

SESSION 2:

WORD & SPIRIT

TEACHER REVIEW - SESSION 2

PREPARING FOR SESSION 2

In this session, you will be helping participants to understand how we hold our Bible-Honoring and Spirit-Filled distinctives in godly tension in the life of our church. While these distinctives may seem to be at odds to some, we want participants in our class to see how both Word and Spirit are vital to healthy church life and impactful church ministry. We want to communicate clearly the ways that participants can start leaning into these distinctives right away in their lives.

If you are teaching this session, you will need to be prepared to:

- Lead an exercise on Word and Spirit churches and the participant's relationship with them
- Give practical advice around reading Scripture
- Explain the spiritual gift of prophecy with competency and confidence
- Briefly share a personal story about an encouraging prophetic word
- Lead an exercise on reading the Bible while listening to the Spirit

BIG IDEAS

- The Tension of Word and Spirit Churches
- Submitting to the Scriptures
- Practical guidelines for reading the Bible:
 1. **Prioritize Communion**
 2. **Submit to the Word**
 3. **Learn the Context**
 4. **Look for Christ**
 5. **Make it a Habit**
 6. **Read with Others**
- Spiritual Gifts in the Church
- Engaging Prophecy through Listening Prayer:
 1. **Posture Yourself**
 2. **Invite the Spirit**
 3. **Don't Force it**
 4. **Test with Scripture**
 5. **Share**
- Sunday Liturgy

SESSION TIMELINE: 45 MIN TOTAL

Word & Spirit Church with Exercise (7 min)

Being Bible-Honoring (7 min)

Being Spirit-Filled (10 min)

Liturgy (5 min)

Exercise: Reading the Bible (15 min)

Session 2: Word & Spirit

FRONTLINE MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Questions

- (1) Which of these two columns are you more comfortable with or tend to emphasize more?
- (2) Which of these two columns are you more concerned about being neglected in the local church?

WORD	SPIRIT
Process	Event
Knowledge	Experience
Sermon	Worship
Intellect	Affections
Reformation	Revival
Obedience to God	Intimacy with God
Principles	Power
Justification	Sanctification
Faith in God	Love for God
Biblically-Informed Wisdom	Spiritually-Imparted Discernment

New Testament Gifts

Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:1-11

- Service
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Generosity
- Leadership
- Acts of mercy
- Words of wisdom
- Words of knowledge
- Faith
- Gifts of Healings
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Discerning between spirits
- Tongues
- Interpretation of tongues
- Helping
- Administering

We can grow in the way we read Scripture by:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____

Guidelines for practicing listening prayer:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

✓ Flip page for exercise.



Exercise: Reading the Bible

The following exercise aims to help you practice embracing both Word and Spirit in your daily life. In the Bible, we find unity of Word and Spirit. The Bible is the very Word of God. Likewise, the Bible was inspired by the Spirit of God. We are going to open our Bibles together and walk through an exercise to help us learn to study the words of the Bible and listen to the Spirit as we read the Bible.

Part 1: Read the Passage

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 3:14-19 aloud for the entire class.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (Eph 3:14–19)

Part 2: Listening Prayer

Each person should spend 3 minutes in prayer, quietly listening, and asking the Spirit to speak. As you listen, write down any pictures or impressions God seems to bring to mind. Reflect on the following questions.

- ▶ What word or phrase stands out to you in the passage?
- ▶ As you reflect on the passage, what are you thinking or feeling about God?
- ▶ What might the Spirit be saying to you? What might God want you to know, do, or become?

Part 3: Study

Take 3 minutes to read back through the passage yourself and look for the three things listed here.

As you read on your own, try to write down at least one thing from each category.



A star: anything that shines out in the passage and draws attention—it can be something important, or something that strikes you



A question mark: anything that is hard to understand—something that you would like to be able to ask the author about



An arrow: anything that applies personally to your everyday life

One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian, David Helm

Part 4: Sharing

Take 5 minutes to each share in turn at your table what the Spirit highlighted for you through this exercise.

