

## Daily Readings

**Please note:** This week we look at the empowering ministry of the church. These passages are recommended for your daily reading. Each of these passages addresses the power of the Holy Spirit.

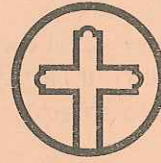
**Monday, October 6** – Read *John 16:5-15*. This passage records the promise of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to help and guide his followers. Here the word is typically translated “**advocate,**” “**helper**” or “**comforter.**” How have you experienced the Holy Spirit as a helper, advocate or comforter in your life? Did you call on the Holy Spirit for wisdom today? Why or why not?

**Tuesday, October 7** – Read *Acts 2:1-13*. This is the story of Pentecost. Here the disciples received the Holy Spirit and the gifts given by God through the Holy Spirit. On this day, the courtyard at the temple was filled with people of many different nations and languages. Yet, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they were given the ability to understand and respond. Although they were different, they found unity in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Have you ever felt the presence of the Holy Spirit? How did you see the Spirit work? As you read this passage, ask God to give you direction in understanding the Holy Spirit and the power it brings.

**Wednesday, October 8** – Read *Matthew 28:16-20*. This is the passage of the Great Commission given by Jesus to the disciples after the resurrection. Here Jesus instructs his disciples to go and **make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.** How have you fulfilled this commission in your life? Have you done anything today to make a disciple for Jesus? Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the opportunity and ability to witness to someone about Jesus. See what God can do through you.

**Thursday, October 9** – Read *Ephesians 1:15-23*. This is Paul’s prayer for the church in Ephesus. Read this passage as your prayer at the beginning of the day. Read this as your prayer at the end of the day. What in your life needs the authority and power of the Christ? How can you use a power of wisdom and revelation in your life and family? What kind of riches do you think Paul is referring to?

**Friday, October 10** – Read *Acts 1:1-14*. The first three paragraphs of the book of Acts describe the last days of Jesus before he ascends into heaven; the promise by Jesus to send the Holy Spirit; the call to be witnesses that comes with this power; and the disciples waiting in prayer for the fulfillment of Jesus’ promise. What are your spiritual gifts? How are you using those gifts to be a witness for Christ? How much time do you spend in prayer and waiting for God? Are you ready for the Holy Spirit to come on your life?



TRIETSCH

October 5, 2008

Study Guide & Daily Readings

## Use Me — “The Master Conductor” Week 3 of 3

### Acts 1:8

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

*The Word from the Bible New Revised Standard Version*

### The Book of Acts

The book of Acts serves as a bridge between the four gospels and all of the other apostolic writings. Authored by Luke, the writer of the third gospel, this book sheds light on the earliest days of the church. Luke commences Acts with the ascension of Jesus, recording another statement of Jesus’ command to take the good news **to the ends of the earth** (verse 1:8). Then comes Pentecost, the birthday of the church, when on that occasion the disciples of Jesus received the power Jesus had promised and were enabled to go forth preaching the word and performing miracles to attest to the truth of what they proclaimed.

The purpose of Acts is often debated. There are many stories and speeches with different subjects that might lead us to one purpose or another. For example, it has been argued that the author is preparing a defense for use at the trial of Paul. As Luke tells the stories of Paul, he does so to put him in conflict with the Jewish community while neutralizing the accusations that Paul was a threat to Rome. Also often argued is that Luke’s purpose is to tell the story of the early days of the church so as to unify the Jewish and Gentile factions of the church. Luke shares with his reader detailed accounts as to how the leaders of the early church tried to bring these two groups together.

There is one thread that weaves its way through the entire book of Acts – the work of the Holy Spirit. With this in mind, the most likely purpose is to describe the spread of Christianity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (verse 1:8). Luke begins Acts with the words of Jesus, “**...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...**” He uses great detail describing the miracle of Pentecost. Further, throughout this book everything accomplished by the early church was done under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

The promise of the Spirit – Luke reports the words of Jesus at His ascension into heaven. We can assume the gathering includes the remaining eleven disciples listed in verse 13. The place of the ascension most likely the Mount of Olives mentioned in verse 12.

Jesus mentions the **promise of the Father** (verse 4). The apostles mistakenly suppose that He is referring to the rebuilding of the **kingdom of Israel** (verse 6). Jesus insists that it is not an early kingdom that is coming, but the power of the Holy Spirit. He then shifts away from what God is

doing to what God is calling them to do. The leaders are to be witnesses for Jesus in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

**Empower** – In Luke’s account of the early church, every experience of the Holy Spirit comes with a job to be done. Everyone has a part. Spirituality, in this sense, depends on our participation in the community. God acts and empowers us for the purpose of reaching out to others.

