

# Devotional

A FOUR-WEEK PLAN ON THE PERSON  
AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



# Introduction

To be a Christian is to believe in a triune God, meaning that God exists eternally as three unique Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and yet one Being – one amazing God. This is a complicated idea to be sure, but we serve a God that is, in many ways, above our comprehension! Understanding and relating to God as the Father and God as the Son, Jesus Christ, seems to come more naturally to the believer. But who is the Holy Spirit? How does this third Person of the Trinity relate to us, and what is He like?

These questions form the basis of this devotional. Over the course of the next four weeks, we will dive into scripture to familiarize ourselves with who the Holy Spirit is and how we experience His presence in our daily walk. We will look at how the Holy Spirit operated in the Old Testament, in Jesus's life, what Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit, and how the Spirit operated in the early church.

Incorporated in the rhythms of this plan are a few spiritual disciplines. These disciplines are practices with a rich Christian history that help form us into the men and women God has called us to be. Ultimately, they help cultivate in us good soil for God's Word to take root. These disciplines are outlined below.

## **Silence and Solitude**

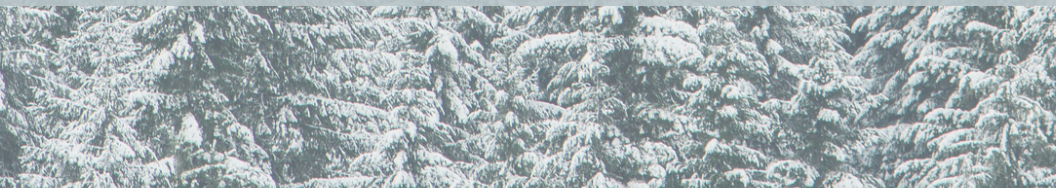
Silence and Solitude are the foundation on which the other disciplines build upon. Our time spent in scripture becomes fruitless if we are distracted. God longs to speak to the deepest desires of our soul, but our souls can be timid creatures. We must quiet our minds, and abandon distraction if we are to make the most of our time with God. Some helpful tips to incorporate silence and solitude into your devotional readings are:

- Choose a place that is comfortable and quiet for you. It should be a place where you will not be interrupted.
- Choose a time that will not feel rushed and allow you to focus on God and what He has for you. Mornings or evening usually work best.
- Begin by closing your eyes. Take long, deep, slow breaths, focusing on inhaling and exhaling.
- Release the constant chatter in your mind. Let each thought go as quickly as it comes, and just focus on your breathing.
- Your mind will run wild with thoughts, feelings, memories, to do's, and distractions. That's okay. Acknowledge the distraction, and release them. Don't be discouraged.
- If using this devotional on your phone, download it and put your phone on airplane mode. Resist the urge to open other apps or check messages.

## Sabbath

Sabbath is a practice of taking one full day of rest from work, both personal and professional, each week. This discipline dates back to ancient Israel and is still relevant today, maybe now more than ever! In our fast-paced, restless culture, the sabbath teaches us two things. First, human beings were made for healthy rhythms of work and rest. And second, our world and everything in it is dependent on God, not man. Taking a sabbath helps us be honest about our own limitations, and trust God with our work.

Each week will begin with a sabbath day, and we encourage you to make it free of work. The devotional reading will have you meditate on a passage of scripture, followed by some self-reflection/self-examination questions. If a full day seems like a large step to begin with, try setting aside a full morning or afternoon and fill it with things that are restful for your mind, body, and soul.



## Lectio Divina

There are many different approaches when engaging with the text of the Bible. Most fall into one of two categories: study and devotion. In study, the primary object of inquiry is the text, and what is meant by its words, both to the original audience and to us also today. We may dissect the text to understand its original context, the culture of its hearers, and the way it has been interpreted throughout the church in centuries past. Study in this sense plays a crucial role in our understanding of God's Word, but it is not our aim with this project.

