

## On Fire For What?

May 27, 2018



### THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Acts 1; Genesis 11:1-9, Acts 2  
Acts 3 and 4:1-31, Acts 9:1-32, Acts 10

This week's Growth Guide will help us to remember some important truths about ministry including who is called, who is forgiven and who is served. The readings are a little longer than usual. We ask that you read the suggested texts and reflect upon their meaning for the early church and for us today.

#### DAY 1

##### Read Acts 1

Acts 1 teaches us that we are called to be Christ's witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. In our time and place that means Largo and Clearwater, the Tampa Bay region and Florida, with new people at a new campus on Druid Road, and in all the world.

- **Are you a witness for Jesus Christ?**
- **How are you a witness?**
- **Where are you a witness?**

Pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate this scripture and empower you to be Christ's witness.

#### DAY 2

## **Read Genesis 11:1-9, Acts 2**

The Genesis text describes a time when God introduced different languages and scattered humanity around the world. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to speak in many languages so that all the people present could hear God's Word. God interacted with humanity during the hundreds and hundreds of years that elapsed between these two events.

- **How did God use language in each story?**
- **Why did God create different languages? Has human pride changed much from those days in Genesis until today?**
- **What should we learn about the Holy Spirit's gift of many languages to the disciples? What does this gift teach us about God's desire for us to share the Good News across cultures? If you speak more than one language, how could you use that gift in ministry?**

Ask God to illuminate your spiritual gifts so that you can use them to bear witness to Jesus.

## **DAY 3**

### **Read Acts 3 and 4:1-31**

Today's texts describe times when Peter and John acted and spoke with boldness and authority. It is hard for us to imagine that this is the same Peter who denied Jesus three times on the night Jesus was arrested. What a change! The book of Acts is filled with descriptions of how the first disciples spread the Gospel message. They spoke with courage that none of them had ever demonstrated while Jesus was still with them.

- **What fueled the bold speech and action of Peter and John?**

- **How did their actions and words affect those around them - especially those who did not yet know Jesus?**
- **Even today, people make a choice to reject Jesus or to accept him as the "cornerstone." How are you helping those who do not know the Lord make that choice?**

Ask the Spirit to help you be "Bold for Jesus" and to give you courage when you feel shy or timid about serving as a witness for the Lord.

## **DAY 4**

**Read [Acts 9:1-32](#)**

Saul was a wealthy, educated, powerful, murderous Pharisee who persecuted the early followers of Jesus Christ. God chose to change Saul's heart. He then became the Apostle Paul and was called to spread the Gospel primarily to the Gentiles. He was responsible for more books of the New Testament than any other writer and he planted many of the first century churches. Before Paul became a powerful voice for Christ, he was helped by the very people he had persecuted.

- **What does Paul's story teach us about who God uses? (Hint: More people than just Paul were used to fulfill God's purpose in this text.)**
- **Some of us are like Ananias and some of us are more like Paul. Both men needed to submit to God's will for Paul's powerful ministry to emerge. Do you see any of the gifts of either of these men in yourself?**

The world needs people like Paul and Ananias today. Ask the Lord to give you a willingness to do God's will - even when it's difficult or frightening.

## DAY 5

### Read Acts 10

The story of Peter and Cornelius teaches us that we are not to prejudge others. Peter had to be reminded that the Jewish law under which he had been raised was radically changed by Christ's commands to make disciples of all nations, be a witness to all people, and to love his neighbors.

- **What verse of this text speaks to you most clearly or loudly? Reread the chapter if a second reading will help you identify that verse.**
- **Do we ever treat people as though they are unworthy or impure? What lesson does this story teach us about such an attitude?**

Pray for the Holy Spirit's gifts, guidance, and illumination so that you become a disciple willing to follow in the footsteps of those whose stories unfolded in The Acts of the Apostles. Make an effort to read the entire book. It is an amazing account of the power of the Holy Spirit to move ordinary men and women like you and me.

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