

REVIVAL

When the Spirit moves slow

Day 1: Rushing The Spirit

Read : Galatians 5:1 - 6:10

Does God have the power to make things happen instantly? The answer is 100% YES! However, God often chooses a slower route because true long-lasting transformation in our hearts takes time. God, in His grace and love for us, cares WAY more about the transformation of our hearts than meeting the immediacy of our needs or wants. WHO we become through the process is much more valuable than our instant gratification.

In our scripture today, there is a list of Spiritual fruit that comes from having a heart transformed by the Spirit of God. If you have ever planted or harvested fruit, you know that cultivating crops, especially fruit, takes time. It can take years, or several seasons, to yield a crop that is worthy of harvest. As this scripture describes, the fruits of the Spirit are produced when we surrender the desires of our hearts to God, and allow His Spirit to transform us. We certainly can't rush this process. In fact, it's a process that's never actually finished. We are transformed through a lifetime of following the Spirit's leading, surrendering our hearts daily to Him, and receiving His transformational power & grace over and over again.

- Where have you been praying for immediate gratification in your life? Do you think that the Spirit might be trying to transform something much deeper in you first? Think about the spaces in your life that you have felt the least patient with God, and ask Him if there is something that He's cultivating in you while you wait.

Day 2: Giving up on The Spirit

Read : Mark 4

It's easy for us to assume that God isn't there, or isn't listening, when we can't see His movement. We've all probably had moments in our lives where we temporarily lost faith & gave up asking God to move in a certain area because we couldn't see any results just yet.

Although the parables in Mark 4 contain varying lessons about our faith in general, they also contain important lessons about the movement of God's Spirit when we feel like giving up on Him.

“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”

- GALATIANS 5:25

User Guide:

How to use this study guide:

- **Pray** : Ask God to reveal Himself to you.
- **Read** : Read the daily scripture, take notes, and write down anything the Spirit reveals to you.
- **Study** : Read the daily study section and prayerfully answer the discussion questions.
- **Act** : Use the “Spirit in Action” section each week to look for ways to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in your day-to-day life.
- **Gather & Share** : Gather with your small group and discuss what the Spirit has revealed to you during this weekly study.
- **NOTE** : If you need help finding a group - Please reach out to Melonie at: meloniep@gumchurch.com

- **Giving up : sharing your faith** - vs. 1-20 - The farmer in this parable was sowing seeds containing the word of God to the people around him. It failed over and over again, until he finally found the good soil that multiplied what he had planted. *Are there are areas in your life where you have given up sowing the seeds of your faith? Ask God's Spirit to give you the strength to keep sowing, the wisdom to reach good soil, and the faith to know that He will multiply it.*
- **Giving up : understanding your faith** - vs.21-25 - Jesus tells us that His light can't be hidden. He promises that the more we listen, the more we will understand. *Is there is an area of your faith that you've given up trying to understand? Ask God's Spirit to speak to you in this area. Ask Him to help you listen, hear, and understand the mysteries of your faith.*
- **Giving up : growing your faith** - vs. 30-34 - Jesus describes a very tiny mustard seed that grows into an enormous tree. This mustard seed of faith is described again in Matthew 17 as an illustration of God taking something very small and using it in mighty ways. *Is there an area of your life that feels too weak or small to grow into anything useful to God? Ask God's Spirit to help grow what you have, even if it's just a tiny seed of faith, into something that He can use.*
- **Giving up : your faith** - vs 35-41 - These verses are an excellent example of how quickly we can forget WHO is in our boat. In the difficult seasons and storms of life, we can mistakenly assume that God must not be with us if we are going through hard things. We forget that we are never alone, and that the ONE with the power over any storm that comes our way isn't going to let us drown. *Spend time in prayer today asking God's Spirit to reveal any areas that you've lost faith in the ONE who is with you. Ask Him to give you hope instead of fear & faith instead of doubt, even when it feels like He's asleep in the boat.*

Day 3: Waiting on The Spirit

Read : Romans 5:1-11; James 1:2-4; James 5:7-12

Waiting on God is never wasted time. When God asks us to wait, or when His Spirit causes us to wait, there is always a purpose behind the waiting. Sometimes the waiting can come with an element of suffering as we struggle with the process of surrender, obedience, and transformation. Instead of a quick fix, God's Spirit patiently forms our character & grows our faith as we persevere in the struggles of life alongside His Spirit. While God doesn't want us to suffer, He also doesn't want us to stay how we are. He isn't simply trying to get you through the hard things. He wants to get you through, while using the hard things to transform you for His good purpose in your life.

