

Pentecost part 1. Acts 2:1-13

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Book of Acts | September 15, 2026 | Acts 2:1-13

Prepared from the spoken message and lightly edited for readability. Scripture quotations and spoken phrasing are preserved as delivered.

Hey guys, thanks so much for listening to today's teaching from The Grove at Champion Forest. We pray this message helps you grow in your love for God and His Word.

Grab your Bibles and open to Acts chapter 2. We are in week three of a five-week mini-series in the book of Acts, looking at the first two chapters and seeing how the Christian life is a continuation of the life of Jesus in us today.

The title for tonight is Pentecost, Part 1. We'll look at the first 13 verses tonight, and then we'll look at the response through Peter's sermon next week in Pentecost, Part 2.

But before we get there, as you're finding Acts chapter 2 in your Bible near the very end, after the Gospels, I want you to think about the greatest gift you ever got on your birthday or Christmas. Hands down, this is it right here. This is what I was asking for. I used it. This was the coolest thing. I gained popularity. Whatever it was for you, that was the number one gift of all time.

You got it in your mind? No? You need time to think about it? Christmas, birthday?

For me, growing up, I'm the youngest of three, the only boy, with two older sisters. I have a brother who is in heaven. He didn't make it through childbirth. His name's Kyle. I cannot wait to meet him one day.

As the youngest of three and the only boy, the gifts I opened were a whole lot different from what my sisters would open. We're all three years apart, and so I would bug them every Christmas. My middle sister, Haley, and I fought every year, to the point of actually fighting, because I always wanted to open just one gift on Christmas Eve.

Does anyone do that? You get to open maybe your stocking or one gift? Yeah? Okay, my wife's family does that, but it's matching pajamas. I'm like, "Y'all can leave that on your side of the family," you know?

But anyway, I never won. My sister always preserved tradition.

I remember one year in particular when I was so excited about what I hoped I was going to see in the morning when I went downstairs that I couldn't sleep that night. I peeked over our railing, saw it, and thought, "Oh man, I'm not sleeping tonight."

When I looked down, what I saw was Rock Band 4, the entire kit. Come on, look at that. I had the drum kit, the guitar, the microphone. I had everything but the band to fill it, so in some ways I just did all of it.

But I looked down, and I was out of my mind. I looked this up. It's \$550 to buy today. That's crazy to me. This is one of the greatest gifts I ever got, and I used it like crazy.

Tonight we're in Acts chapter 2. I'll tell you why that's important. We're going to talk about the Day of Pentecost over the next two weeks.

Here's what I want to do: I want to pray, and then we're going to get into the Scriptures and teach God's Word.

Lord Jesus, King of glory, Father, I have no good in me apart from You. But tonight we exalt Your Word. It's above me. It's above what I want to say. It's above what I think is right to say. It's Your Word. Lead it into our hearts, Holy Spirit. May we leave changed by Your grace. In Jesus' name, amen.

Follow along with me. Here we go, Acts chapter 2:

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

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

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"

And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

Cretans and Arabians - we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

— Acts 2:1-13

This is the setting of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2.

God's Gifts to His People

As a reminder, because it's been a couple of weeks, Acts is the second volume of Luke's writing. Luke wrote volume number one, the Gospel according to Luke. Volume number two, a continuation of that, is the book of Acts.

Luke, a Gentile physician, was an eyewitness to the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He became a disciple, a first-century follower of the Lord Jesus, and he left, as a gift to us and the church then and forever, two incredible, amazing, eternal gifts: the Gospel of Jesus and the book of Acts, which tells us what happens after Jesus' final instructions and what would come in the church.

As a Christian, there are two gifts that are the most important for you to know about today. It's amazing to think about the fact that God gives us gifts.

The first one Luke writes about in the Gospel. The greatest gift anyone can ever be given and receive is salvation. Salvation is only through Jesus Christ. That's what the Gospels are all about.

The good news is that you were dead in your sin. You brought no value, no merit to the table. But God, being rich in mercy, appeared in the loving kindness of Jesus Christ, and He came to forgive you of your sin by taking your place and bearing your punishment. That's the good news.

Christian, that should make something happen in your heart. I don't care if you've heard it ten thousand times. It should do something to you that you're so loved that God gave His only Son.

That's the good news of the gospel. You were dead in your sin. You were on your way to death and hell, but God rescued you through Jesus Christ. It is God's greatest gift to mankind.

Secondly, as a Christian, the book of Acts continues this theme of God giving gifts. The Gospel is salvation through Jesus Christ. When we receive - not earn; say it with me: receive. One, two, three: receive - when we receive the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, God gives us the Holy Spirit, who is His presence with us to help us follow Jesus and make Him known.

