SESSION 4
A Spirit-Empowered Testimony unto Death

Summary and Goal

God’s Holy Spirit empowers the followers of Christ to endure suffering for the sake of Christ. Whether that suffering takes the form of false accusations, death, or other variations, our faithful witness in the midst of suffering is a testimony to Jesus Christ, who came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets and to save us from our sin. When we suffer in faith, we are following in the footsteps of our Savior and bearing witness to His worth above all things, even our very lives.

Main Passages
Acts 6:8-15; 7:44-60

Session Outline
1. Testimony to Jesus in the Face of False Accusations (Acts 6:8-15)
2. Testimony to Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Old Testament (Acts 7:44-53)
3. Testimony to Jesus in a Christlike Death (Acts 7:54-60)

Theological Theme
The Spirit strengthens God’s people to testify to Jesus Christ in persecution and death.

Christ Connection
In his death as the first martyr, Stephen followed in the footsteps of His Savior. Both Jesus and Stephen were falsely accused and charged for blasphemy. Both Jesus and Stephen prayed for their executioners. Both Jesus and Stephen entrusted their spirits to God as they died. As a follower of Jesus Christ, Stephen reflected His Master, in life and in death.

Missional Application
God calls us to bear witness to the greatness of Jesus Christ, even when we are maligned or persecuted for our faith.

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Introduction
Lead off with the writer’s friend who asserted that a good song should prepare people for death and why he said this (leader p. 58; PSG p. 46).

How do you judge what counts as a “good song”?

How have certain songs comforted you during times of suffering?

Declare how the gospel reframes how we view life and death. Then summarize this session on enduring suffering for Christ (leader pp. 58-59; PSG p. 47).

1. Testimony to Jesus in the Face of False Accusations (Acts 6:8-15)
Read Acts 6:8-15. State that Stephen’s reputation for performing signs and wonders while testifying to who Jesus is attracted attention and arguments, which he won. The reason for this was twofold: first, he was on the side of the truth, and second, he was filled with the Holy Spirit (leader pp. 59-60; PSG pp. 47-48).

What comparisons do you see between Stephen and Jesus thus far?

Reference Pack Item 4: Suffering for Jesus both here and throughout this session to help connect Stephen’s suffering to Jesus’ suffering. Say that we shouldn’t be surprised if we experience similar opposition to the gospel as Stephen did, though with different accusations brought against us. Opposition to Christianity, as in Acts 6, typically thrives on exaggeration, distortion, and lies in an attempt to discredit the work of the gospel (leader p. 60; PSG p. 48).

Ask groups of 3-4 to work through the questions in the table in the PSG. After a few moments, reconvene and allow time for responses to be shared with the group (leader p. 61; PSG p. 49).
2. Testimony to Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Old Testament (Acts 7:44-53)

Read Acts 7:44-53. Give some background on how Stephen’s audience would have viewed the temple. Explain how Stephen lumped his audience in with those who had been unfaithful to God in Israel’s history with their killing of Jesus (leader pp. 61-62; PSG pp. 49-50).

How would you describe your experience of God dwelling within the church?

Invite your group to consider how we might be like the angry members of the Sanhedrin (leader pp. 62-63; PSG p. 50).

What is the relationship between the temple, the Holy Spirit, and the people of God?

What are some ways we might get in the way of Christians obeying the leading of the Spirit?

3. Testimony to Jesus in a Christlike Death (Acts 7:54-60)

Ask a volunteer to read Acts 7:54-60. Talk about the three things worth pausing on in this final scene (leader pp. 63-65; PSG pp. 51-53):

• First, notice that God was with Stephen in the midst of this trial.

• Second, we see that Stephen doesn’t let the fact that he’s right make him judgmental or arrogant.

• Third, as the crowd gathered stones to kill him, they piled their cloaks at the feet of a Jew named Saul. (Reference Pack Item 8: Paul’s Life as a precursor to the studies in Unit 2 regarding Paul’s conversion and missionary activities.)

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit sustaining your faith in the midst of trials?

How have you seen faithful suffering encourage believers? Open doors to sharing the gospel with unbelievers?

