

DISCUSS

- Go around the circle and name things that have changed due to COVID. How many of these do you think are temporary and how many do you think might not be.
- There are two points of focus to this week's discussion: 1) Jesus' reassurance to the disciples that even though he had been crucified, nothing had changed – he was still alive and they were to continue his mission; 2) they were to rely upon the Holy Spirit to do so. Read Luke 24:49, Acts 1: 8.
- About the first point, what are some things that have changed in terms of people connecting with church these past two years? What's still the same?
- About the second point, if you are able, share how you have or currently experience the Holy Spirit.
- Why do you think Jesus used the 'physical' act of breathing to give the Spirit? What about physical signs today?
- Why was Pentecost (Acts 2) still necessary for them after?

APPLY

- How hard has it been for you to see God at work these past two years? What is one way you have seen God at work?
- What are the 'places' or people you feel Jesus is sending you as his witness? List the circles of people God has given that you could impact as a witness to Christ.
- Take time this week to re-read the first 12 chapters of the Book of Acts to take note of the Holy Spirit's activity.

PRAY

- Take a moment together as a group to give thanks that though much is changing these days, Jesus has not.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for a fresh touch and fresh empowerment to give you boldness to have conversations about Jesus with unbelievers.

Devoted

CHURCH REIMAGINED

8

Week 8: Devoted to the Holy Spirit

Key Text: John 20:19-23

OPEN

As we wrap up our message series on what it means to be a devoted follower of Jesus and a church devoted to the Gospel – especially in a time of disruption like COVID – we conclude by looking at the parting words of Jesus to the disciples: *“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” Then he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’* On the day of Jesus' resurrection, the disciples were huddled in fear of the Jewish leaders. In the midst of their fear and how they thought everything had changed, Jesus appeared to them to reassure them that everything was in keeping with the Father's plan – they were to continue his ministry. But to do so, they would now need to receive and rely upon the Holy Spirit.

REFLECT

- From verse 19, how would you describe the disciples prior to Jesus appearing to them based on the details?
- What does Jesus show them as proof of his reality? Why?
- What does Jesus say twice to the disciples? Why twice and what do think Jesus was communicating?
- In verse 22, Jesus uses a physical act to release his Spirit. Why this act? Was it necessary? Where else in scripture is the Holy Spirit communicated or manifested that way? (Hint: Genesis 1, Acts 2)