

## Power Walk

**“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”**  
(Acts 19:2).

**Scripture:** Acts 19:1-12

**Song:** “Holy Spirit”

I have been a Christian for 40-plus years. In that time I’ve attended church and been actively involved in ministry. In addition, I’ve tried to be understanding, patient, and kind in my dealings with others. I certainly have tried to “walk the walk,” but as a believer in Christ Jesus, I know it’s only by God’s indwelling Spirit that I can serve effectively.

The apostle Paul had arrived in Ephesus, where he found some disciples who knew only the message of repentance John the Baptist had preached. They were sincere in their desire to do God’s will, but they were unaware that they needed to place their trust in Christ. When Paul learned that their understanding of salvation was incomplete, He taught them about the Lord. To the glory of God, they were saved and received the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

There is more to life in the church than just doing good works or knowing certain things about God. Real faith begins when we believe the gospel message and receive the indwelling Holy Spirit, who empowers us to live and serve effectively in God’s kingdom.

**Father,** I affirm today that I have placed my faith in Your Son, who has provided my salvation. Thank You for giving me Your indwelling Spirit to strengthen, lead, and guide me in service to You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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October 31–November 6. **Sarah Sanford** lives in Connecticut. She is a third-grade teacher. She enjoys spending time with friends and family and is an active member of her local church.

## Who Is Watching?

**The name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor** (Acts 19:17).

**Scripture:** Acts 19:13-20

**Song:** “Nobody”

He sat in the back row and rarely spoke, except to recite passages he had memorized from his favorite cartoon show. He was quiet, had trouble making friends, and needed a lot of encouragement. Two years later, at our fifth grade “graduation ceremony,” he received the Most Improved Student award. During his speech, he thanked me for helping him overcome his numerous obstacles. I cried as I realized that I had made a difference in his life, a difference that I was not fully aware of until that moment.

In today’s reading, there were some Jews who were trying to imitate the miracles that God was doing through the apostle Paul. Their efforts, however, had frightful consequences. As the people of Ephesus were watching both Paul and these impostors, they quickly discerned who was truly following Jesus and who was merely imitating. Perhaps Paul didn’t know the extent of his influence at the time, but the people took notice and word spread about what had happened. Acts 19:17 tells us that through these events, the name of the Lord was greatly honored. Paul’s life was a living testimony to God.

Throughout our lives we often have no idea who is watching or what impact our words and actions have. May the example we set to those around us glorify God in a mighty way and bring honor to His name.

**Father,** may I be an example of Your love and mercy to those I encounter today. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Why Am I Afraid?

**The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear?**  
(Psalm 27:1).

**Scripture:** Psalm 27

**Song:** “Fear Is a Liar”

I woke to the phone ringing. As I reached to answer it, I glanced at the clock—3:00 a.m. Fear gripped my heart. The voice I heard confirmed my fears and pierced my soul as my mother wailed, “Your dad has been taken to the ER. We’re awaiting test results, but the doctors are very concerned.” In my anguish, all I wanted were answers and hope.

Heart-wrenching times come to us all. They may cause us to lose hope, question our faith, and wonder how we can make it through one more day. In today’s passage, David speaks to fear. He had been anointed king in his teens, but he didn’t succeed to the throne until he was 30. Between his anointing and his ascending to rule, he was confronted with many obstacles, including repeated threats to his life. Despite all this, it was with confidence that he wrote, “Whom shall I fear?” (Psalm 27:1).

Fear is invasive and tries to hold on to our hearts and minds. But we can say no to our fear today. We can make David’s words our prayer and place our trust in the Lord. We can stand tall and let God fill our hearts and minds with His assurance and strength.

**Father,** when I encounter fear, I will call on You and rest in the knowledge that You are stronger than any obstacle that comes my way. Thank You for being my light and salvation. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Important Decisions

**[Mordecai] sent back this answer [to Queen Esther]: “. . . Who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”** (Esther 4:13-14).

**Scripture:** Esther 4:5-17

**Song:** “You Say”

At different times in our lives, we’re required to make important decisions. At this very moment you may be at such a crossroads—perhaps related to finances, a relationship, your health, your living situation, or your vocation. In these moments, we may feel intimidated, unsure, and alone.

