



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK 3

Sunday was Pentecost Sunday. For followers of Jesus, the day marks the arrival of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised his disciples. It came upon them like wind and fire. It sparked the very movement that we are a part of today.

Peace of Christ,
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Pastor of Discipleship

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 visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: ACTS 2.1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

- After a short period of waiting (which may not have felt short) the disciples experienced something they had never experienced before. I would imagine they had pictures in their minds or maybe even discussed what the Holy Spirit might feel like. But when it arrived, it created a scene like none of them could have imagined. Their senses were taken over, and suddenly they were empowered by the Spirit to speak in ways they never had before. **Have you ever felt like the Spirit of God took over for you in a particular situation? If so, did other people notice? If not, have you ever asked for the Holy Spirit to come?**
- *Spirit of God, thank you for showing up at the just the right time for the apostles at Pentecost. It feels like the right time for you to show up again. I wait upon you! Amen.*

TUESDAY: ACTS 2.5-12

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?"⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

- The Festival of Pentecost attracted people from all over the known world to gather in Jerusalem. It may have seemed like a coincidence to the disciples as they waited on the Holy Spirit to come and empower them to do what Jesus had instructed before his ascension into heaven. But a collection of people representing the nations was exactly the right spot for the Holy Spirit to come and prepare the way for the witness of the disciples. Jesus had told them to go to Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. The ends of the earth were represented at the Pentecost! **How is the timing of the Holy Spirit's arrival a sign and reminder of Jesus' mission for the church?**
- *God, only you can gather together a collection of people from all over the world you have created. Only you can draw us unto yourself in such a powerful way. May the world respond to your invitation! Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: ACTS 2.14-21

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say."¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.*

¹⁸ *Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.*

¹⁹ *I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

²⁰ *The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

²¹ *And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*

- Peter explains what is happening, the ancient prophecy was coming true in their time. Young people were prophesying and seeing visions. Old men were still dreaming dreams. People who had their whole lives ahead of them, and those who were nearing the end of life were all swept up in the Good News that Peter was preaching to them. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will

be saved. **What if you were called and empowered to dream and envision for others the future that Jesus makes possible? How do you think you'd respond? How would you hope to respond?**

- *Come Holy Spirit, fall afresh on me and wake me up to new things you are doing to bring salvation to the world. Amen.*

THURSDAY: ACTS 2.22-24

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

- Jesus was known to the Israelites primarily because of his miracles, signs, and wonders. Ultimately, his resurrection was and is the clearest sign that Jesus was who he said he was—the Son of God, the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. All the miracles that preceded the resurrection left the leaders feeling threatened. **Sometimes our worst moments are opportunities for God to give us an even bigger sign of His love for us. Can you think of a time when that has been true for you or others around you?**
- *God, open me up to the wonder of your miraculous intervention in this otherwise stuck world. Amen.*

FRIDAY: ACTS 2.36-41

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

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

³⁸ *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.³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

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

- It is difficult to be collectively convicted of a terrible act of evil. It’s easier in our individualistic society to say, “Well, my hand wasn’t on the hammer that nailed him to the cross.” Repentance requires a humble-enough heart to be able to admit our own culpability in the brokenness of this world. Repentance allows us to respond and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Is there anything you are holding on to that keeps you from the full embrace of the Holy Spirit?**
- *Jesus, I surrender to you every bit of self righteousness so that I might be able to take on your righteousness. Amen.*

SATURDAY: ACTS 2.42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common.⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- The immediate impact of the outpouring of the Spirit and the repentance of those who heard the Good News was a new community that operated in a different way. Following Jesus invites us into a different way. It might look a little different in different contexts, but there is teaching, fellowship, sharing a meal, and prayer. There is a sense of responsibility to the whole community that leads others to share and support one another. **Have you experienced this kind of community? What elements of the early church would be helpful for the church today to focus on more closely?**
- *God, I thank you for the outpouring of your Spirit that changes us, makes us better, makes us more useable for you and your Kingdom. Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read the Pentecost story (Acts 1.-47) as a group and take turns reading passages. Notice how the different voices make the story come alive. Consider that this story is the story of your church getting its start.

- What does Pentecost mean for your church?
- What does Pentecost mean for your family?
- What does Pentecost mean for your life?
- How can you live a life that operates with the power of the Spirit and incorporates the key elements of the early church?