


Week # 6

JOY OF
INTERCESSION:
LOVING BEYOND
OURSELVES



*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you
and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and
the ends of the earth. —Acts 1:8*

WEEK SIX

JOY OF INTERCESSION: LOVING BEYOND OURSELVES

DEBBIE TOMLIAN AND BETH COPPEDGE

DAY 1

Read Luke 22.

One of the greatest joys of the Spirit-Filled Life is to enjoy fellowship with Jesus in prayer! Jesus is longing to share what's on His heart with us and allow us to share ours with Him! There is the possibility of intimacy with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit that is available to us that is amazing! Jesus is inviting us into the Trinitarian conversation!! This is how much He loves us. He shed His blood to redeem us! He wants to know us personally and wants us to know Him!! As you read this chapter today you will clearly see the necessity of the infilling of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the disciples if Jesus is going to be able to share with them the things on His heart.

1. This is the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry. What happens in the first 6 verses? Jesus had been preparing his disciples for the His suffering and His death. However, Judas had NO room in his thinking or theology for the cross. What did Judas do?
2. In verses 7–22 what did Jesus ask Peter and John to do? In verse 15 why did Jesus want to go with His disciples to the upper room!! He wanted to share His heart with them!!
3. How did the disciples respond in the next paragraph in verses 23–30? Are there times Jesus has tried to share His heart with us and we've missed Him as badly as His friends here? What were they arguing about?
4. In verses 31–38 what does Jesus say to Peter? What does Peter declare that he will do? How did the disciples respond when Jesus asked them if their physical needs had been met as they followed Him? In verse 37 Jesus gives them another plan. What is it?
5. In verses 39–46 where is Jesus taking the disciples and what did He long for them to do with Him? What do the disciples find themselves incapable of doing with Jesus? It's heartbreaking. Their intentions are good but there in no power in their lives to pray.

6. Read verses 47–71. In them we find the arrest and trial of Jesus. Note the difference in the responses of the disciples and those of Jesus! What did Judas do? What did Jesus do? What happened to the high priest’s servant’s ear? What did Jesus do? What did Jesus say to the priests and guards? What did they do to Jesus?

Where was Peter in verses 54–62? What did he say and do? Was Jesus honest with Peter when He shared with Peter how he would respond!! Peter’s intentions were noble but he had no capacity to do the right thing!! Does this sound like you and me? What was the response of the men who held Jesus? What did they do? How did Jesus respond back to His accusers? What did Jesus say to them about Himself? How did they respond?

As you prayerfully read over this chapter, can you see yourself in any of the responses of the people, religious and political leaders, or Peter or Judas? Judas betrayed Jesus because there was no place in his mind for a suffering Savior and the cross!! Peter denied Him because of fear and self-protection!! The disciples all misunderstood Him and what He came to do because they wanted a “power” gospel where they would be first!! All the disciples were unable to share in the burden on Jesus’ heart as He faced the cross in prayer and communion!! They all fell asleep.

All of these responses from Jesus’ disciples are described as carnal. Their intentions were good, except for Judas, but there was no power in their lives to put Jesus first or to think like Jesus, or to share in the suffering of Jesus in prayer!! Their spiritual lives were impotent!! We may love Jesus and have left all to follow Him, just as His disciples did, but unless we have been filled with the Holy Spirit, our lives are as impotent as theirs in this chapter! Is Jesus inviting *YOU* into the Joy of the Spirit-Filled Life?

Read Proverbs 1:23 NLT.

Read the story entitled *The Lion*. This story written by Dan Searls shares about standing back-to-back against the enemy of our souls.

Jerusalem – Acts 1:8

DAY 2

Prayerfully read Acts 1.

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

1. What admonitions and promises did Jesus give to the disciples in Acts 1:4-8? Write them out in your prayer journal. They are beautiful and very important to understanding the joy of Spirit filled prayer.
2. What incredible promise did the angels give to the disciples at the ascension of Jesus?

3. Where did the disciples go when they returned to Jerusalem? Who was with them? What were they doing?
4. What happened to Judas? There are sobering consequences to choices. What decisions were the disciples able to make in the upper room without arguing or fighting for first place?

Read Acts 2.

