

## “Partnering with the Holy Spirit”

*(Janet, get your purse - session 2)*

### Summary

What does it truly mean to walk in step with the Holy Spirit, not just believe in Him from a distance? This message pulls us into one of the most urgent conversations the church needs to have right now. Drawing from 1 Corinthians 12, we are reminded that God never intended for us to be ignorant of spiritual things. In fact, the natural, carnal mind is not merely disinterested in the things of God, it is actively hostile toward them. Romans 8 makes this sobering reality plain, and yet the invitation standing before us is not one of condemnation but of transformation. We are called to shift from carnal-minded reasoning to Spirit-led discernment, from spectators of spiritual activity to genuine partners with the Holy Spirit. The early church in Acts 13 gives us a stunning picture of what this partnership looks like in practice. While they were worshiping and fasting, the Holy Spirit spoke, and they listened. They did not rush past the moment or lean on their own understanding. They stayed in step, continued to seek, and then moved together with God. The result was the launching of the first missionary journey of the church. The parallel for us today is impossible to miss. We live in a generation drowning in spiritual hunger, and if the church is not offering the genuine article, people will find counterfeit spiritual experiences elsewhere. The call here is not to perform or produce, but to pursue. When we seek God with our whole hearts, he promises to be found. That is not a suggestion. It is a covenant.

### Small Group Study Guide – Partnering with the Holy Spirit *(Janet, get your purse - session 2)*

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#### OVERVIEW

This session explores what it means to be a genuinely spiritual people who walk in active partnership with the Holy Spirit. Rather than settling for a purely intellectual or religious faith, we are called to stay in step with God's Spirit in real time, in a real world, with real needs. This guide will help your group process the sermon's core themes and move toward practical application in daily life.

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## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must do so in spirit and in truth. To know God is to engage the spiritual dimension of life on his terms, not ours.
  - The natural, carnal mind is not merely disinterested in spiritual things. According to Romans 8, it is actively hostile toward them. Every believer must reckon with this tension.
  - The Holy Spirit can be grieved. How we speak, how we treat one another, and whether we walk in forgiveness all affect the atmosphere in which the Spirit moves.
  - The New Testament church operated as partners with the Holy Spirit. Their decisions, their missions, and their direction were shaped by actively listening to him, especially in worship and prayer.
  - When we seek God with our whole hearts, he promises to be found. The sermon offered a personal testimony of what that kind of desperate, wholehearted seeking can produce.
  - Communion is a reminder that we are not merely forgiven sinners. In Christ, we are new creations, co-seated with him in heavenly places, and called to walk in that identity.
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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Opening Question

1. Has there ever been a moment in your faith journey when something spiritually unfamiliar made you want to, as the sermon put it, "Janet, get your purse"? What was that experience, and looking back, what do you think God was doing in that moment?

### Going Deeper

2. The sermon drew attention to the fact that the word "gifts" in 1 Corinthians 12:1 was inserted by translators. The original text simply says "spirituals." Why do you think it matters that Paul's concern was broader than just spiritual gifts? What does it mean to be a spiritual people in a practical, everyday sense?
3. John 4:24 says God is Spirit and those who worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth. In your own words, what does it look like to worship God on his terms rather than bringing him down to yours? Where do you find that most challenging?
4. Romans 8:5-7 describes the carnal mind as not just passive but actively hostile toward God. Can you think of a time, like Peter pulling Jesus aside, when you or someone you know was trying to do something good but was actually working against what God was doing? What helped bring clarity?
5. Ephesians 4:30 says not to grieve the Holy Spirit, and the surrounding verses connect that instruction to how we speak and how we treat one another. How does the way a community handles conflict, forgiveness, and encouragement either attract or repel the presence of the Holy Spirit? What does that look like practically in a small group like this one?

6. In Acts 13, the church at Antioch received direction from the Holy Spirit while they were worshiping and fasting. They did not immediately act but continued to seek God through the logistical complications. What does this pattern suggest about how we should respond when God seems to be speaking but the path forward is unclear?
7. The sermon described a moment of wholehearted, desperate prayer that was answered in a surprising and specific way. Have you experienced a season of that kind of seeking? What did it produce, or what are you still waiting to see from it?
8. Pastor Christie addressed the danger of a religious spirit that keeps believers in a posture of unworthiness even after salvation. How do you personally navigate the tension between genuine humility before God and the bold identity you have been given as a child of God and co-heir with Jesus?