You can share a star, a question mark, or an arrow—or any other general sense from the Spirit you are willing to share.



SESSION 2: WORD & SPIRIT (45 MIN, 9:50-10:35a)

- Introduce yourself briefly if this is your first session to teach.

WORD & SPIRIT CHURCH WITH EXERCISE (7 MIN)

One of our values is our desire to be a church that inhabits tensions. We believe healthy churches inhabit tensions. When faced with biblical tension, we might be tempted to pick a ditch because it feels more comfortable and neatly wrapped. Yet, we believe that embracing all that the Scripture has for us will require us to embrace tensions. When God invites us to hold a healthy tension, we don't want to resolve it cheaply. We want to inhabit that tension.

In the church today, a passion for the Bible and a passion for the Holy Spirit can seem at odds with one another. Churches typically fall into one of these two camps. You have your "Word" churches, which usually prize doctrine and deep theology. They have a serious reverence towards God. Usually, they see "Spirit" churches as crazy and overly emotional. But on the other side, you have your "Spirit" churches, which prize passion, manifestations of the Spirit, and the freedom found in Christ. Usually, they see "Word" churches as quenching the Spirit and deadening the soul.

But when we look at the early church in the Bible, we see the Word and Spirit come together as one. At Frontline, we want to be a Word and Spirit church. The following exercise will challenge you to consider which side of this tension you tend to fall into to. As we recognize where we fall, we pray that God will grow us in how we inhabit this godly tension.

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

Exercise Set-Up: On your Worksheets, there are two columns which list what is typically emphasized in Word and Spirit churches. On your own, take 2 minutes to read through those two columns and answer the accompanying questions above them.

- These questions and the Word & Spirit lists are in their worksheet. However, it would be best practice to read the questions aloud.

Questions: (1) Which of these two columns are you more comfortable with or tend to emphasize more? (2) Which of these two columns are you more concerned about being neglected in the local church?

TEACHER SIDEBAR

- These columns are for reference only. You don't need to read them aloud.

- The Reflection is not on the worksheet. Be sure to emphasize the instructions and question.

WORD

Process
Knowledge
Sermon
Intellect
Reformation
Obedience to God
Principles
Justification
Faith in God
Biblically-Informed Wisdom

SPIRIT

Event
Experience
Worship
Affections
Revival
Intimacy with God
Power
Sanctification
Love for God
Spiritually-Imparted Discernment

Post-Exercise Reflection: Did you choose the same column for both questions? If so, you can assume the opposite column is the one *you* are most in danger of neglecting.

Now, take 2 minutes to look at the column you did not choose, or the column you know you need to work on most. Circle one area in that column that you can commit to take a step to grow in.

We all have a temptation to one side of this tension or the other. So now, we want to step back and see what it would look like to more fully embrace both Word and Spirit.

BEING BIBLE-HONORING (7 MIN)

How do we inhabit the tension of being a Bible-honoring and Spirit-filled church?

In order to grow as a Bible-honoring church, we have to gain a real sense of why Scripture matters. God tells his people that life is found in his word.

... man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deut 8:3)

Christians turn to God's word again and again, because we find God there. In the Word of God, we see and receive the love of God. When we receive the Bible with eagerness, it begins to shape our vision of the good life. Not only our actions, but our imaginations become transformed by God's word. When we have a Bible-imagination, the things we love, hate, desire, and long for come from Scripture.

TEACHER SIDEBAR

Honoring the Bible means that the Bible has weight in our lives. The Bible gets first say when it comes to what we believe, how we worship, how we live our lives, what we see as good or praiseworthy, and how we evaluate what is beautiful or desirable. Honoring the Bible means that we learn to “speak Scripture” as our mother tongue. Scripture may not be the only language that we want fluency in. But before we speak in the language of politics, philosophy, science, or culture, we submit any and all other words to the Word of God. We don’t worship the Bible; we worship God. Yet, the God we worship has given us the Bible as his authoritative Word. So, we translate the Bible into every part of our lives.

