THE SPIRIT WHO EMPOWERS | SESSION 1

THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Acts 2:1-4,22-47

The Point: God calls us to rely on the Holy Spirit as we share the gospel.

HIS STORY

The Holy Spirit Indwelt the Believers at Pentecost

In the Spirit's coming, Jesus' promise to always be with us makes sense, as does the prophet Joel's promise one day God would pour out His Spirit on all people (Joel 2:28). When we respond to the gospel with faith in Jesus, we receive this extraordinary gift—the promised Holy Spirit. The Spirit brings us the invitation and the power to participate in God's redeeming work, as well as the assurance that we are never alone in this work. The promise of Immanuel, "God with us," was fulfilled in Jesus (Matt 1:23), who took on flesh and walked among us, and His Holy Spirit is with us and in us, even to the end of the age.

- **How would you have responded if you had seen what happened at Pentecost?**

- **In what way does the Spirit enabling the believers that day give you confidence to do what God has called you to do?**

The Holy Spirit Empowers the Spread of the Gospel

It didn't take long after the Holy Spirit's arrival for Him to reveal His great passion and purpose. The sound of the rushing wind caught the attention of a great crowd of Jews in Jerusalem who were there for the festival of Pentecost. These Jews from every nation gathered together to investigate and heard the good news of Jesus—each in their own language, as the Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in different languages. Filled with the Spirit, the Apostle Peter responded to the crowd's confusion as he stood before them and preached this sermon.

- **When has love led you to speak out?**

The Holy Spirit Builds the Community of Faith

This kind of abundant, intense, and dedicated community life should be seen for the miracle it is. This kind of living doesn't just happen. When you force people to live in small, shared spaces, usually the opposite occurs. Closeness leads to conflicts, and conflicts lead to strengthened borders. In Acts 2, this newly formed community pressed into one another's lives and the boundaries around possessions and wealth disappeared. As believers were moved by the Spirit, their interests shifted from self to the good of the community of faith.

Essential Doctrines

Deity of the Holy Spirit: *The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, possessing the fullness of deity like the Father and Son. His deity can be seen in the fact that He is eternal (Heb. 9:14), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7-8), the Creator and Giver of life (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30; John 3:5-7), and directly identified with the Triune God (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).*

Leader Note: *Because some content from the Personal Study Guide will not be available on the One Sheet, make sure to adapt the session based on how you use the material with your group.*

YOUR STORY

- **How should the revelation of God as Trinity shape the way we pray? The way we worship?**
- **What are some obstacles that might prevent people from experiencing true community? Why do you think we sometimes struggle with overcoming these obstacles?**
- **What are some ways we can contribute to this Spirit-filled community of faith?**
- **How was the gospel of Jesus communicated in Peter's sermon? What implications should it have for how we share the gospel?**

YOUR MISSION

Head

Too often we act as if the gospel story ends with Jesus' resurrection and ascension. If that were the case, then the church exists only to retell the story. However, we need to see that the Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost not only adds to the gospel story, but also completes the revelation of God as Trinity and serves as our direct line to both the Father and the Son.

- **What thoughts or expectations do you have about believers being filled with the Holy Spirit?**
- **How would you explain the importance of the Spirit's presence in believers' lives?**

Heart

In Ephesians 5:18-19, Paul described being filled with the Spirit in the language of worship: speaking/singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Likewise, the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit as they faced resistance to the gospel (Acts 13:50-52). The Spirit fills us as we find our joy in God—not in our circumstances and our successes. This filling from the Spirit will also overflow with words of love and praise for our Savior to those who need to hear about what He has done for us.

- **Read Ephesians 5:18-19 and Acts 13:50-52. What stands out most to you about these passages?**
- **How should the indwelling of the Spirit change the way believers live?**

Hands

This account in Acts 2 challenges the way we thing about sharing the gospel. Many people struggle to speak up, know when to share their faith, or start conversations about Jesus. Different techniques are often suggested for making those conversations easier. In fact, many churches offer whole classes on the subject, and that's not a bad thing at all. But at its most basic level, maybe the easiest way to become bold in sharing the gospel is by seeking to be filled with the Spirit.

- **What struggles might keep Christians from sharing the gospel with others?**
- **How does being filled with the Holy Spirit overcome these struggles and empower our evangelism?**