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*Session 2:*

**EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
RULED BY GOD'S WORD,  
& RELIANT ON PRAYER**

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# A Theology of The Holy Spirit

John 16:5-7 (ESV)

5 But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

*When it comes to talking about the Holy Spirit, what has been your experience? If you were part of a church before coming to The Parish, do you feel like the Holy Spirit was someone who was frequently emphasized, or not?*

## Activity ~15 minutes

Get into groups of 2 or 3. Read each of the passages and explain what action that the Holy Spirit is specifically doing in each passage.

PASSAGE	WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOING?
John 15:26; 16:14	
John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:13	
Acts 8:29; 13:2	

PASSAGE	WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT DOING?
Ephesians 4:30	
Galatians 5:16-26	
1 Corinthians 2:10-11	
1 Corinthians 12:11	
Romans 8:26-27	
Romans 8:16	
2 Corinthians 3:16-18	

John 16:12-15 (ESV)

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. 15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

We believe that the Holy Spirit has eternally existed as a member of the Trinity, being fully God and indwelling all believers since the day of Pentecost. We believe that the Holy Spirit is not a force of energy, but He is a person and He is God. Whether you are someone who has historically over-emphasized the person and the work of the Holy Spirit, or someone who has neglected His ministry altogether, it is important for every believer to understand the unique ways in which the Holy Spirit is empowering us everyday to glorify Christ, to have our eyes opened to the Word of God, to confess and repent of sin, to obey God, and countless other gracious things.



# A Theology of Biblical Authority

*From the activity we did earlier on the Holy Spirit, which verses did you see that speak about the Holy Spirit and the Word of God? Read those verses out loud.*

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written by men under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The Bible, including all the books of the Old and New Testament, is Holy Scripture and the inspired true Word of God. It is fully authoritative and our only absolutely trustworthy guide for life and faith.

*So where the Bible speaks, God speaks.*

*Where God speaks, we can trust Him and obey.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:19-21 (ESV)

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from some one's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

*What has been your experience with the Bible? Has anyone come from a tradition that did not believe the full reliability and authority of the Bible?*

*Has the Bible ever spoken about something that you didn't particularly agree with? How did you respond?*



## A Theology of Prayer

Philippians 4:6-7 (ESV)

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks giving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:26-28 (ESV)

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. 27 And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

*What happens when we pray?*

*What happens when we don't pray?*

*What is the connection between the Holy Spirit and prayer?*

Ephesians 3:14-4:1 (ESV)

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith — that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.

At The Parish, we are witnessing God move in miraculous ways. The prayer from the beginning of our church has been this: "God, would you do something so great that no one could take credit for it but you?" God has answered that prayer, doing too many great things for anyone in our church to take credit for. We are not done praying this kind of prayer because we know that God is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or could imagine to ask for.

Right now, in each and every believer, the Holy Spirit is presently working within you, and He has unimaginable power to do immeasurably more. God is sovereign and does all that He pleases. And yet, He has set it up that much of His will is sovereignly accomplished through the prayers of His people. His power is both expressed and accomplished through prayer.



# HOW THIS IS LIVED OUT AT THE PARISH CHURCH

## **FIGHT CLUBS**

Also referred to simply as “Discipleship Groups,” these are small groups of four to six believers of the same gender that commit to meeting together consistently to hold one another accountable to being faithful disciples of Jesus in everyday life. It is a consistent relationship with trusted friends that set apart time each week to primarily do three things:

1. Hear from God’s Word and share how you obeyed it
2. Repent and confess your sins, and share your belief in the gospel
3. Consider how you can tangibly serve, and pray by name for nonbelievers.

## **DAILY INTAKE OF GOD’S WORD**

Many people in our church regularly use a Bible reading plan for their daily intake of God’s Word. A healthy Bible reading plan will take you through the entire Bible in a year by reading portions of the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Psalms each day. Not only do we read God’s Word, we study it and strive to trust and obey all that He says through his Word. To do this, many people in our church utilize a tool called the REAP METHOD.