However, many of us have never been taught how to spend time alone with God. Talking about Bible fluency only overwhelms. Reading the Bible becomes a real struggle that often makes us feel shame and embarrassment. We may easily get bored, distracted, or confused. The busyness of our day-to-day life prevents us from getting time alone. We don’t know where to begin or what to do. If that’s you, you are not alone.

READING THE WORD

Because we may not have been taught to spend time alone with God, the Bible can be intimidating for us. It is a big book that is not always easy to read or understand. So what does it look like to grow as a Bible-honoring Christian in the way we read Scripture? We can grow in the way we read Scripture by starting with these six practices. You can write these down in the blanks.

► Fill in the Blank

1. Prioritize Communion

When we read the Bible, we are not just learning information about God. Instead, it is one of the primary ways we connect with God. We should come to the Bible with prayer and humility, knowing that the Spirit of God wants to shape us through it. Being unhurried and attentive here will make all the difference. Take time to hear how God might be specifically speaking to you at this moment.

► Fill in the Blank

2. Submit to the Word

As the Word of God, the Bible is the highest authority for our church. Before we turn to the voices of the world, we seek God’s

TEACHER SIDEBAR

wisdom through his word. To be Bible-honoring people, we must bring ourselves underneath Scripture. It has the final say over our lives. We humbly and eagerly receive its teachings, corrections, and rebukes. As James 1:22 tells us, we must not be hearers of the word only, but doers of the word.

► Fill in the Blank

3. Learn the Context

Each book of the Bible was written in a particular context for a particular reason. When we are unaware of the context, we can take passages and make them mean something the author never intended. We have to look at a whole passage and ask who wrote it and why they wrote it. We must also recognize the genre of each work. Some Scriptures are poetry, while other parts are historical records, both of which should be interpreted differently.

► Fill in the Blank

4. Look for Christ

All of Scripture is about Jesus. To understand it fully, we need to listen to what it is saying about him. Jesus himself was quite explicit on this point. “You search the scriptures... it is they that bear witness about me” (Jn 5:39). The message of Scripture is only accurately and fully heard if we hear the message about Jesus in it. A fundamental question when reading any part of the Bible is, “What does this passage tell me about Jesus?”

► Fill in the Blank

5. Make It a Habit

God calls us to be people of the Book, who constantly have God’s word on our minds and hearts.

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. (Josh 1:8)

The more and more we read the Bible, the more and more it makes sense to us. Some of you just need to start somewhere, maybe a chapter at a time. Don’t be discouraged if your grasp of certain words, phrases, and passages seems unclear after one reading. That’s actually how it is meant to be! We come to the Bible again and again, because there is always more to quench our thirst.

6. Read With Others

The Bible is the word of God for the people of God. It is meant to be read with others in community. We practice this distinctive together when we submit to the preaching of the word on Sundays. We also engage this in Community Groups when we study God's word in our discipleship groups. We don't want to just be Bible-honoring people, but we want to be a Bible-honoring church that strives to come under God's word together.

BEING SPIRIT-FILLED (10 MIN)

As we submit to God's word, we also want to be a Spirit-filled church. We believe that gospel ministry should be marked by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. As we rely on the Spirit, we expect to see him work in miraculous ways. We desire to see more people saved, healed, and changed by the work of the Spirit. We want our church to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. We want to surrender to the Spirit in every area of life. So how can we grow as a Spirit-filled church?

One way to grow in being Spirit-filled is by leaning into our spiritual gifts. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each Christian for the good and upbuilding of the church. These gifts are demonstrations of the Spirit's presence among his people. Spiritual gifts are not personality traits, but they are the various ways that the Spirit works in and through the church. Some may be permanent, while others are circumstantial. Some may seem more supernatural, while others may seem less supernatural. However, all of them are given and empowered by the Spirit as he wills.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor 12:4–7)

We believe that all of the gifts mentioned in the New Testament are still active today, including tongues, healing, and prophecy. Scripture commands us to pursue all of the gifts because they demonstrate his love and kindness towards us.