1. What marvelous thing happened when the day of Pentecost had come? This was the promise of the Father, that Jesus had spoken of in Acts 1:4, 8.
2. What miracle occurred in Acts 2:5–13?
3. Who stood up and preached to the people? Is this the same Peter who we read about yesterday in the upper room in Luke 22? What happened in Peter's life in the upper room in Acts 2 that made such a difference? Has this happened in you?
4. Peter knows his Bible and preaches from the Old Testament book of Joel! How does Joel describe the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? Who can be filled? What other beautiful promises does Joel give in verses 2:25–28? Once again it is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy from Psalm 16:8–11. With Peter as your example, take the Joel passage and the Psalm 16 verses and ask Jesus to help you pray these beautiful portions from His Word! There is something life giving that comes from the Spirit of God when you use scripture for your personal time of prayer and worship!! I challenge you to try it.
5. What is the supernatural response of the people to Peter's preaching? How many were added to the church in Jerusalem? Wow!! As you pray today, using scripture, ask Jesus to strengthen you to BELIEVE that He can work "exceedingly abundantly above," just as He did for Peter! (Ephesians 3:20)
6. Who made ALL the difference in the two upper room experiences of Luke 22 and Acts 2? Do you know the JOY of being filled with the Holy Spirit! Ask the Lord Jesus if there is any sin in your life that you need to confess to Him, and then give to Jesus ALL of you—nothing held back, nothing held onto, nothing between! Then invite Jesus to cleanse and purify your heart and fill you with His Holy Spirit!! All of you for all of Jesus, so you can personally know the joy of living in the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Judea – Acts 1:8

DAY 3

Prayerfully read Acts 3–7.

1. As you read through these next four chapters in Acts 3–7, what do you notice about the disciples of Jesus? What is happening? It's just like Jesus said in Acts 1:8, isn't it?
2. In chapter 3 what happens through Peter and John? Where are they going? Wow!! What a difference again from Luke 22!!
3. Peter finds the healing opens a door to witness about Jesus! Peter calls them to repentance in verse 19! This is a beautiful verse to memorize.
4. What are the various responses to Peter's witness in chapter 4? How did Peter and Jesus' other disciples respond? What do they pray for in verses 4:23–31? In what incredible way did God answer their prayer in verse 31? How are they relating to one another as believers in 4:32–37? This is a good example of Trinity Unity and Calvary Love!
5. Chapter 5 emphasizes the incredible importance of heart holiness in the lives of believers!! What happens to Ananias and Sapphira? Why? This story is very sobering! We cannot play games with God or others! We cannot try to appear more spiritual than we are!! It's sin!! There are consequences to our choices! Today as you pray over this scripture, are there any places in your life where you are lying to God or to others or pretending to be more spiritual or clean in your life than you are? Before you go any farther, stop and ask Jesus to create in you a clean heart by praying Psalm 51:10, *"Create in me a clean heart Oh God and renew a right spirit within! Restore unto me the joy of my salvation and take not thy Holy Spirit from me!"*
6. What happens in chapter 6? Notice how compassionate the believers were to care for those in need! What were the qualifications for the seven serving tables? No work is too insignificant for Jesus!!
7. Who became the first martyr and why? Notice how well Stephen knew his Old Testament, and he was a layman!! Who was with Stephen when he died, and who stood and received him? What is Stephen's dying prayer?

Joy of Praying Beyond Ourselves

1. Ask Jesus to give you a holy boldness to share Him with others and to not be afraid.
2. Are you living closely enough to Jesus today that you can enjoy times of refreshing in your spirit because of the sweetness of His Presence in you?
3. Thank Jesus for the privilege of loving and serving Him in the nitty gritty of daily life, knowing He can use your labor of love for His Glory!
4. Be encouraged today as you pray for others and share life with them, that JESUS IS WITH YOU, just like He was with Stephen!!

Samaria – Acts 1:8

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

DAY 4

Prayerfully read Acts 8.

1. How did Jesus use the persecution of the church to spread the gospel? Who was one of the main persecutors of the new Christians? What did he do?
2. The man Philip, who the rest of chapter 8 is about, was first introduced in Acts 6:5 as one of the seven men with Stephen who cared for the church’s widows. Where did Philip go when the persecution began? The Samaritans were half Jew and half Gentile, and the Jewish people did not like them!! Why do you think Philip went to Samaria and was able to minister so effectively?
3. What astounding thing happened when Philip began preaching Jesus to them? The miracle to the disciples in Jerusalem was that God’s redemption was BIG ENOUGH even for the Samaritans—just like Jesus said in Acts 1:8! Who was one interesting man that sought to believe?

4. Why did the apostles in Jerusalem send Peter and John to Samaria? How did Simon misunderstand the infilling of the Holy Spirit? What strong words did Philip say to him? What did he have to do to get his heart right?

