



# SERMON NOTES

## ACTS OF THE SPIRIT

### Acts - the Prequel

How would you describe the Holy Spirit?

#### **His work in the world...**

*"But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned." (John 16:7-11)*

#### **His work among the disciples...**

*"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." (John 16:13-15)*

# DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

## Description for Series

Every story has a beginning, and the book of Acts describes the beginning of church history. On the one hand, it's a not-to-be-repeated story—this book recounts a unique period in God's plan of salvation. On the other hand, it's a book of encouragement and equipping. Through this history we are challenged to see that God's Spirit is still at work. Acts describes the outward expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem, to Judea and Samaria, and then to the far reaches of the Roman Empire. If we are to be people shaped by God's Spirit, we will also be people who serve in this ongoing mission. It's a mission that involves people like us, near us, and far from us.

### Major Goals:

- To see that God's Spirit moves us into mission.
- To take next steps in engaging those like us, near us, and far from us.

## Prayer Focus

Prayer continues to be an important rhythm in our individual and corporate lives. We want to continue that practice. As a church family, let's continue to pray scripture for ourselves, our families, and the local and global Hershey Free Church family.

## Praying Scripture

The prayer focus for this week is John 14: 15-17a, 18.

*"If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever- the Spirit of truth. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you*

### Below is an example of how to pray the passage.

Father, my love for you is so imperfect but my desire is to love you wholeheartedly and keep your commands. Thank you that you did not abandon your followers and gave us the gift of an Advocate, who is the Holy Spirit. I pray that I would pay attention to the voice of the Spirit and would allow him to guide me into the truth of how to live my life in the power and presence of the Spirit, Amen.

## DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

### SEPTEMBER 4

The devotional guide will continue the same rhythm that we used for the last devotional guides where we practiced the 3 x 20 pattern. Spend at least 20 minutes, 3 times a week, in God's word. Each of the three days you will be asked to implement the **Read. Reflect. Respond.** pattern to help get more deeply into God's word.

To understand the book of Acts, we need to understand the work of God's Spirit. The Spirit's work was actually the focus of Jesus' final instruction to his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. They needed to understand how the Spirit would work in their lives and in the world around them. Likewise, we need to understand how the Spirit is at work today.

# DAY ONE

**Read** John 14:15-18.

- What is the connection between verses 15 and 16?
- Why does Jesus describe the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth? How does that description of the Spirit connect to John 17:17?
- What does it mean to you to live with the Spirit, knowing that he is with you and in you?

**Reflect** on verse 18 and journal your thoughts and feelings, knowing that God has not and will not abandon you.

**Respond** by memorizing verses 15-18.

# DAY TWO

**Read** John 16:5-15.

- Why did Jesus have to return to the Father?
- Describe the disciples' feelings when they realized that Jesus was leaving them. What are the advantages of having the Holy Spirit over the physical presence of Jesus? What are the disadvantages?
- What does Jesus say is the role of the Holy Spirit?

**Reflect** on the importance of having the Advocate in your life. What does it say about God's relationship with you that he sent his Spirit to live in you?

**Respond** by offering a prayer of thanksgiving for the Spirit who is your Advocate.



# DAY THREE

**Read** John 16:5-15.

- Why does Jesus say to the disciples, *“I have so much more to say to you, more than you can now bear”*? How is that statement true for you in your own journey of faith?
- Describe the hope that Jesus offers the disciples in verse 13.
- How does Jesus describe the relationship between himself and the father and between himself and the Spirit? What does this tell you about the Trinity?

**Reflect** on the hope you have in your life each day because you have the Holy Spirit in you. If you don't sense that hope, ask yourself why, and give space for the Holy Spirit to speak into your life.

**Respond** by intentionally choosing to reflect the hope you have because you have the Holy Spirit who leads and guides you.

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the Holy Spirit?
2. John 16:7 describes the Holy Spirit as our Advocate. What does that mean to you?
3. The passage says that the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. How would you define sin? What does it mean to be convicted of sin?
4. Why is it necessary that the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin? Convicts us personally of sin?
5. Discuss this quote by Tim Keller from today's sermon, *“Religious people repent of their sins, Christians also repent of their righteousness.”*
6. Share a time when you experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit. How did you respond? What was the outcome? How do we experience freedom when we respond well to the Holy Spirit's convicting work in our lives?
7. Pray for one another that each person would be able to embrace the convicting work of the Holy Spirit with joy.