This plan falls into the second category of devotion. In devotion, the primary object of inquiry is not the text but rather our hearts. We may ask questions of the text, but only so far as they enable us to hear the questions God is asking of us. We come not to dissect the text, but to hear from God, and let Him dissect our hearts: our thoughts, our actions, and our motives.

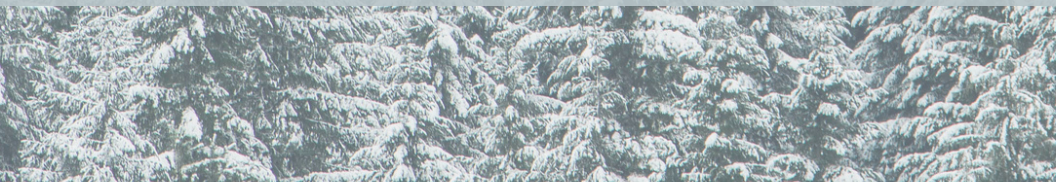
It is with this goal in mind that we have chosen more contemplative methods of engaging the text, or more precisely, letting the text engage our hearts. These methods comprise of reflection questions, prayer, and Lectio Divina. It is our hope that, in the next four weeks, you will learn much about the Holy Spirit, but also much about yourself.

Both reflection questions and prayer are common among Christians, but Lectio Divina warrants some explanation. Lectio Divina is a form of Bible reading that dates back to early monastic communities, most notably that of St. Benedict in the 6th century. It has at its heart a rhythm of reading and contemplation and is experienced in four 'moves' or steps. Often, a time of silent preparation precedes these four moves. The framework of Lectio Divina that we will use for this plan is outlined in detail below. A brief summary is included with each daily reading as well.



- **Preparation (Silencio)** — Take a moment to rest and release. With your eyes closed, let your body relax, and allow yourself to become consciously aware of God's presence with you. Express your willingness (or your willingness to be made willing) to hear from God in these moments by using a brief prayer such as "Come Lord Jesus," or "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."
- **Read (Lectio)** — Read the passage. Listen for a word or phrase that speaks to you. When a word or phrase catches your attention, don't keep reading. Stop and listen to what God is saying to you. Listen and wait.
- **Reflect (Meditatio)** — Read the passage a second time. What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word? Reflect on the importance of the words that light up to you. Explore the ramifications of God's invitation.
- **Respond (Oratio)** — Read the passage a third time. Respond in prayer. Now enter into a personal dialogue with God. Respond truthfully and authentically. What do you feel about the text? Where do you want to push back? Talk with God about these feelings.
- **Rest and Resolve (Contemplatio)** — Rest in the Word of God and live out the Word of God. How can this word be lived out in the day ahead? Consider making a reminder that can help you dwell on this word throughout the day before you leave.

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# Week 1

## The Old Testament

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*"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters."*

*Genesis 1:1-2*

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In Genesis 1:1-2 we see that the Holy Spirit was present at the creation of the world. This week, we will be diving into the Old Testament and observing how the Holy Spirit moved in the cultural context of the nomadic Israelites and how they interacted with the Spirit of God in their everyday lives.

You'll begin to notice throughout this week that God tended to choose a singular individual to anoint with His Spirit, then elevating that individual to a position of leadership for His chosen people.

This week will also cover how the Holy Spirit provides supernatural wisdom and power in addition to a variety of spiritual gifts to those who are anointed. This is also evident in many of the Old Testament prophecies that we will encounter later in this plan.

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# Day 1 - Sabbath

[Numbers 11:16-17; 24-30]

## Passage Context

Moses and the Israelites are being led through the wilderness after the Lord brought them out of Egypt. Miracle after miracle occurred, demonstrating the power of God, yet the Israelites are still grumbling and discontent. Moses, being their leader and empowered by the Holy Spirit, is struggling under the burden of leadership and pleads to God to have others receive the same anointing of the Spirit in order to come alongside him and help lead.

