

Week Beginning: 9<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Worship Series: #7 in series



**lifegroups**  
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

### Theme Verse

So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?"

Acts 11:17

### Remember This Week

You have been created by God, chosen by God, and empowered by God to fulfill His agenda, not yours. Our effectiveness in sharing the love of God with the world will only come through living a life of being filled, led by and shaped by the Holy Spirit to go places our human will wouldn't go, say things our human intellect would not say and love people our human hearts wouldn't love.



**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. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.**

John 14:16-17

Dear Heavenly Father, fill us with your Spirit so that we may come alive through the study of your Word. Fill our hearts to overflowing as we rejoice in the life giving message that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. Give us the gift of wisdom and understanding as we study your Word together. Saturate us afresh in the Holy Spirit that your love and presence may overflow from us to bless others. Amen.



1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *If you could go on an adventure anywhere in the world, where would you choose and why?*
4. *What have been some of the things that have interrupted the agenda of your life plan and how did you react to it?*

Everyone has one. Everyone lives by one. It may be well-constructed and clearly articulated or silent and not consciously expressed. But it is there. It's called an agenda and it contains the important items that need to be done or completed to give direction and focus to your life. What headlines the agenda of your life? How do you respond when the Holy Spirit shows up and interrupts your agenda to fulfil his agenda for your life? It's so easy to live by our own agenda and then ask God to give power to the plans we have decided. It's far more difficult to take a step back and let God's agenda shape our agenda and become our agenda. But the promised Holy Spirit comes to introduce us to God's plans and take us on an adventure where we see God's power at work transforming lives in a way we can never ask or imagine. Join us today as we explore 'Living in the Spirit' - it's a journey that is wild, scary, exhilarating, surprising but incredibly humbling as the Spirit moves and works through us to fulfill God's Kingdom agenda.

Read Acts 10:34-11:18

5. *What thoughts/concepts/themes/phrases stand out for you in this text and why?*
6. *What agendas are evident in this text and what do you think is driving these agendas?*

Read 10:45 again Two words stand out - the Jewish believers were **astonished** that they Holy Spirit had come **even** on the Gentiles. In other words they had have no idea what God is doing, what God is capable of, or who God is able to reach. Instead of being open to the infinite possibilities of God they are closed-minded, thinking that the only way to God is a way that looks like the way that they came to God.





7. *Would you consider yourself to be open-minded or closed-minded to ways that God working in the world today? How do you demonstrate this?*
8. *What's your first reaction/response when you hear someone say to you, 'The Spirit told me to do it?' (11:18)*

Acts 10:1-11:18 is the longest single narrative in Acts and is a crucial step in the development of God's agenda and vision for the church; to be a place that is inclusive of all, a place where the Gospel is shared with all. It's where we see Jesus words in Acts 1:8: **'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth'** being carried out. The Spirit came on the apostles and about 3000 others on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, in Acts 8 the Spirit came on the Ethiopian Eunuch In Samaria who in turn took the Gospel to Africa, and here in Acts 10-11 we see the first stages of the good news of forgiveness and life in Jesus' name reaching 'the ends of the earth'. It's the first time there is an acknowledgement publicly that Gentiles (non-Jews) are seen as being included in God's salvation plan.

9. *Read 11:9 When God moves in new and unfamiliar ways, not everyone is overjoyed. How are the believers in the Church responding to what happened with Cornelius and his family?*
10. *What contemporary examples today do you think are evidence of where the Church is struggling to keep up with what the Holy Spirit is doing? Give reasons.*

God is way ahead of us in the salvation business. He had a plan from the beginning of the world, a plan that continues today to bring life to people as the Spirit moves. Luther says:

**You and I could never know anything about Christ, believe in him, or have him as our Lord if the Holy Spirit did not offer it all to us and plant it in our hearts when the Good News is preached. The work has been done. Christ has won the treasure for us by suffering, dying, rising again, and so on. But if this work stayed hidden and no one knew about it, it would all be for nothing and be no good to anyone.**

(Large Catechism II, 38) It's the Holy Spirit who points passionately to Jesus and tells us, 'Have you seen what Christ has done for you!' Our task is to proclaim that truth and get out of the way as the Spirit continues to move in surprising ways in this world.

Peter challenged the church of his day to re-form they way they considered what God was doing, how to re-interpret what God intended, how to re-think the implications of the good news of the Gospel for their day as the Holy Spirit guide them into all truth. We need to do the same today, for when it comes to God's Kingdom agenda, we often respond in one of three ways:

- a: God's agenda in opposition to our agenda (this is the default position of humanity). We want to be in control of our lives and our choices. God's agenda is contrary to ours.
- b: God's agenda + our agenda. We are happy to incorporate some of God's agenda into our own or we ask him to bless our agenda as we do parts of his.
- c: We surrender our agenda to God's agenda for our life. His purposes become ours.

12. *Do you identify most closely with a,b, or c in your life when it comes to living out God's agenda? Discuss.*
13. *When it comes to the Church, where are you in danger of digging in your heels because of personal preference or agenda? How will that acknowledgment change the way you move forward from this point?*
14. *Where is the Holy Spirit interrupting your agenda currently and how can the LifeGroup support or encourage you in that or with getting out of the way?*

**"The Spirit-filled life is not a special, deluxe edition of Christianity. It is part and parcel of the total plan of God for His people.- A. W. Tozer**

- \* Praise God that his salvation plan includes you and that he uses you to fulfil his kingdom purposes. Thank Jesus for revealing God's agenda for the world. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see where he is moving and to proclaim that as you get out of his way.
- \* Pray for the Spirit to continue to move in our community, drawing people into the life of Jesus, as we are witnessing at this current time.
- \* Pray for courage to go where the Spirit blows especially when it is unfamiliar to us.
- \* Pray for each other that we may welcome the Spirit's interruption to our plans daily.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

*Name, may you be daily surprised by the Spirit's leading in your life. Amen.*

