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Week 1 / God is Not Far / Acts 2:38-39

ICEBREAKER

What's one gift you received that made a lasting impact on you?

OR

Have you ever received something you didn't fully appreciate until later? What changed your perspective?

SUPPLEMENTAL VIDEO

Scan the QR code found on the right side of the back of your Host Resources Card in your small group kit. Watch or listen to the video as a group, prior to starting the rest of your discussion.

INTRODUCTION

Imagine receiving a beautifully wrapped gift but leaving it unopened on the shelf—never experiencing its joy or usefulness. Sadly, many Christians treat the Holy Spirit this way: never unwrapped, never experienced. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit at the time of our salvation, not an optional add-on. The Holy Spirit is God's gift of life, presence, and power for every believer.

What stood out to you from this week's message?

INTO THE WORD

Read: Acts 2:38–39; Luke 24:49; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Joel 2:28.

What do these passages reveal about God's heart toward His people? How does knowing the Holy Spirit is with you personally, shape your confidence in your relationship with God?

Host Guidance: Peter's words in Acts remind us that the gift of the Spirit is for everyone—across generations, cultures, and backgrounds. In the Old Testament, God promised to give His people a new heart and His own Spirit within them. Jesus, before His ascension, instructed His followers to wait for this promised gift. This was not an optional add-on to salvation—it was part of salvation and at the very heart of God's redemptive plan. This is the fulfillment of God's promise to always be with us.

Read: Ephesians 1:13–14; Romans 8:8–9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20.

Which of these truths—being sealed, given life, or given a new identity—most encourages you right now? Why? How might our daily choices look different if we truly believed we have the Spirit of God living in us?

Host Guidance: The Holy Spirit is not simply a symbol of God's presence—He is the seal, the guarantee, the life-giver, and the one who redefines our identity. We are no longer who we once were; our lives are now hidden with Christ, empowered to live in newness of life.

Read: Galatians 5:22–23; John 14:26; John 16:7–8,13.

Which fruit of the Holy Spirit do you see most evident in your life right now? Which one do you long to see grow? How have you experienced the Holy Spirit's guidance or conviction in recent days?

Host Guidance: Receiving the Holy Spirit at salvation is just the beginning. The Christian life is surrendered to walk in step with the Spirit—allowing Him to guide, convict, empower obedience, and bear fruit through us. A Spirit-filled life embraces and embodies the hope of Jesus, reflecting His character to the world. Fruit is the evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence. We don't produce it by trying harder—it grows as we abide in Christ. Invite honest reflection among group members. The Holy Spirit shapes us over time, like a potter with clay. Growth is ongoing. Encourage the group to celebrate progress, not perfection.

EMBRACE AND EMBODY

(Essentials: Seek God Daily and Build Deep Relationships)

This week, remember that the Holy Spirit is God's personal gift to you—meant to be received, relied upon, and rejoiced in. Seeking God daily means walking in His presence moment by moment, listening for His voice, and responding in obedience. Building deep relationships means allowing the Holy Spirit to shape how we love and serve others in community.

As a group reflect on these questions:

- What's one area of your life where you've been trying to live in your own strength rather than depending on the Spirit?
- Is there a relationship, conversation, or decision you will face in the coming days, wherein you could invite the Holy Spirit to guide you?
- What would it look like for you to live more intentionally "in step with the Spirit" at home, at work, or in your neighborhood this week?

Action Step

Challenge your group to begin their day by praying: "Holy Spirit, I welcome You to guide my thoughts, words, and actions today. Help me keep in step with You."

GROUP PRAYER PRACTICE: GUIDED LISTENING PRAYER

- Begin with a moment of silence, inviting the Holy Spirit to make His presence known.
- Slowly read John 14:26 aloud.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind one truth, encouragement, or step of obedience for each person in your group.
- Allow space for quiet listening, then invite anyone who feels led, to share.
- Close this time in prayer

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Spirit, thank You for being God's promised gift to us. Thank You for giving us new life, sealing our future, and shaping us into the likeness of Christ. Help us not to leave Your gift unopened, but to walk with You daily. May Your fruit be evident in us this week as we live out the hope of Jesus. In His precious name, Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Have all group members order their free shirts by scanning the QR code on the Order Shirt Card in your kit. The shirts are intended to be a conversation starter to help make God known.
- Make sure to pass out The Helper stickers in your kits. Encourage group members to stick those somewhere as a reminder to memorize the core verse for the series.
- Post a weekly photo of your group in your campus Facebook group for a chance to win a pizza party.
- Make sure to take attendance for your group. New HOSTs can fill out the Attendance Card and send a picture to smallgroups@fairhaven.church so your group will be built in our system. In future weeks, you will receive weekly attendance reminders and be able to submit attendance electronically.