TEACHER SIDEBAR

- Participant Worksheets include a list of gifts listed in the worksheet. Emphasize that point.

So how do we know what spiritual gifts we have? There are a variety of gifts mentioned in the New Testament. You can take a look at your worksheet for this session and see a list of those, however the New Testament lists were not meant to be exhaustive. They describe the multitude of ways that the Holy Spirit works among his people. You can't just take a test and figure it out.

At the end of the day, spiritual gifts are the ways we love others. The Bible encourages us to pursue them as ways to love one another, and as we do this, our spiritual gifts will naturally manifest themselves.

PROPHETIC WORDS

- If you have a personal story of how you have been encouraged by a prophetic word from another Christian, consider briefly sharing that story here.

In Scripture, we see emphasis placed on the spiritual gift of prophecy. This gift in particular tends towards encouragement and edification within the church. In the New Testament, the purpose of the gift of prophecy is the building up of the church and the believer. (1 Cor 14:3-4). As such, we are all called to pursue and earnestly desire to prophesy.

Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. (1 Cor 14:1)

In the New Testament, prophecy is when a person communicates something that God has spontaneously brought to mind. It could be a word, a verse of scripture, an impression, a dream, or a picture. However, it does not carry the weight of Scriptural authority. When someone speaks a prophetic word today, it may contain errors. Therefore, prophecy should always come underneath the authority of Scripture and be submitted to the discernment of the church. At Frontline, we want to be a church that leans into the prophetic. The Spirit still speaks today, and we can hear his voice, if we listen. He speaks to us in and through the Scriptures, but he also speaks to us through other people for our upbuilding.

One way we can pursue this gift is by leaning into what we call "listening prayer." Listening prayer is being open-handed with God and attentively waiting for whatever he wants to say to us. Many times, the Spirit is speaking, but we aren't listening. Listening prayer simply postures our hearts to hear God speak. When we take time to stop and listen, he might give us a prophetic word.

TEACHER SIDEBAR

If listening prayer is new to you, don't worry—It's probably new for others in the room too. Here are a few guidelines for practicing listening prayer. Again, you can fill in the blank here.

► Fill in the Blank

1. Posture Yourself

Physical postures and practices can help to focus your attention on the moment. Perhaps this means kneeling with your face to the ground. Perhaps this looks like standing with open hands. There are a variety of physical postures that may be helpful.

► Fill in the Blank

2. Invite the Spirit

Briefly pray and invite the Holy Spirit to speak. Ask him questions like, "Is there a word of encouragement or comfort that you would like me to bring to anyone?" Or "Is there anything that you have been speaking to me about that I have ignored?"

► Fill in the Blank

3. Don't Force It

We won't receive a picture or impression every time we engage listening prayer. And that's okay. If you don't sense anything, don't be discouraged. Also, resist the temptation to force a picture in your head. We don't create prophetic words. We receive them from God.

► Fill in the Blank

4. Test With Scripture

If you do get a prophetic word, always test it with Scripture. The Spirit of God will never contradict what he has spoken in the word of God. This requires us to continually grow in our knowledge of the Bible. It is generally good practice to also seek the counsel and wisdom of our elders, especially when we are in doubt. They can help us know whether, with whom, and when to share something.

► Fill in the Blank

5. Share

If you receive a prophetic word for someone, share with them. As you share, avoid grand pronouncements or definitive language, like "thus sayeth the Lord." Instead, consider saying, "I have a sense..." or "I feel like God is saying..." You might get it wrong, so share with that sense of humility. At the same time, prophecy requires risk and faith. You might look silly. You might get it completely

TEACHER SIDEBAR

wrong. But you have to be willing to fail so that God might powerfully use the gift of prophecy to build up the church.

As we faithfully seek to practice the gifts of the Spirit, and especially that we may prophecy, we believe that God will bless, grow, comfort, and build up our church into the image of Jesus Christ.

