

Keep in Step

A Family Devotion

Galatians 5:25 · John 16:12–15

Memory Verse

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.”

— *Galatians 5:25*

This Week’s Story

Have you ever played Follow the Leader?

One person walks in front, and everyone else has to do exactly what the leader does — stop when they stop, turn when they turn, tiptoe when they tiptoe. If you run ahead, you miss the turns. If you sit down and quit, you get left behind. The only way to play is to stay *with* the leader. In step.

The Bible says the Holy Spirit is like that leader.

The Spirit is always moving — toward kindness, toward truth, toward love, toward the people who need us most. And God’s invitation to every one of us — kids and grown-ups alike — is simple: *keep in step*. Pay attention. Stay close. Don’t run so far ahead that you miss what the Spirit is doing. Don’t sit down out of fear and let the moment pass.

This week is a big week for our country — America turns 250 years old! There will be fireworks and parades and cookouts and celebrations. And that’s wonderful. But here’s something to remember in the middle of all the fun:

The Spirit of God doesn’t belong to any country. It moves across every border, loves every person, and calls people everywhere to follow. Our biggest belonging isn’t to a nation — it’s to God.

So this week, amid the flags and fireworks, practice the quiet question: *Where is the Spirit moving right now — and am I keeping up?*

Talk About It

For Little Ones (Ages 4–6):

- Have you ever played Follow the Leader? What did the leader do?
 - Who do you think the Holy Spirit is? (Let them wonder out loud!)
 - What is one kind thing you could do this week to follow the Spirit’s lead?
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For Kids (Ages 7–11):

- What does it mean to “keep in step” with someone? Can you think of an example from your own life?
 - Jesus said the Spirit leads us into truth — not all at once, but a little at a time. Why do you think God works that way?
 - Have you ever felt like God was nudging you to do something? What happened?
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For Teens:

- Paul says we should “keep in step” with the Spirit — not run ahead, not lag behind. Which are you more tempted to do? Why?
 - This week we celebrate 250 years of the United States. What does it mean that our deepest loyalty belongs to God rather than any country? Does that change how you think about patriotism?
 - What would it look like to “check in” with the Spirit once a day this week? What might get in the way?
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For the Whole Family:

- Where have you seen the Spirit moving in our family lately — in a kindness, a hard conversation, a moment of courage?
- Is there something our family keeps running ahead of God on — or something we’ve been sitting down and avoiding?

Try This! — Family Activity

Footstep Prayer Walk

You'll need: Sidewalk chalk (or paper and pencils if staying inside), and your feet!

1. Outside with chalk (or inside on paper), trace each family member's footprint.
2. Inside each footprint, write or draw one way you want to "keep in step" with the Spirit this week — an act of kindness, a hard thing you've been avoiding, someone you want to encourage.
3. Pray over each footprint together — asking the Spirit to lead that person in the week ahead.
4. Optional: Take a photo of all your footprints together and keep it somewhere visible this week as a reminder.

Bonus: During the July 4th celebrations, take a walk together as a family and practice noticing — where do you see kindness, beauty, or love? Where might the Spirit be at work even in the middle of the festivities?

Our Family Prayer

(Simple enough to memorize!)

Holy Spirit, lead the way.

Help us notice. Help us stay.

Not ahead and not behind —

keep us close and keep us kind.

Amen.