How is the good news of Jesus displayed in examples of radical forgiveness?

Conclusion

End by saying that we too can follow in the faithful steps of Christian martyrs, even of Jesus Himself, as we face ridicule and persecution for our faith in Christ (leader p. 65; PSG p. 53). Apply the truths of this session with “His Mission, Your Mission” (PSG p. 54).

Christ Connection: In his death as the first martyr, Stephen followed in the footsteps of His Savior. Both Jesus and Stephen were falsely accused and charged for blasphemy. Both Jesus and Stephen prayed for their executioners. Both Jesus and Stephen entrust their spirits to God as they died. As a follower of Jesus Christ, Stephen reflected His Master, in life and in death.

Missional Application: God calls us to bear witness to the greatness of Jesus Christ, even when we are maligned or persecuted for our faith.
Introduction

Years ago, a friend of mine was invited to take part in a panel discussion at a songwriter’s conference for Christian artists. During the question-and-answer portion of the panel, someone asked what they look for in a song: “How do you know a song is good?” Answers varied, ranging from “a good hook” to “meaningful and encouraging lyrics” to “something surprising.” But when it got to my friend, his answer stopped the room cold. While most on the panel were artists, he was a pastor, and his work in songwriting had primarily involved writing new melodies to old hymns, reinvigorating them for modern ears. His answer had a sort of puritan starkness to it: “I’m looking for songs that prepare people for their encounter with death.”

To him, what mattered most about a song wasn’t so much the musical or even poetic content, though of course, those elements have their place. Instead, his greatest concern was that the song clearly held out the gospel as the ultimate hope in both life and death for the Christian. A catchy tune doesn’t comfort someone at a hospital bedside or a garden graveside. If lyrics don’t address the ultimate issues of life, death, and resurrection, then they don’t offer sustaining power for those who are suffering.

How do you judge what counts as a “good song”?

How have certain songs comforted you during times of suffering?

The gospel declares that death is far from the end, and it reframes our lives and work within the promise that God is restoring all things through Christ Jesus. Whether in joy or suffering, thriving or languishing, our lives’ meaning and purpose is found in a larger and more glorious story being written by the Creator of the cosmos. And this knowledge empowers the Christian to encounter suffering, persecution, hardship, embarrassment, ridicule, and even death with an incredible boldness.

We can be confident because God is holding us in His story—we’re going to be all right. This knowledge comes as we hear the gospel story, and it’s secured in us as we walk in step with the Spirit, whose power sets our hearts on this ultimate hope and liberates us from fear and oppression.
Session Summary

In this session, we will see how God’s Holy Spirit empowers the followers of Christ to endure suffering for the sake of Christ. Whether that suffering takes the form of false accusations, death, or other variations, our faithful witness in the midst of suffering is a testimony to Jesus Christ, who came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets and to save us from our sin. When we suffer in faith, we are following in the footsteps of our Savior and bearing witness to His worth above all things, even our very lives.

1. Testimony to Jesus in the Face of False Accusations (Acts 6:8-15)

One of the earliest and most powerful stories of Christians staring down suffering and death comes from Acts 6–7, where Stephen, a disciple of Jesus, is persecuted for his testimony about Jesus. The story begins this way in Acts 6:8-15:

8 Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from some members of the Freedmen’s Synagogue, composed of both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, and they began to argue with Stephen. 10 But they were unable to stand up against his wisdom and the Spirit by whom he was speaking.

11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God.” 12 They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; so they came, seized him, and took him to the Sanhedrin. 13 They also presented false witnesses who said, “This man never stops speaking against this holy place and the law. 14 For we heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.” 15 And all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, gets a reputation for performing signs and wonders while testifying to who Jesus is amongst the Jews. As a result, he attracts the attention of men who want to come and argue with him, challenging him and hoping to stop his testimony. But because of his wisdom and because he’s filled with the Spirit of God, their efforts fall short.

This is a consistent theme in the Book of Acts: ordinary men like Stephen and Peter taking up debates with well-educated clergy and winning. Their unfair advantage in these debates is twofold. First, they’re on the side of the truth (which makes winning any debate much, much easier). And second, they’re filled with the Holy Spirit, which gives them supernatural wisdom in what to say and when.

