

Week of  
August 9  
2020



Be the CHURCH is DISCIPLESHIP

### Spiritual Disciplines Guide:

- *Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your reading each day.*
- *Read the chapters and underline any meaningful verses and take note of specific advice or wisdom gleaned from your reading.*
- *Note any unclear passages or teaching and seek insight, answers or help.*
- *Think about what you're reading. Ask:*
  1. *How does this apply to me?*
  2. *Are there any temptations to avoid, sins to confess, commands to obey or promises to claim?*
  3. *What insight do I gain on God, myself, others, or life?*
- *Ask God to show you any specific action you need to take as you read.*

The broader title for the book of Acts is The Acts of the Apostles. In particular, the book features the Apostle Peter (chapters 1-12) and the Apostle Paul (chapters 13-28). However, the book could actually be retitled "The Acts of the Holy Spirit"! The name Holy Spirit appears over 50 times in Luke's account of the early church. He is the key character and the star player, not the apostles. Through him, Peter and Paul perform their feats of service and ministry. Starting with Pentecost in chapter two, let's take this week to review who the Spirit is and how he works in and through Christians, both then and now.

### Monday, August 10: Read [Acts 2:1-47](#)

Pentecost is the Festival of First Fruits in the Jewish calendar. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit when he was finally glorified ([John 7:39](#), [John 16:7-15](#)). The festival is literally fulfilled with the church being the first fruits of a new harvest beginning in Jerusalem. Notice the manifestations of the Spirit's arrival, the explanation from [Joel 2](#) and the impact on the large crowd of onlookers. In what ways has the Holy Spirit manifested himself in and through your life? What do you sense He is prompting you to do next? Are you willing to follow?

### Monday: Pray for yourself:

My relationship with God

My life roles and responsibilities

My personal needs/weak areas

My goals and objectives for 2020

## **Tuesday**, August 11: Read [Acts 8:1-25](#)

Luke records another account of the Holy Spirit falling on a group of people in Acts 8. Who were the Samaritans? Why was this group isolated from the orthodox Jews? ([John 4:9](#)) With the persecution, Philip (one of the seven deacons in [Acts 6](#)) preaches the gospel in Samaria. Many respond and believe. However, the Spirit does not fall upon them until Peter and John come. Why? Why would they need to place their hands on them in order to receive the Spirit? What must Simon the Sorcerer have seen that made him want that power and offer money for it? In what sense does Peter describe the Spirit as a gift? ([Acts 2:38-39](#)) How can we receive the gift of the Spirit today?

**Tuesday: Pray for Family by Name.**

## **Wednesday**, August 12: Read [Acts 9:1-22](#)

Reread the conversion of the Apostle Paul in this account. Notice how God uses Ananias, one of the Christians Saul (Paul) would have persecuted. He lays hands on him to be saved, healed and receive the Spirit. No particular manifestation of the Spirit is mentioned other than Saul's immediate boldness to preach Jesus to the Jews in Damascus. In what sense is courage a fruit of the Holy Spirit? ([Acts 1:8, 4:31](#)) Has the Spirit emboldened you yet? Have you memorized Acts 1:8 yet? What scary things could the Spirit empower you to do? How could you tap into his power today? What specifically would you do or say if he prompts you?

### **Wednesday: Pray for Bethel Gilead Community Church**

1. **Leadership:** Pray for God's grace and guidance in Pastor Jim and Pastor David's ministries and families. Pray for Linda Penn in her work at BGCC. Pray for the church council and the various ministry team leaders. Ask the Lord of the harvest to raise up more workers for the harvest ([Matthew 9:38](#))
2. **Worship:** Ask God to strengthen our devotion to Him, in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. Pray for more musicians to help lead the church in worship, including a pianist. Pray for the development of a youth praise team.
3. **Fellowship:** Ask God to deepen our love and commitment to one another as a family of believers. Pray that we incorporate newcomers into our church fellowship. Pray through this past Sunday's congregational prayer requests.
4. **Discipleship:** Ask God to develop the faith, dedication, and leadership of our people. Pray for the children and youth ministries at BGCC. Ask God to bless our small group ministry, to raise up new groups, new teachers and more leaders.

