

“Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1”

Summary

What happens when the living God wants to move through ordinary people? That question sits at the heart of this message, which opens with a striking image from Genesis: the earth was filled with violence through human beings. But here is the breathtaking flip side of that principle. The same way darkness spread through people, the glory of God is destined to fill the earth through people. Habakkuk 2:14 declares it, Isaiah 6 pictures the seraphim already singing it from heaven's perspective, and Jesus instructs us to pray it into reality. We are not waiting for glory to fall from the sky like rain on an empty field. We are called to be the conduit. This is why understanding the Holy Spirit is not optional for us. It is the very engine of our purpose. The message draws us into a honest and hopeful conversation about what it means to be a Spirit-filled people who are growing, not just believing in theory but learning in practice how the river of God flows through willing hearts. The invitation is simple and profound: the earth will be filled with the knowledge of His glory, and we get to be part of how that happens.

Small Group Study Guide – Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1

Series Introduction | Living Waters World Outreach Center

Overview

This sermon launches a new series exploring the person and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and the church. Using the humorous but honest story of a man's first encounter with charismatic worship, the message calls believers to move past fear and unfamiliarity toward a mature, Scripture-grounded understanding of spiritual things. The central challenge is simple: will we go, or will we grow?

Key Takeaways

1. Ignorance about spiritual things is not a virtue. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:1 that he does not want believers to be uninformed about spiritual things. God's desire is for his people to grow in understanding, not to remain as children.

2. The earth will be filled with the glory of God through people. Just as corruption spread through human agreement with evil (Genesis 6:11-12), the knowledge of God's glory is meant to spread through people who cooperate with the Holy Spirit. The flow of God's presence is meant to move through us, not just to us.

3. Holy and unholy things can move through the same person. Peter's experience in Matthew 16 is a sobering reminder that a person can be used powerfully by God in one moment and be a channel for something else entirely in the next. Discernment is not optional -- it is essential.

4. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not relics of the past. The baptism and gifts of the Holy Spirit are described as essential, not merely interesting. Without the partnership of the Holy Spirit, the church cannot fulfill its calling in this hour.

5. Maturity means staying and growing, not leaving when things get uncomfortable. The invitation of the Holy Spirit, like a cave guide in total darkness, is this: "You are welcome to follow me." The question is whether we will.

Discussion Questions

Opening (Choose one to get the conversation started)

- Have you ever walked into a church environment that felt completely foreign or uncomfortable to you? What was that experience like?
- What is one thing about the Holy Spirit or spiritual gifts that you have always found confusing or hard to understand?

Going Deeper

On Spiritual Hunger and Unfamiliarity

1. Pastor Rob described his early spiritual hunger leading him into Eastern mysticism before he encountered genuine Christian faith. What does that kind of hunger tell us about what people are actually looking for, even when they are looking in the wrong places? How does that shape the way we engage with people around us?
2. Many people, like Mike and Janet, encounter the moving of the Holy Spirit and instinctively want to leave. What do you think is behind that reaction? Is it always skepticism, or can it sometimes be something else?

On Growing in Understanding

3. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:1 that he does not want believers to be uninformed about spiritual things, and in 1 Corinthians 14:20 he calls believers to be mature in their understanding. What does spiritual maturity look like in practice when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit? What does immaturity look like?
 4. The sermon draws a contrast between two responses to the messy nature of spiritual gifts: shutting them down entirely, or pressing in and growing through the process. Have you seen either of those responses in your own life or in church settings you have been part of? What were the results?
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On Discernment and the Peter Principle

5. In Matthew 16, Peter goes from being the vessel through whom God reveals the identity of Jesus to being rebuked by Jesus in the span of just a few verses. What does this teach us about how we should hold our own spiritual impressions and promptings? How does it change the way you think about discernment?
 6. The sermon makes the point that not every spiritual manifestation in a Spirit-filled environment is from God. How do we create a culture in our church and small group where we can honestly evaluate what is happening without either dismissing everything or accepting everything uncritically?
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On the Flow of the Spirit

7. John 7:38 describes rivers of living water flowing out of the heart of the believer. The sermon connects this to the idea that the earth will be filled with the glory of God through people. What are some of the things that can block or distort that flow in a person's life?
 8. Pastor Rob said, "If God can get it through you, he can get it to you. But if God can't get it through you, then why would he give it to you?" How does that principle apply beyond giving and finances to the broader life of the Spirit?
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On Personal Response