Queen Esther was facing a decision of epic proportions. She had an opportunity to attempt protection for the Jewish nation, but it could cost her life. Mordecai, her uncle, challenged her with the words in today’s highlighted verse. The essence of his rhetorical question resonates still today for those of us who belong to the Lord. God has called each of us to step into His plan, to yield our God-given gifts to Him, and to prayerfully pursue opportunities to serve Him. Viewing each challenge through the lens of Mordecai’s question transforms our perspective—reminds us that we were made for this moment in time to bring glory to God’s name.

Today, when faced with what may seem frightening or overwhelming, recognize that God has placed you in this position for a reason, and He has a plan. Prayerfully move forward, trusting God with the outcome. God will make himself known to you and to others as you entrust yourself to Him.

**Father,** help us to be reminded today that, no matter what decisions we face, You have a plan and that we can entrust ourselves to You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## The Covenant of God

**He is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments** (Deuteronomy 7:9).

**Scripture:** Deuteronomy 7:1-11

**Song:** “The Blessing”

The day was finally here! I had my driver’s permit, and I was ready to hit the road. I climbed into the driver’s seat, put my hand on the steering wheel, and froze. As my dad got in, he sensed my panic. His presence and comforting words brought a peaceful assurance.

In today’s passage, the people of Israel were about to enter the long-awaited promised land. Moses delivered several messages to prepare the people for life in their new home. He urged them not to repeat their past mistakes. He exhorted them to know the one true God who can always be counted on. And he assured them of God’s eternal covenant of love with them. For those who would abide in that covenant, there would be no lack of protection, provision, or comfort.

Just as I could ease into my driving lesson with my dad at my side, we can move ahead with our lives knowing that our God has entered into a covenant of love with us through His Son (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). His love is faithful throughout all generations (Psalm 100:5), and His covenant is for all who will come to Him by grace through faith. May you rest in the promise of His love for you as you step out and face the challenges of the day!

**Father**, thank You for the assurance of Your presence with me by Your covenant of love. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## In My Father's House

[Jesus said,] “My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?” (John 14:2).

**Scripture:** John 14:1-14

**Song:** “Who You Say I Am”

Our lifetimes often seem to be filled with preparation. We prepare the meal for tonight and “prep” meals for the week. We prepare our homes for entertaining and holidays. Wedding preparations begin with “Will you marry me?” and are followed by engagement parties, bridal showers, and a plethora of other planning endeavors. We plan and prepare these things because we love the people in our lives and want to demonstrate that love.

In today’s passage, Jesus is speaking to His disciples following the Last Supper. He is about to leave the earth, and He knows it will be hard for the disciples to understand. He tells them clearly that He is leaving to prepare a place for them in His Father’s house. What comfort, what joy, what peace those words would later bring to their hearts! The good news is that Jesus’ assurance wasn’t just for those listening that moment. It’s for all who will trust Him!

As we move through the days and weeks ahead, attending to the myriad of holiday preparations we need to make, remember that Jesus is also making preparations. He is preparing a place for you and me—a place where we will live with Him for eternity. What a blessed assurance we have!

**Father,** thank You for Your promise of our eternal home with You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

## Love Like a Blanket

**He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:4-5).**

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:1-14

**Song:** “Love like This”

One morning Debbie’s granddaughter, Megan, climbed onto her lap. Megan put her hands on either side of her grandma’s face and said, “Grandma, I love you so much. I’m going to sew a blanket around you and me. Then I’ll wrap you around me, and I can have you forever.” What a beautiful picture of this little girl’s love for her grandmother! Out of the mouths of children come illustrations of amazing, unconditional love.

It reminds me of the love Christ has for us. The apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 1 that even before the creation of the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without blame in His eyes. We have been provided with every spiritual blessing and infinite grace. Pause for a moment, and let those words soak into your soul. How these truths should make our hearts sing with thanksgiving and joy!

Today you can be assured that God’s love envelops you like a blanket. No matter what may come, you are safely wrapped in the care of the God of the universe. You have been loved since before time began, and you will be loved for all eternity.

**Father**, I trust that Your loving arms surround me—not only for today, but for all eternity. Thank You! In Jesus’ name, amen.