

THE SPIRIT ENABLES

+ **SESSION IN A SENTENCE:**

The disciples obeyed Jesus and waited for the Holy Spirit to come as promised, an arrival that was marked by great power from God.

+ **BACKGROUND PASSAGE:**

Acts 2

+ **SETTING:**

For ten days following Christ's ascension to heaven, the disciples had been in Jerusalem. They were waiting for the Father's promise of the Holy Spirit, which would empower them to be Christ's witnesses to the whole world. During this time, they dedicated themselves to prayer and prepared for the next phase of their ministry by filling Judas's apostolic vacancy with Matthias. Finally, the day arrived, and they were about to experience the power of the Spirit in their lives.

DAY 1

READ:

Acts 2:1-4

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 2:1

NOTES

As we go about our daily lives, it can be easy to become consumed by our own agendas and forget that God desires to use us for His purposes. However, like the disciples who obeyed Jesus by waiting together in Acts 2:1, we can position ourselves to be used by God by cultivating a lifestyle of obedience and availability.

One practical way to do this is to start each day with a devotional study that focuses on surrendering our plans and priorities to God. We can ask Him to show us where He wants to use us that day and to give us the strength and wisdom to carry out His will. This can help us stay attuned to the prompting of the Holy Spirit throughout the day and make ourselves available for whatever opportunities God may bring our way.

In addition to surrendering our plans, we can also prioritize spending time in God's presence through prayer and Bible study. This can help us stay grounded in His truth and draw strength from His Word as we go about our daily tasks.

As we make ourselves available to God in this way, we may be surprised at how He chooses to use us. Whether it's a word of encouragement to a coworker, a kind gesture to a stranger, or a bold proclamation of the gospel, we can trust that God will equip us for whatever task He has for us. And in doing so, we can experience the joy and fulfillment that comes from living a life fully surrendered to His purposes.

How will you develop a daily practice of being available to be used by God?

DAY 2

READ:

Ephesians 5:15-21

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Ephesians 5:18-21

NOTES

Ephesians 5:15-21 encourages us to be filled with the Spirit. We are called to be wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. We are to understand what the Lord's will is and not be foolish, but instead be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.

Being filled with the Spirit means allowing Him to control our lives. It means surrendering our will to His and being open to His leading. When we are filled with the Spirit, we are empowered to live for Christ to be His witnesses and to do His work in the world.

So how can we be filled with the Spirit? First, we need to ask God to fill us. We need to pray and ask Him to fill us with His Spirit and to give us the strength and courage we need to do His will. Second, we need to spend time in God's Word, allowing His truth to permeate our hearts and minds. Third, we need to worship and praise God, lifting our voices in adoration and thanksgiving. Lastly, we need to walk according to the Spirit as we interact with others, showing and telling of God's love and grace.

As we do these things, we will be filled with the Spirit and empowered to live for Christ. We will be transformed by His power and ready to do His will in the world. May we each seek to be filled with the Spirit today and every day, so that we can be the people God has called us to be.

Based on the list in Ephesians 5, what changes could you make in your daily life to cultivate a greater sense of being filled with the Spirit?

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"We have seen that the Bible reveals that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a thing. We call Him *He* rather than *It*. At the same time, the Bible reveals also that the Holy Spirit is a *divine* person. He is God."¹

—R. C. Sproul (1939–2017)

DAY 3

READ:

Acts 2:1-4

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 2:1-4

NOTES



KEY DOCTRINE #63: PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible not only affirms the full divinity of the Holy Spirit but also His personhood. Many people have mistakenly believed that the Spirit is a force or power, not a person. However, Scripture affirms His personhood by acknowledging that He is treated as a person (Acts 5:3; 7:51; Hebrews 10:29), acts like a person (John 14:26, 15:26; Romans 8:14), has attributes of a person (1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Ephesians 4:30), and acts in personal ways (Isaiah 63:10; Acts 13:2). In addition to these, the Bible also affirms that Christians relate to Him personally (Acts 5:3-4; 7:51).

Acts 2:1-4 tells of an incredible day in the life of the church when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost. There was a rushing wind, tongues of fire, and the disciples began to speak in other languages they had not previously known. It was a powerful moment that kick-started the early church's growth and spread the good news of Jesus Christ to people of all nations and languages.

But as we reflect on this passage, it is important to remember that while the day of Pentecost was a significant moment in history, this doesn't mean that every day since has been without the Holy Spirit's presence and power. In fact, as believers in Christ, we have the opportunity to be filled with the Spirit and used by God every day.

So how can we do this? Well, as Romans 8:5 tells us, we can live according to the Spirit by setting our minds on the things of the Spirit. This means making intentional choices to pursue a life that is aligned with God's will and staying connected to Him through prayer, reading His Word, and fellowship with other believers. It also means being open to the ways in which God may want to use us each day. We may not have tongues of fire resting on our heads, but we can be confident that the Holy Spirit is working in and through us as we love and serve others, share the good news of Jesus, and seek to live a life that honors God.

