St. Stephen AME Zion Church

5-WEEK VIRTUAL

HOLY SPIRIT & PENTECOST



BIBLE STUDY SERIES

EVERY WEDNESDAY | 7PM

zoom LIVE

ID: 538 095 5668
Passcode: 1001



Rev. Dianne Tam, CED Coordinator



The Promise, The Power, The Presence

A Bible Study on the Holy Spirit & Pentecost

Don’t just admire Pentecost – live in it



Week	Bible Lesson	Scriptures
1	The Promise	John 14:16-17, Acts 1:4-5
2	The Waiting Season	Acts 1:12-14, Isaiah 40:31
3	Pentecost Power	Acts 2:1–4, Joel 2:28–29
4	Purpose of Pentecost	Acts 2:5–12, Acts 2:37–41
5	Life in the Spirit Daily Walk	Acts 2:42–47, Galatians 5:22–23 Romans 8:1–14, Galatians 5:16



Understanding when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus being baptized as a dove but in Pentecost it was cloven tongues of fire





The Holy Spirit as a Dove (Jesus' Baptism)

📖 **Key Scripture:** Matthew 3:16 (also in Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22)

What happened?

- When Jesus was baptized by John:
- The heavens opened
- The Spirit **descended like a dove**
- God the Father spoke: *"This is My beloved Son…"*

What does the dove represent?

The dove symbolizes:

- **Peace & purity**
- **Gentleness**
- **Divine approval**
- **New beginnings** (echoing Genesis and Noah)

👉 This moment was about **identity and affirmation**:

Jesus is being *revealed* publicly as the Son of God

The Spirit is **resting upon Him** for His earthly ministry

💡 Think of it as:

The Spirit coming **upon Jesus for empowerment and confirmation**





The Holy Spirit as Cloven Tongues of Fire (Pentecost)

📖 **Key Scripture:** Acts 2:1-4

On the Day of Pentecost:

- The disciples were gathered in one place
- A **rushing mighty wind** filled the room
- **Cloven tongues like fire** rested on each of them
- They began speaking in other tongues

What does the fire represent?

Fire symbolizes:

- **Power** 🔥
- **Purification**
- **God's presence** (like burning bush, pillar of fire)
- **Boldness and transformation**

👉 This moment was about **activation and mission**:

- The Spirit is now **within believers**
- The Church is **born**
- The disciples are empowered to **preach and witness boldly**

💡 Think of it as:

The Spirit coming **into believers for transformation and mission**

✨ Why the Difference?

Here's the key distinction:

Jesus' Baptism 🕊️	Pentecost 🔥
Spirit **descends on one person (Jesus)**	Spirit **fills many believers**
Symbol: **Dove (peace, identity)**	Symbol: **Fire (power, action)**
Marks the **beginning of Jesus' ministry**	Marks the **beginning of the Church**
Gentle, affirming	Powerful, activating

Lesson 1: The Promise

- John 14:16–17
- Acts 1:4–5

- The Holy Spirit is promised, not optional.
- He is our Helper, Teacher, and Guide.

John 14:16-17 (Living Bible)

15-16 "If you love me, obey me; and I will ask the Father and he will give you another Comforter, and he will never leave you. **17** He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who leads into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, for it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you do, for he lives with you now and some day shall be in you.

The Setting – The Upper Room

This is the final conversation Jesus is having with His disciples before the cross. What He says in John 14 sets the stage for Pentecost.

- Final night before crucifixion
- During Passover
- Betrayal & denial announced
- Atmosphere: heavy, emotional

The Shift – From Physical to Spiritual

- Before: Jesus WITH them
- After: Jesus IN them
- External → Internal guidance

The Promise – Another Helper

- John 14:16–17
- Helper, Spirit of Truth, Abides forever

The Promise – Another Helper

🧠 **The Original Meaning: *Paraklētos***

- The word translated “Helper” comes from the Greek:
- **Paraklētos (παράκλητος)**

It literally means:

- **“One called alongside to help”**

But it carries multiple dimensions:

- Advocate (like a defense attorney)
- Comforter (one who strengthens you emotionally)
- Counselor (one who guides you)
- Intercessor (one who speaks on your behalf)

💡 So “Helper” is not weak—it’s **powerful, relational, and active**.

Spirit of Truth

✨ **What Does "Spirit of Truth" Mean?**

At its core:

- **The Holy Spirit is the One who reveals, confirms, and aligns us with God's truth.**

Not just facts—but **divine truth**:

- Who God is
- Who you are
- What is right
- What is false

Spirit of Truth

⚖️ **Spirit of Truth vs. Spirit of Error**
The Bible contrasts truth and deception:
👉 1 John 4:6
"…the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."