As a Christian, you get a birthday present. You get the Holy Spirit. God comes to live inside of you.

God loves you so much that He, through Jesus Christ, came to bring salvation through the Gospel. That's what it's all about. But His love doesn't stop there. Jesus said, "I'm not leaving you as orphans. Instead, I will come and make My home with you."

God loves you that much more that He gave you the Holy Spirit to live in you. Incredible. What a gift we have.

The Trinity and the Story of Scripture

Because there is so much distortion as to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, I want to remind us what we talked about two weeks ago, and that is the Trinity.

The Christian faith is centered on the Trinity. God is one being in three distinct persons. This is really helpful. It's a mystery. If you need to understand it completely and rationalize it, you won't. That's not faith. This is who God has revealed Himself to be through the Scriptures.

We're about to look at the Nicene Creed, which the early church established in A.D. 325. The church came together and said, "Man, there is a ton of false teaching. People are distorting the gospel of Jesus. Some say He's just a man. Some say He wasn't God at all. Some say He was God until the cross. Some say the Holy

Spirit is like this feeling. We've got to correct this false teaching and reestablish the truth."

That's why they made the Nicene Creed. I'm going to read it in a minute, and it'll tell us what we believe and why.

Here's the deal: Jesus is God. He is fully God and fully man. The Holy Spirit is God. He's not a lesser version of God. He's not like a temporary Band-Aid on the Christian life. No, He is co-equal and co-eternal. God the Father is God.

Now, the Father is not the Son, and the Father is not the Spirit. The Spirit is not the Son. That's the Trinity: God in one being, three distinct persons. Are you tracking with me here? Okay, we'll keep going, and I'll show you why that matters.

Here it is, the Nicene Creed. For almost - well, not really. I guess so - 2,000 years, this is what the church has been saying and believing:

"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, co-eternal, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made."

Jesus is not the first created being. Jesus was before anything was. He is God.

"Through Him all things were made," Colossians 1.

"For us and for our salvation, He came down from heaven. He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and He was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered, and He was buried. The third day He rose again."

Hallelujah. According to what? The Scriptures, God's definite plan.

"He ascended to heaven, and He is seated at the right hand of the Father."

The Son and the Father are seated in glory in heaven.

But listen here:

"He will come again."

Not as a suffering servant. No, He will come with glory. To what? To judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end.

"And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life. He proceeds from the Father and the Son. And with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is worshiped and glorified. He spoke through the prophets.

"We believe in one holy, catholic, and apostolic church."

Now, pause. When we say, "one holy, catholic, and apostolic church," we're not saying that the Roman Catholic Church is the only church. The word catholic means universal, which means there is one church of

Jesus Christ: those who have been ransomed by His atoning death on the cross and filled with His Spirit.

Church, that's who you are: a people after God. It's made up of believers from every place, grounded in the apostles' teaching, eyewitness accounts, and the Scriptures, and sent to continue making disciples of Jesus.

That's what it means by the holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

"We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins."

You do not need to be baptized every time you sin. You'd have to live in water.

"We look forward to the resurrection of the dead and to the life in the world to come. Amen."

The church has been saying that for almost 2,000 years. It has not changed, okay? God will not adjust who He is to fit today's needs.

Why does all this matter?

If you're new to the faith, you may be thinking, "Man, this is crazy talk. What's going on here?" Hang out with us.

If you've been a Christian your whole life, you might be asking, "Why does the Holy Spirit matter? Why can't we just get forgiveness from Jesus and go on our way? What is the big deal about this, and how do I make sense of it?"

The Bible, 66 books, has one capital-A Author, God Almighty, through the Holy Spirit. It was written to reveal Himself to us for His glory.

There are four main movements in the Scriptures that you can put everything else underneath. You've got a creation account in Genesis 1 and 2. That establishes our worldview.

Look at me. I say that to my daughter: "Look at me, okay?" That does not explain everything. The point of Genesis is not information; it's revelation. God Almighty made the heavens and the earth.

"Well, was it six full days, or was it 6,000?"

It doesn't matter. It really doesn't. If you think it does, it doesn't. It doesn't change who God is.

Genesis 1 and 2 explain creation. Where did man and woman come from?

Genesis 3 is the fall. That explains why everything stinks, why people are angry, why there's brokenness, disease, and suffering, why good things happen to bad people, and why bad people seem to get away without any penalty. Sin and the fall happen in Genesis 3.

