

May 07, 2023



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon
Barry Hosford

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester
Deacon: C M Hester

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The church, and our shared work in the world isn't defined by what we can do. We're entirely dependent on what only the Spirit can do

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:

God, I've exhausted myself by believing that I must make things happen. Holy Spirit, come and help me

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance

(Acts 2:4 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", May 28, 2023)

Series: Jesus Calls Us

UNIT 3: The Birth of the Church

NEXT WEEK

Jumping for Joy
(Acts 3:1-11)

The Day of Pentecost Acts 2:1-8, 14-24, 37-40

Lesson Background and Introduction

The first believers faced great pressure to revert back to legalistic Judaism. They needed to listen to the apostles, who had been with Christ and had learned the truth of redemption by grace through faith in Him. If they did not hold to this truth, the church would collapse and fail. In order to encourage one another in the truth, the first believers also remained steadfast in Christian fellowship. But for Christian fellowship to take place, there must be a deep love of Christ and a desire both to know Him better and to share our joy with other believers. The lesson text elaborates on what it means to persevere in fellowship. The church of Christ is made up of a diverse group of people. For unity to prevail among people of such different personalities and traits, there must be a conscious effort to keep Christ at the forefront. Without Christ, the church would have no reason to exist. As we concentrate on Christ through sound teaching, remembering His saving work, and prayer, we will grow in godliness and usefulness in His kingdom.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

The descent of the Holy Spirit "like a dove" on Jesus at his baptism might suggest a picture of peace and acceptance (Luke 3:22). But the work of the Holy Spirit was not always a pleasant experience for those affected, since Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Spirit and fire" (3:16). Imageries of fire in the Bible are associated with the destruction of God's enemies (Ezekiel 22:17-22, 31; Hebrews 10:26-27; 2 Peter 3:7; etc.) and the testing or purification of his people (Zechariah 13:8-9; 1 Corinthians 3:12-13; 1 Peter 1:6-7). The depiction in Luke 3:16 speaks of the power to do both, especially in light of the "winnowing fork" imagery of Luke 3:17. The most important observance on Israel's calendar was Passover. It was a time to remember deliverance from slavery in Egypt, when God's angel of death "passed over" Israelite households that had been marked with the blood of a lamb (Exodus 12). Within a few weeks of leaving Egypt, the people of Israel arrived at Mount Sinai (Exodus 16:1; 31:18; etc.). There they entered into a covenant with God, agreeing to be his people while the Lord promised to be their God. For centuries thereafter, the Old Testament covenant people celebrated their deliverance on Passover and followed it 50 days later by celebrating God's giving of the law. Pentecost occurs seven weeks after the Passover Sabbath plus one day, which equals 50 days; it was one of the three great pilgrimage festivals (Deuteronomy 16:9, 16). This celebration is also called "the Festival of Harvest," "the Festival of Weeks," and the "day of the firstfruits" (Exodus 23:16a; 34:22a; Numbers 28:26). The Jews in the time of Jesus had a marvelous temple in Jerusalem (see Mark 13:1). The city's economy centered on that structure, as the periodic influx of visiting Jews brought in money (compare John 2:14-15). We might say that the Jerusalem of the time had a tourist economy, and the height of the tourist season was the period from Passover to Pentecost. Many visitors would stay for the entire 50-day period between those two observances. Acts 2 presents something fundamental: the Holy Spirit has come, and He has come with power. The long waiting period is over. We are in the last days, the era of Holy Spirit-empowered ministry. There is power in the gospel. When this message is preached faithfully, God's Spirit is active in the reception of it. This is true whether preaching from a pulpit or sharing with a friend. Whenever the gospel is communicated, God's Spirit is working with us to convict the hearer of his truth and bring that person to faith in Christ. How do you live out this reality?

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

The Presence of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)

The Spirit's presence brings unity (1)

- Unity to follow the word of God (2 Chr 30:12)
- Unity to always fear God (Jer 32:38-39)
- Unity to follow Jesus and glorify God (Rom 15:5-6)
- Unity to show others the love of God (John 17:23)
- Unity through Jesus' destruction of the barrier (Ephes. 2:14)
- Unity that seals our relationship to God (Acts 1:5)

The Spirit's presence brings power (2)

- Power that is mightier than physical forces (Zech. 4:6)
- Power that is given by God (2 Tim. 1:7)
- Power to rebuke sin (Micah 3:8)
- Power to do worldly work (Exodus 31:3)
- Power to express prayers (Romans 8:26)
- Power that can do more than asked or imagined (Ephes. 3:20)

The Spirit's presence brings gifts (3-4)

- Gifts that are irrevocable (Rom 11:29)
- Gifts that are different (Rom 12:6-8)
- Gifts that are from the same Spirit (1 Cor 12:4)
- Gifts that are for the common good (1 Cor 12:7)
- Gifts that are to serve others (1 Pet 4:10)

The Power of the Spirit (Acts 2:5-8)

The Spirit's power is for believers (5)

- Power of hope (Rom 15:13)
- Power to rest faith on (1 Cor 2:5)
- Because the kingdom of God is a matter of power (1 Cor 4:20)
- Power to strengthen the inner being (Eph 3:16)
- Because God only gives the Spirit of power (2 Tim 1:7)

The Spirit's power is sometimes confusing to some and understanding to others (6-8)

- Confusing because things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned (1 Cor 2:14)
- Confusing because of dull minds (2 Cor 3:14-16)
- Confusing because of lack of knowledge (Acts 17:17-20)
- Confusing to those who are perishing (1 Cor 1:18)
- Confusing because of background and previous teachings (1 Cor 1:23-25)
- Understandable because of being guided into the truth by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15)
- Understandable because of being given God's wisdom and revelation of mysteries (Eph 1:6-9)
- Understandable because Jesus gives understanding (1 John 5:20)

The Message of the Spirit (Acts 2:14-24)

Message must be heard and accepted (14-15)

- Heard because it is the actual Word of God (1 Thess 2:13)
- Heard, retained and fruitful (Luke 8:11-15)
- Heard because it is a blessing (Luke 11:28)
- Heard so that the heart will not be hardened (Heb 3:7-8)
- Heard because God wants us to truly hear and understand (Matt 13:9)

Message of fulfilled prophecy (16-21)

- Jesus fulfilled the purpose and goal of the gospel (1 Cor 15:3-5)
- Jesus fulfilled all Scripture references to the Messiah (Luke 4:20-22)
- Jesus fulfilled all the Scriptures (Luke 18:31)
- Jesus fulfilled God's Word (Luke 22:37)
- Jesus fulfilled all promises from God (Acts 13:32-33)

Message proclaiming the gospel (22-24)

- The gospel proclaimed because it is the good news of God (Luke 2:10-11)
- The gospel proclaimed because it proclaims that Jesus died for sins (1 Cor 15:2-4)
- The gospel proclaimed because it is the blessing of Jesus (Rom 15:29)
- The gospel proclaimed because it is given with power (1 Thess 1:4-6)

The Promise of the Spirit (Acts 2:37-40)

The Spirit is promised to those who are believers in God (37-38)

- Promised to believers to prove they belong to Jesus (Rom 8:9)
- Promised to believers to prove their faith (2 Cor 13:5)
- Promised to believers through faith (Gal 3:22)

The promise of salvation (39-40)

- Salvation through the gospel (Rom 1:16)
- Salvation through repentance (2 Cor 7:10)
- Salvation sealed by the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13)
- Salvation through sanctification by the Holy Spirit (2 Thess 2:13)
- Salvation through the renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5)