

Questions for Small Groups | June 9, 2019

Anyone leading the group this week may find additional Small Group Leader Resources at <http://www.wcchapel.org/resources-for-small-group-leaders/>

Explore the Holy Spirit — The Gift of the Holy Spirit

Focus Passage: Acts 1:8; 2:1–13

Context: Acts 1:1–11; 2:1–21

Other Passages Referenced: Gen 1:1–2; Exodus 3:2; Deuteronomy 16:9–12; 2 Chronicles 5:13–14; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Matthew 5:14; Luke 3:16; John 8:12; 20:19–22; Acts 1:4–5; 2:37–38, 41; Ephesians 4:14–15;

Sermon Recap: The Big Idea of the sermon is, “The Holy Spirit exceeds all of our expectations.” Pentecost was a celebration of God’s provision of grain and a reminder of God’s covenants with Abraham and Moses—covenants of providing a Savior and making a people for His own possession. On the specific Day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit was given to live inside of believers, we see an even greater provision than grain and the previous covenants. We see the fulfillment of God’s promise made 600 years earlier in Ezekiel 36:26–27 to put a new spirit and a new heart within His people. The Holy Spirit creates the new community of the Church ... makes us like burning bushes—the light of the world ... empowers mission. Acts 1:8 is not just a command to go but a promise that we will arrive. The Church will be Jesus’ witnesses to the ends of the earth.

Background:

- **Pentecost** was the second of the three great harvest festivals of Judaism, coming between Passover and Tabernacles.¹ It is also known as the Feast of Weeks since it is the 50th day after seven weeks from Passover. It was a celebration of the wheat harvest in the Old Testament (Exod. 23:16; 34:22; Lev. 23:15–21; Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:9–12). By the time of Jesus, the festival was associated with the renewal of the covenant made with Noah and then with Moses (*Jub.* 6:17–18), and in second-century Judaism, it was regarded as the day when the law was given at Sinai.²
- **Sound of wind and Visual of Fire** —The association of the coming of the Spirit with a noise like a powerful wind and with tongues like fire is no doubt to be understood primarily in the light of the prophecy by John the Baptist (Luke 3:16), but at a secondary level the imagery used is reminiscent of the descriptions of theophanies in the OT. God’s coming is associated with mighty storms consisting of wind, thunder, and lightning (2 Sam. 22:16; Ps. 18:7–15; Ezek. 13:13).³
- **Geography & Nations** mentioned — “The list has long intrigued scholars. It begins in what is present-day Iran (Parthia) and then proceeds across the Middle East (Mesopotamia), then southward to Judea, then north to central Turkey (Cappadocia), to northern Turkey (Pontus), eastward to the Aegean coast of Turkey (Asia), inland to Phrygia, then south to the Mediterranean coast of Turkey (Pamphylia) ...The catalog covers North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Cyrenaica), then north and west all the way to Rome, then southeast to the Mediterranean island of Crete, and finally much farther east and southward to Arabia.”⁴

¹ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, vol. 26, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 97.

² I. Howard Marshall, “*Acts*,” in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, UK: Baker Academic; Apollos, 2007), 531.

³ Ibid.

⁴ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, vol. 26, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 102.

Hook: *Pick a Question to Help Ignite Conversation*

Can you briefly tell us about a recent experience that exceeded your expectations?

Look—Observing and Interpreting:

READ: Acts 1:8 & 2:1–13

1. What are the audio and visual manifestations of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:1–13?
2. What descriptive words are used to describe the state of the people when they saw and heard these manifestations of the Spirit?
3. What questions do the people ask?
4. What was the message about that people were hearing in their own languages?
5. What accusation did mockers make against those speaking in the various tongues of the nations represented?

Illustrations:

Illustrations and quotes can be found on the “Sermon Slides” link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org

Took: *Applying the message to our lives.*

1. Have you had or observed an experience attributed to the Holy Spirit that left you bewildered, amazed, astonished, or perplexed?
2. Do you have questions about the Holy Spirit that have not been addressed in this sermon series?
3. What do you think about the claim that the Holy Spirit in you makes every believer like a burning bush or in Jesus’ words, “the light of the world”?
4. What do you see as your next step in being a “mobile disciple” of Jesus?

Prayer: Please spend some time praying for one another.