



## WEEKLY STUDY

### Week 6

The Church that was born on Pentecost and written about in the book of Acts is given life by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is holy (set apart and called for a purpose) and Catholic (universal—beyond one or two local communities). The Apostle's Creed affirms this belief because by ourselves, we might forget the true scope and purpose of the church. As you study and pray throughout this week, may your understanding of the power and reach of the church expand.

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this prayer from Pastor Angela or your own prayer.

*O God, my Almighty Father, I believe in you. I believe in you, Jesus. I believe you are God's only son. I believe you were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. I believe you suffered, were crucified, dead, and were buried. I believe you descended to the dead and rose again on the third day. I believe you ascended into heaven and are seated at the Father's right hand. I believe you will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in you, Holy Spirit. And in the Holy Catholic Church. I believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief. Amen.*

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## DAILY STUDY

### MONDAY: ACTS 2.2-4

*Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

- We pick up where we left off last week. The Spirit of God that appeared as wind and flames breathed life into the first church. Wherever you gather for worship, to serve, and grow as a disciple of Jesus—that community is connected to this event in Acts 2. Do you ever consider how

large of a movement you are a part of when you take part in a church? What does that perspective mean for you?

- *Holy Spirit, your movement in this world gives life to the church. Thank you for this gathering of believers who help me to follow Jesus.*

## **TUESDAY: ACTS 2.36-37**

*“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”*

<sup>37</sup> *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”*

- I mentioned this question in this week’s message. Regardless of the kind of mood you are in or the kind of day you are having, God’s Word can speak to you and call you to something new. Make a practice of asking, “What shall we do?” in response to your study of God’s Word. What is your response to the proclamation that Jesus is Lord and Savior over your life?
- *Jesus, you are Lord and Messiah. Come and rule over my life today and save me.*

## **WEDNESDAY: ACTS 2.38-41**

*Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

<sup>40</sup> *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”<sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

- Repent and receive the Holy Spirit. This is more than a formula. This is the path to life! And when you turn away from a life of pursuing just your own disordered desires, and instead live a Spirit-filled life, generations to follow will see the promise as well. How many will be saved in the wake of your decision to repent, be baptized, and to follow Jesus?
- *God, I offer my life to you. Lead me by your Spirit to live within the community of believers you created at Pentecost.*

## **THURSDAY: ACTS 2.42, 47b**

*They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

- This seems like such a simple pattern of living. Is it possible today for people who live our busy kind of lives? Can you focus on the teaching of the church, fellowship with others, eating and praying together? What barriers prevent you from embracing this? The fruit of that kind of life is others being saved!
- *God, give me a Kingdom perspective as I go about this day. Reveal to me the path to study and true community.*

## FRIDAY: MATTHEW 16.18-20

*I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.<sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”<sup>20</sup> Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.*

- Jesus is giving Peter a glimpse of church life. It is more than a weekly gathering or membership organization. The very gates of hell will not be able to keep the church from breaking in with the light of Good News! Most of us desire to be a part of something that matters—something that is changing the world. Have you witnessed the church storming into dark places?
- *Jesus, thank you for your church. Forgive me for making it anything other than the physical representation of your love and power in this world.*

## SATURDAY: REVELATION 19.6-8

*Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:*

*“Hallelujah!*

*For our Lord God Almighty reigns.*

*Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!*

*For the wedding of the Lamb has come,  
and his bride has made herself ready.*

*Fine linen, bright and clean,  
was given her to wear.”*

- This image of heaven that was given to John offers a taste of the gathering of the saints in worship of Jesus. This “multitude” is made up of worshippers from all over and from every generation. Who from your life do you picture in this multitude? Who are the saints from your story?
- *God, this image brings comfort and perspective for those of us who wait on your coming Kingdom. Come Lord Jesus!*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

In this week's message, I said,

“We cling to the belief in the communion of the saints. As followers of Jesus, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. When we worship, we worship with the 3000 who came to believe on the day of Pentecost. We worship with underground churches in China, and Ethiopia, and in Southeast Asia—all over the world! We worship with all the saints who have gone before us like Paul and Zadie. (Providence Church members who passed away last week)

Because the church is holy and universal. The church is empowered by the Holy Spirit. The church is bigger than our plans for her. The church is dynamic and alive. The church of Jesus Christ is how God is continuing to change the world—to announce the Kingdom of God.

I believe in the church!”

- Make an inventory of your cloud of witnesses. Who are the people who have been instrumental in your faith? Who are the people, living or dead, that have shown you how to follow Jesus?