You have four main movements. As soon as the fall happens, God declares redemption. The woman will bear a son. He will crush your head. You'll bite His heel, but He will trample over you.

Jesus did that on the cross.

From the fall, God looks ahead to redemption, and it will consummate in restoration, when the kingdom of heaven is brought to the earth and all things are made new.

Why does this matter? Because we are living right here. We are living in 2026 in the window of redemption, on our way to restoration. How do we live in that window? By the power of the Holy Spirit.

What should the church do? Continue the ministry of Jesus.

How are we going to do that? He's given us many books to see that.

Does that make sense? Does that help you understand where we are?

If I could sum it up for you, from creation to the fall - sorry, I can't help it - is the Old Testament. That's the story of the Old Testament. God pursues with redemption in mind.

Then we see the coming of Jesus. The kingdom of God is at hand. He preaches, He heals, and He delivers. He's resurrected. Redemption is available for all people through Christ.

What is it leading toward? Ultimate restoration, the Garden of Eden restored.

The book of Acts is situated right on the heels of redemption, moving toward restoration. Is that helpful to know where we are in the span of life right now?

The church age is right here. We are, I believe, days or hours away from the consummation of the kingdom, where He will return to judge. That's why it's so important for us today to understand why this matters.

Two things before we jump into the text tonight.

From week one, the Christian life is Christ continuing His ministry through us by the power of the Holy Spirit. If you weren't here, there it is.

What is the Christian life? What does it mean for us today? It is Jesus continued in each of us today.

Think about that. He says:

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in Me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

— John 14:12

Why? Because there are three hundred however many people right here who can continue the same work Jesus was doing.

Powerful. Glory to God.

The Christian life is Him, by the Holy Spirit, continuing His ministry through us.

Secondly, who is the Holy Spirit? We looked at that picture. We'll never fully explain it, but I think it's a good visual. The Holy Spirit is God's promise to us, God's power in us, and a witness through us. That's from week

one.

One more look, and then we'll jump into it tonight.

Here is the Gospel of Jesus: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. All of this talks about the incarnation, Jesus coming from heaven and taking on flesh. The Gospel is the 33 years Jesus lived in that fleshly life, fully God and fully man: what He did, what He taught, and why it mattered, climaxing in His death for the sins of the world.

From there, Jesus ascends. We saw that in Acts chapter 1. He goes back to the Father in His glory.

We no longer talk about a Jesus who is limping around and suffering. We talk about the Revelation 1 Jesus, with fire in His eyes, the King who has triumphed.

Now Jesus goes back, and He sends the Holy Spirit. This is what we're looking at tonight at Pentecost. What the Spirit does in our lives is bring power.

Why? Because He's sent to witness, through the church to the world, that Jesus is glorified and exalted. That's the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The Day of Pentecost

Here we go, Acts 2:1, looking through the text:

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

— Acts 2:1

Now, context. Acts chapter 1 is our context.

Jesus is resurrected. He spends 40 days doing this with eyewitnesses, dialoguing with His disciples, teaching about the kingdom, and reminding them. He says, "Wait for the promise of the Father. Stay here in Jerusalem."

What do they do? Acts 1:14 says they devote themselves to prayer. All of them, in one accord, are devoted in prayer. Acts 1:15 tells us who that is. It's 120 people in a room praying.

What's fascinating about this is that the power of God comes to a praying people. That's why we begin with House of Prayer. I want to experience the power of God for His glory. Well, it happened when people waited on Him well in prayer.

Just a point of application for you: Are you waiting on the Lord well in prayer?

If you're desiring a breakthrough in your life, are you waiting on Him well in prayer, or are you buckling up and hitting the door on your own, tired of waiting? "This isn't helpful."

That's not kingdom. That's not gospel.

The early church exploded through a prayer meeting. They were looking at the Scriptures. They were praying. They were in fellowship together. Then the Holy Spirit came and brought power.

The Day of Pentecost is really interesting. God has no coincidences, by the way. Nothing accidentally happens in God's sovereign dealings.

There were three solemn feasts for which Jewish males were required to travel to Jerusalem to sacrifice and worship. Pentecost was one of them.

Pentecost has multiple names: the Feast of Firstfruits, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Harvest. All of this is in Leviticus 23. In Greek, Pentecost means 50. God says, "Fifty days after Passover, have this feast." So that's what happens.

Pentecost was thanking God for the harvest that had come.

Without going too deep into it, let me just show you how Jesus fulfills the Old Testament.

