

## Not a Crowd, But a Family: Week 4

### “Becoming a Family of Transformation”

*By Esther Grant*

Becoming a Family of Transformation doesn't happen by chance. God changes us as we accept the Holy Spirit to work in our lives and as we share that journey with each other and encourage each other as we go.

**Read:** As a group read Acts 19:1-7 from The Message translation below.

**19** 1-2 Now, it happened that while Apollos was away in Corinth, Paul made his way down through the mountains, came to Ephesus, and happened on some disciples there. The first thing he said was, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Did you take God into your mind only, or did you also embrace him with your heart? Did he get inside you?” “We’ve never even heard of that—a Holy Spirit? God within us?”

3 “How were you baptized, then?” asked Paul.

“In John’s baptism.”

4 “That explains it,” said Paul. “John preached a baptism of radical life-change so that people would be ready to receive the One coming after him, who turned out to be Jesus. If you’ve been baptized in John’s baptism, you’re ready now for the real thing, for Jesus.”

5-7 And they were. As soon as they heard of it, they were baptized in the name of the Master Jesus. Paul put his hands on their heads and the Holy Spirit entered them. From that moment on, they were praising God in tongues and talking about God’s actions. Altogether there were about twelve people there that day.

**Reflect:** Paul describes taking God into our mind and embracing Him with our hearts. Why do you think Paul makes this distinction between knowing God in your mind versus your heart? He seems to suggest that being filled with the Spirit is necessary before we can know God with our hearts. How might God entering our hearts change the way we think? Take some time as a group to discuss why do you think this is?

**Read:** As a group, read Matthew 18:20

“When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action. And when two or three of you are together because of me, you can be sure that I’ll be there.”

**Reflect:** Jesus words are emphatic. When you pray as a group “heaven goes into action.” Do you pray like we believe this? Do you need to get bolder as a group for the things you’re bringing to God in prayer?

**Challenge:** Consider starting a Prayer Book /Journal for the group. Record your prayers on your group nights and remember to also record the answers to your prayers.

And when God answers (because He will), be sure to share with the wider church for their encouragement!

**Close:** Esther described being challenged to say a bold prayer which gave God permission to intervene in her life. Are we willing to close with this same prayer?

**Prayer:** “Thank you Father God that you are a good God who knows me inside and out. I give you permission to reorder my life and I ask your Holy Spirit to be my counsellor. Help me to better understand what following you looks like. Speak to me in a way that I can sense/hear/see and understand.  
Amen”