9. 2 Timothy 1:6 calls Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God that is within him. What gifts do you sense God has placed in you? Are those gifts currently being stirred and used, or have they grown cold? What would fanning them into flame look like for you specifically?
 10. The sermon closes with the image of a tour guide in a cave saying, "You are welcome to follow me." In what area of your spiritual life do you most sense the Holy Spirit extending that invitation right now? What is making it difficult to follow?
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Practical Applications

This Week, Choose at Least One:

- **Study the Bible.** Read Acts 2:1-41, Matthew 16:13-28, and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 on your own. Write down one observation from each passage that you had not noticed before.
 - **Identify your reaction.** Honestly reflect on where you land on the spectrum from skepticism to openness when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Bring that honestly before God in prayer and ask him to show you whether your position is rooted in Scripture, in fear, in past experience, or in genuine conviction.
 - **Ask a question you have been afraid to ask.** If there is something about the Holy Spirit or spiritual gifts that has always confused or unsettled you, bring it to your small group leader or pastor this week. Growth begins with honest questions.
 - **Pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit.** If you have never asked God to fill you with his Spirit, make that a focused prayer this week. If you have, ask him to stir afresh what he has already placed within you.
 - **Identify your sphere of influence.** The sermon emphasizes that the glory of God fills the earth through people. Write down two or three specific people in your life who are far from God. Commit to praying for them by name this week, asking God to flow through you into their lives.
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Closing Prayer Focus

As you close your group time, pray together around these themes:

- Gratitude for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your midst
 - Courage to grow rather than go when things are unfamiliar or uncomfortable
 - Hunger for a deeper, more mature understanding of spiritual things
 - Openness to be a vessel through whom God's glory flows to a broken world
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Looking Ahead

This is the first session in the "Janet, Get Your Purse" series. Future sessions will go deeper into specific areas of Scripture related to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, how to discern what is and is not of God, and what it looks like for a local church to grow into a mature, Spirit-filled expression of the body of Christ. Come ready to engage, ask honest questions, and grow.

Main Points – Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1

Title: Janet, Get Your Purse: Growing in the Things of the Spirit

Sermon Summary:

This sermon launches a new series called "Janet, Get Your Purse," named after a humorous but relatable story about a man's instinct to flee when first encountering charismatic worship. Pastor Rob uses this story as a launching pad to address the importance of understanding and maturing in spiritual things, particularly the gifts and moving of the Holy Spirit. Drawing from Scripture, the sermon establishes that the earth is destined to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, and that this filling happens through people who are willing to grow in their cooperation with the Holy Spirit. Pastor Rob emphasizes that spiritual maturity is not about shutting down the moving of the Spirit out of fear of messiness, but about learning to discern, judge, and grow in spiritual things. The sermon calls believers to move from spiritual infancy to maturity, to remain open to the Holy Spirit's movement, and to understand that they are vessels through whom God desires to flow to a broken world.

Key Points:

- The Hebrew word "Shema," meaning to hear with the heart, is foundational to the great commandment and to receiving what God is saying
- The earth being filled with violence through people in Genesis mirrors the principle that the earth will be filled with God's glory through people who cooperate with the Holy Spirit
- Ignorance concerning spiritual things is something God explicitly does not want for believers, as stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12
- The story of Peter at Caesarea Philippi illustrates that holy and unholy things can flow through the same person in close succession, making discernment essential
- The manifestation of the Holy Spirit is given to each believer for the benefit of all, not for personal accumulation
- Spiritual maturity means growing through the messiness of spiritual expression rather than shutting it down out of discomfort
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the starting point for spiritual gifts operating as God intended
- Believers are called to fan into flame the gifts God has entrusted to them rather than suppressing them out of fear

Scripture Reference:

- Acts 2:12-17, describing the Day of Pentecost and Peter's response to the crowd's confusion
- 1 Corinthians 12:1 and 12:7, concerning spiritual gifts and their purpose for the benefit of all
- 1 Corinthians 14:20, calling believers to be mature in understanding
- Genesis 6:11-13, describing how the earth was filled with corruption through people

- Habakkuk 2:14, declaring that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of God's glory
- Isaiah 6:1-3, where the seraphim declare the whole earth full of God's glory
- Matthew 16:13-23, covering Peter's confession of Christ and Jesus's rebuke of Peter
- John 7:37-40, Jesus's invitation on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles
- 2 Timothy 1:6, Paul's charge to Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God
- Jeremiah 31:12, describing people flowing together to the goodness of the Lord

Discussion Questions – Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1

The sermon opens with the Hebrew word Shema, meaning to hear with the heart rather than just the ears -- in what areas of your life do you sense God calling you to move beyond surface-level hearing toward a deeper, heart-level listening?