In the Old Testament, there's a Passover. What happens is Israel is in Egypt. They're in slavery for some 400-plus years. God says, "I will deliver you."

Here's what they need to do: Take a spotless lamb, slay the lamb, and put the blood over your doors. "When I see the blood covering your home, I will pass over you. Death will pass over you."

That happens, and Egypt is like, "Get out of here." They send Israel out into the desert. God delivers His people. It was the Passover lamb that provided protection for them.

Thousands of years later, Jesus is the Passover Lamb for our sins. When God sees the blood of Jesus applied to your life, He passes over you in condemnation. He passes over you in the death sentence.

What that means is you're set free in the blood of Jesus. Amen. That's what it is.

On the day of His crucifixion, what holiday was it? Passover.

The Passover Lamb is offered up to God. The last sacrifice to end all sacrifices, Jesus is offered up to God.

When He is resurrected, do you know what day it was? Firstfruits. He's the firstfruits from the dead.

Do you know what happens at Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits? Three thousand - we'll look at it next week - are added to the church. It's the firstfruits of the kingdom of heaven, all of it fulfilled through Jesus.

The Day of Pentecost was not an accident. It was to fulfill all of this prophetic buildup that came through Jesus Christ.

Pentecost, firstfruits, the harvest is those three thousand common people who now walked and lived in the kingdom of God.

They were all gathered together in one place.

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

— Acts 2:2

Listen: "from heaven."

Then there was a sound like a mighty rushing wind. It means they're writing, going, "How do I even make sense of this? It was like a mighty rushing wind."

Wind in the Old Testament was symbolic of God's power. God's power came into the room, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

What were they doing? They were in a prayer meeting.

And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

— Acts 2:3

In the Old Testament, fire represents God's presence. God's power and His presence fill the room and rest on each one of them.

What that means is that when you become a follower of Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to rest on you, live in you, and dwell in you permanently. You cannot lose the Holy Spirit if you're a genuine believer.

There are a couple of things Jesus said would happen that we see fulfilled right here. "There came from heaven." That's a key right there.

Jesus says in John 14:

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him.

You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

— John 14:15-17

That happens on the Day of Pentecost.

Jesus ascends. It's time to send the Spirit. The Spirit fills them. The Spirit leads them. He is the One of truth, the Helper and Advocate who comes alongside and continues the ministry of Jesus.

Look at this: "He dwells with you." He is with you, but He's also in you.

Christian, do you see the power of your life? God lives in you. You are not insufficient for the task if God Almighty lives in you.

He spoke creation into its form. Like the Scriptures say, He knows the stars by number and name, and He loves you that much more.

The same God who spoke into nothing and created is the God who lives inside you to empower your witness for Christ. It's not so you can level up and do whatever you want. No, it's so you can be a witness for Christ.

He knows it was impossible without the Spirit. It's impossible for a bunch of ordinary men and women to turn the world upside down, but not if God lives in them.

God's ultimate goal is our reunion with Him for His glory. He loves you so much that He begins living with you now, until the day of glory when you see Him face-to-face. The Spirit is the means of that.

But notice it says He came from heaven. Why? Because the Father gave the church the greatest gift after salvation: the Holy Spirit living in you.

He says again in Acts 1:

*And while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, "you heard from Me;
for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."*

— Acts 1:4-5

God keeps His promises. You know that.

If you're wrestling with it, find a promise and believe Him for it. "I will never leave you nor forsake you. God, I feel forsaken right now, but You're a promise keeper. Strengthen me. Keep Your promise."

"John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now," meaning Pentecost.

Here's the beautiful picture. Acts 2, moving forward:

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

— Acts 2:2-3

We just talked about how the Spirit came from heaven. Why? Because the Father sent the Holy Spirit.

"Like a mighty rushing wind" - power.

"It filled the entire house where they were sitting."

"Divided tongues as of fire" - power and presence rested on each one of them.

Now, here's what's amazing. This will connect here in a minute.

Tongues. Why? Why tongues? Why did that happen? Why was there this image of what appeared to be tongues of fire?

Because what we're going to see is that God anoints their lips for the gospel. God sets their mouths on fire.

We're going to respond in prayer after this, but if your mouth and heart aren't burning with the gospel, ask Him

to set them on fire. If you see people who are lost and don't tell them, ask Him to burn you with the fire of the Spirit.

"God, set my lips and my heart apart for You."

We know the Scriptures say, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

"God, burn my heart with Your gospel."

Maybe you've forgotten, and you just need to come repent later tonight and say, "God, I've forgotten how good Your gospel is. I forgot that it's the only way. I forgot I didn't earn it. I received it."

