

As Jesus prepared his disciples for his departure he said something somewhat shocking: *It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you.*¹

For many years I followed Jesus, but I didn't really believe this part of his teaching. As a matter of fact, every time I read that statement in my Bible I thought to myself, "Jesus is crazy."

I know you're not supposed to think Jesus is crazy, but this is where I was at. After all, what could be better than Jesus physically and tangibly with us. For example, I'm all for the preaching team at Faith but if we could have Jesus in the rotation, I'd put him on every single week. Seriously, Brad, Steve and I would all get jobs at Chick-fil-A so that we wouldn't miss a Sunday. All that is to say, I couldn't quite get to a place where I believed that it was to our advantage that Jesus left.

Then one day it hit me. I didn't believe Jesus because I didn't know a lot about this helper Jesus promised to send. I knew the helper was the Holy Spirit and I knew he was the third member of the Trinity. But that was kind of where it ended for me. At that point in my life, if you asked me what it looked like to walk in the Spirit, or to be filled with the Spirit, or to listen to the Spirit, I would have shrugged my shoulders.

This realization that I didn't know much about the Holy Spirit sent me on a personal journey to understand, welcome and experience the Holy Spirit in my life. To be honest, I'm still on this journey and one of the things I have discovered along the way is that I am not alone when it comes to the Holy Spirit. There are many Christians who secretly wonder if Jesus misspoke when he said, "It is to your advantage that I go away."

So for the next four weeks we are going to explore the Holy Spirit. Together we'll learn who the Holy Spirit is, what he does in our lives and how we experience his presence.

As the Holy Spirit transforms your life, thank him for his good work and share with the preaching team what God has done. We love hearing stories about the Spirit's work at Faith. You can reach us at preaching@faithchurchfc.org.

Every Blessing,
Pastor Charlie for the Preaching Team

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INTRODUCTION TO SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

No one is born into this world with a theology. So each generation must rediscover the truths of Scripture for itself.

Preaching the Bible is one of the primary tools God has given the church for this to take place.

Small groups are the place where the preaching at Faith is applied and where our church is encouraged to live out God's word. Members of Faith's small groups take time each week to discuss the previous Sunday's sermon, share specific insights from the Bible, and care for one another so that, as a church, we grow up to maturity in Jesus.

This study guide has been put together to give you an overview of our current sermon series so that you know where we are going and so that you are prepared for great discussions in your small group.

Here is an overview of what you will find for each week in this study guide:

Main Passage – This is the passage the teaching pastor will preach from.

Secondary Passages – These passages help to unpack and explain the main passage.

Passage for Memorization and Meditation – This is one passage to memorize and meditate on throughout the week so that at all times you are giving Jesus an opportunity to work in your life.

Overview – This is an overview of what will be discussed in small group this week.

Opening Question – This is a general question meant to spark conversation.

Discussion Questions – These are questions related to the Bible passages.

Application Questions – These are questions and ideas for applying the Bible to your life.

Table Time With Kids – These are questions and ideas for families with young kids.

These materials are not meant to be a rigid formula for your small group, but rather a means for intentional study, discussion and life application so that ultimately, as a church, we grow together to maturity in Jesus.

We hope you find this helpful.

What is a small group?

Small groups at Faith are small gatherings of people from Faith that meet regularly for friendship, prayer and Bible study.

Each small group is unique because it is shaped by the people who attend. However, at the heart of each small group is a desire to see a tight-knit community form that is marked by a growing love for Jesus and for the other people in the small group.

Why should I join a small group?

We are made for friendship with God and others. When we are not known and loved by others, we suffer because we are not experiencing all that God created us to experience. Additionally, life is too difficult to journey alone. Therefore, small groups are a place where we can connect in friendship with other people through the ups and downs of life.

How do I get connected to a small group?

The easiest way to get connected to a small group is to go to www.faithchurchfortcollins.org/smallgroups. You can also sign up on Sunday by filling out a Connect card. Finally, if you would like to join a small group, you can call the church at 970-226-2095.

Title: God's Great Gift

Main Passage: John 16:5-14

Secondary Passages: John 14:15–18, 25–26; John 7:37–39; Luke 11:9–13; John 3:5–7; 1 Corinthians 12:3–6; Romans 8:9–16 and 2 Thessalonians 2:13

Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!

Luke 11:13

Overview: After Jesus left this earth God sent us a great gift, arguably one of his greatest gifts. The Holy Spirit came to dwell in God's people.

