

# PRESENCE + POWER

SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A SOUND FROM HEAVEN LIKE THE ROARING OF A MIGHTY WINDSTORM, AND IT FILLED THE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING. THEN, WHAT LOOKED LIKE FLAMES OR TONGUES OF FIRE APPEARED AND SETTLED ON EACH OF THEM. A MIGHTY WINDSTORM, AND IT FILLED THE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING. THEN, WHAT LOOKED LIKE FLAMES OR TONGUES OF FIRE APPEARED AND SETTLED ON EACH OF THEM.



# PRESENCE + POWER

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## PREFACE

“ But when believers live in the power of the Spirit, the evidence in their lives is supernatural. The church cannot help but be different, and the world cannot help but notice. – Francis Chan, *Forgotten God* ”

Have you ever stood on the shore of an ocean, watching waves crash against the rocks, feeling the spray on your face, and tasting the salt in the air? There is something awe-inspiring about experiencing a power so much greater than yourself—something that cannot be contained, controlled, or fully understood.

The Person of the Holy Spirit is like an ocean as His power and presence breaks into our everyday lives.

So consider this: what if the same power that raised Christ from the dead truly lives within you?

This three-week study invites you into a rediscovery of the Holy Spirit—promised by Jesus, anticipated by the disciples, and living in each and every believer.

This same Spirit that hovered over the waters at creation hovers over your life today, ready to bring healing to your wounds, power to your witness, and guidance for your journey.

As you engage with Scripture, questions, and practices in these pages may you move beyond intellectual understanding to heartfelt experience. May you discover the gift of the Holy Spirit—His presence and power—for He is not a distant force but an intimate presence, not a theological concept but a personal guide, not merely a comfort in trouble but power for transformation.

Come, Holy Spirit—awaken our hearts and empower our lives for Your glory.

# JESUS THE HEALER

## Lesson 1

### Luke 8:40-56 & John 14:12-20



Read **Luke 8:40-56**, and answer the questions that follow.

40 On the other side of the lake the crowds welcomed Jesus, because they had been waiting for him. 41 Then a man named Jairus, a leader of the local synagogue, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come home with him. 42 His only daughter, who was about twelve years old, was dying.

As Jesus went with him, he was surrounded by the crowds. 43 A woman in the crowd had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding, and she could find no cure. 44 Coming up behind Jesus, she touched the fringe of his robe. Immediately, the bleeding stopped.

45 "Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, "Master, this whole crowd is pressing up against you."

46 But Jesus said, "Someone deliberately touched me, for I felt healing power go out from me." 47 When the woman realized that she could not stay hidden, she began to tremble and fell to her knees in front of him. The whole crowd heard her explain why she had touched him and that she had been immediately healed. 48 "Daughter," he said to her, "your faith has made you well. Go in peace."

49 While he was still speaking to her, a messenger arrived from the home of Jairus, the leader of the synagogue. He told him, "Your daughter is dead. There's no use troubling the Teacher now."

50 But when Jesus heard what had happened, he said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid. Just have faith, and she will be healed."

51 When they arrived at the house, Jesus wouldn't let anyone go in with him except Peter, John, James, and the little girl's father and mother. 52 The house was filled with people weeping and wailing, but he said, "Stop the weeping! She isn't dead; she's only asleep."

53 But the crowd laughed at him because they all knew she had died. 54 Then Jesus took her by the hand and said in a loud voice, "My child, get up!" 55 And at that moment her life returned, and she immediately stood up! Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. 56 Her parents were overwhelmed, but Jesus insisted that they not tell anyone what had happened.

**1** What strikes you most about these healing stories? What details stand out to you?

**2** Why do you think the woman approached Jesus secretly rather than openly asking for healing?<sup>1</sup>

**3** How does Jesus address the woman after she's healed? Why might his words "Daughter" and "Go in peace" be significant?

