



devonport
church of christ

TERM 3 2025



4 WEEKS OF SERMON-BASED SMALL GROUP STUDIES

Sermon based Small Group studies are designed to be explored with your Small Group after hearing the Sunday sermon. A time of prayer should accompany the session.

To access the sermon again, please head to the church website or YouTube channel.

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Series Description

In times of crisis and uncertainty, God calls His people to wake up, return to Him, and receive afresh the power of His Spirit. *The Day of the Lord: A Study of Joel* is a four-week small group journey through the ancient yet timely message of the prophet Joel. Together, we'll explore God's warnings, His passionate invitation to repentance, the promise of the Holy Spirit, and the final decisions every soul must make. This series invites us to be spiritually alert, deeply surrendered, and fully empowered for the days in which we live.

Book of Joel Context

The Book of Joel is one of the twelve Minor Prophets in the Old Testament, yet its message is powerful and far-reaching. Likely written between the 9th and 6th centuries BC (exact date debated), Joel addresses the people of Judah after a devastating locust plague and drought have ravaged the land — stripping it of crops, wine, and joy.

Joel uses this natural disaster as a picture of an even greater coming event: **the Day of the Lord** — a time of divine judgment and deliverance. His message is both a warning and a hope-filled call to repentance. Joel urges the people to **wake up spiritually, return to God with all their hearts**, and prepare for a future when God will **pour out His Spirit on all people**.

Significantly, Joel's prophecy transcends his own time. At **Pentecost in Acts 2**, the apostle Peter declares that Joel's promise of the Spirit's outpouring is fulfilled. Joel also speaks of a final day of judgment and decision, making his book both an urgent wake-up call and a hopeful promise for God's people today.

Week 1: Wake Up and Take Notice

Icebreaker Questions

1. What's a moment in your life when you realized you were ignoring something important?
2. What's a crisis you've seen (personal, national, or global) that made you pause and reflect on life?

In the Scriptures

Read Joel 1:1–20

1. What disaster has struck Judah in Joel 1, and how does Joel describe its effect on people, animals, and the land?
2. Why does Joel urge the people to “wake up” and “mourn” (v5, v13)? What is at stake if they don't?
3. Read Ephesians 5:14–17. How does this passage reinforce Joel's message about being alert to spiritual realities in difficult days?

Life Application Questions

1. Think of a time where God allowed you to feel uncomfortable, or of a season that felt barren instead of joyful. Looking back, could God have been trying to get your attention or grow you spiritually?
2. What “wake-up calls” might God be using in your life, family, or church right now? Following Joel’s advice, how should we respond to these?
3. How can we live as wise people who make the most of every opportunity, as Paul instructs in Ephesians 5?
4. What practical steps can you take this week to live more spiritually awake and alert to God’s voice?

Prayer Focus

Share prayer requests and praise points with your group. Ask that God would help us be spiritually alert to what He is doing when times are good as well as when times are hard.

Week 2: Return to Me

Icebreaker Questions

1. Share a time when you had to apologize deeply to someone. What did you learn?
2. What personal habit or practice helps you reconnect with God when you feel spiritually dry?

In the Scriptures

Read Joel 2:12-17

1. What specific invitation does God give His people in Joel 2:12–13? What does the phrase, “rend your heart and not your garments” (v13) mean?
2. What does Joel 2:13–17 reveal about God’s heart, His character and His desire for His people?
3. Read James 4:7–10. How do these verses align with Joel’s call for humble and wholehearted repentance?

Life Application Questions

1. Are there areas in your life where you sense God calling you to return to Him with all your heart?
2. What does genuine repentance look like for you personally and for the church today?
3. What hope and encouragement do you take away from Joel 2:12-14, when repentance is necessary?
4. How can we encourage each other in our group to live humbly before God, submitting ourselves to Him as James describes?

Prayer Focus

Share prayer requests and praise points with your group. Spend time praising God for His compassion and His call to draw near to Him.

Week 3: I Will Pour Out My Spirit

Icebreaker Questions

1. If you could receive one supernatural gift from God, what would it be and why?
2. Share a time when you sensed the Holy Spirit's guidance, comfort, or empowerment in your life.

In the Scriptures

Read Joel 2:28–32

1. What promise does God make to His people in Joel 2:28–29? Who will receive His Spirit?
2. Read Acts 2:14–21. How does Peter explain the fulfillment of this prophecy at Pentecost? (Read some of the earlier verses in Acts 2 for context.)
3. What signs accompany the outpouring of the Spirit in both Joel and Acts, and what is their significance?

Life Application Questions

1. Have you ever seen or experienced God's Spirit at work as described in Acts 2? What does it look like for you to live daily filled with the Holy Spirit's presence and power?
2. In Joel 2:28 God says, "I will pour out my Spirit..."
How can we create room in our lives and church to experience the ongoing work of the Spirit today, as Joel and Acts describe?
3. Are there areas where you've resisted the Holy Spirit's work or prompting? What might change if you fully welcomed Him? Does that idea excite or challenge you?

Prayer Points

Share prayer requests and praise points with your group. Invite Holy Spirit into every prayer point and every part of your coming week.

Week 4: The Valley of Decision

Icebreaker Questions

1. Have you ever faced a “make or break” decision? How did you navigate it?
2. Where have you shown compassion or mercy to someone in the last week or two? How did they respond?

In the Scriptures

Read Joel 3:1-16

1. What is the “Valley of Jehoshaphat” or “Valley of Decision” in Joel chapter 3, and what happens there?
2. How does God’s justice and authority over the nations come through in this passage?
3. Read Matthew 25:31-46. How does Jesus’ teaching parallel Joel’s prophecy about God’s final judgment and decision-making?

Life Application Questions

1. In what ways are we living in the “Valley of Decision” today, both personally and as a church?
2. How can we live with eternity in mind, aware of the choices and priorities that shape our future as Matthew 25 teaches?
3. Are you someone who naturally cares for “the least of these” from Matthew 25? What does that look like in your life?
4. What areas of your life might God be asking you to examine, in light of His justice, mercy, and coming kingdom?

Prayer Focus

Share prayer requests and praise points with your group. Pray that God would increase your level of compassion for “the least of these” this week.