



## ACTS 2:1-13

MAY 8, 2022 | PASTOR MATT WHITEFORD



**REMINDER: THIS IS THE LAST WEEK OF THE SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE. IF YOUR GROUP USES IT, PLEASE MAKE A PLAN FOR WHAT YOU WILL DISCUSS IF YOUR GROUP CONTINUES MEETING AFTER THIS WEEK.**

### FOLLOW UP FROM LAST WEEK'S LIVE IT OUT QUESTIONS

**The last time your group met, was there anything you committed to doing after reflecting on Scripture during your group? Did you follow through with that commitment? What steps did you take (or not take), and is there any way we can help?**

### GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

- 1 What is the most dramatic thing you have ever witnessed? Do you enjoy telling people about what you experienced? Why or why not?**

### QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

### DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

- 1 Someone read ACTS 2:1-13 in their Bible.**

**What was the significance for Luke that the believers were "all together in one place" (v. 1)?**

**What happened when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers? What kind of power might the disciples have been expecting? What kind of power would you have expected if you were there?**

Jesus had told the disciples in Acts 1:8 that they would receive power to be His witnesses. The miraculous signs that accompanied the Spirit included sound, sight, and speech. The sound and the sight were preliminary; the speech was evidence they were filled with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is to be empowered by the Spirit. On this occasion the Spirit gave them ability for speech.

**How does being filled with the Holy Spirit relate to bearing witness to Jesus?**

**What were the two basic reactions of the residents of Jerusalem to the phenomenon of tongues?**

Because of the festival celebrations, many foreigners were in Jerusalem at this time from all over the known world (vs. 9-11). Through the Holy Spirit's power, the disciples were enabled to communicate the Gospel to people who spoke a wide variety of languages. This amazed the crowd. Some even thought the disciples were drunk. Miracles and signs alone aren't

enough to introduce people to Jesus and the salvation He offers, but what happened on the Day of Pentecost gave the apostles, led by Peter, a good foundation for teaching the Gospel and a curious audience to hear it.

### **How does having the Holy Spirit's power make a difference in how you live as Jesus' witness to the lost?**

The power of the Holy Spirit coming in language (as it did on the Day of Pentecost) is a grace that replaces our conception of power **over** people with power **for** people. If you want to honor and love a people, learn their language. If we are serious about the lost, we will learn how to speak with them on their terms in ways that connect with their hearts. If we're not, then we will tell them the truth in the language that suits us best.

#### **LIVE IT OUT** (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

- 1** On Sunday, Matt shared that the power that is available to us from the Holy Spirit is power **for** people, not power **over** people. **What might lead us to mistakenly shift that into thinking it is power to be used over people?**
- 2** Reflect and discuss your responses as a group: **Is your life centered around the presence of the Holy Spirit or do you tend to reorient the Holy Spirit around your life?**
- 3** **If what we looked at in God's Word is true, what needs to change in your life?**

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

If you have not already done so, take some time to share needs and praises to your group so that you can pray for one another, both during your group and throughout the week.

#### **THIS IS THE FINAL WEEK OF SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDES FOR THE SPRING SEMESTER**

Take some time to celebrate what God has done in your lives this year! Also, make sure you have a plan to meet up once or twice in the summer months so that you don't take a relational break before the fall comes.

#### **PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS** (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

#### **TIPS ON GROUP PRAYER**

**PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME:** Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request or praise during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next request or praise.

**PRAY MORE THAN ONCE:** If your group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one should be required to pray.

**KEEP PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE:** Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group.

#### **How to Use this Discussion Guide**

This guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and becoming like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel the need to ask every question during your group discussion. This guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community. In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit [cpmodesto.org/groupleaders](http://cpmodesto.org/groupleaders) to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit [cpmodesto.org/homegroups](http://cpmodesto.org/homegroups) and use the Home Group Finder!

## COMMENTARY

### ACTS 2:1-13

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**2:1-2.** Throughout this book Luke records the togetherness the early Christians enjoyed. Here, at the beginning of everything, we find them all together. They heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind, certainly an experience with which all of us can identify. The word for "wind" is *pneuma*, the same word Jesus used in talking about the Spirit and the wind with Nicodemus (John 3:7-8). Wind filling the whole house reminds us of God's presence filling the temple in the Old Testament. Luke was probably not present for this event, but we can imagine that he heard his colleagues describe it scores of times, for it was a day they could never forget.

**2:3.** We need to be careful with the language of the text. The sound was not a wind but like a wind. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire. Apparently, the fire started as one and then separated and came upon them. Like wind, the Bible commonly associates fire with the presence of God, as Moses found out one day in the desert (Exod. 3:2).

**2:4.** A third physical phenomenon experienced on the Day of Pentecost was the use of different languages. Throughout Acts, Luke uses different verbs to describe the coming of the Spirit upon new believers. This first time was a unique event, never again repeated in exactly the same way. When we look at the entire New Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit, we see the word "baptism" associated with initial conversion and the word "filling" with ministry. The first seems to happen once without repetition; the second occurs with frequency as believers allow God's Spirit to produce powerful work through them.

**2:5-6.** Like Paul, Luke occasionally engages in deliberate exaggeration such as his suggestion that there were pious Jews residing in Jerusalem from every nation under Heaven. Probably we should understand him to mean that people speaking many other languages were present on the Day of Pentecost and each heard the message in his or her own language or dialect. We might ask, if they resided in Jerusalem, wouldn't they have understood Aramaic, or at least Greek? Doubtless many of them did; but part of the miracle was God's ability to proclaim His message in multiple languages through uneducated people who spoke almost exclusively Aramaic and Greek. Some have suggested that the Feast of Pentecost might very well have attracted over two hundred thousand Jews from all over Palestine and the Mediterranean world. Nothing indicates that they heard the wind or saw the flames; but the sound of languages—perhaps dozens of them—captured their attention immediately.

**2:7-11.** The speakers amazed Jerusalem's visitors as much as did the language: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?" After the introductory question raised by the bewildered guests, they identified fifteen language groups, roughly scattered from east to west, who heard the believers declaring the wonders of God in their own languages. Luke tells us they were bewildered and perplexed. Twice he used the word "amazed." Many of the disciples (all of the eleven) came from Galilee, but that label for the group does not necessarily mean that all 120 came from that province. Jesus was a Galilean, and His followers were therefore known by that group name.

Luke's list of fifteen geographical locations was a group of nations or areas in which known Jewish populations existed and would likely have sent representative groups to the Feast of Pentecost. Everyone there who spoke a language other than Greek or Aramaic heard the message of the Christians in that language—maybe fifteen languages, maybe fifty, maybe more. The languages differed; the message remained the same: the wonders of God.

**2:12-13.** Like most congregations, not everyone agreed that this event had significant meaning. Some simply mocked, "They have had too much wine" (v. 13). This word for wine (*gleukos*), used only here in the Bible, leaves no doubt of the mockers meaning. Peter's explanation in the following verses says pointedly, "These men are not drunk, as you suppose" (v. 15).