

Bible Stories for Adults

Pentecost

Acts 2

Opening

Gathering: How does a person's witness change when they are filled with the Spirit?

Today's Focus: The apostles began to effectively witness as soon as they were filled with the power and understanding of the Holy Spirit – just as Jesus had promised.

Key Verses: *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:4*

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 Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Witnesses to the World (*Acts 1:4-8*)

What responsibility did Jesus leave with His disciples before He left to be with His Father?

Matthew 28:19-20 = Go, Make disciples of all nations, Baptize, Teach

Were the apostles to immediately begin witnessing on their own?

Acts 1:4 = No, they were to wait in Jerusalem for the Spirit

What gift had the Father promised?

Acts 1:5 = Baptism with the Holy Spirit

How effective would the Spirit make these witnesses? = Spirit witnesses through us

Acts 1:8 = Able to take the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, ends of the earth

The Message of the Spirit (*John 16:13-15*)

What proof do we have that Christians could not even begin this task without the Spirit?

Acts 1:6 = Even after 3 years with Jesus, apostles didn't understand who He was

How would this be changed by the coming of the Spirit?

John 14:26 = The Holy Spirit would bring understanding to them

Would the Spirit bring a different message than what Jesus brought?

John 16:13-15 = No, both bring the same message - the Father's message

What is this message? = Gentiles and Jews are fellow heirs

Ephesians 3:4-6 = The mystery now revealed that Jesus offers salvation to all people

Did the early Christians immediately understand the universal aspect of this message?

Acts 11:1-4, 18 = No, it was great news when they realized salvation was for all

The Spirit and the World (*John 16:7-8*)

If the message is for the whole world, how would the world accept this Spirit?

John 14:16-17 = The evil world wouldn't even see or know the Spirit, Will live in you

How would the Spirit deal with this evil world when He came? = Add S, R, J to the board

John 16:7-8 = He'll reprove and convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment

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The Spirit's News About Sin (*John 16:9*)

What news would the Spirit reveal to the world in regard to sin?

John 16:9 = The sin of not believing in, or having faith in, Jesus Christ

Why is it important for the world to recognize this sin? = No saving faith without the Spirit

Mark 3:28-29 = Shutting off the work of the Spirit is the unforgivable sin

The Spirit's News About Righteousness (*John 16:10*)

What news would the Spirit reveal to the world in regard to righteousness?

John 16:10 = Jesus has gone to the Father to bring us righteousness

How does Jesus being with the Father bring us righteousness? = atoning sacrifice

1 John 2:1-2 = Being righteous Himself, Jesus *speaks to the Father in our defense*

How is this righteousness news to the world?

Romans 10:1-4 = Righteousness is through faith, not something we do on our own

The Spirit's News About Judgment (*John 16:11*)

What news would the Spirit reveal to the world in regard to judgment?

John 16:11 = The evil prince of the world has been condemned

Why should this be important to individuals in the world?

Revelation 20:10, 13-15 = Those belonging to the evil prince will be destroyed with him

The Spirit and the Apostles (*Luke 24:49*)

If the Spirit will reveal all of these things to the world, what is the role of the apostles?

John 15:26-27 = They must also testify as witnesses

Would they be working alongside the Spirit or in different areas?

Luke 24:49 = Neither, they would be *clothed* with the power of the Spirit

Was the sending of the Spirit a new concept introduced by Jesus?

Joel 2:28-32 (Isaiah 44:3, Ezekiel 36:25-27, etc) = God promised His Spirit throughout history

The Apostles Wait (*Acts 1:12-26*)

What did the apostles do while they were waiting for the promised Spirit?

Acts 1:12, 14 = They stayed in Jerusalem and prayed constantly

How many Christians were there at this time?

Acts 1:15 = About 120

Did they have any business to take care of during this time?

Acts 1:16-20 = Peter said they needed to fulfill prophesy and replace Judas

How could they appoint someone who hadn't experienced all of Jesus' ministry as they had?

Acts 1:21-22 = There were other disciples who had been with them the whole time

How would they know who God had chosen?