But He sets their tongues on fire to go tell the good news.

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

— Acts 2:4

There's been a ton of confusion. There's been a ton of perversion based on this text. What's crazy to me is that if you study it, it removes all the confusion.

"They began to speak in other tongues." Do you know what the Greek word for that is? Languages. They began to speak in other languages.

Here's what it would look like if we were 2,000 years ago on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit fell, and He began empowering me to speak. I could speak Portuguese. I could speak Spanish, Russian, Korean, Japanese, and other languages that I don't know.

Why? So that you in the crowd who speak those languages would hear the works of God.

That's what happened.

I can't speak any of those languages. Poquito, not much more than that. "Jesús es Señor." That's it. "Dios te bendiga." I can speak that. But if the Spirit came on me and there was a Spanish-speaking person in need, and I just preached the whole sermon in Spanish, the Spirit gave the power to do that.

That's what happened.

That's why he lists all these nations, regions, and people groups. This wasn't just some gong of noises happening. No, this was so the Spirit could make the gospel clear, remove the language barrier, and preach the gospel.

Oh, that's powerful.

Why did He set their tongues on fire? For the gospel, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2, "I'm not preaching eloquent words so that your faith would rest on me, but the Spirit demonstrates in power so your faith would rest on God."

They walk out, and people say, "Aren't these Galileans? What in the world? How could they? They can't do that."

Christian, your life is going to be that way. "There's no reason you're able to do that. How is that happening?"

Because God lives in me, because He loves me.

It should be inexplicable apart from the work of God.

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit lives inside Christians. That's a huge point. You need to wake up and rehearse that to yourself every day:

"Because of the gospel, because God so loved me and gave His Son for me, died for me, forgave me, and gave me the promise of the Spirit, I walk with God. God lives in me. I can do this."

That's Philippians 4:13. It's not eye black and cleats and a five-star reel. No, it's, "I can do the things God calls me to do."

Why? Because of Christ in me.

The Holy Spirit lives inside Christians.

There are two things I want to differentiate here because, again, I think - and I'm really mindful of where you are in your life right now and what you hear - TikTok, YouTube, and algorithms cannot disciple you. God's Word needs to disciple you, and His local church needs to disciple you.

You've got to be in relationship with both of those, because if you just scroll and hear something, it cannot build your theology. If someone screwed up the gift of God, that cannot build your theology. The Scriptures and the church need to be part of building your theology.

How many of you have heard of the baptism of the Spirit? How many of you want that?

If you're a Christian, you have it.

If you've heard of the baptism of the Spirit, how many of you have heard, "Speaking in tongues is what happens when you're baptized in the Spirit"?

That's a horrible false teaching. It's just not the gospel. Now let me tell you why.

If you've ever seen a baptism, what happens is we take them under the water. The word baptizo means immersed. You're under the water. You're immersed in the water.

When you become a follower of Jesus, God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, immerses you into Christ. You don't stand up and dry off, and Christ leaves you. No, He begins living in you. You're baptized, immersed into Christ.

Here's what Paul says in Romans 6. I read it the other day:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

— Romans 6:3-4

Remember, he's writing to the church.

Here's beautiful news for you today if you're struggling with shame and guilt. When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, He baptized you into Calvary.

That means what Jesus did to earn the Father's love and favor and take on the wrath, you're baptized into that. That means He counts no sin against you anymore in judgment.

Amen.

You're baptized into what Christ did for you.

We were buried with Him by baptism into death. Your old self is buried with Him by baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too would walk in newness of life.

That's what we say at every baptism: "You're raised to walk in newness of life."

Why? Because the water is magical? No, because you're baptized into Christ, and you're putting it on display.

It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. So you walk in that newness of life. That's the baptism of the Spirit.

Romans 8 says:

You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.

But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

— Romans 8:9-11

You, however, are not in the flesh, though you appear to be. You're not. If the heavens peeled open and you, Christian, could be seen as you really are, you'd be seen as a son or daughter of the Most High God.

You're not in the flesh. You're in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you.

Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him. Plain and simple. If you have not received the Holy Spirit, which every Christian does, you're not a Christian.

You don't get the Spirit because you grew up in a church. You don't get the Spirit because your parents have Him. You don't get the Spirit because you listen to sermons. You don't get the Spirit because you have a worship playlist.

You get the Spirit because you've asked Him to forgive you of your sins, because you've repented, because He's your Lord and Savior, and He fills you with His Spirit.

It's received, not earned.

But listen: If Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

I love what Scripture just did there.