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<sup>1</sup>"Luke does not specify the nature of the 'bleeding' (v.43), which is usually taken to have been a gynecological problem. The restrictions imposed by **Leviticus 15:25-33** and by Jewish custom would have radically affected the woman's life. But her primary problem was the discomfort and embarrassment of her prolonged malady." *Expositor's Bible Commentary (Abridged Edition): New*

4

How do you think Jairus felt about waiting for Jesus to heal and speak with the woman, when his daughter was so sick?

5

It is often the case that what we think God should do right now, God chooses to act on later, while what we would put off, He chooses to handle right away. The most fundamental lesson in this passage is the combination of characteristics tied to faith. Faith should seize the initiative to act in dependence on God and speak about Him, yet sometimes it must be patient. In one sense faith is “full speed ahead,” while in another it is waiting patiently on the Lord. The Father does know best.<sup>2</sup>

How have you experienced both of these elements of faith?

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<sup>2</sup> *NIV Application Bible Original Meaning Notes*, Application Notes, copyright © 2025.

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Read **John 14:12-20**, and answer the questions that follow.

12 *"I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. 13 You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. 14 Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it!"*

15 *"If you love me, obey my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. 19 Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. 20 When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you."*

**1** Jesus modeled what it could look like to access God's healing power. And in **John 14**, He states that because we have the Holy Spirit, that power is in us as well. What do you think He meant when Jesus said we would do even greater works than He did?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Jesus is not saying that His disciples would do greater works—after all, raising the dead is about as amazing as you can get. Rather, the disciples, working in the power of the Holy Spirit, would carry the Good News of God's Kingdom out of Palestine and into the whole world. *Life Application Study Bible*. New Living Translation. Tyndale, 2015. 1786



2

In what ways does the Holy Spirit “lead us into all truth”? How does that relate to healing and faith? (See also **John 16:13**.)<sup>4</sup>

3

What does it mean to you that the Holy Spirit will never leave you? How does that bring comfort in times of sickness or struggle?



Take some time to answer the following reflection and application questions.

1

Which of these healing stories from **Luke 8:40-56** and **John 14:12-20** resonates most with you, and why?

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<sup>4</sup>The truth into which the Holy Spirit guides us is the truth about Christ. The Spirit also helps us through patient practice to discern right from wrong. *Life Application Study Bible*. New Living Translation. Tyndale, 2015. 1789

**2** Have you ever experienced a sense of God's healing in your life—physical, emotional, relational, or spiritual? How did that impact your faith?

**3** Where in your life do you need Christ's healing touch today? What would it look like to reach out to Him?

**4** How might these healing stories speak to those who pray for healing but don't experience it in the way they hope?

# 5

How does the promise of Jesus' presence through the Holy Spirit shape the way you approach praying for healing today?



The following spiritual practice is intended for both personal use and to experience together with your Life Group.

Set aside 15-20 minutes for a healing prayer exercise:

- Begin by sitting comfortably and taking several deep breaths.
- Imagine yourself as one of the characters in these healing stories approaching Jesus with your own need for healing.
- In prayer, reach out to Jesus—expressing your need for healing.
- Listen and watch for how Jesus might respond to you personally.
- Close by thanking God for His healing presence, whether you sense immediate change or are still in the process of healing.

You may want to consider practicing this exercise with someone else you trust as well.



## **PRESENCE + POWER**

This week go on a prayer walk, drive, run, or go to the Upper Room (M-F, 10am-4pm), etc. to pray for Jesus' healing over your city.

You may want to focus on spiritual healing, relational healing, and physical healing.

Notice what God does in your heart toward your city, community, neighborhood, etc.



## **PRAYER REQUESTS**



# SERMON NOTES

# WAITING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

## Lesson 2

### Acts 1:4-14



Read **Acts 1:4-14**, and answer the questions that follow.

This passage from Acts covers two key moments immediately after Jesus' resurrection and before Pentecost. It establishes the anticipatory period between Jesus' ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost—setting the stage for the birth of the church.

