May 24, 2026

THE HOLY SPIRIT SERIES

BOOK OF ACTS EDITION

SERMON: The Spirit Sends
SPEAKER: Pastor Steve
CORE SCRIPTURE: Acts 13:1-12

WATCH SERMON | SERMON NOTES

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMARY

On Pentecost Sunday, Pastor Steve explored how the Holy Spirit initiates and empowers the church's mission. Through Acts 13:1-12, we see the church in Antioch—a diverse, worshipping community—listening for God's direction. The Spirit speaks, calling Barnabas and Saul to new work. The Spirit sends them into mission, where they encounter both openness (Sergius Paulus) and opposition (Elymas the sorcerer). And the Spirit empowers them to bear witness to Jesus with boldness. This passage reminds us that the church moves forward not through human strategy alone, but through prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit.

SHARE

Think of a time when you had to make an important decision and felt like you needed guidance beyond your own wisdom. How did you go about seeking direction? Who did you reach out to for guidance? What role did prayer play in this decision?

READ

Read **Acts 13:1-12** together out loud as a group.

DISCUSS

Feel free to pick/choose what is most helpful for you. Remember, the goal is to have rich, relational, authentic, Jesus-centered discussions.

1. What stood out to you the most about the sermon?

2. In Acts 13:1-2, Luke highlights the diversity of the leadership team in Antioch—people from different ethnic backgrounds, social statuses, and regions. What does this teach us about the nature of the church and the work of the Holy Spirit? How does the gospel create unity across differences?

3. The text says, "While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" What does this reveal about

how God speaks and how the church discerns his will? Why is the context of worship and prayer so significant here?

4. Pastor Steve emphasized that "discernment is spiritual before it is strategic" and that the church moves forward only when it learns to listen to the Holy Spirit. How can we as a group cultivate a posture of listening and dependence on the Spirit in our own lives and in our church community?

5. When Barnabas and Saul encounter Elymas the sorcerer in verses 6-11, they face direct opposition to the gospel. Pastor Steve noted that "when the Spirit sends, opposition follows." How does this reality challenge or reshape your expectations about following God's call? What challenges do you find in pursuing God's will in your place of work, home, or purpose?

6. In verse 9, Paul is described as "filled with the Holy Spirit" before confronting Elymas. The filling of the Spirit is the Spirit's ongoing equipping of the Christian with the grace needed to obey God's commands. Read that over slowly again.
   What comes to mind first?
   Where can you focus this coming week?
   Tip: Be specific, for example, not pray but Pray the Psalms, not read the Bible but meditate on...etc

YOUR NEXT STEPS

- Commit to a rhythm of listening prayer this week. Set aside intentional time to worship, pray, and ask the Holy Spirit, "What are you saying to me? How are you leading me?"
- Identify one way you can participate in Cornerstone's mission. Whether it's deepening your own discipleship, building a bridge with someone different from you, serving in the neighbourhood, or contributing to community connection, take one practical step this week.
- Prepare for the Fall Prayer & Envisioning Gathering on October 17. Mark your calendar and begin praying now for God's continued direction for Cornerstone's future.

PRAY

Spend time to pray together as a group:

- Praise God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and for his presence and power in the church. Ask the Holy Spirit to help each person in your group become a better listener—attentive to God's voice in Scripture, prayer, and community.
- Pray for Cornerstone Church—that we would be a people who depend on the Spirit, discern his leading together, and follow courageously into the mission he has for us.
- Pray for those who were baptized (Koen, Alexi, and Travis)—that they would continue to grow in faith and be empowered by the Spirit for witness and service.
- Pray for boldness and perseverance when opposition or challenges arise, trusting that the Spirit empowers us for the work he calls us to.

CONNECT

Stay connected with what's happening at Cornerstone! Check out **The Hub** for upcoming community **events**, **workshops**, and opportunities to **serve** in the neighbourhood. Consider how your small group might come alongside a ministry or outreach initiative as we live into our calling to join God in the neighbourhood and become a hub of connection and belonging.

CLOSING

As you go this week, remember: the same Holy Spirit who spoke to the church in Antioch, who sent Barnabas and Saul, and who empowered them for mission is the same Spirit at work in you today. Listen. Follow. Trust that where the Spirit sends, the Spirit also empowers.