Paul is saying, "You're not who you used to be. You're alive in the Spirit, and the Spirit lives in your mortal body."

Listen, our mortal bodies are underneath the weight of sin. God knows you are going to sin. He just knows it. He knows that you have a mortal body under the curse of sin.

Second Corinthians 4 says inwardly we're renewed day by day, while outwardly we waste away.

Now, if you continue choosing sin, that's different. But when each of us, Christian - me included, and I feel like foremost - falls into sin, God knew it, but He gives life through our mortal bodies.

Does that make sense? There should be freedom there. There's no more shame or guilt because Christ has done away with it, because you were put into His death. The death that brought forgiveness for all - you're put there so you can have His life.

That's what the Holy Spirit does for us.

One more Scripture:

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

— 1 Corinthians 12:13

What's that body? The church of Jesus Christ.

It doesn't matter if you're a Jew or a Greek, slave or free. All were made to drink of one Spirit.

John MacArthur, who is with Jesus now - his faith is sight - was an incredible pastor, theologian, author, and commentator. He said this about the baptism of the Spirit. I think it's so helpful. Follow along with me:

"The baptism of the Spirit is non-experiential. You don't feel it. You don't know it happens. You can't experience it. Nothing happens to you physically speaking when that occurs, because here it tells us that by one Spirit we were baptized into the body of Christ. The baptism of the Spirit of God is the act by which the Holy Spirit puts

you into the body of Christ when you believe. It is a theological reality. It is not an experience."

What he's saying is you don't get this power-up moment of the Spirit: "He's here!" That's not what happens at salvation. In fact, sometimes you're like, "I prayed the prayer. Did anything happen? I don't know." It's because it's not experiential. It's by faith.

Listen to what he says:

"It's an act by which Christ Jesus, the risen King, the Baptizer, through the Spirit places you in the body."

When you're saved, you're put into the body of Christ. Then the end of the verse says you drink of the Spirit. That is, you take in the Holy Spirit.

Every believer - it says right there that we were all baptized and we've all been made to drink of one Spirit. There's no Christian who hasn't taken in the Spirit. None. We all possess the Holy Spirit.

Isn't that reassuring?

Please raise your hand if you've ever doubted whether you were truly saved.

The Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that God is Abba, Father. You can rest assured that God knows you and has saved you.

One more verse. Jesus says on the last day of the feast:

If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, "Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Now this He said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

— John 7:37-39

"If anyone thirsts, come to Me and drink."

The gospel is an invitation to anyone and everyone. There's no one too far to be saved.

"Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture says, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

This He said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

As soon as He was glorified, He gave the Spirit.

That's the baptism of the Spirit. Christian, you've been baptized in the Spirit. If there's anyone who says you've got to speak in this unknown language to prove it, they're a liar.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit

Now there's the filling of the Spirit.

It says here that they were filled with the Holy Spirit. What does that mean? How do we explain the filling of the Spirit?

If you include Pentecost, four times in the book of Acts it uses this phrase: "filled with the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, filled with the Spirit." Every time, it's before they do a service for the kingdom.

Does it mean they got more of the Spirit in that moment, like they had this measure and then God added this much more? No.

Does it mean I have more of the Spirit because I'm a pastor and I preach? No.

You're a Christian. I'm a Christian. We have the same Spirit.

The best way I've ever heard this explained is that being filled with the Spirit is like turning up the volume of His voice. It's being more in tune with Him and more aware of Him.

It doesn't mean that you got an added measure of Him. No, it just means you're more aware of Him.

If you're wrestling with whether you hear the Spirit's voice, what I do know is that the flesh is loud. You need to quiet the flesh. I'll show you in a minute how we do that.

The filling of the Spirit is when God empowers us for an act of service.

When I come up here and preach, it's because I'm filled with the Spirit, because the Word of God goes forth. It's not because I've got charisma. It's because the Spirit fills me.

When you share the gospel, the Spirit fills you.

When they sing and lead, they're filled with the Spirit.

When you go live on mission, you're filled with the Spirit.

When you read His Word and when you pray, you're filled with the Spirit.

It's not this increase you get for a moment. It's just a greater sensitivity to His already-present presence.

Make sense? Good. I think it's life-changing.

Paul says this:

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,
making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.
Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

— Ephesians 5:15-18

Look carefully at how you walk, how you live. Examine yourself. Let people in your life examine you.

Do not live as unwise, but live as wise people. Make the best use of the time.

That's a great question to ask yourself: "Is this the best use of my time? Is this person the best use of my time? Is this thing the best use of my time? Is this goal and pursuit the best use of my time?"

