

October 13, 2019
The Spirit of the New Testament Church!
Acts 2

“From the depths to the dawn, You are there, Your promise is strong I will trust with all that I am.” You are there, Your promise is strong! But how can Jesus be with us when He ascended back to heaven? It all has to do with His promise. Let’s pray and ask God to teach us what His promise to always be with us has to do with the Spirit of the New Testament Church! Let’s pray.

Before we read our text, I want to remind you of a promise Jesus made to His disciples and ultimately to you and me. It is found in John’s Gospel.

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--

John 14:17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

John 14:18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

Who is this Counselor He’s talking about, this Spirit of Truth who is to live with us and in us? And why does Jesus then say “because I live, you will also live? And to top it off He says...

John 14:20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

What day is He talking about? Let’s turn to our text for today and we will find some answers! Acts 2:1...

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

Acts 2:2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

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

(Let me just point out to you that in this passage it does not say unknown tongues, but other tongues. Let’s keep reading and you’ll understand.)

Acts 2:5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

Acts 2:6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

Acts 2:7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?"

Acts 2:8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?

Acts 2:9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

Acts 2:10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome

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

Acts 2:12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Acts 2:13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

(Don't you just love the world's logic? These guys are speaking other languages, fluently, so they must be drunk! Boy when someone doesn't want to accept a miracle they'll get pretty goofy to try and explain it away!)

Acts 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.

Acts 2:15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

Acts 2:16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

Acts 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.

Acts 2:18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

So now we know the day Jesus was talking about, when He said...

John 14:20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

I believe He was talking about the Day of Pentecost when The Holy Spirit, the Divine Counselor, was given powerfully to the New Testament Church! The promise of Jesus and at least a portion of the prophecy of the ancient prophet Joel, are fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, and we discover the Spirit of the New Testament Church is in fact The Holy Spirit. When we examine the promise of Jesus and the prophecy of Joel we also discover this very important truth...

The Holy Spirit is the Person of God

Remember Jesus had said this...

John 14:17...But you know **Him**, for **He** lives with you and will be in you.

John 14:18 **I** will not leave you as orphans; **I** will come to you.

Notice Jesus didn't say "you know it", or "it lives with you and will be in you," but "you know Him and He lives with you and will be in you!"

Joel had prophesied this and Peter quotes the prophet in our text...

Acts 2:17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out **my Spirit** on all people.

God says, I will pour out "My Spirit!" In other words...

The Holy Spirit, **He** is the Spirit of God, **He** is the Person of God! **He** is the third person of the Holy Trinity! God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit! **He** is not an impersonal object, substance or force! He is God!

"Have you got it?" is not the proper way to refer to The Holy Spirit! He is the Spirit of God and why does this matter? Because the Holy Spirit is the very Spirit of God Almighty, and as such, He is our Teacher/Our Guide/Our Counselor!

He is Our Teacher

Jesus said these things about His Holy Spirit in John's Gospel...

John 14:26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

And then in Luke's Gospel...

Luke 12:11 "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say,

Luke 12:12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say."

I don't know about you, but I need the Holy Spirit to teach me on a daily basis. I need Him to explain and interpret Scripture to me, and to give me wisdom to know how to apply those principles in the different life situations I'm faced with! Listen to the way the Psalmist expressed this...

Psa 51:6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts ; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Psa 86:11 Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

Psa 119:18 Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

Psa 119:19 I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me.

Psa 119:20 My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.

And here's a beautiful truth: If you allow the Holy Spirit to be your teacher, then you will discover He takes it to the next level, because...

He is Our Guide

Jesus said this...

John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 16:14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.

John 16:15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

The Psalmist alludes to this guidance again in Psalm 25 and Psalm 119...

Psa 25:4 Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths;

Psa 25:5 guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

Psa 119:35 Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight.

Psa 119:36 Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain.

Psa 119:37 Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.

So the Holy Spirit is our teacher, our guide, and...

He is Our Counselor

John 16:7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

How about having your very own personal counselor at your side, 24/7? How cool is that? Very cool indeed!!!! The Psalmist put it this way in Psalm 119...

Psa 119:24 Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.

Psa 119:25 I am laid low in the dust; preserve my life according to your word.

Psa 119:26 I recounted my ways and you answered me; teach me your decrees.

Psa 119:27 Let me understand the teaching of your precepts; then I will meditate on your wonders.

Psa 119:28 My soul is weary with sorrow; strengthen me according to your word.

Isn't it beautiful how the Word of God teaches us amazing truths and how the Old and the New Testament complement each other so wonderfully? Jesus told us He would send us another counselor to remind us of all the things He had taught us. And we see in this Psalm that the very statutes of God are like personal counselors for us and

because the Holy Spirit teaches us those things we understand that He is not only our teacher and guide, but our very own counselor!!