The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity, which means he is fully God. After Jesus' ascension he came to empower, teach, unify, convict and gift Jesus' church. One of the Holy Spirit's main tasks is to glorify Jesus,¹ which means every time Jesus is seen to be great in the lives of his people, the Holy Spirit is working. Additionally, every step we take towards being more like Jesus is evidence of the Spirit's work, for he comes to remove everything that isn't Jesus from our lives.

From the Bible we know that the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to people who long to know and follow Jesus. By the Holy Spirit we are born again² and able to declare that Jesus is Lord.³ By the Holy Spirit we are able to put sin to death⁴ and pursue holiness.⁵ By the Holy Spirit we are instructed in all things,⁶ gifted for effective ministry⁷ and reminded that we are loved by God the Father.⁸ In short, without the Holy Spirit we have no new birth, no confession of Jesus' lordship over our lives, no victory over sin, no progress in sanctification, no spiritual understanding, gifting, or power and no confidence that we belong to God.

When we begin to understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit, we see why Jesus said it was to our advantage that he leave so that the Spirit could come.

In the Bible we see that all believers have the Holy Spirit.⁹ And yet Jesus instructed us to ask for the Holy Spirit and promised that the Father would give more of the Spirit to those who do.¹⁰ The implication is that even though the Spirit fully dwells in those who believe in Jesus, we may only have a partial experience of his presence and power. So

1 John 16:14
 2 John 3:5
 3 1 Corinthians 12:3
 4 Romans 8:13
 5 2 Thessalonians 2:13
 6 John 16:13
 7 1 Corinthians 12:4-6
 8 Romans 8:14-16
 9 Romans 8:9-11
 10 Luke 11:9-13

this week we will focus on what we do to experience more of the Holy Spirit.

It should be said that only God can give us more of the Holy Spirit. Additionally, what God gives when he gives more of the Spirit is more of himself. In other words, the Holy Spirit is not an “it” that we can control, it is God himself dwelling within us. This is why the Bible always uses personal pronouns to describe the Holy Spirit.

Because God is personal, the Holy Spirit wants to be pursued and he refuses to be pushed. Our work and effort will not manipulate God to give us more of the Spirit. So what do we do to receive more of the Spirit? We ask, in faith that God is good and longs to give us more of himself.

Opening Question

- Talk about a time when you only partially enjoyed something that belonged to you fully.

Discussion Questions

- Read John 16:5-14. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about The Holy Spirit from John 16:5-14?
- Read through John 14:15-18, 25-26, John 3:5-7, 1 Corinthians 12:3-6, Romans 8:9-16, and 2 Thessalonians 2:13. Based on these verses what do you learn about the Holy Spirit?
- Read John 7:37-39. Describe a time when you’ve been thirsty for more of God’s presence and power in your life. What created this thirst and how did you go about quenching it?
- Read Luke 11:9-13. What do these verses reveal about God?

Application Questions

- Which of the following words currently describes your relationship with the Holy Spirit: lacking, confusing, clear, close, exciting, reliant or something else? Explain your answer.
- How earnestly do you ask God for more of the Holy Spirit?
- What do you think it looks like to earnestly seek more of the Holy Spirit?
- What gets in the way of you seeking more of the Holy Spirit?
- When was the last time you experienced the Holy Spirit? What was that experience like?
- In what ways would you like your relationship with the Holy Spirit to grow during this series?

Table Time with Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud John 16:5-14. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- List everything Jesus says about the Holy Spirit from John 16:5-14. Who is the Holy Spirit? What can he do in our lives? Which item on the list do you most want to experience?
- Has Jesus left us alone? *No. After he left this world, the Holy Spirit came to be with God’s people.*

- Does the Holy Spirit live inside everyone who believes in Jesus? *Yes. The Holy Spirit lives in everyone who believes in Jesus.*
- ***Parents, this week help your kids understand that God wants to be with them, so much so that the Holy Spirit wants to dwell within them to guide, strengthen and encourage. To receive the Holy Spirit your kids simply need to trust in Jesus. This would be a great week to pray for the Holy Spirit to be at work in your children.***

Title: Supernatural Church

Main Passage: Acts 1:4-8, 2:1-21

Secondary Passages: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; 1 Corinthians 14:1

Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8

Overview: The New Testament portrays a church that is animated by the Holy Spirit. Just a casual reading of the book of Acts bears this out. At the beginning of Acts, Jesus instructed his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit. Additionally, Jesus said they would receive power when the Spirit came. After the Spirit came the church was marked by miracles, healings, tongues, words of prophesy, visions and supernatural power. To be sure, there was no question about whether the God of the Bible was alive. He was on the move, empowering his people.