## **PREACHING GOD’S WORD**

Our preaching and teaching ministry is built on the foundation of God and His gospel being central to every message. At The Parish, our preachers and teachers aim to keep God and His gospel central to every message. Primarily, this is done through something called “expository preaching.” This is a way of preaching that goes through entire books of the Bible verse-by-verse. This method of preaching lets the biblical text determine the direction of each sermon. Where Scripture speaks, God speaks.

## SINGING GOD'S WORD

The Word of God is powerful because where Scripture speaks, God speaks. We desperately want to hear God speak when we gather. Therefore, good theology in worship is not only important, it is crucial. Every song written and sung in our gatherings goes through careful consideration by our leadership to make sure that the songs are doctrinally aligned with what we believe from the Bible.

## PRAYER GATHERINGS

Partners at The Parish are regularly called together for a time of prayer. During this time, elders and leaders share vision and updates on what God is doing through our church and beyond. These gatherings are also an opportunity to join together in praying for specific things.



# Partnership Agreements

As we discussed in the last session, we are inviting our partners to participate in this story with us. For that reason, we ask several things of our partners that we do not ask of our casual attendees.

Because we are empowered by the Holy Spirit, ruled by God's Word, and reliant on prayer, partners at The Parish Church agree to:

### **1. Follow the example of Christ in personal holiness in all of life, pursue accountability from one another.**

This commitment means that we will submit to the authority of the Holy Spirit and repent when we don't. We will be sensitive to His conviction. We will surrender ourselves to the Scriptures, which the Holy Spirit will use as a means to develop our character and conform us more into the image and likeness of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. We will live in community with other believers and join Fight Clubs where we confess sin, tell each other how God is moving, and pray.

## 2. Abide in Christ daily through the reading of Scripture and prayer

Jesus says in Matthew 4:4 that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of God.” We want to be a disciplined people who seek God in the Scriptures every day. We want to depend on the Word of God in the same way we depend on food to nourish our bodies. Who has ever approached eating breakfast with a sense of duty? We don’t eat breakfast out of duty. We eat breakfast because it nourishes our body and is usually an enjoyable experience!

Partners at The Parish acknowledge that we are dependent on Christ for everything. In John 15, Jesus says, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” But what does it mean to “abide in Christ?” The word “abide” means waiting, staying, dwelling, lingering, and remaining. To abide in Christ means we seek daily communion with Him through Scripture and prayer. We see the commands in Scripture to seek after God and our hearts cry, “Yes! I need that!” Disciples of Christ want to grow in intimacy with God and conformity to His Son. When at times that feels like a burden, we press into the Scriptures in faith, remembering God has commanded that we come to Him.

1 Chronicles 16:11 (ESV)

“Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!”

Psalms 16:11 (ESV)

“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

The command to abide in Christ is the command to find deep and lasting joy and pleasure. Who doesn’t want that? Partners at The Parish agree to pursue enjoyment in Christ by abiding in Christ each day through the reading of His Word and prayer.

### **3. Consistently pray for one another and our church leaders, and regularly attend church prayer gatherings**

Our access to God in prayer reminds us that we don't worship some far-off deity. We worship a God who is intimately close to us. Prayer connects our hearts with His as we acknowledge that He is our Father and He is holy. He is the King and we live in His kingdom. He gives us everything we need, and everything that happens to us is working together for our good and we can trust Him.

When we pray for one another, we take the call of interceding seriously, knowing that this is the preeminent work of the church—to pray—and that God hears the prayers of the righteous. When we pray for our leaders, we pray for their joy and perseverance, knowing they have been called by God to shepherd our souls.

We also remember that when God's people pray, He moves. He moves in ways that we can't possibly imagine, and He does more than we can even think to ask. So, what do partners at The Parish do? We pray really big and bold prayers, knowing that we are speaking with a God who has unimaginable power to do anything He wants. We look at what God has promised to do in His Word, and we ask Him to do it. Our Father loves when His kids ask Him to do the things He has already promised to do. Prayer conforms our will to His.

No matter what our prayer lives look like today, there is no end to the depths of intimacy that we can enjoy with God. Each one of us can take another step toward connecting our hearts with His through prayer.

**NOTES:**

**QUESTIONS TO BRING TO THE FINAL SESSION:**