So let's remember that while not every day may be the day of Pentecost, every day is an opportunity to be filled with the Spirit and used by God. May we live each day with an open heart and a willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit, trusting that He will guide us and empower us to do His will.

What are some ways you have seen the Holy Spirit at work in your life this past week?

DAY 4

READ:

Acts 2:5-11

FOCAL PASSAGE:

Acts 2:7-11

NOTES

Do you feel intimidated or nervous when speaking to new or different people? This is a common human response, especially when faced with unfamiliar social situations or when interacting with people who have different cultural backgrounds, beliefs, or values.

However, Christ has sent the Holy Spirit to empower His disciples to share the gospel with all people everywhere. In Acts 1:8, we read that the Spirit equips us to be effective witnesses of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth.

The Holy Spirit works in us to give us boldness, wisdom, and discernment to share the gospel with anyone, regardless of their background. We are called to be ambassadors of Christ, and the Holy Spirit equips us to fulfill that role.

Although sharing the gospel can be intimidating, especially when we encounter people who are hostile or indifferent to the message, we can take comfort in the fact that the Holy Spirit empowers us to overcome our fears and share the good news of Jesus Christ with confidence and conviction. We can trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to open hearts and minds to the truth of the gospel.

Therefore, don't let anxiety prevent you from being a witness for Christ. Be strong in faith and trust the Holy Spirit to empower you to share the gospel wherever and with whomever God leads you to. This is why Christ sent the Holy Spirit, and it is what He asks us to do as His disciples.

How can you trust in the Holy Spirit to overcome your fears and share the gospel with confidence, even in unfamiliar or diverse social situations?

DAY 5

READ:

Acts 2:5-13; 13:1-52

FOCAL PASSAGES:

Acts 2:13; 13:44-52

NOTES

Some things in life are within our responsibility, and some things are not. The same applies to sharing the gospel—certain aspects are within our control and others are not. As disciples of Christ who seek to grow in His Word and be led by the Holy Spirit, we are responsible for lovingly and clearly presenting the good news of Christ's salvation to others. However, their response to the message is not our responsibility.

In Acts 2, the disciples, filled with the Holy Spirit, faced individuals who denied the power of God and mocked them. Similarly, in Acts 13, as Paul and his companions shared the gospel, some people responded with saving faith while others became jealous and angry at the missionaries. Eventually, Paul had to leave town because of their hostility (Acts 13:44-52). However, he left with a clear conscience because he had effectively shared the gospel, even though not everyone responded positively.

We too should not be afraid to share the gospel with others, overcoming the fear of rejection or hostility. The Holy Spirit has been given to us that we may be Christ's witnesses, and we must seek to follow His leading and be willing to serve and share the gospel with others, knowing that their response is not our responsibility.

How should the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives help us to not fear rejection or hostility when sharing the gospel with others?

GROUP

NOTES

POINT 1: Jesus's disciples obey Christ (Acts 2:1).

At Pentecost, God's perfect timing reminded the disciples of their commission to go to the harvest of all nations.

? How can knowing that God's timing is always perfect encourage us in our walk of faith?

The disciples obeyed Jesus in staying together in one place, revealing their faith in Christ's promises.

? How does obedience to God's Word affect our lives?

POINT 2: Jesus's disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:2-5).

Christ's disciples experienced a complete and permanent presence of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to obey Jesus's commission to reach the nations.

? Jesus told the disciples that they would experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. How is the arrival of the Holy Spirit like baptism?

KEY DOCTRINE #63: PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are opposite sides of the same coin."²

—A. W. Tozer (1897–1963)

these, the Bible also affirms that Christians relate to Him personally (Acts 5:3-4; 7:51).

? Why is it important that Christ's disciples be filled with the Holy Spirit?

POINT 3: Jesus's disciples reveal God's works (Acts 2:6-13).

The Holy Spirit empowers Jesus's disciples to witness to people from all backgrounds and cultures.

? How can you develop more relationships with those of various cultures to share the gospel?

The Holy Spirit empowers Jesus's disciples to share the gospel with people, no matter the response.

? From Day 5: How should the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives help us to not fear rejection or hostility when sharing the gospel with others?

MY RESPONSE

Because the Holy Spirit changes us to be more like Christ each day, we rely on the Holy Spirit as we share the gospel, call people to repentance and faith, and live in community.

- **HEAD:** How does knowing God is trustworthy help you obey His commands for His glory?
- **HEART:** In what areas of your life can you confess your lack of obedience in carrying the gospel to the nations?
- **HANDS:** What opportunities has God given you to share the gospel this week?



Scan this QR code to access this session's Scripture passages.

VOICES from CHURCH HISTORY

"Should we not press it home upon our consciences that the sole object of our conversion was not the salvation of our own souls, but that we might become co-workers with our Lord and Master in the conversion of the world?"³

—Lottie Moon (1840–1912)