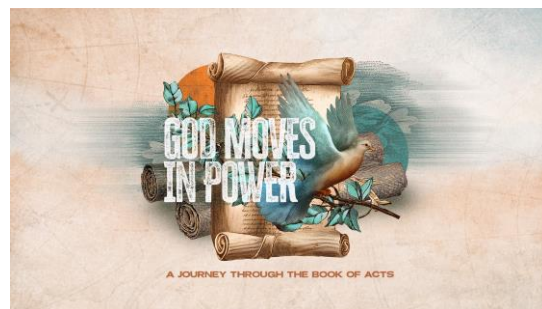


Group Discussion Guide | August 23  
God Moves in Power through the Gospel



**Series overview and leader instructions**

Overview

Our current sermon series, “God Moves in Power,” is a journey through the book of Acts, where we witness the Holy Spirit at work through prayer, the gospel, the Church, and ordinary people. As we explore the story of the early church, we’ll discover that the same God who moved powerfully then is still moving today. This series will challenge and encourage us to live with bold faith, expectant prayer, and a willingness to join God’s ongoing mission in the world. The story of Acts is far from over and we’re invited to be a part of it.

Note: This series will be a thematic walk through the Book of Acts rather than a chapter by chapter or verse-by-verse study.

Bible Lab

Each week, in addition to sermon discussion questions, groups are invited to participate in “Bible Lab,” an interactive Scripture reading experience. Your group will read a different text each time you gather, but the questions you ask will be the same, inviting you to consider what you notice about God, humanity, and yourself in each passage. By providing the same questions each week, we hope to offer a Bible-reading strategy that puts the emphasis first on God and the church/others before drawing a personal application.

It could be tempting for your group to skip the Bible Lab, but we *strongly* encourage you to engage with it each week, allowing God’s Word to form your group and each person in it.

Reading Plan

We have created a reading plan to accompany this sermon series. You can find it here: [Acts Series Resources](#). You can download the reading plan or subscribe to receive the daily devotional guide each week, which contains the reading plan and reflection questions.

Consider committing to completing the reading plan as a group. Here are questions you can use (during your life group time, over a meal, or however you choose) to reflect on the reading plan each week:

- As you read, what resonated with you?
- What questions came up in your mind?
- What challenged you from God’s Word?

**Opening reflection questions (10 minutes)**

This week we are looking at Acts 2:22-41 where Peter presents the first gospel message.

- Where were you the first time you heard the gospel message?

- Who did you learn about the gospel from?

### **Bible Lab (20 minutes)**

All through the God Moves in Power series, we'll be spending time each week in what we're calling "Bible Lab." Bible Lab consists of three "movements." In the first movement, we will read the passage out loud, paying attention to what is happening in the passage. In the second movement, we'll read it out loud again, noticing what it teaches about God, people, and ourselves. In the third movement, we will silently read the passage and share what next step the passage has for us. **Note:** See the last page of this document for a guide you can provide your group members if desired. You could print one for each person, collect them after Bible Lab, and reuse the same guide each week.

#### Movement 1

Invite everyone to turn to **Acts 2:29-41**.

The first time through, we want to get an overview. As we listen, ask yourself:

- What is going on in this passage?
- What caught your attention?
- What questions arise as you listen?

Read **Acts 2:29-41** out loud or invite someone else to do so. When you are finished, discuss your group's answers to the questions above. Feel free to break into groups of 2-3.

#### Movement 2

The second time through, we want to consider what the passage reveals about God and His people. As we listen, ask yourself:

- What does this passage show you about God? The work of the Holy Spirit?
- What do these verses reveal to us about the body of Christ, the Church?

Read **Acts 2:29-41** out loud or invite someone else to do so. When you are finished, discuss your group's answers to the questions above. Feel free to break into groups of 2-3.

#### Movement 3

Each of us will now take a few moments to read **Acts 2:29-41** silently to ourselves. As you read, prayerfully consider this question:

- Lord, what are You inviting me to believe, receive, or do in response to this passage?

Allow time for everyone to read and reflect. Then invite anyone who would like to share a brief response.

When the time of sharing is done, pray a short prayer. You may use these words based on James 1:22 or something similar: **“Lord, thank You for this time in Your Word. May we not merely listen to the word and so deceive ourselves. May we do what it says. And may we encourage each other in that pursuit. Amen.”**

### **Discussion of sermon and Scripture (20 minutes)**

- Sunday morning looked a little different! What struck you about the invitation to a “come as you are” baptism?
- How did that visual shape your understanding of the passage and message as a whole?

In talking about Acts 2:22-41, we see the *substance* of the Good News of Jesus: Jesus came, Jesus died, Jesus rose, and Jesus reigns.

- At this moment in your life, which of these four important truths—Jesus came, Jesus died, Jesus rose, and Jesus reigns—has the greatest impact on your heart and soul? Why?

Dan’s sermon called attention to the *beauty* of the gospel in Acts 2. The events recorded in this chapter are responding to experiences and moments in human history, demonstrating specific ways the gospel is Good News.

First, we see humans moving from fragmentation to restoration.

*Invite someone to read Genesis 11:1-9 and Acts 2:1-12.*

- How do these passages show the power of the gospel to bring restoration where there was fragmentation?
- What examples have you experienced or heard about where the gospel has brought restoration to fragmented things?

Next, Dan drew our attention to the way the gospel moves us from condemnation to transformation. The events of Acts 2 take place on the Jewish holiday of Pentecost, a day they were commanded to observe in the Law of Moses. Again and again, people had demonstrated their inability to obey the Law on their own.

- In what areas of your life have you seen again and again that you can’t “get it right” on your own?
- How does life look different when someone relies on the Holy Spirit rather than trying to “get it right” by themselves?

Dan also reminded us that the gospel moves us from death to life. When the Israelites worshipped a false God in Exodus 32, 3,000 of them died. In Acts 2, when the Israelites here the good news of Jesus, 3,000 of them are saved.

The gospel moves us from death to life. It literally saves us.

- Acts 2:21 says, “And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” What does it mean to “call on the name of the Lord?”
- What does it mean to be “saved?”

Peter says to be baptized for the “forgiveness of your sins and for the gift of The Holy Spirit.” The response to the gospel in Acts 2 is conviction, repentance, and baptism.

- If you’ve been baptized, why did you make that choice? What impact has that choice had on you?
- If you have not been baptized, would you share what is preventing you from acting upon Peter’s words?
- What about Peter’s message or Dan’s sermon cuts you to the heart?

### **Prayer and upcoming events (15 minutes)**

Jesus bore the weight of our punishment because He wants to be in relationship with each of us, for all eternity. As we come together for prayer, let’s pray for whatever will help us live in light of the substance and beauty of the gospel. How can the truth of the gospel be made more real in our lives?

- You may suggest prompts such as an understanding of His love for me, that I am forgiven, that The Spirit changes me from the inside, how to use my talents to serve others, how our group can serve others, how to forgive others, that Jesus loves everyone – even those who I cannot understand how He does.
- Pray for those in your life who need to hear the gospel and for your role in sharing it with them.
- Invite people to pray for their personal/life requests in prayer, too.

*Remember that silence is OK, and that every person is on his or her own journey in prayer. Some people are more comfortable than others. But some people just need a little time and space to gather thoughts.*

**All-church Worship Night:** Mark your calendars for Thursday, September 17 at 6:30pm!

## **Bible Lab Questions**

The following may be used to guide each week's Bible Lab time.

### Movement 1

The first time through this week's Scripture, we want to get an overview. As we listen, ask yourself:

- What is going on in this passage?
- What caught your attention?
- What questions arise as you listen?

*Listen as the passage is read out loud then discuss your answers to the questions above.*

### Movement 2

The second time through, we want to consider what the passage reveals about God and His people. As we listen, ask yourself:

- What does this passage show you about God? The work of the Holy Spirit?
- What do these verses reveal to us about the body of Christ, the Church?

*Listen as the passage is read out loud then discuss your answers to the questions above.*

### Movement 3

Each of us will now take a few moments to read the passage silently to ourselves. As you read, prayerfully consider this question:

- Lord, what are You inviting me to believe, receive, or do in response to this passage?

*After a time of reflection, everyone will be given the opportunity to share their response.*