*4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

*6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"*

*7 He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

*9 After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. 10 As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"*

*Matthias Replaces Judas*

*12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying.*

*Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of*

*Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James). 14 They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.*

**1** What specific instructions did Jesus give His disciples before His ascension? Why do you think the waiting was important?<sup>1</sup>

**2** What does Jesus promise will happen when the Holy Spirit comes? What will be the result?

**3** How did the disciples spend their time while waiting for the promised Holy Spirit?

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<sup>1</sup> "Their primary concern should not be the political power that will come with the restoration of Israel's kingdom. It should be the spiritual power that will come through the baptism with the Holy Spirit, which will enable them to be witnesses 'to the ends of the earth.' ... In a sense the disciples were already witnesses for they had seen the risen Lord; that was the key to their witness (1:22). But they also needed 'power' to be effective witnesses, power that would come from the Holy Spirit." Fernando, Ajith. *NIV Application Commentary*. 1998. Biblegateway.com



Take some time to answer the following reflection and application questions.

**1** Where in your life might God be asking you to wait expectantly rather than rushing ahead with your own plans?<sup>2</sup>

**2** How do you typically respond when God's plans differ from your expectations?

**3** Jesus promised power to be His witnesses. How have you found yourself sharing faith with others recently? What barriers do you face?

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<sup>2</sup>"Jesus had instructed his disciples to witness to people of all nations about him (**Matthew 28:19, 20**). But they were told to wait first for the Holy Spirit (**Luke 24:49**). God has important work for you to do for him, but you must do it by the power of the Holy Spirit. We often like to get on with the job, even if it means running ahead of God. But waiting is sometimes part of God's plan ... When you face a difficult task, an important decision or a baffling dilemma, don't rush into the work and just hope it comes out the way it should. Instead, make your first step prayer for the Holy Spirit's power and guidance." Life Application Study Bible. *New Living Translation*. Tyndale, 2015. 1815





The disciples were “constantly united in prayer.” What would a commitment to prayer look like with your current life and schedule? How might a renewed commitment to prayer—both individually and with others—prepare you for God’s work in your life?



The following spiritual practice is intended for both personal use and to experience together with your Life Group.

Set aside time each day this week for waiting prayer:

- Find a quiet space where you won’t be disturbed for 10–15 minutes.
- Begin by consciously releasing your agenda and expectations.
- Pray simply: “Come, Holy Spirit” and then wait in silent receptivity. If your mind wanders, gently return to your prayer: “Come, Holy Spirit.”
- Before concluding, ask: “Lord, what are You inviting me to notice, receive, or let go of as I wait on You?”
- Journal any insights or experiences from this time of waiting.



## **PRESENCE + POWER**

This week go on a prayer walk, drive, run, or go to the Upper Room (M–F, 10am–4pm), etc. to notice where God has placed you as a witness.

You may want to focus on specific people, buildings, businesses, schools, etc.

Notice what God does in your heart toward your city, community, neighborhood, etc.



## **PRAYER REQUESTS**



# SERMON NOTES

# COME, HOLY SPIRIT

## Lesson 3

### Acts 2:1-12



Read **Acts 2:1-12** and answer the questions that follow.

1 On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. 2 Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. 3 Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. 4 And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.

5 At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. 6 When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.

7 They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed. “These people are all from Galilee, 8 and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! 9 Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, 10 Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!” 12 They stood there amazed and perplexed. “What can this mean?” they asked each other.

