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Principles of Christian Growth

Section One: The Nature of Christian Growth – What is it?

Lesson Five: The Holy Spirit is critical to our Christian growth.

Bible Reading: Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 5:13-26

In the upper room the night of His crucifixion, Jesus explained to His disciples that He would be leaving them, and for this reason sorrow filled their hearts (John 14:28, 16:5-6). The consolation Jesus provided their sorrow was the promised coming of the Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit. Jesus calls Him “another Comforter,” meaning that having the Holy Spirit present would be very much like having Jesus with them as they grow in the Lord (14:15-17, 26-27, 16:7-15). *Comforter* is the word *Paraclete*, and it means *one called alongside*. He is with us to help us better love Christ and obey His commandments (14:15).

Discussion questions:

1. Two key Pauline passages on the Holy Spirit emphasize that His work in us is the opposite of the work of our flesh. The work of our flesh is what comes naturally to us apart from the Spirit. What are the characteristics of a life lived in the flesh? (Rom. 8:3-9; Gal. 5:13-15, 19-21, 26). In what sense are believers no longer in the flesh? (Rom. 8:9).
2. Paul mentions a fail-safe antidote to living life in the flesh for those who are indwelt by God’s Spirit. What is it? (Rom. 8:4, 12-14; Gal. 5:16).
3. Describe from Galatians 5 how each of these key words plays a role in walking in the Spirit: mind (v. 17), mortify (vv. 7-12), mentor (v. 18), mercy (v. 18), and ministry (vv. 6, 13-15).