**Journey – Week 3 (Holy Spirit)**

**August 26-27**

Hey everyone! We have been in a series at Northview Students called Journey.You know, just like we need to take stuff with us when we are going on a journey or hike through the mountains, we need to take some things with us on our journey with God. During this series we are highlighting 4 relationships that you need in your life to help you on your journey with God. We’ve talked about how we all want to belong and then last week we discussed how crucial it is to be a part of a life group (the groups you’re sitting in right now!). Our THP asked the question, “Who am I going to surround myself with?” We need a community of people who will challenge, encourage, and support us on this journey to follow Jesus. That is why it’s so important that you are here at Northview Students as much as possible. This is a community that can help encourage you, help you make wise choices, and support you when you need help. Today, we are talking about the third relationship that you need to have in order to grow in your relationship with God. It is by far the most important relationship that you can have in your journey with God. Tonight we are talking about the Holy Spirit.

Who is the Holy Spirit? That’s kind of a big deal. If we are going to talk about how important your relationship with Him is. The Holy Spirit is a real person who came to reside within Jesus Christ's true followers after Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven. Jesus told His apostles in John 14:16 – *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."*

The Holy Spirit is not a vague, ghost like shadow, nor impersonal. He is a person equal in every way with God the Father and God the Son. He is considered to be the third member of the Godhead or the Trinity, which I know can be a very confusing thing to understand. Jesus said to His apostles in John 16:13…

*"When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."*

The Holy Spirit was given to live inside those who believe in Jesus, in order to produce God's character in his or her life. In a way that we cannot do on our own, the Holy Spirit will build into our lives love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Rather than trying to be loving, patient, kind, etc. God asks us to rely on Him to produce these qualities in our lives.

**Some of you may be like, “Ok…so what?” Alright, well here’s where the THP comes in for today. Here we go!**

**THP: The Holy Spirit helps you and changes you!**

**Let me show you a little illustration!**

**(Leaders Note: Illustration: Two regular latex balloons: Fill one with water about 1/10 so that there's a sizeable puddle inside the balloon; fill the other with only air) and a lighter. Experiment with this before trying it in a group. Ask for a volunteer to come up and sit in a chair facing the crowd. Blow up one of the balloons full of air and hold it over the person’s head. Ask the person or the audience what they think may happen when you hold a lighter to the bottom of the balloon. Then, while holding the balloon about a foot above the volunteer's head, click the lighter and put it under the fully inflated balloon. It should pop immediately, sometimes scaring them a little.**

**Then take out the balloon with the puddle of water in it. Most of the time, the kids can tell you're about to do the same thing with the lighter to this balloon, thinking that it's going to pop as well.) Be sure to have this one ready before you go up to do this, since there's probably not a faucet on stage. Ask the kids or the volunteer what they think will happen and tell them to make sure to sit still and not jump up or anything; it doesn't matter if they do, but this makes them think it's more fragile and there's a good chance they're going to get wet.**

**When you put the flame to the bottom of the balloon this time, nothing happens. JUST MAKE SURE YOU KEEP MOVING THE LIGHTER AROUND IN SMALL CIRCLES ON THE BOTTOM OF THE PUDDLE. When you’re finished, move on to the next section of the message.)**

The water in the balloon makes the balloon act differently; it changes the way the balloon responds to heat. When empty the balloon behaves the way it does because of the properties that make up what it's full of - nothing.

When we accept Christ, we are asking God - through the power of the Holy Spirit - to come in and make us more like Him. Yet sometimes, we still want to act like we used to. The Bible says the old self dies with Christ and we are made into new creations. Some people claim to have accepted Jesus as their Savior, yet they don't show any signs of being renewed. They are still fine with the fact that they gossip, they look down on others who are not that popular, they make no effort to love their neighbors or serve those around them. To say we are one with Christ, yet show no signs of a renewed life, is a lie. The Holy Spirit is the most important part of helping you to be a Christian and follow Christ!

Let’s go to Galatians 5 in the New Testament where we will sit for a little while and talk about how the Holy Spirit works in our lives.

Galatians 5:16-17, 24-25 **–** *“So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh* **(Leaders Note: Explain that the “flesh” means whatever we think is right/best or whatever we want to do).** *For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want…Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*

As soon as you put your faith and trust in Jesus you are filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is your guide, your conscience, your gut feeling, your still small voice that is helping you navigate through life. The Holy Spirit helps you by giving you desires that are from God and not from the world. There is a fight happening between what we want to do and the Holy Spirit. This fight is intense and it’s so important. Living by the desires of our sinful nature results in not running after what God thinks is best for us. I think if we were honest, all of us would say that we struggle with just doing things and making decisions based on what we want.

**Turn to your neighbor and tell them “I struggle with just doing what I want”**

As Christians, we need to do what this verse says: “keep in step with the Spirit.” We need to let go of what we want or what we think is best and run after what God wants for our life! You may be thinking, “Well, what does a person’s life look like when they live by the Spirit?”

We live by the Holy Spirit when we… show love to a lonely person… have joy in the midst of something sad… have patience when reacting to your parents or siblings… show kindness to someone who may not deserve it… do the right thing even when it’s difficult… are gentle with others, not harsh or looking down on someone… show self-control in the face of temptation

Guys, that’s why our **THP (The Holy Spirit helps you and changes you!)** is so important for today! If the Holy Spirit lives in you, it will change you and help you to be more like Jesus. Some of you sitting in this room have never made a decision to follow Jesus… you have never responded to THE Gospel. The Gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ, his life, how he lived it, his death, his resurrection and why that allows us to have a relationship with God.

**I want every head bowed and every eye closed. I’m going to close us in prayer and I want you to repeat it silently to yourself. *Dear Jesus, thank you for saving me. I know that I have done things that are wrong in my life. I can’t live this life on my own. I need You. Please forgive me of my sins. I commit to follow You for the rest of my life. I want your Holy Spirit to come and help me and change me. Help me to obey you! Thank you for loving me no matter what. I place my faith and trust in You and You alone. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.***

If you just said that prayer for the first time, this is your first step as a new follower of Christ. That is awesome! It is the best decision that you will ever make! We want to help you take your next steps! I want you to do three things for me if you made that decision…

-Tell someone (family, friends, leaders)

-Get a Bible (if you need one, let your leader know and we can get you one!)

-Get baptized during the next baptism service!

If you ever need someone to talk to, all of the leaders are available to listen to you and help you

in any way that we can. Love you guys! Let’s go to our group discussions!