Further Commentary

“Stephen’s teaching aroused keen opposition, and a full-dress debate was probably arranged. The exact subject of the debate is not stated; the messiahship of Jesus was no doubt the central issue, but Stephen expounded the implications of this messiahship more radically than his fellow-believers had hitherto done, with reference to the abiding validity of the law of Moses and especially of the temple order...The strength of his case was such that his opponents in the debate found themselves worsted. They accepted his premises (for like him they acknowledged the authority of Old Testament scripture), but they could not accept his conclusions, so scandalous and revolutionary did they appear.”

–F. F. Bruce
Often, Christians confronted by unbelieving friends or an unbelieving culture will find themselves looking for an advantage in books and arguments, and while there’s certainly value in that kind of research and study, what ultimately makes the difference is the presence and power of God the Holy Spirit. We might be better served in preparing for conflict with the world through prayer rather than relying on argumentation.

As the story goes on, Stephen is taken before the Sanhedrin, a body of religious leaders who oversaw the Jewish community. There, his opponents resort to low and dirty tactics, lying about what Stephen has been preaching and teaching.

What comparisons do you see between Stephen and Jesus thus far?

We shouldn’t be surprised if we experience something similar. As the world goes and as the culture around us becomes increasingly hostile to Christianity and a Christian worldview, we shouldn’t be surprised if we find ourselves the objects of greater and greater aggression, including dishonest tactics from people who’d like to see Christianity disappear from the public sphere.

In Stephen’s case, he was accused of speaking blasphemy against the temple and against the law found in the Old Testament. In our case, what’s more likely is that we’ll be accused of hateful speech, of bias and bigotry, simply because we hold to traditional beliefs about the value of human life, the meaning of marriage, and the origins of sexuality. Even if we never utter a judgmental word, we might find ourselves accused. Here in Acts 6, we see that this is the nature of opposition to Christianity. It thrives on exaggeration, distortion, and lies in an attempt to discredit the work of the gospel.

But Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, has yet to answer their accusations. He simply shines with the face of an angel. The Bible tells us he is blessed because he’s facing this kind of opposition: “You are blessed when they insult and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me” (Matt. 5:11). This is one more example of the wonderful, upside-down economy of God’s kingdom. It’s good to be opposed. It’s good to be attacked. In this position of weakness and brokenness, there is a unique kind of strength. Surely that accounts for Stephen’s angelic appearance. He was blessed, and he was filled with the Spirit.
How have you seen false accusations being leveled against Christians? | How have you seen such opposition become a blessing?
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What role does the Holy Spirit play in our response to opposition? | What is our responsibility to prepare for the reality of opposition?

### 2. Testimony to Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Old Testament (Acts 7:44-53)

Eventually, Stephen is called on to speak, and when he does throughout Acts 7, he delivers a stark rebuke with a clear testimony to Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, which they’ve accused him of blaspheming.

> “Our ancestors had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as he who spoke to Moses commanded him to make it according to the pattern he had seen. Our ancestors in turn received it and with Joshua brought it in when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before them, until the days of David. He found favor in God’s sight and asked that he might provide a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. It was Solomon, rather, who built him a house, but the Most High does not dwell in sanctuaries made with hands, as the prophet says:

> 49 Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool.
> What sort of house will you build for me? says the Lord, or what will be my resting place?
> 50 Did not my hand make all these things?
> 51 “You stiff-necked people with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always resisting the Holy Spirit. As your ancestors did, you do also.
> 52 Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They even killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become. You received the law under the direction of angels and yet have not kept it.”

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### Further Commentary

“Under the direction of angels”...[T]he point is not that it was wrong to construct the tabernacle or temple but that ‘they should never have been regarded as in any literal sense God’s home.’