Difference:

Spirit of Truth	Spirit of Error
Leads to clarity	Leads to confusion
Aligns with God's Word	Twists God's Word
Brings conviction	Brings deception or denial
Produces freedom	Produces bondage

"The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth is God's voice inside you—helping you see clearly, live rightly, and stay anchored in what is real."

Abides Forever

✨ **What Does “Abides Forever” Mean?**

At its core:

The Holy Spirit is not temporary—He lives with and in believers permanently.

“Abide” means:

- To remain
- To dwell
- To stay continually

So Jesus is saying:

“The Spirit is not coming for a moment… He is coming to stay.”

The Holy Spirit Defined

- Comforter, Teacher, Guide, Presence

✨ The Holy Spirit: Roles and Meanings

Role	Definition	Key Scripture	What It Means for You
Comforter 🕊️	The One who brings peace, encouragement, and strength in times of trouble	John 14:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4	You are never alone in your pain—He strengthens and sustains you even when circumstances don't change
Teacher 📖	The One who instructs, reveals, and helps you understand God's Word	John 14:26	He makes Scripture come alive and gives you understanding beyond natural knowledge
Guide 🧭	The One who leads you into truth and directs your decisions	John 16:13	You don't have to rely on your own understanding—He provides direction and discernment
Presence 🏠	The abiding, indwelling presence of God that remains with you forever	John 14:17; Ephesians 1:13-14	God is not distant—He lives within you, assuring you of His nearness and your identity in Him

Comforter → *He strengthens me*
Teacher → *He teaches me*
Guide → *He leads me*
Presence → *He stays with me*

The World vs The Believer

- World cannot receive Him
- Believers KNOW Him
- Relationship determines revelation

✨ **What Does It Mean That "the World Cannot Know Him"?**

- In Scripture, "the world" doesn't mean people in general—it refers to a **mindset and system that is disconnected from God**.
- So, this is not about exclusion—it's about **spiritual condition**.

The Pentecost Connection

- Promise fulfilled in Acts 2
- Private promise → Public power

What Changed at Pentecost

- Fear → Boldness
- Hiding → Preaching
- Confusion → Empowerment

Key Teaching Point

- Jesus didn’t leave them empty—He left them equipped
- Promise → Presence → Power

Application – For Us Today

- You are not alone
- You are guided
- You are empowered

Acts 1:4-5 (Living Bible)

4 In one of these meetings he told them not to leave Jerusalem
until the Holy Spirit came upon them in fulfillment of the
Father's promise, a matter he had previously discussed with
them.

5 "John baptized you with water,"[a] he reminded them, "but you
shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit in just a few days."

Acts 1:4–5

- Summary & Background
- Jesus prepares His disciples for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Background of Acts

- Written by Luke
- Occurs after Jesus' resurrection
- 40 days of teaching about the Kingdom
- Transition to the early Church

The Setting

- Jesus is with His disciples
- Just before His ascension
- Giving final instructions
- Preparing them for what's next

The Instruction

- Do not leave Jerusalem
- Wait for the promise of the Father
- You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit

Key Message

- Wait before you move
- Do not rely on your own strength
- You need the Holy Spirit first

Theme: The Power of Waiting

- The disciples had a mission
- But they had to wait
- God’s timing is essential

Theme: The Promise of the Father

- God fulfills His promise
- Connected to prophecy (Joel 2:28)

28 *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:*

- The Spirit is coming

Theme: From Water to Spirit

- John’s baptism = outward
- Holy Spirit = inward power
- Shift from ritual to relationship

Connection to Pentecost

- Leads into Acts 2
- Waiting leads to outpouring
- Promise becomes reality

Devotional Insight

- Do not move without the Spirit
- Calling + Power = Impact

The 2 Scriptures together

- From John 14:16-17
  Jesus promises:
  - "Another Helper" (the Holy Spirit)
  - One who will abide forever
  - The Spirit of truth who will live in and with believers

❖ This is a personal promise of presence

- From Acts 1:4-5
  - Jesus commands:
    - Wait for the promise of the Father
    - You will be baptized with the Holy Spirt

❖ This is a practical instruction to receive power

The Holy Spirit is God's promised presence within us and His power upon us – received not by striving but by waiting and trusting.

You don't have to strive for what God has already promised.
You just have to position yourself to receive it.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father,
Thank you for the promise of Your Holy Spirit.
Help us to wait on You and not move ahead in our own strength

Fill us afresh, O God,
And let Your Spirit guide, strengthen, and empower us
To live and walk in Your truth.

Position our hearts to receive all the You have promised,
And help us to trust Your timing.

In Jesus' name,
Amen