

Acts 2

Learning

Engaging Chapter 2 (some content you can use to prep and/or use as a group)

- **Recap:** The opening verses of Acts from last week (Acts 1:1-8) and anything else from Ch. 1. Then continue in the first section of Acts (1:1-6:7) where **the Church is established in Jerusalem**
- **Read - Acts 2 (5 minutes)**
- **Context:** The Feast of Pentecost was the name for the Feast of Weeks (7 wks x 7 days = 49 days) that occurred 50 days after the Passover celebration. It was a one day harvest festival, after the Temple was destroyed it became associated with the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai.
- **Interesting Words:** The word “filled” (v. 4) means to influence and accomplish, in reference to the Spirit it is usually related to empowering for acts of service or speaking. Explicitly echoes here of the OT occurrences of the Spirit empowering someone. Luke says the people were “cut to the heart” (v. 37) this phrase is only used here in the NT and in the OT means “remorseful, angry, stung, humbled, and struck silent.”
- **Culture:** It is interesting to note that Luke’s summary of the early Messianic community sounds a lot like utopian community ideals within the broader Greco-Roman world (cf. Plato, Aristotle, and Philo’s writings). Some cultural commentators have noticed that the modern day progressive worldview is similar, envisioning a “New Heavens and New Earth” society of equality and peace. As Mark Sayers says, the difference is “They want the Kingdom without the King.”
- **Themes:** While the exact details are not normative, Luke clearly emphasizes repentance, faith, baptism in the name of Jesus, and receiving the Spirit as essential for apprenticeship to Jesus and participation in the community of God. The important action of “repentance for the forgiveness of sins” repeats throughout Acts (cf. 3:19; 10:43; 11:18; 17:30; 26:18-20).
- **Quote for expanding the discussion:**

Referring to the 4 marks of the early church John Stott writes, “First, they were related to the apostles (in submission). They were eager to receive the apostles’ instruction. A Spirit-filled church is an apostolic church... anxious to believe and obey what Jesus and his disciples taught. Second, they were related to each other (in love). They persevered in the fellowship, supporting each other and relieving the needs of the poor. A Spirit-filled church is a loving, caring, and sharing church. Third, they were related to God (in worship). They worshipped him in the temple and in the home, in the Lord’s Supper and in prayers, with joy and with reverence... Fourth, they were related to the world (in outreach). They were engaged in continuous evangelism. No self-centered, self-contained church (absorbed in its own affairs) can claim to be filled with the Spirit. A Spirit-filled church is a missionary church.”

Dialogue Questions (some example questions for this content above)

- What is Luke emphasizing when the Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost? (v. 2:1-13)
- What are key ideas that Peter identifies to make sense of what has happened to Jesus? (v. 2:14-41)
- What stands out about the *character of the community* that forms from those who repent and are baptized? (v. 2:42-47)
- What values or practices can the modern church learn from Luke’s account of the early church?

Implication Questions (some example questions/challenges that engage real life now)

- Does anyone have any stories to share about being “filled” with the Spirit?
- Try reading the quote above and give space for reflection. How does this sit with you? How does it inspire? How does it convict? How does your *Rule of Life* embody these 4 marks? Does it?
- *Response:* Ask if anyone wants prayer for a filling of the Holy Spirit? Lay hands on them and pray. Ask the Lord to continually fill our church and all churches with the Spirit, it’s gifts, and fruit!
- **During the Week:** Be reading Acts 1:1-6:7

Scriptures

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

[Act 2:1](#) When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

[Act 2:2](#) Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

[Act 2:3](#) They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

[Act 2:4](#) All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

[Act 2:5](#) Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

[Act 2:6](#) When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.

[Act 2:7](#) Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?"

[Act 2:8](#) Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?

[Act 2:9](#) Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

[Act 2:10](#) Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome

[Act 2:11](#) (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

[Act 2:12](#) Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

[Act 2:13](#) Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Peter's Sermon at Pentecost

[Act 2:14](#) 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.

[Act 2:15](#) These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

[Act 2:16](#) No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

[Act 2:17](#) "'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.

[Act 2:18](#) Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

[Act 2:19](#) I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

[Act 2:20](#) The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

[Act 2:21](#) And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

[Act 2:22](#) "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.

[Act 2:23](#) 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.

[Act 2:24](#) 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.

[Act 2:25](#) David said about him: "'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

[Act 2:26](#) Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope,

[Act 2:27](#) because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay.

[Act 2:28](#) You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

[Act 2:29](#) "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.

[Act 2:30](#) But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

[Act 2:31](#) Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.

[Act 2:32](#) God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.

[Act 2:33](#) Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

[Act 2:34](#) For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand

[Act 2:35](#) until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

[Act 2:36](#) "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

[Act 2:37](#) When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

[Act 2:38](#) 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.

[Act 2:39](#) The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

[Act 2:40](#) With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

[Act 2:41](#) Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

[Act 2:42](#) They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

[Act 2:43](#) Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

[Act 2:44](#) All the believers were together and had everything in common.

[Act 2:45](#) They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

[Act 2:46](#) 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,

[Act 2:47](#) praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.