Sadly, over the years some people have stamped the Holy Spirit's name on manipulative and abusive ministry activity. This has so muddied the waters of how the Spirit works that many churches have sidelined the Spirit either by teaching that he no longer empowers the church like he once did or by being silent about what the Bible clearly teaches about the Spirit. The end result is that legitimate, Spirit empowered churches are somewhat rare.

As we saw last week, the Spirit's main work is to glorify Jesus.¹ This means the Holy Spirit works to show people the beauty, sufficiency and goodness of Jesus. He does this both through the Bible and through demonstrations of supernatural power that point people to Jesus.

It may be helpful to think about the Holy Spirit's supernatural work through God's people like this: Outside of Faith there is a 40 foot cross that is lit up at night by powerful floodlights. Often when I walk past our church at night I look at the cross and I am reminded of Jesus' work for me. Not once have I thought, "My, what powerful floodlights we have outside our church."

This is what the Holy Spirit does. He shows us the goodness of Jesus. So a legitimate experience of the Holy Spirit's power does not point people to a miracle or to the person who performed the miracle. It points people to Jesus. Therefore, the mark of a church that is legitimately animated by the Spirit is that Jesus is consistently seen to be great and glorious.

At Faith we want to experience all that God has for us as a church. So this week we are going to look at what it means to be a church that is animated by the Holy Spirit. It is important to study this because the Spirit is on the move and we do not want to quench him, nor do we want to set aside any of the gifts he is offering to us. Instead, we want to function in harmony with what the Bible reveals about the Spirit and we want to partner with the Spirit to glorify Jesus.

Opening Question

- Take a look around the room where you are meeting and find an object that describes Faith Church. For

1 John 16:14

example, you might choose a mirror because you think Faith reflects the love of Jesus. Have everyone in your group share what they chose and why.

Discussion Questions

- Read Acts 1:4-8 and Acts 2:1-21. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Acts 1:4-8 and Acts 2:1-21?
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- According to 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, does everyone have the same spiritual gifts?
- According to 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, who gives spiritual gifts?
- According to 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, what are some spiritual gifts?
- In what ways do the spiritual gifts draw people to Jesus?
- In 1 Corinthians 14:1, Paul instructs us to pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts. What do you think this means?

Application Questions

- What are some attitudes towards spiritual gifts that may cause more harm than good?
- In what ways could spiritual gifts open a door to pride and arrogance in our own hearts?
- Do you earnestly desire spiritual gifts? Why or why not?
- What questions or thoughts do you have after this week's discussion?

Table Time with Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Acts 1:4-8. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Acts 1:4-8?
- What instructions did Jesus give to his disciples in Acts 1:4-8?
- Why do you think Jesus wanted them to wait for the Holy Spirit to come?
- Does the Holy Spirit want to bring supernatural power to you? *Yes. He wants to empower you to live and love like Jesus.*
- What do you think it looks like to live and love like Jesus?

Title: Walking By The Spirit

Main Passage: Galatians 5:16-26

Secondary Passages: Romans 8:12-17; Romans 13:14

Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.
Romans 8:13

Overview: What does it mean to walk by the Spirit? This is an important question to answer well because God encourages us to keep in step with the Spirit¹ and only those who are led by the Spirit are God's children.²

The distinguishing mark of walking with the Spirit is that we, by the Spirit, are putting sin to death. This means that empowered by the Spirit, we walk away from sin and toward righteousness. Notice, the emphasis of the Spirit's work is not on perfection, but on walking away from sin. Perfection is the end result of walking with the Spirit, but that doesn't happen on this side of glory. On this side of glory, the Spirit works to remove everything that doesn't honor Jesus from our lives. He empowers us to kill sin so that sin doesn't kill us.

How does the Holy Spirit help us to put sin to death? He shows us the glory of Jesus.³ He reveals to us the seriousness of sin.⁴ He give us the supernatural power to turn from sin.⁵ And he gives us a new heart that longs for righteousness.⁶

As we battle sin, we must always remember that we are not engaged in a losing battle. The Spirit who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world.⁷ Therefore, no sin that we struggle to put to death is so large or ingrained that the Holy Spirit cannot eventually remove it. This means that walking with the Spirit is hopeful, encouraging and transforming.

Opening Question

- What qualities do you want someone with whom you are going to walk through life to have?

Discussion Questions

- Read Galatians 5:16-26. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about walking with the Spirit from Galatians 5:16-26?
- What is the evidence that someone is walking with the Spirit?