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## Questions + Reflection

As you quiet your mind, reflect on the questions below; invite the Holy Spirit to this space and ask Him to prepare your heart to receive what He has from the Father.

- Has this passage challenged your perspective of the Holy Spirit's movement in your life? If so, how?
- Think of a time where you've experienced God giving you direction and wisdom in the midst of a leadership or team position.
  - Would you attribute this wisdom and direction as the movement of the Holy Spirit? Why or Why not?
- Meditate on this statement from Moses: "I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!"
- What does this statement say about God's willingness to pour out His Spirit?
- How would seeing such gifts manifest in your daily life impact you and those around you?

## Day 2

[Exodus 13:17-22]

### Passage Context

In this passage we have the exodus of the Israelites right after the devastation of the ten plagues. They are fleeing towards the Saudi Arabian peninsula to get as much distance from Pharaoh and his army. We see the spectacular sign of God's guidance to His people and the hope these signs provide for the Israelites.

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### Lectio Divina

- **Preparation** [*Silencio*] — *Take a moment to rest and release.*
- **Read** [*Lectio*] — *Read the passage. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention.*
- **Reflect** [*Meditatio*] — *Read the passage a second time. What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?*
- **Respond** [*Oratio*] — *Read the passage a third time. What is my response to God based on what I have read? Respond in prayer.*
- **Rest and Resolve** [*Contemplatio*] — *Rest in the Word of God and live out the Word of God. How can this word be lived out in the day ahead?*



## Day 3

[Judges 3:7-11]

### Passage Context

Here we jump to the age of the Judges, or military leaders who God has chosen to lead Israel. At this point in time, the Israelites have conquered most of the promised land and began to settle there. Since they failed God's command to drive out all other people, the Israelites became incredibly influenced by other pagan cultures which caused them to not keep the covenant between them and God. Since Israel was in a blessings/curse covenant, their disobedience led to them being attacked and conquered by foreign powers until they repented and cried out to the Lord for deliverance. Only then, would God raise up a Judge to deliver Israel and lead them.

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### Prayer

- This passage talks about the harmful influence of the people and cultures around the Israelites as they strove to adhere to commands of God. They looked to these Judges, who were led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, for guidance and direction. Pray today that the Holy Spirit would reveal harmful influences of people and cultures in your life.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction as you navigate the day and pray that He would give you wisdom and discernment on how to adhere to the truth of the Bible.

## Day 4

[1 Samuel 10:1-8]

### Passage Context

Now we come to the age of the Monarchs. After the era of the Judges, Israel demands that God appoint them a king to rule over them. You can imagine the frustration God must have felt at this request because He, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was Israel's King. The people insisted on a human king so that they could be like the other nations around them, so God left Israel to choose their king; they chose Saul who was a military leader. This passage is Samuel, a prophet of God, anointing Saul as king of Israel.

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### Questions + Reflection

- Imagine being in Saul's shoes. How would going through this anointing process radically change your perception of God and the power of the Holy Spirit?
- Reflect on verse 7 "Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you".
  - How would walking in the power of the Holy Spirit in the day to day bring transformation to your life?

## Day 5

[Daniel 1:17-21]

### Passage Context

This passage is after the two kingdoms of Israel, having split and rebelled against God, are swept into captivity by two world powers. Israel, the northern kingdom, was captured by the Assyrians, and Judah, the southern kingdom, was captured by the Babylonians. This passage is the story of Daniel, a noble in Judah, and three friends who are taken to Babylon and taught the language and literature of the Babylonians for three years. The four of them refused to defile themselves with anything that went against their laws given to them by God and for that, God showed them incredible favor and blessed them through the Holy Spirit.

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## Day 6

[Isaiah 61:1-3]

### Passage Context

This passage in Isaiah is part of a Messianic Prophecy that Jesus fulfills and references in both Matthew 11:4-6 and Luke 4:14-30. Here we have the prophet Isaiah speaking through the power of the Holy Spirit what the Messiah will do in the redeeming of the world.