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## PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

### **This Week, Consider the Following:**

**Examine your spiritual atmosphere.** Based on Ephesians 4:29-32, take an honest inventory this week. Is there any unresolved bitterness, careless speech, or broken relationship in your life that may be grieving the Holy Spirit? Take one concrete step toward addressing it, whether that means reaching out to someone, confessing something to God, or asking for forgiveness.

**Prioritize worship as a place of listening.** The church at Antioch received direction in the context of worship and fasting, not only in a planning meeting. This week, set aside time not just to ask God for things but to worship him and then wait quietly. Journal anything that comes to mind during that time.

**Identify where you are in step and where you are not.** Galatians 5:25 says to keep in step with the Spirit. Reflect honestly on one area of your life where you sense God is moving and you have been hesitant to follow. What is the specific obstacle? Bring it to your group or to a trusted believer and pray through it together.

**Reject false identity.** If you have been operating from a posture of unworthiness, condemnation, or religious performance, write down one specific truth from Scripture about who you are in Jesus. Speak it out loud every day this week. Colossians 3:1-4 and Ephesians 2:4-6 are good places to start.

**Consider your role as a sender or a goer.** The sermon highlighted that in the body of Christ there are goers and senders, and both are essential. Pray this week about your specific role in the Great Commission. If you are not currently engaged in any form of outward-focused mission, ask God to show you one step you could take.

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## CLOSING PRAYER FOCUS

Close your group time by praying together around these themes:

- That each member would grow in sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's voice and movement
- That your group would be a community where the Spirit is welcomed and not grieved
- That God would restore any wasted seasons and bring each person into step with his purposes
- That Living Waters as a congregation would be a people who reflect God's presence to a spiritually hungry world

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*"If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit." - Galatians 5:25*

## Main Points – Partnering with the Holy Spirit (*Janet, get your purse - session 2*)

### Sermon Summary:

This sermon, the second in a series called "Janet Get Your Purse," calls believers to move beyond spiritual ignorance and into active, daily partnership with the Holy Spirit. Drawing from Paul's letters and the example of the early church, Pastor Rob emphasizes that God is a Spirit and must be worshiped and known on spiritual terms, not natural ones. The carnal mind, though common to all believers, is actively hostile to the things of God and must be submitted to the Spirit rather than allowed to rule. The sermon challenges the congregation to pursue deep, relational fellowship with the Holy Spirit, to stay in step with him in worship, prayer, and fasting, and to trust that God speaks to those who seek him with their whole heart. The sermon closes with a communion reflection on the resurrection power that dwells in every believer and the identity and authority that comes through union with Jesus.

### Key Points:

- The word "gifts" in 1 Corinthians 12:1 is not in the original Greek; the passage speaks of "spirituals," meaning all things pertaining to the spirit realm, not gifts alone
- God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must do so in spirit and in truth, meaning engagement with the spiritual realm is not optional for the believer
- The natural, carnal mind is not merely disinterested in the things of God but is actively hostile toward them, and believers must recognize this tendency in themselves
- The Holy Spirit can be grieved by corrupt speech, unresolved bitterness, and failure to extend forgiveness, and believers carry responsibility for how they steward his presence
- The early church at Antioch modeled Spirit-led partnership through worship, fasting, and prayer, receiving direction from the Holy Spirit and then acting on it together
- Seeking God with the whole heart, as described in Jeremiah 29, is the condition attached to being found by God and receiving His direction
- There are goers and senders in the mission of God, and both roles are equally part of Spirit-led partnership
- Halloween is identified as spiritually dangerous and incompatible with Christian faith, connected to occult practices that believers should avoid entirely
- Believers are not to think of themselves as unworthy sinners but as co-heirs with Jesus, seated with him in heavenly places, carrying resurrection power
- The congregation is called to grow into the full expression of Spirit-led worship and the gifts of the Spirit so that the church can meet the needs of a desperate world

### Scripture Reference:

- 1 Corinthians 12:1, on spiritual things and the danger of ignorance in the church
- John 4:24, where Jesus declares that God is Spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and truth

