

Deliver Us #7: The Filling of the Spirit

November 12, 2023

Luke 11:14-26 Colossians 2:15

D E L I V E R U S
Life in the victory of Jesus

Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Then pray: *Empowering God, we pray that you will send your Holy Spirit to move us to understanding; to help us to believe the gospel; to give us strength and wisdom to live by it. Amen.* (Worship Sourcebook Q.3.5.8)

Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another.

1. What chore do you find feels most futile? (e.g. laundry, vacuuming, oil changes, etc.)
2. Have you ever tried to break a habit? What worked or didn't work for you?

Introduction

As you meet this week, place the focus on listening to each other. Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue as people share.

Listening to God's Word

Do you ever feel like life would be better if you were free from something? Whether a bad habit, an unhelpful routine, or a pattern of persistent sin, we can easily imagine how life would be better, simpler, and easier if we could just *stop*. However, the pursuit of a 'neutral' life free from the bad is an illusion. True freedom is not found when we are delivered *from* sin, but when we are delivered *to* Jesus. Overcoming the work of the enemy is fully and finally done when our lives are filled with the power and presence of God's Holy Spirit.

Small Group Discussion

- ☐ **Read Luke 11:14-26.** *What is your first thought when you read through this passage?*
- ☐ There is a lot of interesting stuff happening here! *How straight forward does this passage seem to you?*
- ☐ In this passage, people accuse Jesus being able to cast out demons, saying he was 'working for the devil.' *Why would people say that Jesus was doing good things by an evil power?*
- ☐ God has moved powerfully throughout history in events called 'revivals,' with a similar mixed response by people. We don't want to be tricked by something or someone who isn't from God, but we also don't want to miss what God is doing. *How do you discern whether a person, an event, or a 'revival' is truly from God? Could you imagine yourself responding to Jesus in a similar way?*
- ☐ The 'strong man' in the story is the devil, but the 'stronger man' is Jesus who easily overpowers the 'strong man.' This is an amazing truth we sometimes forget! *How does Jesus defeating the devil impact our understanding of spiritual warfare? Our day-to-day lives?*
- ☐ The idea of a 'neutral' life is appealing for some – free from evil without having to follow Jesus. However, in Luke 11:24-26, Jesus tells a short story teaching that we cannot remove evil in our lives without also replacing it with the good. *How have you seen or experienced the idea of a 'neutral' life?*

- ❑ **Read Ezekiel 36:24-27.** If we are honest, there are things in our life where our desires are different from God's desires. Hundreds of years before Jesus, God promises to place His Spirit within His people, thereby changing our hearts and our very desires. *Where have you experienced a 'heart of stone' being transformed? Is there part of your heart that still feels particularly stony?*
- ❑ **Read Galatians 5:16-26.** Freedom from 'the flesh' cannot happen by our efforts but only by the Holy Spirit. *How have you fallen into the trap of 'trying harder' in your fight against sin?*
- ❑ While we cannot defeat sin by ourselves, God invites us to actively walk the journey with Him. We are called to 'walk by the Spirit,' be 'led by the Spirit,' 'live by the Spirit,' and 'keep in step with the Spirit.' *In simple language, what does this look like in your day-to-day life? How do you actually do this?*
- ❑ Galatians 5 says that walking by the flesh process sin, but walking by the Spirit produces a different fruit. *Where have you seen sin not just reduced or eliminated, but actually replaced by the fruit of the Spirit in your life?*
- ❑ ***How do you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to or act on what we have read and discussed?***

Practices – 'De-Neutralizing' Our Lives

Jesus says that the pursuit of a 'neutral' life, free from sin *and* Jesus is an illusion. Our lives will either be led by ourselves and marked by sin, or led by the Spirit and filled with His fruit. (For example, **read Ephesians 5:18.**)

Have someone pray for the Holy Spirit to speak to you as a group, then take a moment or two in silence to prepare to hear what He says. Then, either together or in smaller groups, take time to ask each other the following questions:

1. Is there anywhere in your life are you pursuing a 'neutral life,' in which you are free from sin but not necessarily surrendered to Jesus?
2. Is there any sin you are trying to overcome with your own effort?
3. Whether in an area of struggle or in everyday life, what would it look like to be 'led by the Spirit,' 'walk by the Spirit,' 'live by the Spirit,' and 'keep in step with the Spirit?'

Take time to pray for each other based on what you share.

Caring for One Another

- ❑ *Take some time to share if there is something practical your group can help with. After all, part of being a life group is acting like family! **Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***