



# Study Guide - Week 3

## Sermon Recap 🎬

Josh shares a gripping tale of a 1976 bus kidnapping to highlight the importance of our relationship with God, questioning if we see it as a mere transaction rather than a transformative experience. He explores the role of the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that faith should lead to transformation rather than comfort or convenience, advocating for a deeper understanding of God's presence in our lives.

Through scriptural references and personal anecdotes, Josh encourages believers to assess their motives and approach to faith, urging them to move beyond transactional interactions with God to genuinely seek a transformative relationship. Ultimately, he challenges everyone to trust in the Holy Spirit's guidance and embrace the change that comes from a true connection with God.

# Ice Breaker

If you could have any fictional character as your personal life coach, who would it be?

## Discussion Questions

▼ Josh discusses how some people approach God like a transaction, expecting rewards for their actions, rather than seeking a transforming relationship.

- How do you think viewing your relationship with God as a transaction might affect your faith and spiritual journey?
- Can you think of a time when you might have treated your relationship with God as a transaction? How did that impact your relationship?

▼ Josh emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is a person who **guides, comforts, convicts, and empowers** us, rather than just a force to wield.

- In what ways do you feel you have experienced the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your own life?

## Read Scripture

### ***Acts 19:1-5 NIRV***

<sup>1</sup> While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road to Ephesus. When he arrived, he found some believers there. <sup>2</sup> He asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?”

“No,” they answered. “We haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

<sup>3</sup> So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

<sup>4</sup> Paul said, “John baptized people, calling them to turn away from their sins. He told them to believe in the one who was coming after him. Jesus is that one.” <sup>5</sup> After hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

### ***Romans 8:1-2 NLT***

<sup>1</sup> So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

# Discussion Questions

▼ Josh mentions Romans 8:1-2, saying there is no condemnation for those in Christ, and highlights that while the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, He does not condemn us, instead offering freedom through Christ.

- How does this verse bring you comfort in your personal struggles?
- How does this understanding of no condemnation influence the way you approach your mistakes or failures?

▼ Josh points out that many in the church seem lost or irrelevant because they negotiate with God instead of trusting Him fully.

- Why do you think many people might struggle to fully trust God and live in His power?
- Are there areas where *you* find it hard to trust God completely? What might be holding *you* back?

▼ Pastor encourages us to ask if our faith is transactional or transformational.

- How can we identify the difference within ourselves?
- What steps can you take this week to move from a transactional faith to a more transformational relationship with God?

## Going Deeper

Remember the ABCs of listening to the Holy Spirit.

Ask: Is it **affirming**, **biblical**, and **Christlike**?

(More on this in the Want To Go Deeper page this week).

## Prayer

- Ask God to help you trust Him more as you go through life's challenges this week.
- Pray for the courage to approach God in a more personal and relational way, rather than a transactional one.
- Ask Him to reveal any areas of your life where you may be negotiating instead of fully submitting to His will.
- Seek guidance on how you can be a better witness of His transformative power in your life.

# Rewatch the Sermon

Visit [victorycc.life/watch](https://victorycc.life/watch) for on-demand access to all of our sermons.



# 5 Day Reading Plan - Week 3

## Day 1

### *Acts 19*

This passage highlights the power and necessity of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. When Paul arrives in Ephesus, he meets disciples who had received John's baptism but had not yet received the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:2). After Paul lays hands on them, the Holy Spirit fills them, and they begin to speak in tongues and prophesy (Acts 19:6). This passage reminds us that the Spirit is not just an abstract idea but an active presence that empowers and transforms us. Through the Holy Spirit, miracles were performed, lives were changed, and the gospel spread powerfully throughout Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12). Even in the face of opposition, the Spirit continued to work, leading many to repentance and deeper faith. Are you fully relying on the Holy Spirit's power in your life, or are you trying to follow Christ in your own strength? The Spirit equips us to walk in obedience, speak boldly, and experience the fullness of God's presence. Let's seek a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit, allowing Him to work in and through us for God's glory.

- In what ways do you see the Holy Spirit actively working in your life, and where do you need to invite Him in more fully?
- Are you relying on your own strength to follow Christ, or are you allowing the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you?

- How can you be more open to the Spirit's leading, even when it challenges you to step out in faith?
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit, to deepen your dependence on His power, and to give you boldness to live out His calling in your life.

