

# Stretching Exercises

Sometimes the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit by other names. For example, in the King James translation, Jesus talks of the Spirit as the "Comforter." In John 14:16, he explains, "The Father ... shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Later, in John 16:7, Jesus says, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." If the Father gives the disciples a second Comforter, who was the first Comforter? Why couldn't this second Comforter come to them while Jesus was still on earth? Paraphrase what you think these passages mean.

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The Bible lists the fruits of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Think about your own experience in becoming a Christian and the changes that have occurred since you made your commitment. Complete these sentences.

I first felt the stirring of the Holy Spirit in me when ...

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Since the Holy Spirit came into my life, I have experienced the following positive changes ...

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We all have special gifts, given to us by the Spirit, to be used in spreading the gospel of Jesus. The Bible assures us that, "to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers,

to another prophecy ..." (1 Corinthians 12:7–10, niv). List your special gifts on the left; then, on the right, jot down how you might use those gifts "for the common good."

Gifts from the Spirit	Ways to use the gifts

**Meditation:** As you think about the Holy Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—consider a man who is a father, a son, and a spouse. He is one and the same, but he has different responsibilities in his various roles. The same is true of God. He is one, yet he reveals himself to us in three ways. As the Father, he has never been seen (John 1:18); as the Son, he has walked among us (John 1:14–18); as the Holy Spirit, he is working within us (John 16:8 and 1 Corinthians 6:19–20).

Record reflections in your journal.

**Prayer:** As you pray to God, thank him for the Holy Spirit's growing presence in your life. Ask that the Spirit's influence will continue to increase. Ask that you might recognize the gifts that God has given you. Finally, pray for guidance in developing and using those gifts to glorify him.