–Darrell L. Bock

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### Further Commentary

“Stephen...called on Old Testament history to assert that God’s ultimate goal had been the coming of Christ and the creation of the church. He implied that this gospel was universal in that God never had been limited to one land or building. He also saw within this history the continual pattern of official persecution of God’s messengers from Moses to the prophets, to Christ, and to Christ’s disciples. This approach...called into question the exclusive claim that Jews had placed on being the people of God. If God’s purpose was to produce a universal gospel through Christ, then the Jews were tools to accomplish this, rather than being the only people of God. Thus, Stephen began to set the stage for the extension of the gospel to non-Jewish people.”

–Timothy N. Boyd, *Biblical Illustrator*
Stephen’s sermon might sound a little bit odd to our ears. It’s important to keep two things in mind when we read it so we understand how powerful its message is and why the reaction against it was so strong.

First, to Stephen’s Jewish audience, there was nothing on earth as sacred as the temple. The temple in Jerusalem was the high point of all of Jewish history. Their exclusive claim as Jews was that the one true God dwelled with Israel, first in a portable sanctuary and then in a permanent temple in Jerusalem. That temple was magnificent and was a symbol of God’s blessing and their national pride.

Second, Israel was unfaithful to their covenant with God, and they turned to the gods and idols of their neighbors. Eventually, they were conquered, the temple was destroyed, and the nation was crushed. For generations, the temple was rubble. Its reconstruction came with a religious revival, and the second temple’s presence in Jerusalem was seen as a sign that God would be coming back to Israel and they would one day be free from the tyranny of the nations.

When Stephen spoke about where God dwells, he and his audience had this whole history in mind. God had never been confined to these dwelling places, which no one in Israel disputed, but Stephen went further and told them that they were missing the point of what was happening in Israel right then. God had indeed come back to Israel, but He wasn’t manifesting Himself in the temple; He was there in flesh and blood. The Righteous One had come, and they had killed Him.

By saying this, not only did Stephen confront them as those who killed Jesus, he lumped them in with all of those who had been unfaithful to God in Israel’s history. Just as the unfaithful members of Israel had killed the prophets, their first-century sons had killed the One to whom the prophets had pointed. They killed Jesus—God incarnate—and furthermore, now they were persecuting His church, where God the Holy Spirit lives in the hearts and praises of the followers of Christ.

How would you describe your experience of God dwelling within the church?

Often when we read the Scriptures, we like to imagine ourselves on the side of the “good guys.” But in a story like this, it’s wise to stop and ask ourselves how we might be like the angry members of the Sanhedrin.

Sixteen years ago, I helped to start a church initially made up of a ragtag group of teenagers and twenty-somethings, most of whom were single, under-employed, and unsure of what they were doing with their lives. Lots of people rolled their eyes at the thought of “a bunch of kids” starting a church, and some pastors even tried to stand in our way through various efforts. These days, I must confess that I’ve made the same mistake that others made with us—I’ve stood in the way of people whom God had called to plant a church.
It’s been humbling to realize how I can be just like the Sanhedrin and all of those who stood in the way of the early church. We all come to accept a certain set of attitudes about how God might be at work and what we expect Him to do. When something comes along that defies those expectations, we tend to get stiff-necked, sticking to our way of seeing and thinking rather than learning from what God is doing. And when we do that, we miss out.

The Book of Acts is, in many ways, a big party. God has come to dwell with Israel again, and He’s confirming it through the many miracles and wonders happening all over the region. The Sanhedrin’s stubborn refusal to see it because they weren’t expecting it to look so lowly and a-political means they not only miss out on the party but they miss out on the presence of God.

What is the relationship between the temple, the Holy Spirit, and the people of God?

What are some ways we might get in the way of Christians obeying the leading of the Spirit?

3. Testimony to Jesus in a Christlike Death (Acts 7:54-60)

In Acts 7:54-60, we see the response to Stephen was swift and terrible:

54 When they heard these things, they were enraged and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven. He saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 He said, “Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!” 57 They yelled at the top of their voices, covered their ears, and together rushed against him. 58 They dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. And the witnesses laid their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning Stephen, he called out: “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” 60 He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” And after saying this, he died.

There are three things worth pausing on in this final scene in Stephen’s life, all of which illustrate the way his death was a testimony to Jesus.