- 1 Corinthians 2:9-16, on the Spirit revealing the deep things of God to those who receive him
- Romans 8:5-9, on the contrast between the mind set on the flesh and the mind set on the Spirit
- Ephesians 4:29-32, on not grieving the Holy Spirit and the connection between speech, relationships, and his presence
- Galatians 5:25, the call to keep in step with the Spirit
- Acts 13:1-4, the sending of Barnabas and Saul from Antioch through Spirit-directed worship and fasting
- Jeremiah 29:10-14, on seeking God with the whole heart and being found by him
- Ephesians 1 and 2 (Passion Translation), on the spirit of wisdom and revelation and the believer's identity as co-seated with Christ

## Discussion Questions – Partnering with the Holy Spirit *(Janet, get your purse - session 2)*

The sermon describes the natural mind as not merely indifferent to spiritual things but actively hostile toward God — in what ways have you personally experienced your own reasoning working against what God was doing in your life?

Pastor Rob describes a moment of desperate, wholehearted prayer that was followed by a surprising and confirming answer — what does it look like practically for you to seek God with your whole heart rather than a portion of it?

The early church in Acts 13 made major decisions by saying it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to them, treating the Spirit as an active participant in their discernment — how does your personal or communal decision-making process reflect or fall short of that kind of partnership?

The sermon draws a distinction between worshipers who try to bring God down to their terms and worship that is designed to lift us into God's realm — how does this reframe the way you approach corporate or personal worship?

Pastor Rob warns that a world rejecting Jesus is deeply spiritually hungry and will fill that hunger with something — what responsibility does that place on the church to offer a genuine and vibrant spiritual life rather than a controlled or subdued one?

The sermon suggests that answering God's call almost always requires giving something up, and that you cannot go up without giving up — what might God be asking you to release in order to step into what he is calling you toward?

Paul's warning in Ephesians 4 connects the way believers treat one another directly to whether the Holy Spirit is grieved or welcomed — how seriously do you consider your relational conduct as a spiritual and not merely a social matter?

Pastor Christy challenges the congregation to reject what she calls a worm mindset rooted in false humility, arguing that viewing yourself as worthless after redemption is an insult to what Jesus accomplished — how does your self-perception align or conflict with the identity Scripture says you have been given in Jesus?

The sermon revisits the moment when Peter rebuked Jesus for speaking of the cross, and Jesus identified that rebuke as satanic in origin despite Peter's good intentions — how does that account challenge you to examine whether your well-meaning impulses are always spiritually aligned?

Galatians 5:25 calls believers not just to live by the Spirit but to keep in step with the Spirit, implying an ongoing, attentive, and paced relationship — what habits, attitudes, or distractions in your current life are making it hardest for you to stay in that kind of step?

## Scriptures – Partnering with the Holy Spirit (*Janet, get your purse - session 2*)

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

### DIRECTLY CITED

1. 1 Corinthians 12:1 - Introduction to spiritual gifts and the call against ignorance of spiritual things
2. John 4:24 - God is a Spirit, and those who worship him must do so in spirit and in truth
3. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16 - What God has prepared for those who love him, revealed through the Spirit; the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit; we have the mind of Christ
4. Romans 8:5-9 - Those who live by the flesh set their minds on fleshly things; the carnal mind is hostile toward God; those in the Spirit set their minds on spiritual things
5. Ephesians 4:29-32 - Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths; do not grieve the Holy Spirit; be kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving
6. Galatians 5:25 - If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit
7. Hebrews 5:12 - By this time you ought to be teachers, but you need someone to teach you the basic principles again
8. Acts 13:1-4 - The church at Antioch worshiping and fasting; the Holy Spirit calling out Barnabas and Saul for missionary work; being sent out by the Holy Spirit
9. Acts 15:28 - It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us
10. Jeremiah 29:10-14 - God's plans for welfare and not evil; seeking God with all your heart and finding him; restoration of fortunes
11. Matthew 16 - Peter's confession of Christ; Jesus rebuking Peter, saying "Get behind me, Satan"
12. Revelation 14:4 - Those who follow the Lamb wherever he goes
13. Philippians 1:6 - He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion
14. Ephesians 1:17-23 - Prayer for the spirit of wisdom and revelation; the immeasurable greatness of God's power; Christ exalted above all rule and authority
15. Ephesians 2:1-6 - Once dead in trespasses and sins; raised up and seated with Christ in heavenly places
16. 1 Corinthians 14:14 - He who prays in an unknown tongue, his understanding is unfruitful
17. Numbers 6:24-26 - The Aaronic blessing: the Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you