LITURGY (5 MIN)

Weekly we encounter the beautiful union of Word and Spirit is in our liturgy. Liturgy is the intentional order and practices of our Sunday gatherings. Liturgy points us toward God's word, and it creates a space for the Spirit to move within us.

Some of us may associate liturgy with Roman Catholicism. Reciting prayers and receiving a benediction may seem rigid and inauthentic. But rather than mechanical repetition of pre-written words, we believe the Spirit uses liturgy to shape and form our hearts toward Jesus. When we recite creeds, stand for the reading of God's Word, and confess our sins together, we are training ourselves to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Even when we don't "feel" the words we are saying, liturgy speaks truth to our heart and recalibrates our affections.

Here are some common elements of our Sunday liturgy.

► These liturgical elements are not in their worksheets.

Call to Worship. Beginning each of our services, the Call to Worship is an invitation to the feast of grace, to receive help from the presence of God. Through the reading of Scripture, the Spirit of God is calling us to worship him.

Confession and Assurance. We confess our sins and our need for grace with one voice, followed by a proclamation of the forgiveness we have received through the sacrifice of Jesus. It teaches us how to repent, confess, and remember the gospel throughout our lives.

Intercession. We pray for God's justice and goodness to be poured out on Christians, non-Christians, leaders, cities, and nations. Intercession teaches the believer how to participate in the mission of God through prayer.

Benediction. Benediction comes from a Latin word meaning "blessing." It is a pastoral impartation of grace upon the people. Most often a passage of Scripture is read as a charge over the

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people of God before they are sent from the gathered body. The benediction blesses the people of God as they are sent on mission.

What does a church look like that inhabits this tension of Word and Spirit? Andrew Wilson describes it like this,

Imagine a service that includes healing testimonies and prayers of confession... Creeds that move the soul and rhythms that move the body. Imagine young men seeing visions, old men dreaming dreams, sons and daughters prophesying, and all of them coming to the same Table and then going on their way rejoicing. (Andrew Wilson, *Spirit and Sacrament*)

We pray that God makes us just such a church.

EXERCISE: READING THE BIBLE (15 MIN)

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

- This passage is listed on their worksheet.

- Be prepared ahead of time to cue up some instrumental music for the moment.

TEACHER SET UP (2 MIN)

The following exercise aims to help you practice embracing both Word and Spirit in your daily life. In the Bible, we find unity of Word and Spirit. The Bible is the very Word of God. Likewise, the Bible was inspired by the Spirit of God. We are going to open our Bibles together and walk through an exercise to help us learn to study the words of the Bible and listen to the Spirit as we read the Bible.

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 3:14-19 aloud for the entire class.

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1. *Listening Prayer (3 Min)*

Each person should spend 3 *minutes* in prayer, quietly listening and asking the Spirit to speak. As you listen, write down any pictures or impressions that it seems God brings to mind. Reflect on the following questions.

- What word or phrase stands out to you in the passage?
- As you reflect on the passage, what are you thinking or feeling about God?
- What might the Spirit be saying to you? What might God want you to know, do, or become?

TEACHER SIDEBAR

- Keep track of time for people, either by setting a timer or keeping an eye on the clock.

2. Study (3 Min)

Take 3 minutes to read back through the passage yourself and look for the three things listed here. As you read on your own, try to write down at least one thing from each category.



A star: anything that shines out in the passage and draws attention—it can be something important, or something that strikes you



A question mark: anything that is hard to understand—something that you would like to be able to ask the author about



An arrow: anything that applies personally to your everyday life

One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian, David Helm

- Feel free to join a table and engage the discussion.
- If you notice tables are wrapping up early, feel free to bring them back sooner.

3. Sharing (5 Min)

Take 5 minutes to each share in turn at your table what the Spirit highlighted for you through this exercise. You can share a star, a question mark, or an arrow—or any other general sense from the Spirit you are willing to share.

POST-EXERCISE / SESSION WRAP UP

You can continue to use this method as you try to make reading Scripture a habit. This method is especially fruitful to do with others, so you can share and learn from one another.

BREAK (5 MIN, 10:35-10:40a)