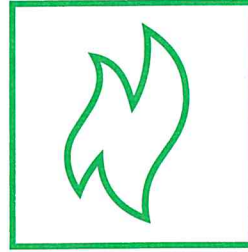


Question 36

What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?



Answer

That he is God, coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Big Idea

The Holy Spirit is God, and he is an eternal member of the Trinity.

Aim

To help the children understand that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, not a force, and that God has sent him to be our helper.

Bible Passage

John 14:15–31

Memory Verse

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”
(John 14:16–17)

Virtue

Love



Leader's Notes

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit must be explained to children simply and often in order for them to understand the Spirit's importance within the Godhead and his role in the Christian's life. This lesson will expand the knowledge that the children already have from Question 3. This lesson aims to reinforce in the children's understanding that the Holy Spirit is God and that he is coeternal with the Father and the Son.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is hard to understand; be patient, clear,

and concrete in your explanation. Some children will understand this doctrine quicker than others will. Make sure you engage both groups in the lesson. Try to communicate, by your tone and engagement with the lesson, just how amazing the concept of God living within his people is.

- Remember to mix and match the activities in the lesson to fit your time frame (see p. 12 for some sample outlines). You won't have time to do them all. Feel free to adapt each activity based on your class's strengths and weaknesses.

Leader's Prayer

Triune God, I give you great praise as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thank you for your amazing work in your world and in my life. Thank you, God the Father, for sending the Holy Spirit and for his indwelling presence in my life. I rejoice that each day

he is at work helping me to see more of Jesus and become more Christlike. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they be filled with joy and wonder as they behold the Triune God. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- Q36 Recap (DL), printed out and cut into individual words
- Envelopes
- Whiteboard and marker
- A recording of "Triune Praise" by Shai Linne and a means to play the song
- Paper
- Crayons
- Large piece of construction paper



10 Catechism Recap

Print out and cut up Q36 Catechism Recap (DL). Place the words in an envelope. Make enough sets for the children to work in small groups of four or five.

Divide the children into small groups and give each group an envelope containing the question and answer for catechism

Question 3. Tell the children that each envelope contains a full question and answer and that they need to figure out the question and answer by placing the words in the correct order. Give the children a set amount of time to work out the question and answer. Tell the children that Question 3 links closely with the question in this lesson.

Notes

5 Introduction to Question 36

Ask the children what it means to help someone. Invite them to name members of the helping professions. They will most likely think of:

- Doctor
- Nurse
- Firefighter
- Police Officer
- Paramedic
- Teacher
- Soldier

Explain to the children that this lesson is all about the special helper that God sends to his people in his world. God knew that his people would always need his help, and so he promised to be with them to the end of the age. Introduce Question 36: “What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?” Remind the children that Question 3 of the catechism teaches that there are three persons in one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Tell the children that this question will help them to learn more about God the Holy Spirit, who is the promised helper.

10 Activity

Explain to the children that you are going to make some statements about the Holy Spirit and they must decide whether the statement is true or false. Instruct the children to go to the left-hand side of the room if they think the statement is true and the right-hand side of the room if they think the statement is false. Tell the children they

can stand in the middle of the room if they are unsure of the answer.

1. The Holy Spirit first appears in the New Testament. **False**

The Holy Spirit is coeternal with God and was present at the creation of the world (Gen. 1:1).



2. The Holy Spirit is a person. **True**

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity.

3. The Holy Spirit lives in all people. **False**

The Holy Spirit dwells in those who have been born again (Rom. 8:9–10).

4. The Holy Spirit first appeared on the day of Pentecost. **False**

The Holy Spirit came upon believers on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–13), but he has existed eternally and been active throughout history (1 Sam. 16:13).

5. The Holy Spirit is the promised helper. **True**

Jesus promised to send someone in his place when he ascended into heaven (John 14:15–17). The Holy Spirit is that promised helper.

6. The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in the Trinity. **True**

Yes, the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in the Trinity. The Trinity is made up of three equal persons in one God.

7. The Holy Spirit loves the Father and the Son. **True**

The members of the Godhead have always existed in a loving relationship (1 John 4:16).

To conclude this activity, ask the children to finish these statements:

- The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is ____? (Answer: God)
- The Son is not the Father, the Father is not the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the ____? (Answer: Son or Father)

15 Teaching Outline

Begin the teaching time by asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Read John 14:15–31. Provide Bibles for the children to read along.