1. Outreach: Pray that God will use Bethel Gilead to make a positive impact on our community so that many would come to Christ. Ask God to embolden our people to intentionally reach out to others.
2. Future Faith Goals: Ask God to give our congregation a united vision for the future. Pray for God's clear leading in our 2020 plan as we call our members to a greater love and commitment to the Lord and his service. Ask God to bless our finances so that we can better accomplish his purposes for our congregation.

**Thursday**, August 13: Read [Acts 10:1-48](#)

Luke includes the account of a Greek family receiving the Spirit in Acts 10. What is different here compared to Saul's conversion ([Acts 9](#)) and the conversion of the Samaritans ([Acts 8](#))? What were the manifestations of the Spirit? Did anyone lay hands on them? When were they baptized, before or after receiving the Holy Spirit? Note ([Acts 2:38, 8:12, 15-16](#)). Finally, read Peter's defense to the skeptical Jews in Jerusalem in [Acts 11:1-18](#).

### **Thursday: Pray for "My World"**

*(Write down names as God brings people to mind.)*

- Neighbors • People who live around me.
- People at Work • Others God brings into my life. Take note of specific needs around you and ask God what he wants you to do to help. Who can you invite to church?
- Community -- Ask God to bring revival and a spiritual awakening to Branch County, even through the Coronavirus crisis.
- Pray for the area churches and a greater spirit of unity and cooperation, especially as churches reunite after the quarantine.
- Pray for the community parachurch ministries serving our county, including Beginnings Care for Life Center, Branch County Right to Life, Celebrate Recovery, Coach Eby Youth and Family Center, Damascus Road Ministry, Family Promise, Forgotten Man Ministries, Foster Closet of Branch County, God's Choice Church, Jacob's Well Ministry, Presbyterian Free Health Clinic, Shelterhouse, Tommy's House, the Gideons and the Bronson Food Pantry.
- America: Continue to pray for the nation, our national leaders and a revival in America. Pray that God would use the Coronavirus outbreak to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ.

**Friday**, August 14: Read [Acts 19:1-7](#)

Luke includes this account of the Spirit falling in Ephesus. The Apostle Paul is preaching there. These 12 men are called “disciples”, but likely they were disciples of John the Baptist from way back before Jesus’ ministry. It’s curious that they were not familiar with the Holy Spirit. Verse two could also be translated -- we have not heard that the Holy Spirit has come yet. John predicted he would come ([Matthew 3:11](#)). How are John the Baptist’s words fulfilled in this account at Ephesus? Notice they not only spoke in tongues, they prophesied. What could that mean? And what role might those 12 men play in the fledgling ministry at Ephesus? And what role is the Holy Spirit prompting you to play in our ministry at church and in the community? Ask the Holy Spirit to empower and direct your life today and each day that follows ([Acts 1:8](#))

**Friday: Pray for Our Missionaries**

***Juan & Adriana Palacios*** (Angola, Africa), ***David & Miriam Trott*** (Cochabamba, Bolivia), ***Mario Bloise*** (Argentina), ***Dan & DeAnn Gerard*** (San Antonio, TX), , ***Craig & Shelly Shafer*** (Sentani, Indonesia), ***Sue Saunders*** (Bosnia), ***Matt and Becky Kooi*** (Tijuana), ***Daniel Jezowski*** (Wycliffe), ***Andrew & Sara Williams*** (Ethnos360), ***Brad and Christa Babjack*** (University of West Virginia), ***Salomon and Megan Guzman*** (Tijuana), ***Alvaro and Rachel Garriga*** (Central Asia), ***William and Salma Garcia*** (Tijuana church plant), ***Brendan and Ashley Camp*** (Columbia)