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Further Commentary

“[W]hy is the Son of Man revealed to Stephen as standing rather than sitting? This posture has been variously interpreted. It could symbolize Jesus’ readiness to welcome Stephen as a persecuted prophet, soon to enter his presence. Perhaps the vision serves as ‘assurance of Jesus’ supportive witness in the heavenly court’ (cf. Luke 12:8). Perhaps it implies a personal coming to the martyr at the time of his death, as at the end he will come to all. At this particular point in the narrative, however, it is more likely to be a way of asserting the readiness of the Son of Man to act in judgment against those who deny him...a specific warning to those who have rejected Jesus and his witnesses in the past and who are about to reject him again by killing Stephen.”

–David G. Peterson
First, notice that God was with Stephen in the midst of this trial. We often hear stories of Christians enduring beatings, torture, and the threat of death while refusing to deny their faith, and we might wonder how someone would be able to sustain their faith under such pressure. It would be very tempting simply to deny our faith to save our skins. Wouldn’t God forgive us if we did?

Stephen felt that immense pressure but didn’t cave, and we’re told why—he was full of the Holy Spirit. As the pressure of persecution got more and more intense, so did God’s sustaining provision—Stephen looked into heaven and saw God’s glory with Jesus standing at God’s right hand. Stephen couldn’t deny Jesus’ lordship in that moment because he saw it so clearly, perhaps more clearly than he ever had seen it before. So he cried out in joy and in worship, even as the mob raged against him.

A principle that we see throughout the Scriptures is at work here: God supplies all we need to obey Him and follow Him. In a moment of acute suffering and persecution, He gave the power and vision to sustain Stephen. God provides what we need as we need it, and when suffering and trials come into our lives, we can be confident that God will supply the strength, support, and encouragement we need in order to remain faithful through them.

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit sustaining your faith in the midst of trials?

Second, we see that Stephen doesn’t let the fact that he’s right make him judgmental or arrogant.

That might sound strange, given how harsh his rebukes were in the previous verses, but as Stephen dies, he cries out “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” Like Jesus, he cried out for mercy for his persecutors. His actions here were motivated not by pride—an eagerness to be right and to prove his rightness—but by love. He wanted them to believe in Jesus, not simply to believe him. Preaching, evangelizing, and contending for the faith must come from a heart of love and compassion for the lost, not from an ego that simply wants to win.

Third, as the crowd gathered stones to kill him, they piled their cloaks at the feet of a Jew named Saul.

This Saul would become one of the church’s most violent persecutors. But then he became one of the church’s leading church planters and theologians, whom we know as the apostle Paul. His presence at this moment reminds us that we never quite know what will result from our ministries and our words.

Many would point to Stephen’s death and call it a failure. No converts, no confessions that Jesus is Lord; only increased animosity toward the followers of Jesus. But of course, this was far from the end of Stephen’s influence and story.
The fact that this story is included in the Book of Acts tells us that someone witnessed it, someone knew it mattered, someone was impacted by these words. Very likely, that someone was Paul himself, who partnered with Luke (the author of Acts) on many missionary ventures later in the book. It seems like Stephen’s prayer for mercy for his persecutors found a most unlikely answer in the conversion of the ringleader for his execution. Spirit-filled Christians find themselves doing many strange and wonderful things. Perhaps nothing is so strange and powerful as the fearlessness with which they can face suffering and death. A supernatural strength sustains them, and it’s just as powerful when they face a mob as when they face cancer or Ebola. Empowered by the Spirit and looking with hope to Jesus, we have a confidence that overshadows the power of death (1 Cor. 15:51-58). Stephen died at the hands of persecutors, but he died with great confidence because Jesus is alive, the grave is defeated, and in His world, we have nothing to fear.

How have you seen faithful suffering encourage believers? Open doors to sharing the gospel with unbelievers?

How is the good news of Jesus displayed in examples of radical forgiveness?

Conclusion

The history of the church is rich with stories of Christians who, emboldened by the Spirit, faced suffering and death while testifying to Jesus. Missionaries have died while going to share the gospel with hostile people. Countless martyrs the world over and through ages past have faced torture and death for their faith in the risen Savior.

