



Digging Deeper
The Book of Acts: “The Church God Longs For”
Week 6:

Getting Started

This week we saw how God puts the right people together to accomplish His purposes. He has used four uniquely talented ladies to put together a team to help and heal children with brain and spinal tumors. Incredible! However, as Cindy Heiberg challenged us at the end of each service, God has equipped each of us uniquely to be a part of His church, His purpose and His plan. Are you listening? Are you ready to be obedient even when you do not know the answer or see the full story? Are you willing to allow the God of the Universe to shape your life so that you are participating in a larger picture? Even if you are an individual with a unique talent that might not be used in a team fashion, but as a unique child of God.

Use the song that Dr. Amy Smith challenged us with at the end of the service as your starting point for each day.

“Spirit of the Living God” by Daniel Iverson

1 Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

2 Spirit of the living God, move among us all;
make us one in heart and mind, make us one in love:
humble, caring, selfless, sharing.
Spirit of the living God, fill our lives with love.

Dr. Smith shared how the author of this song, Reverend Daniel Iverson, brought her grandfather to Christ. Here are some insights into Rev. Daniel Iverson written in a letter by his son, Bill Iverson, to his father on what would have been his father’s 118th birthday.

“I have a grateful heart before God for a Christian home where Christ was the center, and where we as children enjoyed having content in the covenant which you provided for us by reading the Bible daily-- simply, with no sermons, neither prolonged prayers but sincere and heartfelt. I have heard you say that you would rather lose your right arm than lose the privilege of daily family times, leading us to the throne of grace. I failed in not a few ways as a father and husband, but I gave my life to that covenantal habit. To this day we are faithful to what you and Mom gave us. Our family devotions can often be prosaic and it does not make for perfection, not yet. We are simply called to be faithful, cherishing redemption for family devotions are better done than undone.

When you died, I heard that you had led Charlie Hodges to the Lord on the phone that very day. You chased him for forty years, first in Miami, then both of you moved to Western Carolina. In Asheville, if you saw Charlie on one side of the street, he would cross, and Charlie would go to the other side. You prayed for him all those years and put those prayers into action. Dad, you taught me to be an evangelist as a lifestyle. Your story about D. L. Moody seems to exemplify your daily life. You said that Moody had a vow to share the Gospel every day. One night he remembered. He told Mrs. Moody he had to go out. It was a blustery Chicago night and he accosted a man and placed his 300 pound frame under the umbrella.



"Are you a Christian?" He asked, with less sophistication than boldness.

"No, I am not a Christian, and furthermore, it is none of your business!"

"Yes indeed, it is my business!" replied Moody.

"Well, who do you think you are, Mr. D. L. Moody?"

"That's precisely who I am" said Moody, and went on to give the Gospel to the amazed "victim of grace."

Dad, you showed me that sort of faithfulness to the evangel, and regretfully, I can be brash and unwise rather than wise and bold. Nevertheless, I would rather clumsily and hurtfully save a child from an oncoming truck than be a guilty bystander with a faint "Be careful."

You taught me reverence. That old wooden tabernacle of the Shenandoah Presbyterian Church, put up "temporarily" and used twenty-four years, was truly a holy place, open windows and whirring fans notwithstanding. Summer in Miami can remind people of that "other place." When you prayed, it was as though you put the prayer into the golden censers— communion was solemn joy, and preaching was enjoyable yet convicting. We knew about the gap—the vast chasm between God and man bridged only by the infinite love displayed in the Cross. After all, 4000 people made professions of faith under the preaching of the Gospel in that old building. God was Present. You expected Him to show up. Even a garbage heap is a Bethel if He is there. And regarding that, because you set so many families praying in their homes, when all the little churches gathered into the big church (Jonathan Edward's thought), they did not pool their emptiness as in our "as usual" Sundays at 11:00 AM. They pooled their fullness. Richard Summers, one of your early son in the ministry said, "I could always bring my high school buddies to hear "Preacher Dan" because there was a distinct possibility that they might be saved."

God uses all of us to accomplish His purposes. Are you listening? Are you willing to obey?



Days of Reflection

DAY 1: Read Acts 5:17-41.

According to v. 17 what was the condition of the heart of the Sadducees and high priest? How was this different compared with the same priests in the trial of Jesus? (Matthew 27:18).

Describe the situation that takes place after the apostles are arrested. How does God use this situation to bring Glory to Himself? What are the miracles that take place? How does Peter respond to the charges against he and the apostles (v. 29)? What is the gospel message that Peter relays in v. 31?

What does Peter say about the purpose of the Holy Spirit and who the Spirit is given to (v. 32)?

Who was the Pharisee that spoke out for the apostles? Who did this famous Pharisee train (see Acts 22:3)?

From v. 42, what did Peter and the apostles do after being flogged and released?



Day 2 Read Acts 6:1-7.

Describe the circumstances behind the situation. What was the basic problem? How did the apostles respond? What was the spiritual gift given to the apostles?



Day 3: Read Acts 6:1-7.

What were the four selection criteria for the seven men to help in the food distribution and to oversee the program for widows?

Describe the two gifts to which the apostles devoted themselves.

What did the apostles do for the seven men that were chosen?

List three results that occurred in v. 7.



Day 4: Read I Corinthians 12.

Starting with v. 1 what is the question that Paul is trying to answer in this chapter?

What are the different kinds of spiritual gifts that Paul lists in v. 4-11? According to v. 7 a spiritual gift is given to who(m) and for what purpose?

What metaphor does Paul compare the church to starting in v. 12? What is his argument regarding one part that is missing compared with the whole?

What are the different roles outlined starting in v. 28? Are any of us expected to be everything and do everything?

According to v.25 and 26 what is the purpose for all of the parts fitting together? All of God's people interacting together to form the unified church?



Looking Ahead:

Day 5: Read 6:8-15.

Who was Stephen and why was he arrested? According to v. 10, why could none of the men take a stand against Stephen?

What lies were made up against Stephen?

When all looked at Stephen, what did they see?