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### Prayer

- After reading this passage, take some time to glorify and give praise to God for sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins.
- The Bible says that salvation in Jesus is for all people. Take some time and pray for the Holy Spirit to bring the name of a friend to mind who you can share the gospel with.

# Day 7

[Joel 2:28-32]

## Passage Context

Here we have another prophecy by the prophet Joel. This prophecy alludes to the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:14-36 where God will pour out the Holy Spirit and provide various spiritual gifts for His people to operate in as He sees fit. It then ends with a prophecy about what will occur when Jesus returns.

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## Questions + Reflection

- Within this prophecy we see evidence that the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and the impartation of Spiritual Gifts is for all people, men and women, boys and girls.
  - In what ways does the empowerment of the Holy Spirit challenge you? Do you believe it is for you today?
- What would it look like for you to pray for and operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Are you willing to pray for them to manifest in your life?

# Week 2

## The New Testament

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For the past week we have seen how the Holy Spirit moved in the cultural context of the nomadic Israelites, as well as historical leaders' individual experiences of the Holy Spirit's anointing of leadership, wisdom, and power.

This week we begin our journey into the New Testament scriptures, specifically the gospels, to witness the work of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life and ministry. We will see the prophecies of the Old Testament fulfilled in Jesus' life, and much like the historical leaders that came before him, the Holy Spirit will anoint Him with leadership, wisdom, and power.

However, unlike the Holy Spirit's work with Israel in which His anointing was for certain people and for certain times, Jesus points to a day where all God's people would experience the Spirit's anointing.

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# Day 8 - Sabbath

[John 3:1-9]

## Passage Context

In John 3:1-9 we get to "eavesdrop" into a conversation Jesus has in the quiet of the night with a respected Jewish leader named Nicodemus. Nicodemus is quite curious about Jesus, and comes to question him, to learn more of him, and in return, he is challenged to make a decision that would change his life forever.

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## Questions + Reflection

As you quiet your mind, reflect on the questions below; invite the Holy Spirit to this space and ask Him to prepare your heart to receive what He has from the Father.

- Meditate on this statement from Jesus: **"Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit."**
- Jesus emphasizes the importance of being born *again*, and he attributes this act to the work of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the rest of Scripture, we see that it is the Holy Spirit that gives us new life when we put our trust in Christ.
  - Have you been born of the Spirit? How have you seen the Spirit transform your life and make you new?
- How can you surrender to the Holy Spirit's renewing work in your life this week?

# Day 9

[Luke 3:21-23a]

## Passage Context

Jesus' baptism is a defining moment at the beginning of his public ministry. The significance of the descent of the Holy Spirit symbolizes his "anointing" as the Messiah while affirming the empowerment to carry out the will of God. Along with the appearance of the Holy Spirit like a dove, the voice from heaven also confirms that Jesus is the Chosen One and the Son of God that the forefathers had prophesied would come to save the world.

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# Day 10

[Luke 4:1-13]

## Passage Context

This story picks up where we left off yesterday— Jesus is baptized, divinely empowered by the Holy Spirit, and affirmed to be the Chosen One, the Messiah, and the Son of God. As Jesus begins his ministry, he is led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. Historically, the wilderness was the place where God rescues and leads the Israelites out of slavery from Egypt. There he cared for his chosen people and tested their hearts that they might remain faithful to him. Here Jesus is led to the wilderness by the Holy Spirit, where he will also face temptations by his adversary, the devil.

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## Prayer

- From this passage, we can see the guidance of the Holy Spirit in Jesus' life as he was led into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Jesus relied upon the promises of God to defeat Satan. Today, knowing God's love and promise to guide you, pray that the Holy Spirit would show you the way out of any temptations you are facing.
- Take some time to pray and thank the Holy Spirit for any ways you've seen Him guide you in the past away from temptations, and into freedom from sin.