5. In verse 26 what did the Spirit ask Philip to do? Do you think it would have been hard to leave a flourishing revival to go to a desert road in Gaza? How did Philip respond?

6. What did Philip find? Whose Presence had gone before him? Notice the intimate way that Philip hears Jesus speak to him and how willing and ready he is to be an instant obeyer!! Everything the Spirit asks him to do, he does!! In fact in Acts 8:30, Philip runs to obey. In your life do you hear Jesus' voice, and then trust Him enough to run to obey even if you don't understand what Jesus is doing?

- 7: What was the result of Philip's trusting obedience? Notice again Philip's ability to use God's Word to share the gospel! What was special about the man Philip baptized and led to Jesus?

Joy of Praying Beyond Ourselves

I love this chapter. We see here how Jesus used ONE man FULL of the HOLY SPIRIT to witness to a despised people group and God came in revival fire to SAMARIA!! Then God took the same person and led him to one man, traveling alone on desert road, who was reading God's word with a hungry heart! Philip's instant obedience resulted in the conversion of the first African believer! It was the beginning of the witness of JESUS going to the whole WORLD.

The question for our prayer time today is, are you willing to be like Philip and listen, trust and obey the Holy Spirit? God would like to use your life to accomplish His purposes in the world in which you live, just like He used Philip! (Jeremiah 5:1)

The story of the winsomeness of Jesus.

Recently I read a quote describing the life of an anointed British preacher, F.B. Meyer, of the nineteenth century, that has caused me a great deal of reflection and prayer! It read, "His life was the stuff that prejudices people in favor of Jesus Christ!" It caused me to wonder about the lives of the people I have known and been acquainted with that exuded this same beauty and sweetness of F.B. Meyer, and about the ones who didn't!

While thinking about this, I remembered being with a precious woman in the northeast. We were talking and praying together. I asked her how she had met Jesus and been filled with the Holy Spirit. Her response was amazing! She said, "My husband and I were church people who had been saved in high school. We faithfully went to church after we got married and were quite prosperous financially. One day after church, our preacher asked if we could host an evangelist and his wife who were coming to our church for a series of meetings. They would be with us for a week. My husband and I thought about it and decided we would do just that. We were in for the surprise of a lifetime! They were the most radiant loving Jesus people we had ever seen!!! We had never seen Christians like this before, and before we realized it our hearts got hungry to know Jesus like

they did! All that week they shared in preaching and song about the joy of being filled with the Holy Spirit of God! By the end of the week, both my husband and I had prayed to receive the Holy Spirit in our lives, and to give Jesus “all of us for all of Him!” When the week was over and they had gone, I sat on the sofa and cried and cried! I didn’t want them to go! The Glory of the Presence of Jesus Christ was so real in their lives, we longed to linger in The Glory! From then on, every winter we drove to a camp meeting in south Florida and sat on the second row in the tabernacle, next to the evangelist’s wife, listening to the evangelist lead the service and preach the gospel! We have never been the same since! JESUS CAME and visited us in our home through this godly winsome couple, and by the time they left, JESUS had transformed our lives.

The World

“Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

DAY 5

Prayerfully read Acts 12, 13:1–5, 16:1–15.

Acts 12

1. What happens to the church in verses 1–5? What does the church do in this impossible situation? In verses 6–11, in what miraculous way did God answer?
2. What was Peter’s response? Where did he go? What ironic thing happened when he got there? God’s answer seemed too good to be true. Has this ever happened to you, where you were surprised by God’s faithfulness to answer your prayer?
3. Why was there no small stir in the prison? What happened to Herod? What happened to the church?

Acts 13:1–5

1. Who was assembled in Antioch? What were they doing? Who spoke to the group and what did he say? Did they obey? Who sent them? What did they do when they arrived in Salamis?
2. We notice here that missions was started in a prayer meeting at the initiative of the Holy Spirit. What else was started in a prayer meeting in an upper room at the initiative of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2? This is thrilling!! The rest of Acts is the story of the three missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul under the anointing of the Holy Spirit!