## Day 2

### *Acts 2*

This passage marks the powerful arrival of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling Jesus' promise to His disciples. On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit descends like a rushing wind, filling the believers and enabling them to speak in different languages (Acts 2:2-4). This moment signifies the birth of the Church, showing that God's Spirit is for all who believe in Christ. Peter boldly proclaims the gospel, and through the Spirit's power, thousands repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38-41). The Holy Spirit not only empowers believers for bold witness but also unites them in fellowship, prayer, and devotion to God (Acts 2:42-47). This passage reminds us that we are not meant to live the Christian life in our own strength—the Spirit fills, equips, and leads us. Are you actively seeking the Spirit's guidance in your daily walk with Christ? His presence in us brings transformation, boldness, and unity. Just as the early Church was moved by the Spirit, we too are called to live Spirit-filled lives that point others to Jesus. Let's surrender to His leading and trust in His power today.

- How can you be more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence and power in your daily life?
- In what ways is the Holy Spirit calling you to step out in boldness and share the gospel with others?
- How does the unity and devotion of the early Church challenge the way you live out your faith in community?
- Ask God to fill you afresh with His Holy Spirit, to empower you for bold witness, and to deepen your commitment to living in unity and devotion with other believers.

## Day 3

### *Genesis 1*

This passage introduces us to the Holy Spirit's presence at the very beginning of creation. In verse 2, we see the Spirit of God hovering over the waters, bringing order and life from chaos. This reminds us that the Holy Spirit is not only active in creation but also in renewing and transforming our lives. Just as He brought light into the darkness of the world, He brings the light of Christ into our hearts. The Spirit breathes life into us, guiding us into God's purpose and truth. His power is not limited to the beginning of time but continues to work in and through us today. Are you allowing the Holy Spirit to shape and renew your life? Just as creation responded to God's command, we are called to surrender to the Spirit's leading. The same Spirit that brought life into the world now dwells in us, making us new creations in Christ. Let's trust in His power to bring order, life, and purpose to our journey of faith.

- In what areas of your life do you need the Holy Spirit to bring order and renewal?

- How does knowing that the Holy Spirit was present at creation shape your understanding of His power and work in your life today?
- Are you actively surrendering to the Spirit's leading, allowing Him to bring light and transformation into your heart?
- Ask God to fill you with His Spirit, bringing renewal, clarity, and purpose to your life, just as He did in the beginning of creation.

## Day 4

### *1 Kings 19*

In this passage, the prophet Elijah is weary, discouraged, and afraid, fleeing into the wilderness after a great victory. In his despair, God meets him not through a mighty wind, an earthquake, or a fire, but in a gentle whisper (1 Kings 19:11-12). This passage reminds us that the Holy Spirit often speaks in quiet, subtle ways, guiding and strengthening us when we feel weak. While we may expect God's power to be loud and dramatic, He often moves in stillness, calling us to listen and trust. The Holy Spirit comforts us in our lowest moments, providing the renewal we need to keep going. Like Elijah, we must take time to step away from distractions and hear His voice. Are you making space to listen for the Spirit's whisper in your life? God is always near, speaking words of truth, direction, and encouragement. Let's slow down, tune our hearts to Him, and allow the Holy Spirit to refresh and lead us.

- How can you create space in your life to hear the Holy Spirit's gentle whisper amid the noise and busyness?
- In what ways has God spoken to you in unexpected or quiet moments, and how did you respond?
- Are you trusting the Holy Spirit to renew and strengthen you when you feel weary or discouraged?
- Ask God to quiet your heart, help you recognize His voice, and fill you with His Spirit to bring renewal, encouragement, and direction in every season of life.

## Day 5

### *Philippians 1*

This passage reminds us that the Holy Spirit is actively working in us to complete the good work God has begun (Philippians 1:6). Paul, writing from prison, expresses confidence and joy, knowing that the Spirit empowers believers to stand firm in their faith. The Spirit fills us with love, wisdom, and discernment so that we may live in a way that glorifies Christ (Philippians 1:9-11). Even in suffering, the Spirit strengthens us, turning challenges into opportunities to share the gospel. Paul's life shows that true confidence and boldness come not from our circumstances but from the Spirit within us. Are you relying on the Spirit's power to carry out God's purpose in your life? The Spirit unites us as believers, encouraging us to strive together for the faith of the gospel (Philippians 1:27). No matter what we face, the Holy Spirit is present, guiding and sustaining us. Let's trust Him to complete the work He has started, knowing that His power is always at work within us.

- How can you cultivate a deeper reliance on the Holy Spirit in your daily life and circumstances?
- In what ways can you allow the Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide you, especially when facing challenges or suffering?
- How does knowing that the Spirit is completing God's work in you encourage you to press on with confidence and hope?
- Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit, to strengthen your faith, and to empower you to live in a way that brings glory to Christ in every circumstance.