In almost every case, these tragedies don’t end in the silencing of the gospel or the stemming of its spread; in fact, it’s quite the opposite. The persecution of the church and the martyring of its people is like the pruning of a plant. It grows stronger, richer, and more deeply rooted as a result. And that pattern can be traced all the way back to the first Christians, beginning with Stephen.

As we face ridicule and persecution for our faith, we are following in the faithful steps of these martyrs, just as they were following in the trailblazing steps of the Savior. He gave Himself for us—may it be our joy to give ourselves for the glory of His name.

CHRIST CONNECTION: In his death as the first martyr, Stephen followed in the footsteps of His Savior. Both Jesus and Stephen were falsely accused and charged for blasphemy. Both Jesus and Stephen prayed for their executioners. Both Jesus and Stephen entrusted their spirits to God as they died. As a follower of Jesus Christ, Stephen reflected His Master, in life and in death.

99 Essential Christian Doctrines

94. Life After Death

The Bible teaches that when a Christian dies, he or she immediately is with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8; Luke 23:43). This is what some people call an intermediate state, given that the final state for believers takes place at the future resurrection (Rev. 6:10-11). For those who are not in Christ, life after death results in being separated from Christ in a state of suffering, even though future judgment remains (Luke 16:19-31).

Voices from the Church

“God is heaven-bent on inviting me to share in his joy, peace, and power. But there’s a catch. God only shares his joy on his terms, and those terms call for us, in some measure, to suffer as his beloved Son did while on earth.”

–Joni Eareckson Tada
Additional Resources

A Spirit-Empowered Testimony unto Death

Get expert insights on weekly studies through Ministry Grid at MinistryGrid.com/web/TheGospelProject. Grow with other group leaders at the Group Ministry blog at LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry.

Study Material

- “Mission and Suffering”—Chapter 15 by Zane Pratt from *Theology and Practice of Mission*, edited by Bruce Riley Ashford
- “Stephen’s Martyrdom”—Sermon by Charles Spurgeon; find a link to this sermon manuscript at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including “Stephen: Christian Martyr,” can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator. Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

Sermon Podcast

Kent Hughes: “Standing Tall”

Find a link to this at GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources

Tip of the Week

Staying in Touch During the Holidays

We all get busy during the holiday season surrounding Christmas and New Year. Parties, family gatherings, and various events tend to pull our attention away. As a result, many people with needs get overlooked unintentionally. Make sure your group is aware of the importance of staying in touch with each other and holding each other accountable for paying attention to the needs of all the individuals and families associated with your group.
Unit: 1

Mike Cosper is the founder and director of Harbor Media, where he develops podcasts that help Christians navigate a post-Christian world. Previously he served for 16 years as one of the founding pastors of Sojourn Community Church in Louisville, Kentucky, where he oversaw Sojourn Music—a collective of musicians writing songs for the local church. He is the author of four books, including (most recently) *Recapturing the Wonder*.

Katie Orr (special session), creator of the FOCUSed15 Bible study method, is passionate about equipping busy women to experience God daily. She is a teacher, speaker, podcaster, and prolific writer for blogs, magazines, and Sunday School curriculum. A former Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ) staff member and mother to three young children, she and pastor-husband, Chris, are part of the church revitalization movement.

Unit: 2

Jason C Dukes (sessions 7-9) has been a church starter, a church renewer, and tries to be a disciple-maker. He’s currently the Multiplication Minister with Brentwood Baptist Church near Nashville, Tennessee. He has authored books and periodically blogs, which you can learn more about at LiveSent.com. He and his wife, Jen, are thankful for their seven children.

Daniel Im (sessions 10-12) serves as the Director of Church Multiplication for NewChurches.com at LifeWay Christian Resources. He is also a teaching pastor at The Fellowship in Nashville, Tennessee, and author of *No Silver Bullets: Five Small Shifts That Will Transform Your Ministry* and *Planting Missional Churches*. He is married to Christina, and they have three children, Victoria, Adelyn, and Makarios.