



## **Theme: The Power of the Holy Spirit**

### **“The Gifts of the Holy Spirit.”**

**Weekly Memory Verse:** <sup>7</sup> *A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.* –1 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT)

**Family Activity for the Week:** List all the skills, talents, gifts, etc. that you have been given by God and provide one example of how you have used that gift. Find a candle you can use and take turns putting in front of each person in your family or group. Talk about how that candle represents the Holy Spirit. While the candle is in front of each person, focusing on that person and list ways others have seen those gifts, or others, in each person. List how each person blesses the family or group with their gifts. End with a prayer, thanking God for each person and their gifts.

**Monday, June 21** – Read Micah 3:8-12. The prophet Micah said the power of the Lord’s Spirit sent him to warn the people of Judah that their unjust ways were leading to terrible consequences. Other “prophets,” he said, claimed the Spirit gave them “windy” messages that all would be well (see Micah 2:11). The Hebrew word for wind and spirit is the same word (rûah). These prophets will have gone about claiming to speak with the spirit when their words are wind. Micah really does speak in the power of the wind—Yahweh’s wind or spirit.

🏔️ Later, the prophet Jeremiah also preached strong warnings. The officials in Jerusalem wanted to execute him for such an “unpatriotic” message. But “a few of the community elders” told the crowd they should listen, and quoted Micah 3:12 as evidence they shouldn’t kill prophets for delivering warnings from God (ss Jeremiah 26:1-19). What makes it important for you to listen to prophetic voices even when they tell you things you don’t want to hear?

🏔️ The power of God’s Spirit also led prophets to proclaim hope and new life (see the May 25 Meditation Moments where we read Ezekiel 37 and Zechariah 4. And Peter quoted Joel 2:28, which was a message of hope, in his Acts 2 sermon.) In one place the prophet Isaiah called a judgment message God’s “strange deed” and “foreign work” (Isaiah 28:21), suggesting that God’s Spirit was far happier to send messages of redemption and life. When have you heard and heeded prophetic voices that gave you hope and renewed life?

**Prayer:** *Lord God, you are a truth teller, so at times you need to warn me. But I thank you that the great ultimate truth you tell me is that, even beyond sad consequences, you always offer hope and restoration. Amen.*

**Tuesday, June 22** – Read Luke 1:28-38. God’s messenger promised that Mary, young and unmarried, would have a baby. Since human biology (Mary was a virgin) ruled pregnancy out, she logically asked, “How will this happen?” We often overlook this as we read the Christmas story, but the heavenly messenger said the

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Holy Spirit (“the power of the Most High”) would come over her. That was the message Mary trusted as she replied, “Let it be with me just as you have said.”

🏔️ Given what we know of her culture, Mary was likely in her mid-teens when the angel Gabriel unfolded a task she couldn’t (and we can’t) fully understand. Part of the power and mystery of that task was the Holy Spirit’s role in bringing her unique child into being. How does Mary’s response (verse 38) speak to your heart? Are you willing to surrender to the Holy Spirit’s leading, even when that calls for trust that reaches beyond full intellectual understanding?

🏔️ The angel greeted Mary with, “Rejoice, favored one!” That didn’t mean ease and comfort. Mary’s “favored” life brought huge challenges—first explaining her pregnancy to her fiancé and (probably) her parents, finally a day at the foot of a cross watching the Romans kill her son. Do you ever wish the Holy Spirit’s favor to you meant only pleasant things? How did Mary’s life show the challenge submitting to the Holy Spirit may involve?

**Prayer:** *Holy Spirit, Mary’s mission was a one-of-a-kind event in history. Give me an openness to whatever more “ordinary” (yet vital) missions you call and direct me to live out for you. Amen.*

**Wednesday, June 23** – Read Acts 1:1-8. Before leaving earth, Jesus charged his followers to witness to him. But he didn’t ask them to trust in their own courage or cleverness. He said they were to wait for the Holy Spirit’s power to make them effective in carrying out their mission. Some have even suggested that instead of “Acts of the Apostles” we might better call Luke’s second book something like “the Acts of the Holy Spirit (through the apostles).”

🏔️ Acts 1:15 said that “the family of believers” included about 120 people. Think of the vast, ever expanding scope of the task Jesus set before them: “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” How did Jesus’ vision and commission for that mission-driven, outward life focus make it essential that those first 120 (and all who came after them) trust the Holy Spirit’s power rather than their own?

🏔️ Jesus “ordered” (not “requested”) that his followers “... wait for what the Father had promised... in only a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:4-5). Especially when there is a big job to do, most of us want to “get on with it,” not “wait.” Have you ever had to wait for God to clarify or empower some worthy activity? What spiritual risks does running on ahead of God pose for a Christ-follower?