Take time to reflect on what God might be trying to form in you through a struggle that is taking longer than you expected to get through.

- **SEE** - Ask God what He is trying to reveal to you in this season.
- **ASK** - Ask His Spirit what He is trying to form in you in this season.
- **ACT** - Ask Him to reveal the next step of obedience that He's calling you to make...and take it!!

Spirit in Action

Join us each week as we look for ways to practice experiencing the gifts of the Spirit in Action.

Long Suffering

Read : 1 Corinthians 13
Long suffering doesn't sound like a gift, right? If we are honest it kinda sounds like punishment. However, this absolutely CAN be a gift of the Spirit.

The Spirit can empower us to remain loving, steady, and faithful when something or someone takes longer, hurts more, or requires WAY more patience than we would naturally have.

1. Give space to grow

Practice giving people room to grow, while also recognizing that none of us have it all figured out just yet.

- Ask the Spirit to help you to respond to others in a way that would encourage their maturity and growth.
- Set healthy boundaries
- Allow the hard consequences instead of protecting and enabling
- Speak truth in love
- When you are tempted to say - "they should know this by now" or "I should know this by now" - Remember that God is still forming ALL of us!

Day 4: Aligning your timeline with The Spirit

Read : John 11: 1-44; 2 Peter 3:8-9; James 4:13-17; Revelation 1:8

Our human concept of time is drastically limited when we compare it to God's omniscience timing. God exists fully outside of the constraints of time, therefore, He sees and exists in the past, present, and future. This is one of those concepts that is virtually impossible for our human brains to conceive or fully understand. Our concept of time is linear, while God's timing transcends all possible limitations to orchestrate His perfect plans, with His infallible wisdom, and eternal foresight. We can trust and have faith that His timing and plans are WAY WAY better than ours.

In the first scripture passage for today, John 11, we see God's timing on full display. What looked like a deadly mistake by taking too long to get to His sick and dying friend, became one of the most amazing miracles of the New Testament along with a powerful foreshadowing of what was to come for Jesus. Even with pressure from the disciples, Lazarus' family, and the close relationship that Jesus had with them, Jesus' timeline was aligned with The Spirit instead of His own earthly desires. This wasn't easy for Jesus. He was angry, He wept, and He was troubled by what He saw. However, no matter how hard it was, or how He felt, Jesus remained obedient to the Lord and therefore, his friend, Lazarus was raised from the dead!

- Is there an area in your life that you have labeled as "too late" for God? Pause and ask God if He might still be working in that area. Ask Him to align your limited human timeline with His omniscience timing through faith & obedience to Him.

Day 5: Being present with The Spirit

Read : Galatians 6:9; Ecclesiastes 3:11

Sometimes aligning ourselves with the movement of The Spirit is as simple as "keep going". We don't always need a dramatic breakthrough, a booming voice, or a miraculous sign. Sometimes The Spirit is simply inviting us to stay faithful in the daily ordinary things while we wait for His timing. Often it's in those ordinary daily practices of our faith that we receive a solid foundation of steady growth, or a training ground for what God is going to do in our lives. Just like the farmer, the daily watering & care eventually lead to a great harvest. Where is God saying "keep going"?

- **Keep Praying**
- **Keep Obeying**
- **Keep Loving**
- **Keep Growing**
- **Keep Trusting**

- Which of these areas have you grown weary in doing good?
- Ask the Spirit to reveal what it looks like for you to live faithfully present with His Spirit TODAY - what is one small next step that He has been nudging you to take in this moment? Don't wait....DO IT!!

2. Don't sit in God's seat

God knows all, sees all, and has the power to do ALL things. We weren't made to sit on His throne. Only God has the power to change your heart, or someone else's. You can practice:

- patience without passivity
- love without trying to control the outcome
- care without carrying.

3. Keep going

It's easy to give up when you have suffered over a long period of time. Sometimes the hardest part is continuing to love when you don't see any changes. Small ways to practice long suffering are:

- Praying instead of complaining
- Encouraging instead of criticizing
- Speaking truth without sarcasm or contempt
- Doing your part, but not picking up theirs or trying to control the outcome
- Ask God what you need to do TODAY - and let tomorrow's difficulties wait for tomorrow.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up"

- GALATIANS 6:9