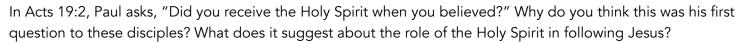
Discussion Questions March 30, 2025

Acts 19:1-7 - Life in the Spirit





- 2. Look at Acts 19:3-4. These disciples had John's baptism, which was about repentance, but not the full story of Jesus. How does this compare to ways people today might follow partial truths about God without knowing the whole gospel?
- 3. Paul noticed something "off" with these disciples that led him to ask about their experience with the Holy Spirit. What are some signs in our lives that might show we're relying on our own strength instead of the Spirit's power
- 4. In John 16:7, Jesus said it was better for Him to leave so the Holy Spirit could come. Why do you think many of us struggle to believe that the Spirit's presence is better than having Jesus physically here? How could leaning into that truth change our daily lives?
- 5. The sermon challenged us not to be "functional cessationists" passively waiting for God to move, but to step into the river of the life in the Spirit. Where in your life could you take a step of faith to actively invite or pursue the Holy Spirit's power?
- 6. Read John 3:3-8.

Nicodemus, a religious expert, needed to be "born again" by the Spirit. The focus is on the work of the Spirit. What "robes of comfort" might you need to let go of to experience more of the Holy Spirit's work in your life?

Closing Challenge

This week, we looked at Nicodemus and his dilemma of wanting to hold on to his "robes of comfort" (like control, pride, not looking weak, etc). Take a minute and prayerfully reflect, "Is there any area where I am like Nicodemus?" Reflect on one area where you've been hesitant to trust the Holy Spirit - maybe praying for something big, stepping out to encourage someone, or letting go of control. What is one tangible step you can take this week to "plug into" the Spirit's power (e.g., pray boldly, ask for prayer, or act on a nudge from God), and share how it goes with the group next time. Let's not settle for a powerless faith when God's Spirit is ready to move!



Acts 19:1-7 (NLT)

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" He asked them. "No," they replied, "we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." "Then what baptism did you experience?" He asked. And they replied, "The baptism of John." Paul said, "John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus." As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.



John 3:1-8 (NLT)

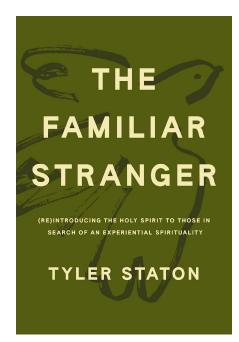
There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you." Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

John 16:6-7 (NLT)

..You grieve because of what I've told you. But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate [Helper] won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you.

Tyler Staton - The Familiar Stranger

A functional cessationist often embodies some form of passive availability, saying, "If God wants to speak to me, I'm right here. If God wants to heal me, I'm open. If God wants to fill my mouth with a miraculous word of knowledge, fill my imagination with a prophetic image, or fill my hands with healing power, he knows where to find me."



..[functional cessationists] neglect to seek out the gifts of the Spirit and fail to develop a set of habits and mindsets that can foster openness and availability to the presence, power, and gifting of the Spirit.

This passive stance toward the supernatural ministry of the Spirit is a tactic never employed in other aspects of spiritual growth. Christians of every theological persuasion readily agree that a pursuit of God is necessary for spiritual maturity. A stance of passivity may avoid the worst of spiritual abuses, but it does so while subtly stunting spiritual growth and vitality.

Am I Nicodemus? It may be worth asking, "When was the last time I prayed for miraculous healing? When was the last time a word of prophecy was shared with me or by me? When was the last time I had to seek out an explanation because my experience with God was a step ahead of my understanding of God?" Am I Nicodemus? And if so, what are the robes I need to risk taking off that I might experience the gift of God's Spirit?

Acts 19:6 (NLT)

Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied.