

<p>Slides</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Why Bother With the Spirit?</h2> <p>Move One:</p> <p>Faith does not come easily to me.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perhaps you come to faith more naturally ... more effortlessly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are those who are blessed with the gift of “faith.” • If you are one of those, congratulations. 2. But faith has always been a struggle for me. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wake up every day to wrestle once more with the faith I confess. • It is something I question and worry over and argue with. <p>It’s not so much the big questions that keep me up at night.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questions about the existence of God or his purposes in this world. 2. It is, rather, the smaller, more practical questions that cause me bother. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is personal transformation really possible? • What can God possibly do through someone as limited as myself? • Where is the power to live in Christ-like ways, to overcome sin, to be holy? • When will the church start living up to its potential and its mission? • Why does the world have to be so hard-hearted and careless of eternal things? <p>In fact, there are five feelings that are pretty characteristic of my personal faith walk.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I’m not proud of these feelings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I’m not offering them to you as the model of faithful living. • I’m <i>confessing</i> these feelings rather than <i>boasting</i> about them. 2. I am saying that these feelings tend to characterize my daily walk. 3. And I suspect these will resonate with many of you ... that you often feel the same way.
---------------------------------	---

<p>Slides 3</p>	<p>Move Two:</p> <p>I often feel <i>lonely</i> in my faith.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not that I don't enjoy the relationships I have with Brothers and Sisters. 2. Not that I don't appreciate the companionship I've found in the church. 3. But I miss my Master. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I wish I had a relationship with him that was more personal, more tangible. • I'd like to hear his voice, feel his touch, sit at his feet. • I wish I could be in his presence—like I am with a friend.
<p>4</p>	<p>I often feel overwhelmed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know that Jesus has left his Kingdom business for me to do, for us to do. 2. But frankly, there are times when I know I don't measure up ... that Jesus has given me a job to do that is more than I can wrap my arms around. 3. His mission is so important, so vital, but I am so weak and inadequate. 4. It overwhelms me that Jesus has placed his mission in my hands.
<p>5</p>	<p>I often feel <i>afraid</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know what the world does to truth-tellers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I understand that I need to testify to the truth I've found in Jesus Christ. • I understand that Jesus expects me to go into all the world and preach the gospel. 2. But there are times I don't want that commission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The resistance of the world, the resentment of the world frightens me. • I'm tempted to be timid when I want to be bold.
<p>6</p>	<p>I often feel <i>limited</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It's not just that the mission is difficult. 2. There are many parts of the mission I can't accomplish. I don't have the power or the capacity! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can't make people ready to receive the gospel. • I can't break hearts or create a hunger for truth. 3. Those capacities are beyond me. I don't have what it takes to do that. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yet I know that God's work in this world cannot be done without those things taking place. • I can speak up. But I can't make people believe!
<p>7</p>	<p>There are often times I feel <i>small</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It's not just the mission that's larger than me. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's the calling and lifestyle, the eternal perspective and the Christ-like living. • It's the nature of God and the way he is pursuing his purposes in our world. 2. I feel like a straw ... and God is a fire hydrant. 3. He is more than I can bear. He is more than I can contain.

Slides	Move Three:
8	<p>I don't think I'm the <i>only</i> follower of Jesus to experience these feelings.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As I go and speak at various events around the country, and when I talk about these five feelings, I see heads shaking all in every audience: "Yes, that's how I feel." 2. And I imagine that there are some in <i>this</i> audience who can identify with these feelings as well ... who empathize with my struggles. 3. The fact that others share my feelings of loneliness, inadequacy, fear, etc. doesn't surprise me because that's how disciples have <i>always</i> felt.
9	<p>In fact, this is how the Apostles felt—particularly the last night they were with Jesus.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That entire evening, Jesus forced his disciples to hear hard news. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus has to tell them—over and over again—"I am going away, and where I am going you cannot come." • "I am leaving; you must stay ... What I was doing, now you must do." • "What they hated in me, now they will hate in you." • "In spite of it all, you must fight the good fight ... you must carry on the mission." 2. Jesus pulled the rug out from under them that night with his difficult news.
10	<p>And in the shock of it all, they were feeling precisely what I was describing before.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They felt <i>abandoned</i> ... that Jesus was withdrawing his presence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They had become addicted to his presence. • They'd spent the last 3 ½ years walking and talking and watching him. • He was always there, just ahead of them on the road. • They loved being with him. They found hope in being with him. • And now he was going away.
11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. They felt so <i>inadequate</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disciple's never were very good disciples. • They didn't understand his teaching ... they couldn't muster much faith. • They argued and bickered and missed the point. • And now Jesus is leaving his mission to them and <i>they</i> have to carry on?
12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. And they are so <i>frightened</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They've seen how Jesus has been treated for speaking the truth. • They're about to see what people do when truth-tellers won't shut up. • Now Jesus tells them, "You are the truth-tellers. You are the message-bearers." • "And the world will hate you for that. They will persecute you and kill you."
13	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. And they certainly feel limited. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They know some things have to happen to make God's kingdom grow. • But they don't know what to do; they don't have what it takes to do it. • If Jesus couldn't change people's hard hearts, what hope did they have?
14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Most of all, they feel small. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were just tax collectors and fishermen, after all. • They weren't big enough to hold the mission, the message, the glory of God.

<p>Slides</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p>	<p>Move Four:</p> <p>It is these difficult feelings that consume Jesus on this final evening.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The fears and uncertainties, the loneliness and doubts of his closest companions. 2. Everything is about to change. And he wants their faith to survive the storm. <p>What our Lord chooses to give them ... the best he offers to prepare them for what is about to happen ... is a series of teachings about the Holy Spirit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is a Spirit coming, a Spirit named “The Paraclete.” 2. Jesus brings him up five times on this last evening, returning to him time and again. 3. Just when you think he’s moved on to something else, he comes back to the Spirit once more and says something new and hopeful about him. <p>The overriding theme Jesus presses home is that, when that Spirit comes, he is going to be for the Apostles all that Jesus has been for them ... and more!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When the Spirit comes, he will bring the presence of Jesus with him. (Jn 14:16ff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I know you’ll feel abandoned,” Jesus tells them. “I know you’ll miss having me walk and talk with you as I do now.” • “But when the Spirit comes, he will live with you and in you.” • “And you will discover that <i>he is me</i> in other form ... in forever form.” • “I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you as the Spirit—tangibly, personally, eternally.” 2. When the Spirit comes, he will equip disciples for the work of Jesus. (Jn 14: 26ff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I know you feel overwhelmed by the mission and worry about effectiveness.” • “But the Spirit will teach you everything you need to know to do my work.” • “He will remind you of everything I’ve said and done.” • “He’ll equip you. He’ll make you competent for ministry.” 3. When the Spirit comes, he will testify and give us courage to testify. (Jn 15:26-27) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I know you are afraid of the world. I know you will be tempted to keep quiet.” • “But the Spirit will come to testify himself to the world ... he will speak up.” • “And the Spirit will help you testify ... give you words and courage.” 4. When the Spirit comes, he will accomplish things mere disciples can’t do. (Jn 16:7ff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He’s going to convict the world of guilt. He’s going to break the world’s heart. • He’s going to harrow hearts in preparation for the seed of the gospel. 5. When the Spirit comes, he will enlarge our capacity. (Jn 16:12ff) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus has given them more than they could bear. Jesus has much more to say. • But the Spirit will enlarge disciples, mature disciples, make them capable of bearing more than before, make them worthy to hold the glory of God. • He turns thimbles into buckets into barrels so we can hold the fullness of God. <p>On this final night, Jesus gives his apostles the Spirit. The solution to their fear and inadequacy and insufficiency is the Spirit. The Spirit makes disciples sufficient.</p>
---	---

Move Five:**So the question is: Are these promises for us? Today?**

1. Would Jesus say the same thing to you and me? Would he make the same promises? Would he offer the same solution to us?
2. As we sit here with our doubts and fears and spiritual insecurities, with our timidity and insufficiency and longing for Jesus, what would Jesus tell *us*?

There are those who would say the promises spoken on this final night were for the Apostles and the Apostles alone.

1. These words are not for us. They were for the Twelve and only the Twelve.
2. The Apostles got the Holy Spirit indwelling and living and empowering.
3. But that's not what *we* get. We get:
 - A book
 - Sunday worship
 - The church
 - Hymns and sermons
 - Sacraments
 - The Divine Pattern
 - Command, example, and necessary inference
4. What we *don't* get is the Holy Spirit that was promised to them.

That, for too long, has been the message you and I have heard.

1. Though we share the same problems as the Apostles
 - though we struggle with the same feelings (loneliness and inadequacy, fear and limits, a spiritual smallness that cannot contain the fullness of God)
 - we have been told that Jesus has a different solution for us than he promised to them.
2. I can no longer believe that what we've been told is true.

God has something more in store for us.

1. I am thankful for this book [Bible]. I honor this book.
 - I am thankful for you ... for the church ... for the community of the faithful.
 - I'm grateful for the sacraments and for the great hymns and for times of worship.
2. But though these things are necessary, they are not *sufficient* for our personal walk of faith or for the life of our church.
 - Don't leave me with the message: "Read your Bible and exercise self control and you too can live a holy life." It hasn't worked for me. Has it worked for you?
 - Don't tell me that if I take the elements of the Supper in the right order on the right day with the right frequency, the skies will open and all will be right in my life.
 - Don't tell me that if only we sing the proper songs—without instruments or clapping or humming—that we will be empowered to live the kind of world-changing lives God commands us to live.

Slides	<p>Move Six:</p> <p>No! The same promises that were made to the first Apostles are made to us also!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The same <i>presence</i> made available to them is the presence we enjoy through the Spirit. 2. The same <i>competence</i> for ministry offered to them is the very competence for ministry, the same equipping for ministry offered to us by the Spirit. 3. The same <i>boldness</i> in testimony, the same courage in the face of hatred, is promised to us today. 4. The same <i>partnership</i> with God—working together to win the world as the Spirit prepares hearts to hear good news—that same partnership is available to us, through the Spirit. 5. The same deepening and <i>maturing</i> and broadening, the same increase of capacity so that disciples can bear more and understand more and be more, is the deepening done in us by God’s Spirit. <p>We need the same life-giving, indwelling Spirit that Jesus promised to the Twelve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ease our loneliness with the personal presence of Jesus. 2. To teach us everything we need to know to accomplish our mission. 3. To calm our fears and embolden our witness. 4. To do in this world a work that we cannot do ourselves alone. 5. To make us large enough to hold in these “feeble vessels” the glory of God. <p>Would you speak this paraphrase of John’s Paraclete Passages applied to ourselves.</p> <p>23 Me: Jesus continues to ask the Father to send his Spirit. Audience: And the Father continues to give the <i>Paraclete</i> to all who follow Jesus. Me: That Spirit is meant to be with us forever.</p> <p>24 Audience: The promise is that he will live with us and dwell in us for all our lives. Me: Because of this, we can experience Jesus living with us and dwelling in us—for this Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, one with him in purpose and person. Audience: The Spirit teaches us all things and reminds us of everything Jesus taught—he equips us for the mission.</p> <p>25 Me: The Spirit testifies about Jesus and gives us the courage to testify—he makes sure the world always hears the truth. Audience: The Spirit convicts the world of guilt, a necessary work we cannot do. Me: The Spirit guides us into all truth, taking the mind of Jesus and making it known to us.</p> <p>These are the promises, this is the Spirit, available to all who love Jesus and walk with him.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We were never meant to practice faith in his absence. 2. He has always been here—ready, willing, and able. 3. The time has come, once again, to invite him into our lives and into our churches.
--------	---