Pastor Rob describes a divine discontentedness -- a hunger for more of God even when we are at peace with him -- how do you personally distinguish between holy spiritual hunger and mere restlessness or dissatisfaction?

Peter received a revelation from God that Jesus is the Christ, and moments later Jesus rebuked the enemy speaking through him -- what does this dramatic shift tell us about the importance of ongoing discernment even for those who are genuinely devoted to God?

The sermon draws a parallel between Genesis 6, where the earth was filled with violence through people, and Habakkuk 2:14, where the earth will be filled with God's glory through people -- what does it mean to you personally that God has chosen human beings as the channel for his glory rather than acting independently of us?

Pastor Rob describes the tension pastors face between theologically affirming the gifts of the Spirit and practically encouraging their expression because of the messiness involved -- how should a community of faith balance the risk of spiritual disorder with the danger of quenching what God is doing?

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:1 that he does not want believers to be ignorant about spiritual things, and in 1 Corinthians 14:20 he calls them to be mature in understanding -- what are the most significant barriers that prevent believers today from growing in their knowledge and practice of spiritual gifts?

The cave guide's repeated phrase, you are welcome to follow me, became a metaphor for the Holy Spirit's invitation -- in what ways have you experienced the Holy Spirit extending this kind of invitation in your own life, and how did you respond?

The sermon emphasizes that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each believer for the benefit of all, not for personal accumulation -- how does this communal purpose reshape the way you think about your own spiritual gifts and experiences?

Pastor Rob acknowledges that not every spiritual manifestation in a Spirit-filled church is from God, and that believers are called to judge, discern, and prove all things -- what practical habits or disciplines help you personally test and evaluate spiritual experiences against Scripture?

The sermon closes with the vision of people flowing together to the goodness of the Lord as described in Jeremiah 31:12 -- what would it look like in practical, everyday terms for your local church to become a congregation through whom living water genuinely flows to a broken world?

Scriptures – Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1

Here is a list of all scripture references mentioned or alluded to in the sermon:

Directly Referenced

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (the Shema, "Hear, O Israel," and the great commandment)
- Matthew 22:37-39 (love God and love your neighbor)
- Matthew 8:27 (disciples asking "What manner of man is this?" after Jesus calms the storm)
- Philippians 3:8-14 (Paul's desire to know Christ; pressing toward the mark; the prize)
- Genesis 6:11-13 (the earth corrupt and filled with violence)
- Habakkuk 2:14 (the earth filled with the knowledge of the glory of God)
- Isaiah 6:1-3 (Isaiah's vision of the Lord; seraphim declaring "Holy, holy, holy; the whole earth is full of his glory")
- Matthew 6:10 (thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven)
- Acts 2:12-17 (day of Pentecost; people amazed and perplexed; Peter's response quoting Joel)
- 1 Corinthians 12:1 (Paul not wanting believers ignorant concerning spiritual things)
- 1 Corinthians 12:7 (the manifestation of the Spirit given to each one for the benefit of all)
- 1 Corinthians 14:20 (do not be children in understanding; be mature)
- Ephesians 4:11-15 (the five-fold ministry; perfecting the saints; growing to the fullness of Christ)
- Matthew 16:13-23 (Peter's confession; Jesus calling Peter blessed; "Get behind me, Satan")
- Matthew 16:24-26 (take up your cross; losing and finding your life; gaining the world but losing your soul)
- 1 Corinthians 10:12 (let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall)
- Luke 24:49 / Acts 1:4-8 (tarry in Jerusalem; wait for the power of the Holy Spirit)
- Proverbs 14:4 (where no ox is, the stall is clean; but much increase comes by the strength of the ox)
- John 7:37-40 (Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles; rivers of living water flowing from the heart; the Spirit not yet given)
- 2 Timothy 1:6-7 (fan into flame the gift of God; spirit not of fear but of power, love, and self-control)
- Jeremiah 31:12 (flowing together to the goodness of the Lord; the soul as a watered garden)
- Numbers 6:24-26 (the Aaronic blessing; the Lord bless you and keep you)

Alluded To Without Direct Citation

- Romans 4:17 (declaring things that are not as though they are)
- Philippians 4:19 (God meeting all needs according to his riches in glory)

- 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 (quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesying; prove all things; hold fast to what is good)
- 1 John 3:2 (when we see him as he is, we shall be like him)
- Genesis 1:2 (the Spirit hovering over the waters at creation)

Devotional – Janet, Get Your Purse - Session 1

Day 1: Hear, O Hungry Heart

Reading: Deuteronomy 6:4-9 -- The great Shema, calling God's people to hear with their whole heart, love God completely, and pass that devotion on to every generation.