Acts 1:23-26 = They picked two, prayed for guidance and trusted God to show them

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Feast of Weeks (Acts 2:1)

- What major festival did the Jews celebrate besides Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles?
Deuteronomy 16:9-10 = The Feast of Weeks, Seven weeks after beginning of harvest
- To make the festival date more universal and predictable, the Jews set it 50 days after Passover
Commonly referred to as *Fiftieth* (Greek word meaning *Fiftieth* is *Pentecost*)
- Where would Jews try to be to celebrate this harvest festival?
Acts 20:16 = In Jerusalem
- Where were the waiting apostles when this day came?
Acts 2:1 = *Together in one place* - in Jerusalem

The Spirit's Magnificent Entrance Into the World (Acts 2:2-4)

- What did it sound like when the promised Spirit came on Pentecost?
Acts 2:2 = Sounded like a violent wind, but there was no wind
- What did it look like when the promised Spirit came on Pentecost?
Acts 2:3 = Tongues of fire separated and rested of each of the disciples, individually
- How were Jesus' chosen witnesses affected by this Spirit?
Acts 2:4 = They were all filled with the Spirit, began to speak in other languages

People of the World Respond (Acts 2:5-13)

- Could these sounds be heard by others or just the affected believers?
Acts 2:5-6 = Pentecost visitors from all over heard and came to see
- Did they think anything of hearing these Galileans speak in their languages?
Acts 2:7-12 = They were amazed that uneducated Galileans knew other languages
Note: List of nations represented the surrounding world to the Jews = Refer to map
- How did some try to explain some of the strange languages they heard?
Acts 2:13 = They're drunk

Let Me Explain (Acts 2:14-21)

- Who understood what was happening and explained it to the crowd?
Acts 2:14 = Peter
- How did he respond to the accusation that they were drunk? = drunks can't speak clearly
Acts 2:15 = It's too early - Jews fasted on festival days at least until 10 am
- So what were the people seeing and hearing?
Acts 2:16 (16-21) = The fulfillment of Joel's prophesy of the coming of the Spirit

The Real Explanation (Acts 2:22-28)

- What did Peter say with this opportunity to speak to people from all around the world?
Acts 2:22-24 = He witnessed to Jesus' life, death and resurrection
- Why was it important for Peter to point out Jesus' *miracles, wonders and signs*?
John 3:2 = They proved that God had sent Him
- What did Peter mean by *God's set purpose and foreknowledge*?
Luke 24:25-27 = Jesus' sufferings had been planned and foretold by God from eternity
- How did Peter begin his explanation of Jesus resurrection?
Acts 2:25-28 = Quoted Psalm 16 - David said *You will not abandon me to the grave*

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David's Lord (Acts 2:29-36)

Was David referring to himself?

Acts 2:29 = No, he died and knew he would

Who was David talking about?

Acts 2:30-31 = The resurrection of the Messiah promised to descend from him

Who is this Messiah that David spoke of and how did Peter know?

Acts 2:32 = Jesus, The apostles are witnesses

What proof did Peter have?

Acts 2:33 = Jesus is with the Father and sent the Holy Spirit as you can see and hear

What other proof did Peter give?

Acts 2:34-36 = David spoke of the ascended Jesus at the right hand of the Father

The People's Response (Acts 2:37-41)

How did the people respond when the Spirit convinced them of their sin?

Acts 2:37 = They were cut to the heart and asked what they should do

How did the Spirit then convince them of their righteousness?

Acts 2:38-39 = Peter offered forgiveness and Holy Spirit through repentance and baptism

How did the Spirit convince them of the coming judgment?

Acts 2:40 = He warned them through Peter to get away from the *corrupt generation*

How did the people respond to this work of the Spirit?

Acts 2:41 = About 3000 accepted the Spirit and were baptized

Children of the Father

Should we expect the Spirit to come to us like He came to the early Christians on Pentecost?

Luke 11:13 = The Father will give the Spirit to His children who ask

How do we ask for the Spirit?

Acts 8:14-17 = Pray for it, Open our hearts for it

Why should we want the Spirit to live in us?

Romans 8:9-11 = We won't be controlled by sin, we'll receive life

How do we know if we have the Spirit in us?

Galatians 5:16-25 = If we bear the fruit of the Spirit rather than acts of sinful nature

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I sensed the power of the Spirit in my life?
(Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 14-18; Judges 13:24-25; 14:6; 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:6, 9-11; 16:13; 19:23-24)
2. How have I allowed the Spirit to work through me?
(Acts 2:14-47; 6:5, 8-10; Genesis 41:38-40; Numbers 27:15-23; Judges 6:34-35)
3. How has the Spirit convicted me of guilt in regard to sin?
(John 16:7-8; Acts 2:37; Proverbs 16:2; John 8:7-11; Romans 3:23; James 2:10; 1 John 1:8-10)
4. How has the Spirit convicted me of guilt in regard to righteousness?
(John 16:7-8; Acts 2:38-39; Isaiah 64:6; Luke 18:9-14; Romans 1:16-17; 3:1-31; 9:30-32; 10:3-4)
5. How has the Spirit convicted me of guilt in regard to judgment?
(John 16:7-8; Acts 2:40-41; Proverbs 21:2; Matthew 25:31-46; John 3:16-18; 4:22-29; Romans 1:18-32; 2:1-16)