Now I know some of you may have a translation that says comforter instead of counselor. Actually there are several ways to translate the Greek word "Paraklete" in John's Gospel. According to the Holman Bible Dictionary, the following can be used: Helper, Comforter, Counselor or Advocate! Most scholars agree that Counselor is the best translation, but I will add this caveat, "What a comfort to know that The Holy Spirit of God is your counselor! What a help to know that we have an Advocate with The Father making intercession on our behalf! I love the way the writer of Hebrews put it..

Heb 13:5 ... because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."
Heb 13:6 So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

And this truth found in Romans...

Rom 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

This leads us to the next major truth concerning the Spirit of The New Testament Church...

The Holy Spirit is the Presence of God

We discover in our text that Peter quotes Old Testament Scripture from Psalms 16:8-11. Just before He quotes this passage Peter reminds the people that God had shown His presence and done His work of salvation through Jesus His Son. Jesus was the presence of God in the flesh. Listen...

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, 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.

Acts 2:23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

Acts 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.

Peter then reminds them of the prophecy of David in Psalms about Jesus being God in the flesh...

Acts 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.

Acts 2:26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope,

Acts 2:27 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

Acts 2:28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.'

Peter is letting the people know how vital it is to have the presence of God in our lives and how...

The Presence of God is essential to the survival of the Church!

Listen as Peter continues...

Acts 2:29 "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.

Acts 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.

Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

Acts 2:32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

Acts 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.

In other words, once Jesus, God in the flesh, God's presence with the disciples, once He had ascended to the right hand of the Father, He poured out His Holy Spirit on His follower, because without the presence of God the followers of Christ, the church, the body of Christ in this world, cannot survive! In fact David had once said these powerful words...

Psa 51:11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

Psa 51:12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

And Moses had said these words to God when the Children of Israel were in the desert wilderness...

Exo 33:15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.

Exo 33:16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

Exo 33:17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Exo 33:18 Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

Exo 33:19 And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

And to whom does the Lord have mercy and compassion? We find the answer to this in our text...

Acts 2:21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

And this leads us to this powerful truth about The Spirit of the New Testament Church...

The Holy Spirit is the Power of God

We turn to our text to see the power of God shown through His precious Holy Spirit! The Power of God to save, to transform, to do things that could never be done by human strength or wisdom! God shows us the amazing power of His Holy Spirit as He takes the very man who had denied Jesus three times and who had run away weeping bitterly, God, by the person, the presence and the power of His Holy Spirit uses Peter to start a world wide spiritual awakening! Listen...

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Acts 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?"

Acts 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.

Acts 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."

Acts 2:40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Boy I would have loved to have been there on that day! But I'm excited to see what God is going to do in our day! But you say, "Pastor Larry, I just don't know, I mean things are so different today and people are so skeptical, and it's just hard for me to see how we could even have a spiritual awakening given the moral, cultural and political climate in our country. And when you look at the terrible situations around the world, I just don't know if there could be a repeat like The Day of Pentecost! Well let me remind you of the circumstances and background of our story today. Israel was occupied by the Romans. A majority of the religious leaders were corrupt and had sold out to the Romans in order to maintain their institutional power and control. Jesus, the leader of the grass roots movement for reform had been brutally crucified. There were only 120 left of the thousands who had once attended Jesus' outside rallies. The threats of ongoing persecution were real. These 120 had seen the brutality of what would happen to anyone who apposed those in power and yet, at the most prominent and highest attended Jewish festival, these people, led by Peter, emboldened by the person, the presence and the power of God's Holy Spirit, made their stand, proclaimed the truth and

stood on their convictions in a loving, yet bold and passionate way and God poured out His Spirit and drew the hearts of lost people to Him. Listen again to what God's Word says...

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The same power that was available to the New Testament Church is available to Northshore Church! Listen to Paul's words to the Church in Rome back in the days of great persecution...

Rom 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The New Testament Church was powerful because they relied on the Holy Spirit for their strength! Listen to Paul's words to the church at Ephesus

Eph 3:14 For this reason I kneel before the Father,

Eph 3:15 from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

Eph 3:16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

Eph 3:17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

Eph 3:18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

Eph 3:19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Eph 3:20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

Eph 3:21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Folks, God's purpose for His Church has not changed and...

The Holy Spirit reveals the Purpose of the Church

We find this beautiful description of the New Testament Church and I believe the Holy Spirit inspired these words to serve as a template for the purpose of any Biblically based church...

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

Acts 2:44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

Acts 2:45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

Acts 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,
Acts 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.

This template includes outreach, evangelism, discipleship, prayer, fellowship, ministry to one another, unity of mind and mission, praise and worship, and church growth! And if you look closely at this passage you'll discover...

The Holy Spirit fuels the Church's Passion

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

And what led to this passionate devotion? I'll close with the answer found in Titus 3:4-7

Titus 3:4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared,
Titus 3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
Titus 3:6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,
Titus 3:7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Let's pray!