



Sermon Discussion Questions  
03-29-26

Rev. Jessica Stafford (LOX); Rev. Trevor Johnston (LW); Pastor Efrain Silva (ESP)

Sermon Series: I Believe  
Week 6: Spirit, Church, Saints

1. ICE BREAKER: In the message, we began by talking about the *Little House on the Prairie* book series. What was your favorite book or series of books as a child? Why?
2. Read our Scripture for this week, Mark 2:1-12:

<sup>1</sup>A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. <sup>2</sup>They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. <sup>3</sup>Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup>Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>6</sup>Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, <sup>7</sup>"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>8</sup>Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? <sup>9</sup>Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? <sup>10</sup>But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the man, <sup>11</sup>"I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." <sup>12</sup>He

*got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"*

What do you notice as you read this Scripture today? What word or phrase is standing out to you? What would you have been thinking if you were a witness to this event?

3. In the sermon, the main idea was: *"We do not believe alone."* This is why we have the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Church and the communion of saints.

Why do you think it is so common for people to try to live out their faith independently? What are some risks or consequences of trying to follow Jesus on your own?

4. The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, guides us into truth, comforts, encourages, and gives us the power to live the Christian life. John described the Holy Spirit as *parakletos*, an Advocate, or helper, one who comes alongside us.

In what ways have you experienced the Holy Spirit guiding, convicting, or strengthening you? If you haven't, what questions or hesitations do you have about the Holy Spirit?

5. The Creed says, "I believe in the holy catholic Church." The sermon explained that this refers to the global, historical Church—not a building, but a people.

How has your experience with church shaped your view of it? What makes it difficult for people today to stay connected to the church? Why do you think God chose the church as His "plan A" for reaching the world?

6. Our faith is not meant to be a solo sport. It is less like a single kayak or a paddleboard, and more like a galley ship - full of rowers rowing in the same direction.

Do you currently feel like you are rowing strongly, struggling but still engaged, or needing to "set your oar down" for a season? What would it look like for others to support you—or for you to support someone else?

7. The "communion of saints" reminds us that our faith is deeply connected to other believers—past and present. Read Hebrews 12:1-2a, *"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."*

Who are some people that have strengthened your faith? Do you currently have intentional Christian relationships (friends, mentors, small group)? Why or why not?

8. The bottom line of the message was *"We do not believe alone."* One of the tactics of the enemy is to isolate people from their community, making them easier to "pick off."

What does it mean to you that you do not believe alone? How does this statement challenge the way you currently think about or practice your faith? What is one specific way you can begin to live this out more intentionally this week?

9. PRACTICE: This whole series will be spent in the Apostles' Creed. For your weekly faith practice with your group, we encourage you to end by saying the Apostles' Creed together. Perhaps you will memorize it by the end of Lent! Try to really think about the words and their meaning as you say them out loud.

*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead.*

*The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there, He shall come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*