### The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

665 persons have turned in spiritual gift inventories over the past two weeks. 12 were incomplete and 10 had no name. Out of the 643 completed gift inventories, we found some interesting results. The top five gifts in our congregation are Faith, Generosity, Mercy/Compassion, Assistance/Helps and Administration/Leadership.

There is still time to fill out the gifts inventory. Copies are at the doors and information booth. Everyone should be receiving a report by email or letter in the next few days.

When you receive your spiritual gifts report, you may have questions about the results. You may have questions about what to do next. We are offering a class on discerning spiritual gifts and finding God’s will for your life on November 8. If you are interested in getting more information, please note in the registration pads next to your name and someone will get in touch with you with more information.

The following listing is the number of times a spiritual gift was scored in the top three.

Faith . . . . .	513
Generosity . . . . .	340
Mercy compassion . . . . .	294
Assistance/Helps . . . . .	209
Administration/Leadership . . . . .	193
Leadership/Leading with Diligence . . . . .	185
Healing . . . . .	132
Utterance of Wisdom . . . . .	119
Discernment of Spirits . . . . .	110
Pastor-Teacher (Shepherding) . . . . .	75
Teaching . . . . .	42
Exhortation (Encouragement) . . . . .	41
Utterance of Knowledge . . . . .	34
Evangelism . . . . .	20
Prophecy . . . . .	14
Apostleship . . . . .	13

The following listing is the number of times a spiritual gift was listed as the top gift.

Faith . . . . .	295
Administration/Leadership . . . . .	92
Generosity . . . . .	90
Mercy compassion . . . . .	80
Assistance/Helps . . . . .	65
Leadership/Leading with Diligence . . . . .	36
Healing . . . . .	32
Utterance of Wisdom . . . . .	17

Discernment of Spirits . . . . .	14
Pastor-Teacher (Shepherding) . . . . .	10
Utterance of Knowledge . . . . .	10
Teaching . . . . .	8
Evangelism . . . . .	6
Exhortation (Encouragement) . . . . .	4
Prophecy . . . . .	2
Apostleship . . . . .	1

### Descriptions of the top five gifts in our church

#### Faith

The spiritual gift of faith is the divine ability to recognize what God wants done and to act when others fall back into doubt. Even in the face of barriers that overwhelm others, people with this gift simply know that God will see it done. Believing deeply in the power of prayer, they also know that God is both present and active in their lives. People with this gift, by their works and by their words, show others that God is faithful to God’s promises.

#### Generosity

The spiritual gift of generosity is the God-given ability to give material wealth freely and joyfully, knowing that spiritual wealth will abound as God’s work is advanced. People with this gift usually manage their finances well, may have special ability to make money, and tend to be frugal in their lifestyle. They use these skills to increase their support for God’s work, and trust that God will provide for their needs. They are often comfortable and successful in approaching others for contributions. Instead of asking, “How much of my money do I give to God?” they ask, “How much of God’s money do I keep?”

#### Mercy/Compassion

The spiritual gift of mercy and compassion is the God-given ability to see and feel the suffering of others and to minister to them with love and understanding. More simply, this gift is compassion moved to action. People with this gift are called to reach out to someone who is hurt or rejected, easing the suffering. They feel fulfilled when they can show others that God loves them. They are skilled at gaining the trust of those in need and enjoy finding ways to comfort them.

#### Assistance/Helps

The spiritual gift of helps and assistance is the God-given ability to work alongside others in performing practical and often behind-the-scenes tasks to sustain and enhance the Body of Christ. A person with this gift receives spiritual satisfaction from doing everyday necessary tasks; he or she may prefer to work quietly and without public recognition. When a need is seen, the helper frequently takes care of it without being asked. The helper’s work often frees up other persons so that they may carry out their own ministries.

#### Leadership/Administration

The spiritual gift of administration or leadership is the God-given ability to organize and manage information, people, events and resources to accomplish the objectives of a ministry. People with this gift handle details carefully and thoroughly. They are skilled in determining priorities, and in planning and directing the steps needed to achieve a goal. They feel frustrated when faced with disorder, and are uncomfortable with inefficiency.