# Day 11

[Luke 4:14-22]

## Passage Context

After fasting in the wilderness for forty days and forty nights Jesus returns by the power of the Holy Spirit to Galilee to officially begin his public ministry. Jesus then travels to the village he was raised in called Nazareth. As an honored guest and respected teacher, Jesus would have been invited to read a passage and give his interpretation. The passage he reads is the prophecy about the Chosen One, the Messiah who has yet to come.

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## Questions + Reflection

- The first verse we read today said that Jesus returned to Galilee in *the power of the Spirit*. How can you see this evident in this passage?
- Reread the prophecy about Jesus from the book of Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

- Highlight anything that stands out to you. Why might this characteristic of who the Messiah is (Jesus) be important to you right now? Spend time praying about what stood out to you.

# Day 12

[John 14:15-17]

## Passage Context

The second half of John 14 begins one of Jesus' longest discourses on the nature of union with God and the Spirit's role in the believer and in the world. The next three days will be spent in this chapter. A common theme throughout this discourse is Christ's impending departure that will lead to the coming of the Spirit.

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# Day 13

[John 14:18-24]

## Passage Context

We continue today with our second passage from John 14. Refer to Day 12 for the context of the larger passage.

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## Prayer

- Jesus promises to those who love and obey Him: "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." Reflect on what it means to be adopted into God's family, then take time to pray and thank God for this promise!
- Jesus makes it clear that love leads to action. Pray about how you can show God you love Him through your life today.

# Day 14

[John 14:25-27]

## Passage Context

We continue today with our final passage from John 14. Refer to Day 12 for the context of the larger passage.

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## Questions + Reflection

- Jesus is explaining to the disciples that he will no longer be with them on the earth. In fact, he says it is better that he would go because he is sending the Holy Spirit, otherwise known as the Advocate or Helper. How have you seen the Holy Spirit help you in your life? Where might you need His help today?
- In verse 27 Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives." What is the difference between the peace Jesus gives and the world's idea of peace? How can the peace Jesus gives to you today affect your circumstances whether good or bad?

# Week 3

## The New Testament

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Much like last week, we begin this week with passages on the Holy Spirit from the Gospels. However, these passages will begin to transition us to Pentecost, a day prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, John the Baptist and Jesus Himself.

Traditionally, Pentecost (greek, literally, 'fiftieth') was a Jewish holy day that marked the beginning of the Feast of Weeks and was held 50 days after Passover. As we will read, the day carries significant meaning in Christian worship as the day that marks the beginning of the church. On this special day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit falls upon the community of disciples in Jerusalem, and empowers them with the ability to speak in other tongues.

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# Day 15 - Sabbath

[John 15:26-27]

## Passage Context

Jesus begins to foretell the future to his disciples to prepare them for what they will need when building the early church. He highlights the critical role that the Spirit will play both in the Christian community and in the world. Even after he is gone, he assures them, they will not be alone. In the book of John, Jesus' preferred term for the Spirit is the Paraclete. The Paraclete, being a Greek noun, is related to a verb that means "I call alongside." The Paraclete, or the Spirit of Truth, is whom Jesus calls to walk alongside his followers as helper, counselor, advocate, and guide.

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## Questions + Reflection

As you quiet your mind, reflect on the questions below; invite the Holy Spirit to this space and ask Him to prepare your heart to receive what He has from the Father.

- Reflect on the word Paraclete and His role to walk alongside believers as helper, counselor, advocate and guide.
  - Have you seen the Holy Spirit work in your life in any of these ways?
  - Are there any place in your life you would like the Holy Spirit to help you in?
- The Holy Spirit is also described as the Spirit of Truth. How might the Spirit of Truth challenge 'truths' in our world today?
  - How has the Holy Spirit lead you to truth? Are there any truths that have challenged your thoughts or way of living?
- Take time to pray and ask for the Holy Spirit's help in any way you need today, or for this week!