**Prayer:** *Jesus, I love your audacity, telling 120 people in a small Roman province to reach “to the end of the earth.” I love the Holy Spirit’s power that made that mission a reality. Give me your vision and power today. Amen.*

**Thursday, June 24** – Read Acts 2:4 and 4:8-12. At times, the Holy Spirit performed “signs and wonders” through the early Christians. Luke used the phrase about 8 times in the book of Acts. But the apostles never made healing, speaking in tongues or any other extraordinary happening an end in itself. When those things happened, they were vehicles the apostles used to turn people’s attention to Jesus’ power to save. And, in 2 Thessalonians 2:9, the apostle Paul warned that signs and wonders could also be used to deceive.

🏔️ How many of today’s avenues of healing were unavailable to the apostles and the people around them? To what extent do you believe God worked through available mechanisms, then and now? Do you believe the same Holy Spirit who healed through the apostles later led Christians to establish hospitals, medical schools, and other ways of restoring people to health?

🏔️ Would more “miraculous” works today automatically win more people to faith in Christ? Well, in today’s second reading Peter had to defend himself for healing a lame man! Supernatural events didn’t force either Jesus’ enemies or Roman officials to follow Christ. The greatest miracle the Spirit works,

repeatedly, is transforming people for the better from the inside out. How can you be a channel the Spirit uses for that, as well as lesser miracles?

**Prayer:** *Lord Jesus, you came, and you sent the Spirit, to offer salvation, not just to put on a show. Whether in an amazing event or in quiet everyday change, work through my life to build your kingdom in human hearts. Amen.*

**Friday, June 25** – Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-30, Ephesians 4:11-13, and Romans 12:6-8. The apostle Paul wrote the three passages you just read over two thousand years ago, yet they are timeless, applying to each follower of Jesus in 2021. As the body of Christ, each member works together to create the whole. If one person with one gift is missing, the entire body suffers. As the body works together unity and power come into being. We do not acquire or use these gifts on our own strength, but only through the Holy Spirit at work within us.

🏠 Are you clear about which of these gifts the Spirit has given you? If not, ask one or more people who know you well what gifts they see in you. You can also click [https://spiritualgiftsdiscovery.com/assessment-login/?invite=k\\_52d56c999ee9f](https://spiritualgiftsdiscovery.com/assessment-login/?invite=k_52d56c999ee9f) to access a short introduction to spiritual gifts discovery that we use at Summit Church. Once you have a sense of what your gifts are, how are you using those gifts to serve and build up the body of Christ?

🏠 Last week we focused on the fruit of the Spirit—qualities the Spirit grows in every Christian (see Galatians 5:22-23). But your “package” of spiritual gifts won’t be exactly like anyone else’s—note how Paul used words like “some” and “if” in writing about the gifts. And you must develop any spiritual gift. You likely have an aptitude in your area of giftedness but have room to grow in using it well. How are you developing your spiritual gifts?

**Prayer:** *Lord Jesus, the Spirit has gifted me in unique ways so that the Kingdom might come to earth. Help me to recognize the joy and responsibility of my giftedness. Amen.*

**Saturday, June 26** – Read 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. Corinth was a large, wealthy city infamous for its immorality (which took some doing in the Roman Empire!) Preaching Jesus there must have been scary. And preaching Jesus “as crucified” was even harder. Scholar N. T. Wright showed the difficulty for Paul: “Imagine finding yourself standing up to speak... and having nothing to say except some stammering words about a strange thing that happened a few years ago which you know sounds crazy but which you happen to think contains the secret to everything... Crucifixion was regarded in the ancient world as so horrible, so revolting, so degrading that you didn’t mention it in polite society. Imagine someone at a fashionable dinner-party going on loudly about how he’d seen rats eating the body of a dead dog in the street; that’s the kind of impression you’d make by standing up in public and talking about someone being crucified... But Paul believed, and the newfound faith and life of the Corinthian Christians bore this out, that this was the clue to the mystery of life.”

🏠 Paul was well-educated (see Acts 22:3). Paul knew the culture and ideas of the Greco-Roman cities he preached in, well enough to quote from their writers (see Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12). But he also knew that his message sounded ridiculous to many of them (see Acts 17:32). So, he didn’t rely on glib slogans or catchy marketing, but on the power of the Holy Spirit—and it worked. In Corinth, of all places, he saw the Spirit produce a vibrant, growing community of Christ-followers. They had lots of growing and learning to do (just read 1 and 2 Corinthians if you doubt it), but he trusted the Spirit to stay at work in their hearts and lives all through that process (see 1 Corinthians 6:11, 19, 2 Corinthians 13:13). How has the Holy Spirit’s power shaped your faith and growth in Christ? How have you learned to trust the Spirit’s power in your own efforts to share that faith with others?

**Prayer:** *Come, Holy Spirit! Do the wonderful, mysterious work of the kingdom through me, teaching me how to rely on your power to reach beyond anything I could do on my own. Amen.*

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