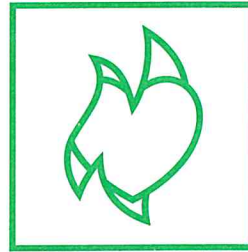


Question 37

How does the Holy Spirit help us?



Answer

The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin,
and he enables us to pray and
to understand God's Word.

Big Idea

God the Holy Spirit is at work in his people convicting them of sin, helping them understand and apply the Word, and helping them pray.

Aim

To help the children understand how the Holy Spirit helps Christians in everyday life.

Bible Passage

Ephesians 6:10–20

Memory Verse

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.” (Eph. 6:17–18)

Virtue

Honesty





Notes

Leader's Notes

The children will understand that the various people in their lives play different roles. They daily see their parents, teachers, and coaches perform their particular duties and responsibilities. This lesson should help the children understand the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian and illuminate the kind of work that the Holy Spirit does in equipping, enabling, nurturing, and teaching God's people. His role has strong similarities with that of parent, teacher, and coach. This lesson aims to continue to teach the children about the Holy Spirit and to help them grow in their understanding of who he is and what he does.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- Remember that some children may have a good grasp of who the Holy Spirit is and what his role is; try to stretch them while also being sensitive to those who are struggling to comprehend.
- Remember that some of the children will have a personal faith and others will not. Be sure to communicate that the indwelling of the Spirit occurs at the moment of personal conversion.
- 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

Gracious God, thank you for your kindness in sending your Spirit to dwell in the hearts of your people. I praise you that he is my helper and counselor. Thank you that he shows me more of Jesus as I study your Word and that he intercedes for me. May I continue to be refined by

the sword of the Spirit, and may I use the sword of the Spirit to point others to Jesus. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. May they gain a deeper understanding of your work. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- Whiteboard and markers
- Sticky Tack
- Paper
- Markers
- Q37 Illustrations of Roman armor (RB)
- Construction paper



- Tape
- Scissors
- Ball

Notes

10 Catechism Recap

Have Question and Answer 36 on hand.

Ask the children if they remember the answer from last week's question. Ask, "What do we believe about the Holy Spirit?" and let students take turns answering until

someone gets it exactly right. Divide the children into pairs. Have them take turns asking and answering the question in the voice of a mouse, then a frog, a giant, and a whale. They can look at the words to jog their memory if they need to.

5 Introduction to Question 37

You will need a whiteboard divided into three sections. Section 1 should have "The Role of a Teacher" written at the top; section 2 should have "The Role of a Parent" written at the top; and section 3 should have "The Role of a Soccer Coach" written at the top.

Write the following on individual slips of paper:

- Teaching children to read
- Organizing school events
- Teaching children how to behave in the classroom
- Planning lessons
- Training players
- Developing new ball skills
- Teaching team members how to be good sports
- Giving pointers on how to score
- Planning match tactics
- Providing pregame nutritional advice

- Doing the laundry
- Cooking meals
- Teaching children to obey
- Comforting children when they have a bad dream
- Keeping the family safe

Lay out the fifteen different pieces of paper and invite the children to stick them on the whiteboard (using Sticky Tack) in one of the three sections. Encourage the children to consider which action is consistent with the role of a parent, teacher, or soccer coach. The aim of this activity is to help the children understand the role and responsibilities that come with a job title. Introduce Question 37: "How does the Holy Spirit help us?" Explain to the children that this lesson will help them understand more about the role of God the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian.

**Activity**

The Bible references below speak of the role of the Holy Spirit. Stick the Bible references up around the classroom. Do not include the job titles.

- John 14:16 (helper)
- John 14:27 (giver of peace)
- John 15:26 (helper and teacher)
- John 16:7-8 (helper and convictor of sin)
- John 16:13 (teacher of truth)
- Romans 8:11 (giver of life)
- Romans 8:26 (helper in prayer)

Divide the children into small groups and assign each group one or two verses.

Give each group a Bible. Tell the children that they need to figure out the role or job description for the Holy Spirit by looking up their Bible verses and figuring out what they say about the role of the Holy Spirit.

Once the children have had sufficient time to investigate their verses, ask them to share what they've discovered about the Holy Spirit. Write a job description list for the Holy Spirit on the whiteboard. Ask the children if anything surprised them or confused them.

Assure them that the teaching time will bring more clarity.

**Teaching Outline**

Have Q37 Illustrations of Roman Armor (RB) ready.

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.

Remind the children that God the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity and that he has a vital role in bringing people to faith in God and also in helping God's people to live for him in the world. The Holy Spirit indwells Christian believers the moment they put their trust in Jesus, and from that time onward he is at work in Christians, helping them to understand more about Jesus and to become more like Jesus. Highlight for

the children all the different things detailed on the Holy Spirit's job description (which they listed when they looked up the Bible references) to emphasize how significant he is for Christians. Particularly remind the children that the Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin, helps Christians to pray, and helps them understand the Bible.