# Day 16

[John 16:5-11]

## Passage Context

We find our passages for the next two days contained within a much larger discourse from Jesus about union and unity with God. He has just finished stressing the need for His disciples to remain in communion with Christ so that they may live fruitful lives, especially as perilous times come. However, how are His disciples to remain in communion with Him if He leaves them, a reality hinted to at the beginning of this passage, and one we know will come to pass as Jesus ascends to the Father before Pentecost. Jesus once again points to the Holy Spirit, here referred to as the Advocate or Helper, as His very presence that will make communion with God a reality.

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# Day 17

[John 16: 12-15]

## Passage Context

Today marks the second of two passages from John 16. Yesterday we read verses 5-11, and today we have verses 12-15. Refer to Day 16 for a reminder of the context.

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## Prayer

- In verse 13 it says, "the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth". Spend time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to reveal any lies you have been believing about yourself, others, and God. If there are any that come to mind, pray that the Spirit of Truth would guide you to what is true.
- Pray over your mind these new truths to believe and ask for the Holy Spirit to help you when you are tempted to believe the lies again.

# Day 18

[Matthew 3:11-12]

## Passage Context

John the Baptist is seen as the great forerunner, the one who came before Christ as "A voice of one calling in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way for the Lord'" (Isaiah 40:3) And prepare the way he did! Our passage today is a quote of John the Baptist found in the book of Matthew. In it we see Him foreshadowing the greater ministry of Christ. John baptized, or immersed people in water, but Jesus would come and immerse His followers in the Holy Spirit. John's prophecy, followed by many of Jesus' own, point to a day where God's Spirit will fall on mankind like it never has before.

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## Questions + Reflection

- As stated above, John baptized, or immersed people in water, but Jesus would come and immerse His followers in the Holy Spirit. How would a life that has been immersed in the Holy Spirit look different from one that hasn't?
- Verse 11 says Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Fire is often used in the Bible to describe refinement or purification. Spend a few minutes reflecting on your own life. Are there any areas of your life that you want the Holy Spirit to refine? To purify? Bring these things to Him in prayer and entrust them to Him.

# Day 19

[Acts 1:1-8]

## Passage Context

Our passage for today marks a transition of sorts. In it we see the activity of both Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus has walked with His disciples for the better part of 3 years by this point, and His time with them is almost up. He will not leave them alone, however, as He once again points to the day of the Holy Spirit's coming. This day, we shall see, is soon approaching.

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## Lectio Divina

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# Day 20

[Acts 2:1-13]

## Passage Context

The coming of the Holy Spirit marks a fundamental change in how God dwells among His people. In the Old Testament, God dwelt among His people within the tabernacle (and later the temple). This meant that God's presence was heavily restricted to one priest, one time a year. The New Testament opens with a radical shift, God has chosen to come and dwell amongst His people in the person of Jesus. This meant God's presence was not restricted to the high priest once a year, but to all who Jesus fellowshiped with. As amazing of a change as this was, Jesus pointed to yet another shift where ALL of God's people would experience His presence. Pentecost marks the day the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples. The implications? God's presence was unrestricted and open to all who would put their faith in Christ.

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## Prayer

- The promise of Pentecost is that those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ and trusted Him with their lives will be baptized, or filled, with the Holy Spirit.
  - Pray in gratitude that God's presence is with you today.
  - Ask Him for a fresh filling of His Spirit and an awareness of His presence in your day today, and then seek to follow His guiding.

# Day 21

[Acts 2:16-39]

## Passage Context

Our passage today is originally from the book of Joel in the Old Testament and one which we have already devoted a day to. Today, we will circle back to it again, no longer as a prophecy expected, but as a prophecy fulfilled. This Old Testament passage is quoted by Peter as he gives his first sermon on Pentecost. He uses it to explain what these Jewish onlookers have just witnessed, an event we read about yesterday. In it we find a beautiful picture of the cooperation of men and women with God and the truly miraculous wonders that come from it.

