

August 9/10, 2025

"The People of Praise"

Pastor Jeff Manion



**Beyond the
Weekend**

SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2025 Focus: 50 Key Truths

Each Friday, explore a key truth about our Christian faith and how we can live in light of this truth.

Day 1 [Acts 2:42-47](#) | Devoted

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

The early church is "devoted" to five core commitments. They know the reality of Jesus's death, burial and resurrection, and these truths radically shape their minds and way of life. As a result, their habits and lifestyles were on a new trajectory. They were "all-in" on: (1) the Apostles' teaching, (2) fellowship, (3) meeting needs, (4) sharing Jesus, (5) prayer and praise. This devotion fuels a life of intimate prayer and overflowing praise.

In a way, these five core commitments can serve as vital signs. Much like how we can check our pulse for signs of life, the five commitments are signs of life for the believer. One danger in the spiritual life is coasting and not assessing our spiritual health or vitality. It's possible to know the right things and even affirm the right things, and yet have a life that is void of these signs of life. These five commitments provide a helpful test for assessing the health of our hearts. Our aim as followers of Jesus, then, is to grow more faithfully and fully into the way of Jesus—the way that was also followed by the early church.

TODAY: Take your pulse relative to these five commitments. Are there signs of life? Consider which of the five commitments you struggle with the most. Make this a matter of prayer this week, and ask God to work in your heart over the coming weeks as we continue this series.

Day 2 [Acts 3:1](#) | Something Old, Something New

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Acts 3:1

The early church is growing, and the apostles are deeply committed to teaching and leading these new believers in the way of Jesus. As part of that commitment, the apostles maintain a regular rhythm of prayer—a rhythm that includes going to the temple to pray. In this way, their faith involves things that were old and familiar (the temple, Scripture, prayer), yet was infused with new life because of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

What we see in the life of the early church is also true for us. The experience of Christ and his Spirit makes old things new again. The Spirit brings renewal and fresh air to our spiritual lives. For instance, the Spirit can awaken someone familiar with the Bible and its story to the reality of Jesus and his kingdom. Or, the Spirit can bring salvation to someone who is familiar with church, but has never put their faith in Christ. The Spirit brings new life into our old, familiar spaces.

TODAY: The only way to know and experience the Spirit's power is through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus came and lived a perfect life and died on the cross to take away our sin and give us new life. Everyone who turns from their

sin and puts their trust in Jesus is forgiven and sealed with the Holy Spirit ([Ephesians 1:13](#)). New life begins! Have you tasted and experienced that new life? If not, today is a great day to begin.

Day 3 [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18](#) | Prayer and Praise

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Paul has a close and affectionate relationship with the church in Thessalonica, having founded the church during his second missionary journey. Paul writes a heartfelt letter to this group of Jesus followers, instructing them on what it meant to follow Jesus amid the trials and pains they were experiencing. He includes these words about prayer and praise. Rejoicing, praying, and thanking God are to be a regular and consistent part of believers' lives. These were rhythms of the early church in Jerusalem ([Acts 2:42-47](#)), and they were to be a rhythm for them as well.

Prayer and praise should be a regular, consistent part of our lives as well. Though there is benefit to having a structure to our prayer life (praying at specific times, in specific locations), prayer can and should be incorporated into every corner and aspect of our lives. This might mean praying for someone who is going through an especially hard season when you meet them in the grocery aisle. Or it might mean texting a prayer to a loved one. Regular prayer could even mean praying with a friend while you're out golfing. All of life presents an opportunity to pray.

TODAY: This week, find opportunities to make prayer a regular part of each day. Look for opportunities to pray with someone at times and places you wouldn't normally think to pray. You are called to pray continually. Let your prayer and praise be a consistent part of our lives and a blessing to those around us.

Day 4 [Acts 2:44-47](#) | Growing Together

They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts. Acts 2:45-46

The early church shares life together. They give possessions away, eat meals together, and pray fervently with one another. They know what it means to share life and help each other thrive. And though the early church is imperfect, it is a renewed community empowered by the Spirit that is growing together. This is what Jesus desires for his people.

Much like the early church, we are called to grow together. We live in an individualistic age that often caters to the self. It is uncommon to look outward at the needs of others rather than inward at our own wants and desires. Much like the early church, however, we need to learn to give of ourselves for the blessing and benefit of those around us, particularly our brothers and sisters in Christ. One of the greatest catalysts to our growth is when we fully immerse ourselves in sharing life with other believers. It is there that God molds and shapes us more into the likeness of his Son.

TODAY: It's group life season at Ada Bible Church. Registrations are now open for men's, women's and couples' small groups. Small groups are a prime context for sharing life and experiencing spiritual growth. If you are not in a small group, now is a great time to join one. Visit adabible.org/small-groups for more information. Remember, it is when we share life together with other believers that God often does his greatest work in our hearts.



Day 5 Genesis 1:2 | Question 31: Who is the Holy Spirit?

Question: Who is the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity, the power behind all that God does. The Spirit is active in believers' lives.

Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Genesis 1:2

From the very beginning of Scripture, the Holy Spirit is present and active in God's creative work. The Spirit of God hovers over the waters as God speaks creation into existence, revealing the Spirit's essential role in all God does. Throughout the Old Testament, the Spirit empowers individuals like Samson, Saul and David in amazing ways. The Spirit is fully God, yet distinct from the Father and the Son. He is involved in the virgin birth of Christ ([Matthew 1:20](#)). He descends upon Jesus at his baptism and anoints him for ministry ([Matthew 3:16](#)). The Spirit empowers Jesus to remain sinless and obedient to the Father ([Hebrews 9:14](#)). And through the Spirit, human beings faithfully recorded God's Word ([2 Peter 1:21](#)).

This same Spirit continues divine work in believers' lives today. The Spirit living within us is fully God—not a force or inclination. This understanding transforms how we approach our spiritual lives. The Spirit who empowered people and inspired Scripture now regenerates, indwells, adopts and seals us when we come to faith in Jesus. The Spirit transforms us into Christlikeness, helping us defeat sin and produce the fruit of the Spirit. We can walk in confidence knowing God himself lives within us.

TODAY: Thank God for his Spirit. Ask the Spirit to reveal areas of your life that need his transforming power. Submit to his guidance, trusting that the Spirit is actively working in your life. Learn more about the Holy Spirit's work in our [We Believe document](#).