



TABLE TALK

Conversation starters, prayers, and practices to help you grow in Christ

THE WAY FORWARD: Discovering the Spirit's Path in Acts (Weeks 1-5)

Here's a short description of our current sermon series.

In this exhilarating series, we'll embark on a journey through the book of Acts, tracing the footsteps of the early church and witnessing the extraordinary ways the Holy Spirit empowered and guided its formation. We'll delve into the Spirit's role in equipping the disciples with boldness and supernatural gifts, leading them to unprecedented growth and impact. By studying their sensitivity to the Spirit's promptings, we'll uncover timeless principles for how he might be leading us to lay the next bricks of the 21st-century church in Memphis. **This journey promises to ignite our faith, deepen our dependence on the Spirit, and inspire us to be a Spirit-led community that reflects God's love and power to the world around us.** Join us as we discover how the lessons of those who went before us can empower us to bring renewal to God's good world today.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE - Praying Boldly

We believe that Jesus' teaching is more than just knowledge for our minds (though it is certainly that). It should transform our actions. By living out - or practicing - the ways of Jesus, we are being shaped into a people who look more and more like Him.

In the book of Acts, we witness courageous believers who pray bold prayers of salvation, healing, unity, and deliverance. God's Word encourages us to come boldly to God in prayer because we are his children, redeemed by Christ and sealed with the Holy Spirit. It can be hard to pray bold prayers. We might be afraid of disappointment or "getting our hopes up". We might be afraid of ridicule or rejection. Or maybe bold prayers just weren't modeled for us. During the next five weeks, we encourage you to choose one simple, bold prayer to pray every day (or as often as you remember). We suggest that you choose something in one of the four categories above: 1) salvation, 2) healing, 3) unity, or 4) deliverance. (ex: "Lord, I believe that you have the power to save _____, and I am asking you, in faith, to do it!") This prayer can be for you or someone you know. If you have children, we encourage you to involve them in choosing a bold prayer that they can pray, or that you can pray as a family. You could write or print this prayer on a piece of paper and leave it on your dinner table, in your car, or another place you regularly gather together so that you will have it close at hand each day. *(If you have questions or want to talk more about prayer, please reach out to any member of our staff. We are here to walk with you in your journey of faith.)*



PRAYER

You can pray this prayer daily during the sermon series, or use it as a closing for table conversations each week.

Holy Spirit, Jesus said that it was better for him to go away, that you would come and live in us. Forgive us for the times when we have relied on our own power and strength, instead of putting our trust in you alone. We ask that you would increase our faith, and we humbly pray that you would use us to grow your kingdom. Give us the words and courage to proclaim your good news of freedom to those around us. Give us faith to pray bold prayers of salvation, healing, unity, and deliverance. Thank you for being ever-present with us.

In Jesus name,
Amen.

FEB 16TH: "THE PROMISE FULFILLED: AN OUTPOURING OF POWER"

SERMON SUMMARY

Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit fulfilled God's enduring desire to dwell among humanity. By empowering his followers, the Spirit would extend Jesus' light throughout the world, expanding the intersection of heaven and earth. The seemingly unusual events of Pentecost vividly illustrate the Spirit's indwelling within believers. This fulfilled the long-awaited promise of God's renewed presence in the world through the Church, which would act as a microcosm of the coming new creation.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Kids

- As Jesus was preparing to go to Heaven, He made a promise. He told his followers that even though he was going away, he would not be leaving them all alone. He promised to send a Helper: the Holy Spirit. Do you ever need help? What kinds of things do you need help with? The Holy Spirit helps us to remember what God tells us and to grow into people who are kind, loving, joyful, and full of God's peace. Can you think of ways that the Holy Spirit has helped - or could help - you?

Students

- Jesus told his disciples that it was better for him to go away so that he could send them the Holy Spirit (John 16:7). Put yourself in their shoes. Would this be a hard truth for you to accept? Even though the disciples were used to having Jesus right there - walking with them, teaching them, and doing miracles - He assured them that the Holy Spirit would be their Helper. In what ways have you experienced the Holy Spirit's help at this point in your life? What would it look like for you to experience the Holy Spirit in a different or deeper way in this season?

