

PROFILE OF A HEALTHY CHURCH **Lives Are Transformed by the Holy Spirit**

THEME: The power to change a life does not come from willpower and hard work. It is the activity of God through the Holy Spirit. While it is true that lives don't get changed unless people surrender them in a true desire for transformation, the fact remains that it takes the power of God to intervene, reorient, and change people. Today we will focus on some key biblical texts about the power of the Spirit at work in the church.

ICE BREAKER

1. Spend a few minutes together reviewing the headlines from the past week. (Don't get too discouraged! There is a point to this.)
2. What about the past week has been most frightening to you? Encouraging? Confusing?
3. How realistic is it to think our world is going to be radically different than it is apart from spiritual renewal?
4. Are there any signs that encourage you to think spiritual renewal may be about to happen? If so, explain your impressions in some detail.
5. Are you praying for a spiritual awakening throughout the world?

THINK

1. The agency of change in Christian theology is the presence of the Holy Spirit. Other than the two texts below, can you identify a few biblical passages that make this claim?
2. A generation ago, people talked about a "charismatic movement" in the church. What were they referencing by that term?
3. Do you think the effects of the charismatic movement have been lasting and positive for the larger Body of Christ in our world?
4. How do you see the Holy Spirit at work in your life at present? In the life of Grace Chapel?

EXAMINE

Read [Ephesians 1:15-23](#) to answer the following questions:

1. What does this prayer tell you about the relationship of Paul to the Christians who originally received this epistle?
2. What is the central request of Paul for his readers in this prayer?
3. From v.17, notice the clear Trinitarian theology at the heart of Paul's prayer.
4. From v.17, how is the Holy Spirit presented as the primary agent for the fulfillment of Paul's prayer for his readers? How do you explain this?
5. From this prayer, how had Paul witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit demonstrated in Jesus Christ? (See vs.19-20).
6. How was the Spirit's power to be seen in the church? (See vs.18, 22-23).

Read [1 Corinthians 12:1-13](#) as background for the following questions:

1. Was the Holy Spirit present and at work in the church at Corinth? What evidence can you give to support your answer?
2. Were there any serious problems in the church at Corinth?
3. Does it ever discourage you to see churches have problems? Make you wonder if they are “true churches” at all? How anyone could continue to be part of those churches?
4. In light of questions 1 – 3, are 21st-century churches really that different from first-century churches?
5. If the Holy Spirit is present and at work within a community of Christians, how can that church still be so flawed?
6. What was Paul’s corrective to the problems at Corinth? (See ch.13). How does his “corrective” challenge Christians to rethink some of our ideas about the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts? *Hint: They seemed to think speaking in tongues was the greatest of all spiritual gifts. How did their view of the matter square with Paul’s comment at 12:29?*

THIS WEEK: During the month of March, we will focus on some of the cross-cultural and international mission work being supported by Grace Chapel. Then, on the final (fifth) Sunday of the month, our annual Missions Contribution will be taken. Begin praying now about the level of giving you want to commit to that special day. Begin planning and budgeting to be especially generous.