Therefore, do not be foolish. Understand what the will of the Lord is. His will is for you to make disciples who make disciples. It's that simple. As you go, make disciples.

Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

Listen, Christian, it's not optional. It's not just for the moment you need it. You're commanded to be filled with the Spirit.

You have a negative command: Do not get drunk. Do not lose your sober-mindedness. Do not overconsume. Do not live foolishly.

But positively, be filled with the Spirit. It's a command.

Every day, you should come before the Lord and say, "God, fill me with Your Spirit. Turn the volume up in my life so I'd be greatly aware of You."

Here's the question we should all be asking: How do I become consistently filled with the Spirit?

Anyone wondering that? I hope so.

First, fasting.

You want to turn down the volume of your flesh? Starve it. Fast. Abstain from food. Do more than just a music or technology fast. Do that on top of a food fast. That's what the Scriptures teach.

Abstain from it, and in place of it, feed yourself the Scriptures. Feed yourself His presence through prayer. Feed yourself through community. Starve the flesh. Turn down the volume.

Now, let me tell you something I've learned through fasting. When I fast, it feels like the flesh cranks itself up. I'm angrier. My wife doesn't like it when I fast. I've got to get better at that. I mean that by grace.

She's like, "Oh, are you fasting today?"

It's because I'm just more irritable.

Why? Well, there's an enemy who hates when my flesh gets quieted and the Spirit gets turned up. Because when I walk with Him, power happens. Identity is shaped and formed in that.

You want to be constantly filled with the Spirit? Live a fasted lifestyle.

Secondly, pray.

Get alone with God. Put the clock away. Don't just pray through a list or a plan. Use those to get into His presence, then throw them away and just sit and bask.

"Oh Lord, You're so holy."

More often than not, what God wants to talk to me about is my relationship with Him: "You're My son."

I'm simple-minded, and I struggle in my time with God. If I had more time, I'd talk to you about it tonight. My time alone with God is a struggle every day because I get distracted, because I have intrusive thoughts, because I'm prideful, because I want to do things, and because I misunderstand the gospel every day.

Pray for me, please. I would love that.

But I have to say out loud, "I'm here as a son. I'm here as a son. I'm not here as a pastor. I'm not here as a father. I'm not here as a husband."

All of those things come from sonship.

Maybe you need to go to your room, close the door, open your Scriptures, read Matthew 6 - the Father sees in secret and rewards in secret - and say, if you're a female, "I'm Your daughter. I'm here as Your daughter. I'm here as Your daughter, spending time with You, Father."

As a man, humble yourself. Get low.

"God, I'm a needy man. I need You, but I'm Your son."

Reorient yourself to the right relationship.

Third, Scripture meditation and memorization.

Be filled with the Spirit. Put His Word in your heart. He loves to use His Word. Psalm 1. Meditate. Memorize.

Fourth, accountability and confession.

Live with a glass-walled life. People need to see into who you are. Be known and know people. Live with accountability. Confess your sin. Close the gap.

When you feel conviction, confess. Confess. Call someone. Live in community.

You're not supposed to do the Christian life alone. It's a community project.

Lastly, serve.

Humble yourself. Give back to other people. Pour out what God's given you. You're not meant to keep it for yourself.

You want to be constantly filled with the Spirit? Pursue these as daily rhythms.

These are not the end. They're means to an end, which is Jesus. More of Jesus in your life.

We don't need you to learn more things. We need you to be more like Jesus.

That's the difference between the baptism and the filling of the Spirit.

Empowered to Preach the Gospel

Moving forward, Acts 2:5:

Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

— Acts 2:5

Again, why did the tongues of fire appear? Why did they speak in these other national languages?

Here's why: According to the rules God laid forward in His Word, the Jews had to be there, so they traveled.

Here's how intentional God is. When Jesus came to the earth, Rome had colonized most of the known world. They had created roads for travel. They were an empire. Before that, the Greeks had conquered, and there was a universal language.

Within a few lifetimes of Jesus' resurrection, there's a universal language and pathways to travel the world. God intentionally and specifically sent Christ for maximum gospel explosion.

The Jews are there because they're gathering, and there are men from all these different places. When they hear these languages they can understand, they come rushing forward.

The gospel is for all people.

They're amazed and astonished.

"These are Galileans. How are they speaking all these languages?"

Listen, a Holy Spirit-empowered life will amaze and astonish people for the glory of God.

I want my tombstone to say, "He could only be explained by Jesus." I really do.

I want lost people to be at my funeral because I loved them. I want them to say, "I don't really believe what he believes, but I know he did. And the things in his life only make sense because of Jesus."