1 Galatians 5:16, 18

2 Romans 8:14

3 John 16:14

4 John 16:8

5 Romans 8:1-4

6 Ezekiel 36:26

7 1 John 4:4

- Read Romans 8:12-17. What do you learn about the Spirit from these verses?
- What role do you play in putting sin to death?
- Read Romans 13:14. What do you think it means to make provisions for the flesh?
- Based on the fruit of the Spirit, how do you think the Holy Spirit responds to you when you struggle to put sin to death?

Application Questions

- The Holy Spirit produces various kinds of fruit when we walk with him. In what ways do you see the fruit of the Spirit growing in your life?
- Give some examples from your own life where the Holy Spirit has empowered you to overcome sin and walk with him. How did the Holy Spirit empower this victory?
- What are some ways that you are tempted to make provision for the flesh?
- Take two minutes of silence and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal an area of sin in your life that he would like to empower you to put to death. What area of sin did the Holy Spirit reveal?
- What will walking by the Spirit in this area of life look like for you this week?

Table Time with Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Galatians 5:16-26. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Galatians 5:16-26?
- Do you have to be perfect to be in a relationship with God? *No. Jesus was perfect for you. But God does give you the Holy Spirit so that you can walk away from sin.*
- ***Parents, this week help your children identify one area in their lives that the Holy Spirit wants to change. It could be an area of disobedience or it could be an area where they need courage or strength or it could be something else. Pray each day with your child for the Holy Spirit to work in this area.***

Title: Pouring Out Love

Main Passage: Romans 5:1-11

Secondary Passages: Romans 8:15–17; 1 Corinthians 13; 1 Thessalonians 5:19

Passage for Memorization and Meditation:

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

Romans 8:16

Overview: Without a doubt the greatest need we have is love. Sure we need stuff like food, water and clothing to survive. But love is what we were ultimately made for because we were made for God and God is love.

All sorts of things go wrong when we don't have love. We become insecure, needy and unsafe. We put up barriers to protect ourselves; but barriers don't give love, they give protection.

Jesus came into the world because of God's love. As a matter of fact, his whole mission was to die on a cross to deal with the sin that kept us from God's love. After he left this world, the Holy Spirit came to apply Jesus' work to our lives. This means the main thing the Holy Spirit is doing in our world is pouring God's love into our hearts.¹

Satan doesn't want us to experience God's love. He wants us to be toxic, anxious and insecure. So Satan spends a lot of his time trying to quench the Holy Spirit. His main tool to quench the Spirit is lies. Satan tells us we don't belong to God. He says there is more to do to be loved. He says God isn't too thrilled with us. He reminds us of what we have done and how we have failed, without helping us see Jesus' open arms of love at the cross.

At times we participate with Satan and we quench the Holy Spirit. This causes the Spirit to mourn because he longs for us to know we are loved and he knows we bring heartache into the world when we don't believe we are loved.

So this week we will unpack the Spirit's job to pour out God's love into our hearts. The phrase "pour out" comes from Romans 5:5 and it refers to an abundant lavishing of God's love. In other words, God wants to give us most what we most need. He wants to give us love. So the Father sent the Son into our world and the Son sent the Spirit into our hearts to pour out God's love.

Opening Question

- Describe a time in your life when you felt loved.

Discussion Questions

- Read Romans 5:1-11. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Romans 5:1-11?
- Based on Romans 5, how do you see the different members of the Trinity working so that we experience God's love?

- Read 1 Corinthians 13. What is God's love like?
- Read Romans 8:15-17? What role does the Holy Spirit play in our lives?
- In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 Paul says, *Do not quench the Holy Spirit*. What do you think it means to quench the Holy Spirit?

Application Questions

- What In what ways do you quench the Holy Spirit when it comes to him pouring out God's love in your heart?
- What happens in your life when you forget the greatness of God's love for you?
- Take five minutes of silence and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal lies that Satan speaks to keep you from experiencing God's love and wounds in your past that make it hard for you to experience God's love. During this time ask the Holy Spirit to address those lies with God's truth and to heal your wounds with God's grace. After the five minutes share with your small group what the Holy Spirit brought to mind and what he said to you.

Table Time with Kids

- What was the sermon from Sunday about? What questions do you have from it?
- As a family, read aloud Romans 5:1-11. What sticks out to you from these verses?
- What do you learn about God from Romans 5:1-11?
- How did God demonstrate his love for you? *While we were sinners, Jesus died for us.*
- What does the Holy Spirit do in our hearts? *He reminds us of God's great love for us.*
- What should you do when you struggle to believe you are loved? *Look at all that God did for you in Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to say to your hearts, "You are so loved by God."*
- ***Parents, this week partner with the Holy Spirit to find tangible ways to remind your kids that they are loved.***