

## Ordinary Operations of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:1-13, 36-47

### Message Mate

- On the day of Pentecost, believers in Jesus were filled with the Holy Spirit. As a crowd gathered around them, they asked “What does this mean?” What the Holy Spirit did at Pentecost is what the Holy Spirit does ordinarily, but there was an intensification of the ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit that day. The ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit in helping people find and follow Jesus are conviction, conversion, assurance and sanctification.
- *Conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit making someone aware of their separation from God and their need for God’s grace.* In Acts 2, people were convicted by hearing the Word of God (v37) and/or by a revelation of who God is and what He can do (v43). Conviction occurs for both believers and unbelievers to draw us closer to God. Conviction can lead to conversion.
- *Conversion is a decision to turn to God and come into a right relationship with Him.* It involves repentance (turning away from sin and turning to God, Acts 3:19), faith in Jesus (Acts 20:21) and receiving the Holy Spirit as part of rebirth and renewal, to bring life to their spirit. (Eph 1:13, Titus 3:5,6). The term conversion (Acts 15:3) is also called salvation (Acts 2:47) or being born again (John 3:3,5).
- *Assurance is an absolute certainty that a believer is unconditionally loved and accepted by God* because their sin that had separated them from God has been dealt with through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Assurance is based on trust in the Word of God (1 John 5:13) and the Work of the Holy Spirit personally (Romans 8:38,39), publicly (Acts 4:31) or miraculously (Galatians 3:5). It gives certainty of God’s love for us (1 John 4:17).
- *Sanctification is a process of God’s grace transforming believer’s hearts and minds to become more like Jesus.* It involves obeying the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 4:1,8) and the Work of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2). It is an ongoing process throughout life (Hebrews 10:14, 2 Corinthians 7:1).
- When there is a greater intensity of these four ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit, revival can happen. Let us not define revival by what the events look like, but what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of people, families, workplaces, churches and communities. Let us consider revival as an intensification of the ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit, grounded in the Word of God and led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- Revival is not something we can make happen, but we can increase the likelihood of it happening. Only God can sovereignly bring revival, but He calls us to pray and prepare. On the day of Pentecost, the people asked, “What does this mean?”. If we are to pray and prepare for revival let us ask, “What does this mean?”

## Some Questions to Consider

1. Is revival a word that you are familiar with and if so, what have been your views on revival? Discuss the statement, "Let us not define revival by what the events look like, but what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of people, homes, workplaces, churches and communities."
2. Consider the definition of conviction. Have you ever felt a strong conviction of your sinfulness or separation from God? How did you respond?
3. Are you familiar with the terms conversion, being saved or born again? Were you aware that these are all expressions of coming into a right relationship with God? Briefly share if your conversion experience was a clearly defined moment, or a gradual process.
4. Discuss the definition of assurance. Do you have this assurance? What might help you be more assured that you are unconditionally loved and accepted by God? (Consider the importance of both the Word of God and the Work of the Holy Spirit.)
5. Sanctification is an ongoing process of becoming more like Jesus. What has helped you in your journey of sanctification and what had hindered you? What would help you in this season of life.
6. Discuss the statements "Revival is not something we can make happen, but we can increase the likelihood of it happening." and "Only God can sovereignly bring revival, but He calls us to pray and prepare." What could you (or your Life Group or the church) do to increase the likelihood of revival happening and prepare for it?

### Pray –

Pray with thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and how the ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit have continued to change lives, churches and communities ever since.

Read the following and then pray for an "Intensification of the ordinary workings of the Holy Spirit and how that might impact our lives, families, workplaces, churches, city and nation.

Consider the impact of the Word of God being shared by preachers and the people on the street so that people hear the Gospel and are convicted of their sin leading to conversion. Where the Word of God brings assurance that God's promises are true and people are unconditionally accepted and loved, leading to growing sanctification. Consider the impact of the Holy Spirit moving in power and freedom so people are aware of their need for God and are convicted and converted, leading to them receiving the Holy Spirit. Consider people overwhelmed by God's love and acceptance that they are aware of the presence of God whether in sacred silence or loud manifestations of God's glory, including signs, wonders and miracles. Imagine the Holy Spirit doing His sanctifying work to purify us and make us more like Jesus so that we carry God's presence and reveal Christ to those around us. Imagine how that might change our lives, families, workplaces, churches, city and nation.