A Holy Spirit-empowered life will amaze and astonish people, not so you get the glory. No, it's for God's glory.

And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

— Acts 2:8

All these languages and places, people from the whole known world:

We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.

— Acts 2:11

Listen, the Holy Spirit empowers Christians to preach the gospel.

There are multiple Christian cliches that just drive me crazy. One of them is, "Tell the gospel only when needed, and show it," or however you say it.

It just drives me nuts.

No, you have to speak the gospel. You can't just be a nice person. It doesn't help anyone.

Speak the gospel. Share the gospel.

"How do I do that? I'm nervous. What if I get it wrong?"

Let the Holy Spirit fill you up. He empowers you to do that.

"What if I fumble my way through it?"

What if what they hear in the midst of you fumbling around for words is that Jesus loves them, died for them, wants to forgive them, and wants a relationship with them? Everything else, you're like, "I feel like an idiot," but they heard that.

They walked away and thought, "That person was so nervous telling me, but there was love in their heart. Those words were different."

The Holy Spirit will empower your witness. That's why He's given to the church.

God dwells in us and communes with us, but He also witnesses to the gospel through us.

You have to say it. If you can't tell it to someone, you don't know it. You need to learn the gospel. You need gospel language. It should just ooze out of you by the Spirit.

If it isn't, that's okay right now. Go get alone with God. There's so much grace.

Listen, you don't have to explain all the mysteries away. In fact, I want more mystery brought to the church. But just begin saying what you learn.

Read books. Listen to sermons. There are great resources to help you learn how to share the gospel. But it's not the resource you need. It's the Holy Spirit in you doing the work.

Receiving or Resisting the Spirit's Work

And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine."

— Acts 2:12-13

Here it is before we close: People can receive or resist the work of the Holy Spirit.

This incredible outpouring happens to these 120 people, men and women. They begin telling the works of God in other languages, and some people are like, "This is incredible."

Some of you are here tonight, I hope, and you're not in a relationship with God through Jesus. You're not a Christian. You're trying this thing out, and you're thinking, "This sounds incredible. The Holy Spirit, God living in Christians and empowering them, that's amazing. I thought God didn't want me. I thought God was distant and far off, disengaged. I'm just a disappointment. I'm an accident. There's no purpose. But I'm hearing about this intimate God who loves me, wants a relationship with me, and will actually live in me. This is amazing."

Some of you are feeling that way right now. Praise God.

Some of you are going, "This is ridiculous. This is dumb. Christianity is a crutch. It's for people who can't help themselves. They follow this God who helps people. You're not smart enough to understand things, so you use this as a crutch to get by."

You're mocking the works of God because you're rejecting the activity of the Spirit.

There are only two options: People reject it, or they receive it.

But it's not you they're rejecting. It's Jesus. Jesus said that: "You're not rejecting Me. You're rejecting the One who sent Me."

He says, "My Word didn't come to condemn. It came to bring life and liberty." But if you deny His Word, when you stand before Him, the same Word you denied, unbeliever, will damn you, or it will deliver you.

But it's the gospel that people need.

One quote, and then I'm going to pray. Ray Pritchard, a pastor, says this. I love it. It's so simple:

"When the Holy Spirit fills you, He will have the controlling interest in your life. It's a control by consent, meaning you just yield to Him leading.

"Now let me stop and make a critical distinction. Being filled with the Holy Spirit doesn't mean I have more of the Spirit; it means the Spirit has more of me.

"It doesn't happen all at once any more than you get drunk all at once. Being filled with the Spirit happens as you continually choose to live under His influence."

It is day by day by day by day by day, grace by grace by grace.

You don't need more of Him. He needs more of you.

Just live as an offering. Live as a sacrifice.

That's what the Day of Pentecost was. That's what it means for us today. The Holy Spirit came and filled the church for the purpose of the life of Jesus continuing.

Here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to pray, and then I'm going to lead us in a time of intentional prayer and

response.

Father, I thank You for the Word of truth. Lord, I know I'm prone to error, and I pray that it was handled well, that it was clear, and that You, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, took Your Word and put it in people's hearts for their understanding and for Your glory.

God, as we continue forward, Holy Spirit, empower us to respond rightly and obediently to what You want this time to look like. God, I ask all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thanks again for listening to today's teaching from The Grove. Be sure to follow us on Instagram at [thegrove_cf](#). If you're a young adult in Northwest Houston, we'd love to connect with you on Tuesday nights and Sunday mornings. We hope to see you soon.