Students

- When the Holy Spirit came on the disciples at Pentecost, the effect was unmistakable. While you may or may not have had such a dramatic encounter, the impact of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers is unique and undeniable. What ways have you seen the Holy Spirit work in your own life? How has he been your Helper? In what ways has he spoken to you or guided you?

FEB 23RD: "SIGNS AND WONDERS: THE SPIRIT'S BOLDNESS"

SERMON SUMMARY

The Holy Spirit empowers believers to boldly proclaim God's Word and perform miracles, even when facing opposition. Consider the remarkable transformation of Peter. Just moments before, fear had driven him to deny even knowing Jesus. Yet, empowered by the Spirit, he became a courageous advocate, boldly declaring his devotion to Christ even in the face of certain imprisonment. His subsequent miraculous release highlights the power of the church's prayers. Significantly, Peter's newfound boldness was immediately followed by the church praying for continued boldness.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Kids

- When Jesus came, he had power over all things. He made a storm stop, healed a man who could not walk, and brought a girl back to life. After Jesus went to heaven, he kept his promise to send the Holy Spirit to his followers. When the Holy Spirit came, Jesus' friends were able to do the same miracles that Jesus had done! What do you think it was like to see such amazing miracles happen all the time? Have you or someone you know ever experienced a miracle? *(Note: We can help children understand the many ways that God still works miracles today - helping people to believe in Jesus as their Savior, healing people through prayer and medical care, and bringing justice into places and experiences that feel impossible, etc.)*

Students

- When you hear about the miracles that the disciples performed, do they feel like a story that happened a long time ago, or do you believe that miracles like that still happen? Have you ever asked God to do something for you or someone else that seemed "impossible"? Why or why not? How might your day-to-day life change if you put more trust in the Holy Spirit than you do right now?

Adults

- What thoughts or feelings come up when you hear that "the Holy Spirit gives believers boldness to speak God's Word and perform miracles"? Do you believe that is true now, or does it feel like a story that happened a long time ago? Have you seen God move in a powerful way - what you might call a miracle - in your life or the life of someone you know? How might your day-to-day life change if you put more trust in the Holy Spirit than you do right now?



MAR. 2ND: "ONE IN THE SPIRIT: SUPERNATURAL UNITY"

SERMON SUMMARY

The Holy Spirit cultivates a supernatural unity among believers. The early church provides a compelling example, demonstrating this Spirit-empowered unity through a radical love and generosity that led them to share all things in common. This Spirit-driven generosity transcended typical social and economic divisions, creating a community marked by remarkable cohesion. This profound unity, born of the Spirit, served as a powerful and undeniable witness to the world, clearly testifying to the transformative work of the Holy Spirit within them.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Kids

- The Holy Spirit helps us to become kind and generous people. "Generous" means that we are excited to share with other people, and we don't expect anything back. We can give money, food, or other things that people need. We can give people our time. We can use our special gifts or talents to help and bless others. There are many ways that we can be generous! Can you think of some ways that *you* can be generous?

Students

- The book of Acts tells us about how Christians in the early church lived and interacted with one another. One way that the Holy Spirit worked in the lives of Christ-followers was by leading them to give generously to one another. Acts 2:44-45 says that they "shared everything they had" and that they "sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need." What would that kind of radical generosity look like for someone your age? (Keep in mind that we can be generous with all kinds of things - time, money, talents/gifts, things, etc.) If your family and friends were to name your strengths, would generosity be one of them? With the Holy Spirit's help, what are some practical ways that you can be a more generous person? Would that change the way others, including non-Christians, think about you?

Adults

- Have you ever been on the giving and/or receiving end of radical generosity? Is it easier or harder for you to imagine a church community where everyone's needs are met through the sharing of resources? What would be the markers for that kind of community? With the Holy Spirit's help, what are some practical steps that you and others in our church could take to get closer to that vision? Would that impact the community outside of Fellowship Memphis? Why or why not?



