



Leader's Guide

Week of February 5

Leader Check-In

Leaders, we'll be spending the rest of this season in the book of Acts. I'm excited to write these guides for the groups, and am especially excited because Acts has a huge variety of issues that it grapples with. Like always, I encourage feedback on how these guides are going, please tell me what sorts of questions are especially (un)helpful for discussion. The more specific you are, the better the Life Group guides will be! I visited my first Life Group last week, and I will continue to sit-in on some of the groups in the near future!

-- Cameron Tate

The Big Idea

Acts begins with a sharp focus on Jesus. **Acts 1:1-11** is the only section of the book that has Jesus physically on earth, passing on his mission to the church. Later we'll see what the disciples do at the beginning of the church, but first we must establish who establishes the church. It is Jesus, through the Holy Spirit who commissions the church. He gives them the Spirit to accomplish the mission of God for the sake of the whole world.

Getting Started

1. What are your initial thoughts on the book of Acts? What do you know about it?
2. What do you hope to learn through a study on the book of Acts?

Digging In

1. Read **Acts 1:1-3**. Do you think you tend to follow Jesus' works more or his words? Another way of asking this is do you tend more toward 'truth' or 'grace?'
2. Read **Acts 1:4-8**. What is the power of the Holy Spirit?

***Leader's Note:** The power of the Holy Spirit is

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the power to transform lives. It is the power to save and to change people from living in a kingdom of darkness to living in the Kingdom of God. It cannot be separated from Jesus.

3. Read **Acts 1:9-11**. Recall that Jesus told his disciples in **Matt. 28** "I will be with you always, even to the end of the age." Did Jesus lie? Why/why not?
***Leader's Note:** Point them to the theological truth that the Holy Spirit (also called the "Spirit of Christ") was with the disciples. Just as the Holy Spirit is with us now.
4. Where did Jesus go? Where is he today? What is he doing?
***Leader's Note:** Many people, even those who grew up in the church, are surprised to hear that Jesus is in a physical body in some 'heavenly realm.' But Scripture tells us that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father, interceding on our behalf, and that one day we will be physically joined with him. Jesus didn't become the Holy Spirit, but he did give the church the HS so that we can continue the work of the Kingdom.
5. Why was the church given the Holy Spirit?
***Leader's Note:** To empower and equip the

people of God to do the mission of God.

6. What is the mission of the church?

Looking Around

1. Jesus was able to do the things he did on this earth because he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. If Christians have the same Holy Spirit empowering them, what stops them from living like Jesus?
***Leader's Note:** There might be many reasons people throw out like lack of belief, lack of holiness, lack of whatever. But ultimately the leader should point the group toward what Christ did: humble himself. The power of the HS worked through Christ's humility, and God's power is shown through our humility and weakness too.
2. What steps do you need to take to be less self-reliant and more Spirit-empowered?
3. What sort of things does a church do when it is following the mission of Jesus?
4. What would Southern Gables need to do to more closely follow the mission? What do you need to do in your life to support that mission?

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***Leader's Note:** Point them toward 'disciples making disciples.' This is what Jeff said on Sunday is God's mission that is accomplished through the church. Then have an open and honest discussion about how SGC does with this mission.

Pray

Challenge yourself to pray directly to the Holy Spirit for his guidance, gifts, and vision for your life, for Southern Gables, and for the church worldwide.