Explain to the children that in this passage in John, Jesus is speaking to his disciples. He is explaining that one day he will have to leave them, but he promises that he will send someone else to be with them.

Jesus describes the One who will come as another helper, a person like Jesus.

In verse 17, Jesus makes it clear who this helper will be; he calls him the Spirit of truth. The Holy Spirit is the promised helper. Tell the children that sometimes people think the Holy Spirit is just a life force or strange power, but in the Bible, the Holy Spirit is always portrayed as a person. That means he has a will and he acts. Even more, the Holy Spirit is described as God (Acts 5:3–4).

**Notes**

The disciples were very sad at the thought of Jesus leaving them, but he reassured them that they would never be alone in life because of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. And they would one day be in Jesus's presence again.

Highlight for the children that this is a most amazing gift to Christians! The Holy Spirit lives in them at Jesus's request. The people in the helping professions assist others only on occasions of need, but the Holy Spirit is with God's people all the time to help because he lives in them!

Ask the children how significant they think the presence of the Holy Spirit is in the life of the Christian. Explain that there is no similar idea in any other religion. The fact that God the Holy Spirit lives in Christians is truly unique.

God the Holy Spirit comes to live in Christians to help them learn more about

Jesus and understand more about Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the teacher of truth (v. 26) and he is a bringer of peace (v. 27).

Conclude this teaching time by explaining to the children that the Holy Spirit

- is personal
- is God
- is a gift for Christians, but the rest of the world cannot see or understand him
- reveals more of Jesus to God's people

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 36 and the answer to memory.

(These notes are just for guidance. Please expand or amend them to suit your own children and context. Write out your talk in your own words and include illustrations and applications that you know will connect with your children.)

**Activity**

You will need to be able to play Shai Linne's "Triune Praise" for the children to listen to. You will also need paper and crayons for each child.

Play "Triune Praise" and invite the children to write down words that stand out to them about the Trinity—especially about the Holy Spirit. Let them decorate and embellish the words with crayons as they listen to the song.



Discussion and Question Time

Some questions that might arise include:

? **When does the Holy Spirit come to live in Christians, and can they feel it?**

Explain to the children that the Holy Spirit comes to live in a person the moment he or she becomes a Christian. The new Christian may not feel anything, but the Holy Spirit will start to make a difference in his or her life by helping him or her to follow Jesus.

? **If the Holy Spirit is a person, why can't I see him?**

Like God the Father, the Holy Spirit is not visible. He is Spirit and does not have a body, yet we should not confuse him with an impersonal force.

Also use this opportunity to help the children think about their own lives and how this question and answer affects them personally.

- Ask the children if they find joy in understanding more about the Holy Spirit and his role in the Christian's life.
- Ask the children how they might explain the concept of the Holy Spirit to someone who's never heard about him before.
- Ask the children if they've ever experienced the help of the Holy Spirit.



Virtue Vision

Love

Point out to the children that we usually associate love with Valentine's Day, puppies, our favorite sports teams, or other things that make us feel good. Some things and people are easy to love. But some are not so easy to love. Ask the children to describe a situation in which it is hard to show love.

Tell the children that one reason God has given us the Holy Spirit is to help us learn how to love when it isn't easy. The Holy Spirit has always been in relationship with the Father and Son. They have a perfect

relationship of love, even though they are three different persons with different roles.

Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, he is willing to coach us through difficult situations to help us love difficult people.

Take a couple of the scenarios the children mentioned in which it is difficult to show love and imagine with the children some of the ways the Holy Spirit, our helper, might coach them through a loving response to a difficult person. If time permits, you could role play the scenarios.



10 Memory Activity

You will need to write out the memory verse or catechism question and answer on a large piece of construction paper. Cut the memory verse up into puzzle pieces and hide them around the classroom before the lesson starts.

Tell the children that the memory verse is hidden around the classroom and ask them

to find the pieces. As the children begin to bring the pieces back, encourage them to start making the puzzle to reveal the memory verse. Once the puzzle is completed, say the memory verse together several times. Then start removing pieces of the puzzle to see how much the children can recall.

Notes

5 Closing Prayer Time

Invite the children to thank God for his loving gift of the Holy Spirit. Invite them to mention specific areas of their lives where they need his help.