MAR. 9TH: "GUIDED BY THE SPIRIT: NEW PATHS UNVEILED"

SERMON SUMMARY

The Holy Spirit empowers and guides believers in making wise decisions and fulfilling their calling. Throughout the early church's history, the Spirit actively led them in choosing leaders and navigating unexpected circumstances, enabling them to embrace God's purposes. This Spirit-led direction is clear in the scattering of the church after persecution, a seeming setback that became a means of Gospel expansion. Philip's Spirit-directed encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch further exemplifies this guidance, showing the Spirit's strategic work. In every situation, the Holy Spirit empowered believers to discern and follow God's will.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Kids

- The Bible says that God made you and knows everything about you. He knows how many hairs are on your head (Luke 12:7). He knows what you like to eat. He knows what you like to do. And He has a special plan for your life! What are some things that you are good at? What are some things that you really like to do? The Holy Spirit can use you and your special gifts to grow God's kingdom in the world. *(Parents and caregivers, take a moment to speak into your child(ren)'s life in this conversation. Help them to see ways that God is already using them and their special gifts in your life and the lives of your family, friends, church, and/or community.)*

Students

- Our culture often promotes self-knowledge and finding our purpose by looking deeper within ourselves. Are there places, people, or conversations where you have heard that kind of messaging? Do you, or the people around you, believe that message? Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit is always with us, ready to grow us into the truest version of ourselves and to guide our decision-making. What would/does that look like for someone your age? Have you experienced the Holy Spirit's guidance personally, in your own decision-making? How can you give more space for God to speak into your decisions?

Adults

- What does your decision-making process typically look like? Do you invite God into your daily decisions? Or maybe just the really big ones? Have you experienced the Holy Spirit's guidance toward a certain person or situation that you weren't planning for (like Philip sharing the good news of Jesus with the Ethiopian eunuch)? What did that feel like and look like in your life? Was it hard to set aside your own plans for the day and say "yes" to God? How can we cultivate listening ears and hearts that are attuned to the Spirit's gentle voice?



MAR. 16TH: "BREAKING BARRIERS: THE SPIRIT'S INCLUSION"

SERMON SUMMARY

The Holy Spirit actively breaks down barriers and opens doors for the Gospel to reach all people, regardless of their background. Peter's divinely orchestrated encounter with Cornelius, a Gentile, and the subsequent deliberations of the Jerusalem Council powerfully demonstrate the Spirit's leading in overcoming deeply ingrained cultural and ethnic divisions. These events showcase how the Spirit propelled the early church toward a radical inclusion of Gentiles, ensuring that the message of salvation was available to everyone.

CONVERSATION STARTERS

Kids

- The Bible says that the good news about Jesus - the news that He loves us, came to rescue us, and wants to live with us forever - is for all people! This great news will be shared around the world until every group of people has heard it. The Holy Spirit helps us to share this news in the places where we live, with the people we see all the time. Who are some people you can share God's good news with? Is there someone in your family? A friend? A neighbor? A teacher? A classmate? Maybe you need to be reminded of God's great news today. Jesus loves you! He came to rescue you. And He wants to live with you forever!

Students

- Before Jesus came, God's chosen people were mostly Jews (with a few exceptions). Jesus ushered in a new era when all people can become part of God's family through faith in Christ - people of every race, ethnicity, personality, political ideology, cultural group, belief system, prior religion, etc. What are some barriers that you see in reaching different types of people with the gospel of Jesus? Have you seen or heard of ways that the Holy Spirit overcomes those barriers? How can we share the gospel in ways that respect differences, but preserve the truth? Are you willing to pray for more opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with *all* types of people?

Adults

- It's easy for us to imagine the good news of Jesus reaching people like ourselves. But what about people who are different from us, people of different backgrounds, beliefs, political views, etc.? Is there a person in your life who you didn't think would accept the gospel, but who is now a Christ-follower? How does the Holy Spirit break down barriers for the gospel to go out to different people groups? What is the role of Christians in that work? How can we be more in tune to opportunities at home and abroad where we can share Christ with others?