Acts 16:1–15, 40

1. Acts 16 is the beginning of the second missionary journey of Paul and his partner Silas. In the first 5 verses of this chapter who does Paul add to his team?
2. In verses 6–10 there are some interesting scriptures on the guidance of the Holy Spirit for Paul and his team. How does the Spirit lead Paul? I love this! The Holy Spirit is very specific in His direction. What is the response of Paul and the team?
3. To what city did they go? Where do they go on the Sabbath day? What happened at the riverside? Who did they meet and what happened in her life? Who opened her heart to the things that Paul said? Who was baptized, and where did Paul and his team stay?
4. Do you think Paul and his team were initially disappointed by the Spirit closing the door to Asia and Bithynia and opening the door to a ladies' riverside prayer meeting? It's amazing the Spirit knew where God was moving in hearts, and He led Paul and Silas there!! The Christian church in Phillipi was birthed in Lydia's family room, and the gospel spread throughout Europe!! Have you ever been disappointed initially by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life, only to recognize later that God knew best?

Joy of Praying Beyond Ourselves

1. These scripture passages demonstrate the value of praying together with other believers over seemingly impossible situations in our lives!! The first is for situations in your life, or in the lives of others, or in the church, or the world, that feel impossible just like Peter in prison! Are you willing today to bring these impossible needs to Jesus with a body of other prayers and see how Jesus answers?
2. Do you feel the Holy Spirit may want to do new things in your life and church in answer to corporate prayer and fasting? Does He want to "separate unto Himself" some from your midst to take the gospel to the world? Does He want to call you? It's interesting the missionary movement was birthed NOT out of a program but a prayer meeting!!
3. Are you available to invest your life in discipling younger believers like Paul and Silas were? Are you listening to the Holy Spirit and allowing Him to direct your life's choices? Are you willing to humble yourself and go where Jesus leads you, even if it's a woman's prayer meeting like Paul and Silas?
4. What glorious answers to prayer came out of the obedience of Paul and Silas? What glorious answers to prayer does Jesus want to birth out of your life?

The *Lion*

by Dan Searls

World Gospel Mission

Missionary in Urd, Hungary

Scripture tells us that “Satan is like a roaring lion roaming around looking for lunch!” (1 Peter 5:8, DSV – Dan Searls Version). Even a superficial reading of Scripture will show just how true this is!

Moses was supposed to speak to the rock. But he struck it instead and failed to give God the glory. It cost him the Promised Land.

King David got a serious case of “the stupids” the night he saw Bathsheba on the rooftop. Look how it affected the rest of his life.

Solomon was the wisest man to have ever lived, the WISEST! But to his detriment he became involved with the gods of his wives.

Clearly the lion is out there. And some people would put missionaries up on a pedestal as super-spiritual people. Yet who are we missionaries to think that somehow we will avoid the lion’s grasp? Are we more holy than Moses, a man Scripture tells us walked with God? Are we wiser than Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived? The truth of the matter is that we are not. Missionaries are people with clay feet like everyone else. We make mistakes. We wrestle with our passions. We struggle to have our quiet times. To think that missionaries will not be bothered by the lion is sheer folly.

Two brothers, both missionaries to Africa, tell the story of how one day they were going about their business when a runner from a nearby village approached. He begged them to come and help. A lion was

harassing his village, and it had already killed several animals and a person. The villagers didn't have any firearms, and knowing the missionaries did, they sent for help. When the brothers asked why they hadn't gone to the authorities, they were told it would take weeks even months to get help, and they couldn't wait. "Please help us!" the messenger pleaded. Wanting to help, the missionaries went inside, retrieved their guns and ammunition, got into their Land Rover, and sped to the village.

They reached the village and asked where the lion was suspected of being. The villagers pointed toward the vast grassy plain north of the village. Deep grass, up to a man's chest, as far as the eye could see, stretched out before them. Somewhere in this grass was a lion with a taste for man.

"Who will go with us?" the brothers asked.

"We're not going out there! You have the guns. You get the lion!" was the reply.

At this point, the brothers began to question just how much they wanted to help! But they had come and promised to help, so help they would.

The brothers knew that when a lion hunts, it always attacks from the rear, surprising its prey. If the prey is able to see the lion coming, it is often able to escape. Knowing this, they checked to make sure their guns were loaded, flicked off their safeties, and shouldered their weapons. Then, standing back to back, they waded out into the grass.

One of the brothers later reported, "Every step I took, I felt for my brother behind me. Every turn he made, I made. I knew that as long as he was behind me I was safe! I felt for him every step. I never let our backs separate, not even for one step."

A low growl broke the silence, the grass near them exploded, and the lion leapt from his hiding place. The rifles, already on their shoulders, boomed. The brothers and their families are still serving our Lord. The lion is dead.

There is a lion that would like nothing more than to see me fail as a missionary, just as he'd like to see you fail in your calling, your work, your family, church and friendships. We all desperately need people who will stand at our back in prayer. On many days, those prayers are all that stand between us and the lion!