**1** What sounds and physical manifestations accompanied the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost? Why do you think God chose these particular elements?<sup>1</sup>

**2** Why is it significant that the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in other languages that people from various nations could understand?<sup>2</sup>

**3** How does this Pentecost event fulfill Jesus' promise from **Acts 1:8**?

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<sup>1</sup>“Two explicit miracles announced the arrival of the Holy Spirit. First was the sound of a “rushing mighty wind” (**Acts 2:2**). Jesus compared the Spirit to wind when He spoke with Nicodemus (**John 3:8**). Just as wind is invisible yet irresistible, so is the Spirit of God. We cannot control Him nor dictate how He will operate. But when the Spirit moves, things are forever different. Where the wind of God blows on a church, the walls of resistance topple, and that church is well on its way to becoming great. Not only did the apostles hear the Spirit's descent, they saw Him as a fire (**Acts 2:3**). The fire of the Holy Spirit cleanses and purifies the church (**Exodus 3:2; Hebrews 12:29**). His fire consumes the rags of righteousness, the dross of pride, and the stubble of doubt. Finally, fire conflagrates, producing more fire. The Spirit takes hold of us and makes us what He is—a burning flame.” *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, 1996. Biblegateway.com

<sup>2</sup>“The ‘tongues’ are different from those described in **1 Corinthians 12-14**. This manifestation fit in with the Spirit's role in enabling the church's worldwide witness (**Acts 1:8**).

4

How did the crowd respond to what they witnessed? What questions did they ask?



Take some time to answer the following reflection and application questions.

1

At the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit's arrival was both visible and audible. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit's presence in your own life?

2

At Pentecost, language barriers were miraculously overcome. What barriers to connection or communication exist in your community that the Holy Spirit might help bridge?

3

The disciples were transformed from fearful followers to bold witnesses. Where do you need the Holy Spirit's power to move you from fear to courage? What is your story with Jesus—how has He changed your life? Spend some time writing it out:

4

How could you share that story with someone else?



The following spiritual practice is intended for both personal use and to experience together with your Life Group.

**Find a quiet place to spend some time in prayer. Light a candle and take a few moments to simply observe the candle flame without analysis or judgment.**

- Notice its colors—the blue at the base, the yellow in the middle, the occasional orange flickers.
- Watch how it moves, dances, and responds to the slightest air current.
- Notice the dark space at its very center.

**Reflect on how the flame brings light to darkness, just as the Holy Spirit illuminates our understanding.**

- Consider these questions silently:
  - What areas of my life remain in shadow or darkness?
  - Where do I need greater clarity or understanding?
  - How might the Spirit be bringing God's truth to light in my circumstances?

**Become aware of the warmth generated by even this small flame.**

- Consider these questions silently:
  - Where in my life do I feel cold, numb, or indifferent?
  - How might the Spirit's warmth melt hardness in my heart?
  - Who in my life needs the warmth of God's love through me?

**Acknowledge that fire contains tremendous energy and power.**

- Consider these questions silently:
  - Where do I feel depleted or powerless in my life right now?
  - What might be possible if I were fully empowered by the Spirit?
  - How did the disciples' lives change when they received this power?

**Continue gazing at the flame, but now allow your thoughts to flow freely.**

- Consider these questions silently:
  - What insights or impressions came to you during this meditation?
  - Which aspect of the Holy Spirit's fire do you most need right now?
  - What would it look like for you to be "afame" with the Spirit like the disciples at Pentecost?
  - What small step can you take today to invite more of the Spirit's presence?



## **Read this prayer aloud or silently:**

Holy Spirit, thank You for Your presence symbolized in this flame. May Your fire continue to illuminate my mind, warm my heart, purify my spirit, and empower my life. Like the disciples at Pentecost, make me a carrier of Your holy fire to others who need Your light and warmth. Amen.

## **Extinguish the candle as a symbolic act of carrying the light with you.**

Candles and prompts are available in the Upper Room. If you would like to do this practice in that space the hours are 10am-4pm Monday-Friday.

## **PRESENCE + POWER**

This week go on a prayer walk, drive, run, or go to the upper room (M-F, 10am-4pm), etc. to ask God to reveal himself to those who don't know him yet.

Ask the Holy Spirit to show up in dreams, miracles and other ways to draw people to God.

Notice how God is prompting you to interact with those you come in contact with.



## **PRAYER REQUESTS**



## SERMON NOTES