### ALLUDED TO OR THEMATICALLY REFERENCED

1. Genesis 2-3 - The garden, the fruit, and God walking with man in the cool of the day

2. Genesis 1:26-28 - Man made in God's image and likeness; the mandate to subdue the earth
3. Acts 2:1-4 - The Day of Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit
4. 1 Corinthians 10:21 - The table of the Lord versus the table of demons
5. Ephesians 5:25-32 - Marriage as a picture of Christ and the church
6. Revelation 19:7-9 - The marriage supper of the Lamb
7. 1 Kings 18:46 - Elijah supernaturally running and overtaking Ahab's chariot
8. Daniel 9:20-23 - Daniel praying and the angel arriving while he was still praying
9. Joel 2:25 - God restoring the years the locusts have eaten
10. Ephesians 2:19-22 - The church as the body of Christ, filled by the Spirit
11. Romans 8:21 - The glorious liberty of the children of God
12. 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Anyone in Christ is a new creation
13. Galatians 3:28 - Neither Jew nor Gentile, all one in Christ Jesus

# Devotional – Partnering with the Holy Spirit *(Janet, get your purse - session 2)*

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## **Day 1: You Were Made for More Than the Natural**

Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:9-16

Devotional: The natural mind cannot receive what the Spirit of God is offering. Paul makes clear that the things God has prepared for those who love him are revealed only through the Holy Spirit. Many believers settle for a Christianity that is entirely explainable, entirely comfortable, and entirely earthbound. But God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must do so on His terms. Today, examine where you have allowed natural reasoning to be the final authority in your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of your understanding and lead you beyond what you can see, hear, or imagine on your own.

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## **Day 2: Do Not Grieve the One Who Dwells Within You**

Reading: Ephesians 4:29-32

Devotional: The Holy Spirit is not a force or an energy. He is a person, and persons can be grieved. Paul's instruction to the church at Ephesus was direct: the way believers treat one another either attracts or repels the presence and flow of the Spirit. Bitterness, slander, and unforgiveness do not simply damage relationships between people. They create distance between the believer and the God who dwells within. Today, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unresolved offense, any carnal pattern of speech, or any root of bitterness you have allowed to remain. Repent, extend forgiveness, and make room for him to move freely.

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## **Day 3: Seek Him with Everything You Have**

Reading: Jeremiah 29:10-14

Devotional: God's promise in Jeremiah was not given to people in comfortable circumstances. It was given to exiles, to people waiting in a place they did not choose, for a timeline they did not control. Yet into that uncertainty, God spoke clearly: when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. Half-hearted seeking produces half-hearted results. The kind of prayer that moves heaven is the kind that comes from a place of genuine desperation and complete surrender. Today, bring the areas of your life where you feel most confused or most stuck, and offer them to God not as a last resort, but as an act of wholehearted trust.

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## **Day 4: It Seemed Good to the Holy Spirit and to Us**

Reading: Acts 13:1-4; Acts 15:28

Devotional: The early church did not make decisions by committee alone. They made decisions in partnership with the Holy Spirit, and they knew the difference between the two. In worship and fasting, they created the conditions for God to speak. When he spoke, they listened, confirmed, and obeyed together. This is the pattern of a Spirit-led community. The Holy Spirit is not distant or silent. He is present and willing to guide those who are willing to wait, worship, and listen. Today, consider a decision or direction you are currently navigating. Have you brought it to God in genuine, sustained prayer, or have you been relying primarily on your own reasoning?

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## **Day 5: Seated with Christ, Walking in His Authority**

Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10; Ephesians 1:17-23

Devotional: Paul's prayer for the Ephesians was not that they would simply survive their circumstances. It was that they would know the immeasurable greatness of the power already made available to them, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. That power now dwells in every born-again believer. You are not a helpless observer of history. You are co-seated with Christ in heavenly places, called to carry his authority into every corner of your world. Today, reject the mindset that reduces your identity to your failures or your limitations. You are a blood-bought child of God, empowered by his Spirit, walking in a destiny he ordained before you were born.