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## Questions + Reflection

- Peter's sermon is one of the first presentations of the Gospel we have in the early church. What stands out to you about his Gospel message? What is encouraging? What is challenging?
- Peter concludes that the gift of the Holy Spirit is for those that repent of their sins and put their faith in Jesus. This means that if you are a Christian, the Holy Spirit dwells in you. Reflect on this reality! Do you believe that God is with you always? How can you live in a way that reflects this reality?

# Week 4

## Acts + The Epistles

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The past few weeks have been a survey on God and our communion with Him. Starting with the first pages of the Old Testament, we have followed the work of God's Spirit in creation, communion, and ultimately redemption. This past week we read passages building up to Pentecost, a defining moment in humanity's communion with God that ushered in the birth of the church and what some would call the 'Age of the Spirit'.

This age is characterized by a restoration of what was lost in the garden, communion with God! The beauty of Pentecost is that the Spirit of God has come to dwell with us, both in the Church as a community and in our hearts as individual believers.

This final week, we will focus on this age of the Spirit that we find ourselves in, and more importantly on this Spirit's presence in our communities and in our individual lives.

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# Day 22 - Sabbath

[Titus 3:5-7]

## Passage Context

We encounter our passage for today right in the middle of Paul's letter to Titus. The theme of Church order, appointing elders, and how the body of believers ought to relate to one another and the world takes up much of his letter. In this passage, Paul is urging believers to recall the transforming work God has done in them in an effort to cultivate love and mercy towards unbelievers around them that have yet to experience that same transformation. Within this appeal, we find a beautiful picture of the triune God's saving work in us and the Spirit's role in making us new.

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## Questions + Reflection

As you quiet your mind, reflect on the questions below; invite the Holy Spirit to this space and ask Him to prepare your heart to receive what He has from the Father.

- Just like we saw in John 3 during Jesus' conversation with the Jewish leader, Nicodemus, there is great importance to the Holy Spirit's role in renewing our lives.
  - With only one week left of this devotional, how have you seen the Holy Spirit transform your life?
- Reflect on the verse, "**he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.**"
  - How does this verse reveal to us God's heart for humanity? What does this reveal to us about God's heart for you?
  - In your life, what are ways you can respond to God's love and kindness towards you?
- Take some time today to thank God for the gift of His Holy Spirit being generously poured out upon you!

## Day 23

[Romans 8:12-17]

### Passage Context

Paul's letter to the Romans serves as one of the most robust and lengthy presentations of the Gospel message in the New Testament. For the better part of 10 chapters, Paul outlines the reality of humanity's sinful condition before a righteous and holy God, our inability to rectify this condition, and Christ's saving work on the cross. Although most of Romans tends to be read in the light of a courtroom, where the guilty are pronounced innocent by God on behalf of Christ's righteous work, in the passage below, Paul details the implications of the cross in the context of relationship. In Christ, God has freed us from our oppression under sin, and has restored us into His family once again. The Spirit's work here is seen as one of restoration into the family of God.

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### Lectio Divina

- **Preparation** [*Silencio*] — *Take a moment to rest and release.*
- **Read** [*Lectio*] — *Read the passage. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention.*
- **Reflect** [*Meditatio*] — *Read the passage a second time. What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?*
- **Respond** [*Oratio*] — *Read the passage a third time. What is my response to God based on what I have read? Respond in prayer.*
- **Rest and Resolve** [*Contemplatio*] — *Rest in the Word of God and live out the Word of God. How can this word be lived out in the day ahead?*



# Day 24

[1 Corinthians 2:10-13]

## Passage Context

The passage for us to consider this week is in some ways unbelievable if we comprehend its meaning. In the chapters just before our passage, Paul has taken time to describe the difference between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God. The main difference being that God sees all things from all eternity, and the world is blind in comparison, only able to discern some of what has happened in history and rarely the reasons why. His chief example is the cross which displays the power of God to those who are saved, while the world only sees foolishness. What accounts for such a sharp difference in perspective? Paul points to the Holy Spirit illuminating our minds to the things of God. How this will change our lives if we let it!