# Want To Go Deeper? - Week 3

## Historical Context

Acts 19 is a significant chapter in the New Testament that details part of the Apostle Paul's third missionary journey, specifically his time in Ephesus. Here are some important historical and contextual points to consider:

- 1. Ephesus as a Major City:** Ephesus was a major city in the Roman province of Asia (modern-day Turkey). It was a significant center for commerce, culture, and religion, known for the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. This made it a strategic location for Paul to spread the Gospel.
- 2. Religious and Cultural Context:** Ephesus was a hub of pagan worship and occult practices. The city was known for its magical arts and the worship of Artemis (Diana). This context is crucial for understanding the events in Acts 19, such as the burning of the sorcery scrolls and the riot instigated by the silversmiths.
- 3. Paul's Ministry in Ephesus:** Paul spent about three years in Ephesus, which was longer than he stayed in most other cities. During this time, he taught daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus, which allowed the message of the Gospel to spread throughout the region (Acts 19:9-10).

4. **The Holy Spirit's Work:** Acts 19 highlights the work of the Holy Spirit, including the baptism of the Holy Spirit for believers who had only received John's baptism. This emphasizes the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant in Christ, where the Holy Spirit plays a central role in the life of believers.
5. **Miracles and Opposition:** The chapter records extraordinary miracles performed by Paul, such as healing the sick and casting out evil spirits. These acts demonstrated the power of God and validated Paul's message. However, they also led to opposition, particularly from those whose livelihoods were threatened by the spread of Christianity, such as the silversmiths who made idols of Artemis.
6. **The Riot in Ephesus:** The chapter concludes with a significant event—a riot instigated by Demetrius, a silversmith, who feared that Paul's preaching was undermining the worship of Artemis and, consequently, their trade. This incident illustrates the social and economic impact of the Gospel and the resistance it faced.

Understanding these historical and cultural contexts helps to appreciate the challenges and triumphs of early Christian missions and the transformative power of the Gospel as it spread through diverse and often hostile environments.

# Listening to the Spirit

## The ABC's

### Is it Affirming, Biblical, and Christlike?

#### A – Affirming

- ✔ *Does this align with God's heart of encouragement, strengthening, and comfort?*
  - **1 Corinthians 14:3** – *“The one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.”*
  - **Romans 15:2** – *“Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up.”*
  - **Proverbs 12:25** – *“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.”*
  - **Ephesians 4:29** – *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”*

**Key Idea:** If what you feel led to say, do, or decide **tears down rather than builds up**, pause and reconsider whether it's from God.

#### B – Biblical

- ✔ *Does it align with Scripture? God never contradicts His Word.*
  - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** – *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
  - **Psalms 119:105** – *“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”*

- **Isaiah 40:8** – *“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.”*
- **Galatians 1:8** – *“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse!”*
- **John 16:13** – *“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.”*

**Key Idea:** Feelings, emotions, or impressions should never **replace Scripture**. If it doesn’t align with **God’s Word, it’s not His will**.

## C – Christlike

✓ *Does it reflect the character of Jesus? Would Jesus say or do this?*

- **1 John 2:6** – *“Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.”*
- **Colossians 3:17** – *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*
- **John 14:9** – *“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”*
- **Matthew 11:29** – *“Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*
- **Philippians 2:5** – *“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”*
- **Luke 6:43-45** – *“A good tree doesn’t produce bad fruit... A good person produces good out of the good stored up in his heart.”*

# Deeper Application

1. **Surrender and Trust:** True faith requires surrendering our own desires and trusting God’s plan, even when it doesn’t align with our expectations. This means being open to the Holy Spirit’s guidance and allowing Him to lead us in all areas of life.
2. **Active Participation:** Transformation involves active participation in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, reading Scripture, and being part of a faith community. These practices help us to hear God’s voice, understand His will, and grow in our relationship with Him.
3. **Evidence of Transformation:** The sermon calls for evidence of transformation in our lives, as seen in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). This includes love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. These qualities should be increasingly evident as we grow in our faith.
4. **Living by the Spirit:** The sermon encourages believers to live by the Spirit, which means being sensitive to His leading and allowing Him to shape our character and actions. This involves a daily decision to follow Jesus and rely on the Holy Spirit’s power rather than our own strength.
5. **Impact on the World:** A transformational relationship with God not only changes us but also impacts those around us. As we live out our faith authentically, others will see the presence of God in our lives, which can draw them to seek Him as well.