Read Ephesians 6:10–20. Provide Bibles for the children to read along. Hold up the illustrations of Roman armor while you read.

Explain to the children that Paul is writing to the Christians in Ephesus and is preparing them to contend for Jesus in the world. He uses the imagery of Roman armor to help them understand how to equip



Notes

themselves for war against the Devil, who works to keep people away from Jesus. Paul writes about putting on the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of peace, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation. Paul also speaks about taking up the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; this is the only weapon Paul identifies as necessary for facing the battle.

Ask the children what a sword is capable of. It can do real damage; it can pierce and wound and even kill. Ask the children what they think Paul is saying by describing the Bible as the sword of the Spirit.

Explain to the children that God describes his Word as a sword (Heb. 4:12). God also declares that his Word was written down by men inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20–21). So, the sword of the Spirit comes from God.

God's Word protects Christians from spiritual attack as they study it and believe God's promises. It cuts away the truth from the lies told by the world.

Paul also commands the Ephesian Christians to pray in the Spirit. This is a

great reminder that the Holy Spirit is an essential component of a Christian's prayer life. Explain to the children that to pray in the Spirit means to pray in a way that is consistent with God's Word. Ask the children to think of ways people might pray that are not consistent with God's Word. Ask them to give examples of ways to pray in line with God's Word. Remind the children that the Holy Spirit lives in each Christian and that he also prays for each Christian (Rom. 8:26).

Explain to the children that God knew his people would struggle with prayer, so he didn't leave his people without help. He sent the Holy Spirit to teach, encourage, and expose the hearts and minds of Christians. He leads, instructs, and inspires the prayers of Christians.

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 37 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 some construction paper, scissors, markers, and tape.

Invite the children to make a paper sword. Encourage them to be as creative as possible—there's no wrong way to do it.

Ask them to write the words “the sword of the Spirit—Ephesians 6:17” on the sword. The children could also write the sixty-six books of the Bible on their swords, or one of their favorite Bible verses.





Notes

As the children are making the swords, discuss with them what the sword of the Spirit is and how it will help them to stand firm for Jesus in his world.

Display the swords around the classroom before letting the children take them home.

5 Discussion and Question Time

Some questions that might arise include:

? Why do I need the help of the Holy Spirit?

Explain to the children that without the help of the Holy Spirit, humans would be inclined to live in ways that focus on themselves and not on Jesus. Also remind the children that the Holy Spirit helps Christians to understand what God's Word means.

? Why do I need to pray if the Holy Spirit is praying for me?

Explain to the children that God loves to hear the prayers of his people and has instituted prayer as a way for his people to respond to his Word and to talk to him. The Holy Spirit is the Christian's guide and help.

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

? What is the difference between the Holy Spirit and my conscience?

Every person alive has a conscience, but only those who have been born again have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. A conscience can alert us when we've broken God's law, but the Holy Spirit has the power to change our hearts and make us people who want to do what is righteous.

- Ask the children if they are determined to know God's Word so it might be the sword of the Spirit in their lives.
- Ask the children if it is a comfort to know that the Holy Spirit aids them in prayer.
- Ask the children if they understand the role of the Holy Spirit more fully.

10 Virtue Vision



Honesty

Ask the children if they appreciate honesty. Ask them how they feel when people lie to them or hide the truth from them.

Hebrews 6:18 says that God cannot lie. Since we have learned that the Holy Spirit is himself God, what do we know about the Holy Spirit? (He cannot lie.)



Notes

Explain to the children that an honest and truthful character is evidence of the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer influencing our actions.

Point out to the children that the answer to today's catechism question says that the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. We use the word *convict* when someone is arrested and found guilty of a crime. When people are convicted, they are given a punishment.

Ask the children, if the Holy Spirit "convicts" you of lying or telling a half truth, is he going

to send you to jail like a judge would? The answer is no. Help the children consider why that is. Help them to see that Jesus has taken our punishment. But though our punishment has been taken, we still need the conviction of the Holy Spirit so that we can confess our sin to the person we have sinned against. It is hard to tell someone else we've lied to him or her, but the Holy Spirit is in us to give us courage to do the right thing.

10 Memory Activity

You will need a ball and the memory verse or catechism question and answer written on a piece of poster board. Have some pieces of paper and Sticky Tack handy that you can place over the words of the verse to cover them up.

- Put the poster board with the memory verse or catechism question and answer on the wall.
- Divide the children into two teams.
- Invite the children to read through the memory verse with you several times.
- Gradually cover up the words.

- Have the teams stand in two straight lines and then face each other.

Throw the ball to a child. He is expected to say the first word of the memory verse or catechism question. He should then throw the ball to a child on the opposite team, who is expected to say the second word of the memory verse. Continue down the lines. If a child doesn't remember the word or gets it wrong, he should throw the ball and then sit down. The team with the most team members still standing is the winner at the end.

5 Closing Prayer Time

Invite a volunteer to lead the class in prayer, asking God to use his Holy Spirit to convict us of sin, to help us pray, and

to make us more honest and loving, even when it isn't easy.