Devotional:

The Hebrew word Shema means more than simply hearing sounds. It means hearing with the heart -- receiving what is spoken and letting it reshape you from the inside out. Before God ever gave Israel a commandment to obey, he gave them a commandment to listen. This tells us something profound about God's character. He is not primarily interested in your performance. He is interested in your attention. Spiritual growth begins not with doing more but with hearing more clearly. Ask yourself today: am I truly listening, or am I simply going through the motions of religious routine? The Spirit of God is speaking. Position your heart to receive.

Practical Application: Set aside ten minutes today in complete silence. No music, no phone, no background noise. Simply tell God you are listening, and wait. Write down anything that comes to your heart during that time.

Day 2: What Is Flowing Through You

Reading: John 7:37-39 -- Jesus, on the last and greatest day of the Feast of Tabernacles, invites anyone who is thirsty to come to him and drink, promising that rivers of living water will flow from within those who believe.

Devotional:

Jesus did not say that living water would trickle or drip from those who believe. He said it would flow like rivers -- plural, powerful, and life-giving. The imagery is intentional. A river does not hoard what flows through it. It receives and releases, receives and releases. This is the design God has for every believer. The Holy Spirit was given not merely so that you could feel spiritually satisfied on Sunday morning, but so that something life-giving could move through you toward a broken and thirsty world. The question worth sitting with today is not whether God is willing to pour out his Spirit. The question is whether you are willing to be a channel.

Practical Application: Identify one person in your life who seems spiritually thirsty. Pray specifically for them today and ask the Holy Spirit to show you one practical way you can be a source of living water to them this week.

Day 3: The Earth Will Be Filled

Reading: Habakkuk 2:14 -- The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. Isaiah 6:1-3 -- Isaiah's vision of the Lord enthroned, with the seraphim declaring that the whole earth is already full of his glory.

Devotional:

Heaven does not see the earth the way we do. From the eternal vantage point of God's throne, the seraphim are already declaring that the whole earth is full of his glory. This is not wishful thinking. It is a declaration rooted in the certainty of God's purposes. The same God who allowed the earth to be filled with violence through human beings in Genesis 6 has determined that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of his glory through human beings who cooperate with his Spirit. You are not waiting for God to show up. God is waiting for you to yield. The filling happens through people -- through you.

Practical Application: Memorize Habakkuk 2:14 this week. Each morning, speak it aloud as a declaration over your day before you leave your home, reminding yourself that you carry the presence of God into every room you enter.

Day 4: Growing Up, Not Going Away

Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-7 and 1 Corinthians 14:20 -- Paul urges believers not to be ignorant of spiritual things and calls them to be mature in understanding, even as they remain innocent in malice.

Devotional:

Maturity in the things of the Spirit is not automatic. It requires intentional pursuit, honest self-examination, and a willingness to remain in the room even when things feel unfamiliar or uncomfortable. Peter experienced one of the highest prophetic moments recorded in Scripture when he declared Jesus to be the Christ, and within the same chapter he became a vessel for something entirely different. This should not discourage us. It should sober us. The goal is not to shut down spiritual expression out of fear of getting it wrong. The goal is to grow in discernment, to prove all things, and to hold fast to what is genuinely from God. Choosing to grow rather than go is one of the most important decisions a believer can make.

Practical Application: Reflect honestly on an area of your spiritual life where you have pulled back out of fear or confusion rather than pressing in for understanding. Bring that area before God today and ask him for the courage to grow rather than retreat.

Day 5: Fan Into Flame

Reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-7 -- Paul reminds Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God that is in him, and declares that God has given believers a spirit not of fear but of power, love, and self-control.

Devotional:

A flame that is not tended will diminish. This is not a statement about God's faithfulness. It is a statement about human responsibility. Paul does not tell Timothy to wait for a fresh flame to fall from heaven. He tells him to fan what is already there. The gift of God is already within you if you have received the Holy Spirit. The question is whether you are actively cultivating it or allowing it to smolder under the weight of fear, discouragement, or neglect. God has not given you a spirit of fear. He has given you power to act, love to motivate, and self-control to steward what flows through you wisely. Fan the flame today.

Practical Application: Identify one spiritual gift or calling you have allowed to lie dormant. Take one concrete step this week to activate it -- whether that means serving, praying for someone, sharing your testimony, or simply making yourself available to God and saying, I am here. Use me.

This reading plan is designed to be used individually or in a small group setting. Consider journaling your responses to each day's reflection and sharing what God is speaking to you with a trusted fellow believer.