

Dear Church Family,

Fun fact: it is a terrible idea to run a five-mile decline without first practicing running. Perhaps I was naïve, but when I joined track in high school, I was unprepared to take on the five-mile jog on the first day. I am no athlete, not even close. Thus, when I was tasked with jogging five miles the first day, I found my confidence absolutely destroyed. I could scarce run 1-mile. I quit track that day.

It is often ill-advised to get ahead of yourself. If I had built up my stamina and had more practice, I could have jogged five miles easily. But, without prior conditioning, I was poorly prepared, overwhelmed, leaving me exhausted and discouraged.

We are fascinated by the idea of immediate results. But, often, we get ahead of ourselves and skip the necessary conditioning. We end up overwhelmed and discouraged. If only we trained for the sport or made a life change for that diet. If only we had put more effort into that relationship. If only we had considered the cost, and so on.

But not it’s too late…

Once we have been overwhelmed, beaten, and discouraged, we often quit. Why bother now? It’s too late. It just didn’t work out. This is a miserable state to be in and is an emotion we are all too familiar with. This is especially true for Jesus followers.

To those who have followed Jesus for some time, you are aware of the burn-out - the condition where you are just done. You ran the five-mile race, you participate, and now you are spent. You gave your time and no one appreciate you. There is nothing to show for it except frustration and exhaustion. You tried to surrender your addiction, your anxiety, your struggle to Jesus but it was just too much. You gave your best efforts in following Jesus, but you still don’t enjoy reading scripture, prayer is awkward, and honestly life is just too buys. We have all been there.

It wasn’t meant to be this way. results

After Jesus ascended into Heaven, he commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the promise of the Father came. So, they waited. The followers of Jesus gathered together daily and prayed; seeking Jesus with an obsessive single-mindedness. They were desperate and urgent. They had no idea what to do next or what turn their lives would take. All thy had were words of Jesus. So, they waited and waited.

“And they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

Then it happened: The Holy Spirit arrived. “When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a might rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” – Acts 2:1-4

After desperately seeking God, praying and sharing life together, the disciples saw Jesus show up again in a whole new way. While at first, they thought He was gone, that day, they realized Jesus was closer than ever before. Now, Jesus was living through his disciples.

It was a result of their waiting.

Before this moment, the disciples had tried to be like Jesus in the past. But, as you read in the Gospels, you will find the disciples often fell short. Like us when we get ahead of ourselves, the disciples frequently found themselves frustrated and discouraged. When Jesus died on the cross, Jesus’ followers did not celebrate the death of sin, they were discouraged and confused. When Jesus ascended into Heaven, they were uncertain and unclear. It wasn’t until the Holy Spirit came that everything clicked into place!

Now, consider the results of the Holy Spirit. Read acts 2:42-47; it is incredible! This is church lived in complete unity. This is a big deal as disunity or division is in our nature. But Jesus’ work on the cross undoes both our separation from God and each other.

The Holy Spirit Result

Just look at the early church, unity came naturally for them. They sought life together, cared for each other, and in a very counter-cultural way, met together daily. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. This is where He shines brightest! He IMPACTS CULTURE to the very core: eliminating hatred, fear, and division. He creates desire for unity rather than division.

Consider the result of the Holy Spirit: unity. He unifies us with Jesus, our church, and brings wisdom, guidance, peace, joy, and healing into our families. This is the work of the Spirit! This is how he IMPACTS CULTURE!

So how do I get this result? If we want to see Jesus transform our families, neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, and cities, we need the Spirit to IMPACT our CULTURE and radically change us to the core! So, we must wait! We need to get away with God! We need to pray together urgently and desperately! Let’s allow the Spirit to IMPACT our CULTURE! It’s time to wait on Jesus. The results are worth waiting for.

With love,

Pastor Vern Pastor Ty

**Group Discussion**

*Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group.*

1. Have you ever started something ill-prepared? Did you succeed or fail? What would have changed if you had prepared yourself?
2. The disciples waited, sought God and prepared for what Jesus had for them. Are you effectively waiting? What steps can you take to effectively wait on God?
3. Do you feel our church is unified? Why or why not? What steps or changes can you make to change or encourage unity in our church?
4. The Holy Spirit radically changes us and impacts our culture. What results do you see of the Holy Spirit’s workings in your life?
5. Why is it better to wait and seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit rather than trying to follow the Will of God on our own? What would be the result of either situation in your own life?

The word for “line” (as in waiting in line), comes from the French word “queue” which means “tail”. The word “queue” is used mostly in European Countries

– Wikipedia

**Closing Prayer**

*Close your time together in prayer. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topic of today’s discussion:*

Jesus help us to:

* Be more unified
* Learn to wait
* Rely on the Holy Spirit
* Seek the Holy Spirit
* Wait on the Holy Spirit

**Weekly Challenge**

Ask God to show you ways to promote unity in our church, in your family, at work, and in your everyday life. Then, put those ways into action! See what the Holy Spirit can do through you and through a more unified church.



Kid’s Korner

Did you know?

The Toy Story ride in Disney’s California Adventure has a wait time of 300 minutes! That’s 10 episodes of Spongebob WITH commercials!

Could you wait that long?

**Closing Prayer**

*Pray together as a family. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about.*

Jesus help us to:

* Work more as a team.
* Ask for the Holy Spirit’s help
* Talk to you more.

The EXTREME Challenge

*Do you have what it takes to conquer this challenge?*

Challenge yourself to be more unified at church, at home, at school, and with your friends. Maybe your brother or sister needs help with their chores. Help them out! Maybe your mom or dad needs help picking up around the house. Offer to help. Or maybe your friends need help with their homework. See if you can help them! Try and do one thing a day that helps promote unity.

**Questions for Kids**

*If you have children, here are some questions you can go over with them.*

1. Have you ever tried a game, sport, or activity without knowing how to play it? What happened? Did you stick with it and get better, or give up?
2. Jesus wanted the disciples to wait and prepare themselves for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. What do you think the disciples did to prepare?
3. What can you do to wait and prepare yourself for what God has for you?