to try again. After another deep breath, he opens his mouth, but this time comes an incredibly forceful roar, and the hyenas scatter. Simba, and the audience, is amazed and confused, until the true source of the roar is revealed—this powerful roar actually came from Mufasa, Simba's dad and king of the jungle. Simba was unable to scare off the hyenas with his own power, but through the power of his father, the king, the goal is accomplished and the hyenas flee.

Like Simba, believers in their own strength often fail at accomplishing certain goals. Thankfully, God generously pours His grace onto His children's failings because of the sacrifice of His son, Jesus Christ. This grace frees believers from a legalistic attempt to earn God's love through obedience to the law. But, believers must be careful to never abuse this gift by using grace as a justification for living only to satisfy their personal desires. Instead, believers are called to a life of holiness just as God is holy. Jesus Christ lived out this example of holiness in the flesh during His time on earth. However, even Jesus did not rely on His own power to fulfill this lifestyle of holiness. Believers today should not either.

In his letter to the church in Rome, Paul revealed the source of Jesus's strength and explained this same source is available to believers today. As a family, read Romans 1:1-6. Paul emphasized the importance and power of the Holy Spirit. Paul first illustrated the power of the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ's life. Because Jesus was fully God *and* fully man, He experienced temptation, just like all other believers on earth today. Yet, Jesus never fell to this temptation because He relied upon the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to lead a sinless life. Paul then informed believers that the same power that worked in Jesus's life and raised Him from the dead still works in the lives of believers today . . . if the believer is willing to yield to the Spirit. Believers must first admit their inability to live a life of holiness in their own strength power, before they can accept the Holy Spirit to help them walk in victory in this area of their life.

CONNECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways that believers try to accomplish holiness on their own? How do these attempts often work out?
2. Why can it be difficult to yield to the power of the Holy Spirit?
3. Can you describe an experience from your life where you knew you could not accomplish the task on your own, but the Holy Spirit supernaturally equipped you to complete it? How can you use that experience as an encouragement for other believers struggling with the idea of surrendering?