\* \* \*

## Prayer

- God has revealed Himself to us by His Spirit. Spend some moments in prayer praising God for the things you know and admire about Him.
- The Spirit knows the depths of God, but He knows the depths of your heart too! Are there any areas of your heart and life that you are keeping from God? Pray that the Holy Spirit would illuminate those areas that you have been holding from Him.

# Day 25

[Galatians 5:16-25]

## Passage Context

In this passage as we have seen in so many others, Paul outlines the sharp contrast between the desires of the Spirit, and the desires of our flesh (our sinful nature). We see immediately that these two desires stand in conflict with one another, and we have a daily choice to make: which one will we surrender to? These few verses fall into the category of passages that are easy to understand, but very difficult to live out.

\* \* \*

## Questions + Reflection

- This passage compares the deeds of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit and the tension that exists between them. Reflect on the particular ways this tension plays out in your own life. What is one practical thing you can do today to deny the flesh?
- Choose one characteristic of the fruit of the Spirit. How can you walk out that particular characteristic today?

## Day 26

[Ephesians 4:30-32]

### Passage Context

Today's passage is from Paul's letter to the Ephesian church. It is found just after Paul makes an appeal to unity within the church and cites one important reason for it: we have been given a new life to live. This new life has at its center a love for God, and a unifying love for one's brother and sister. He concludes this thought with the verses below in which we discover two things: The Holy Spirit cares very much what we do, and He has done something wondrous for us.

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### Lectio Divina

- **Preparation** [*Silencio*] — *Take a moment to rest and release.*
- **Read** [*Lectio*] — *Read the passage. Listen for a word or phrase that catches your attention.*
- **Reflect** [*Meditatio*] — *Read the passage a second time. What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?*
- **Respond** [*Oratio*] — *Read the passage a third time. What is my response to God based on what I have read? Respond in prayer.*
- **Rest and Resolve** [*Contemplatio*] — *Rest in the Word of God and live out the Word of God. How can this word be lived out in the day ahead?*

# Day 27

[Acts 20:22-24]

## Passage Context

Let us set the stage: Paul has called for a meeting with the elders of the church in Ephesus. It is clear from what he says to them that he believes he will never see them face to face again. He reminds them of the boldness in which he first came to them, and pleads with them to not shrink back from proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus, even though times will come where that will prove to be very difficult. It is within this plea that Paul describes the Lordship of the Spirit and the necessity of submission to Him.

\* \* \*

## Prayer

- This passage reveals the leading and lordship of the Holy Spirit in Paul's life.
  - Ask the Holy Spirit how He is leading you in your present season and how you can submit to His will for your life.
  - Pray a prayer of surrender to the Holy Spirit for the day ahead. A model is given below:
    - *"Holy Spirit, I surrender myself to you today. I give you my thoughts, words, and actions and pray that you would manifest in my life in whatever way you desire. I trust that your will is better than mine."*

# Day 28

[1 Corinthians 12:4-11]

## Passage Context

Our final passage comes to us from Paul's first letter to the church at Corinth. What we find in these few verses along with the chapters that follow is that the Holy Spirit intends to move in special ways when we gather together. It is a beautiful thing to know that the Holy Spirit dwells within us individually and that He is with us even when we find ourselves alone. However, the Holy Spirit is seen most evidently within the context of community. It is in these circumstances that the Holy Spirit longs to move in us and through us.

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## Questions + Reflection

- Which gifts seem most comfortable or familiar to you? Which gifts do you have questions about or have never seen before?
- The Holy Spirit longs to give you gifts to help build others up. How can you make yourself available to His gifts?

### Challenge:

- If you have questions or want to know more about the Holy Spirit and His gifts, talk to your core group leader or a staff member with Chi Alpha!

