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



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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 (4/22)	Pentecost Power	Acts 2:1–4, Joel 2:28–29
4 (4/29)	Purpose of Pentecost	Acts 2:5–12, Acts 2:37–41
5 (5/6)	Life in the Spirit Daily Walk	Acts 2:42–47, Galatians 5:22–23 Romans 8:1–14, Galatians 5:16

Acts 2:5–12

5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Acts 2:37-41

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Acts 2:5–12 (When God Speaks to Everyone)

- In this Bible study we explore how the Holy Spirit moved beyond the upper room and impacted the crowd. Emphasize here is that this passage shows not just power—but **purpose**. God is communicating something important to the world.
- Let’s understand who was present in Jerusalem at this moment.

Acts 2:5–12 – A Global Gathering

- Devout Jews from every nation
- Gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost
- A multicultural, multilingual crowd

Explain Pentecost as a major Jewish feast drawing pilgrims from across the known world. These were diaspora Jews—people who lived in different regions but came to worship. This was not a small or local moment—this was a **global audience**.

Jesus' Earthly Mission

🗺️ What That Looked Like Geographically







- Most of His teaching and miracles happened in **Galilee** (e.g., Capernaum)
- He traveled through **Samaria** (like the woman at the well – John 4)
- His final ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection took place in **Judea (Jerusalem)**

👉 So yes, geographically speaking, His ministry was **localized—not global in physical movement**

But Here’s the Deeper Spiritual Insight

While His **physical presence was limited**, His **mission was never meant to be local.**

📖 1. His Ministry Was Strategic, Not Limited

Jesus focused on:

- Training disciples
- Teaching the Kingdom of God
- Preparing a movement that would spread

Global Expansion of the Gospel

🌐 **3. From One Region to the Whole World**

- Jesus' **body** was in one place
- But His **Spirit and message** now reach everywhere

👉 This is why the Gospel spread rapidly through:

- The apostles
- Missionary journeys (like Paul)
- The early church

"Jesus was **physically local**, but **spiritually global**.
What He started in one region, the Holy Spirit expanded to the entire world."

Global Expansion of the Gospel

🔥 **2. The Expansion Came Through the Holy Spirit**

After His resurrection, Jesus told His followers:

👉 Acts 1:8

"You shall receive power... and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

- In Acts 2 (Pentecost), the Spirit empowers the disciples
- The message that was once in one region now becomes global

The Miracle of Language (Acts 2:6-8)

- Each person heard their own language
- Disciples spoke by the Spirit
- Clear communication of God's works

Emphasis is not the confusion—it was clarity. The Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in languages they had not learned. Every listener heard in their native tongue. God removed barriers so His message could be understood

This wasn't just a few people—Scripture even tells us where they came from

The Nations Represented (Acts 2:9-11)

- Parthians, Medes, Elamites
- Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia
- Egypt, Libya, Rome, and more
- A picture of the known world

This shows geographical diversity—Middle East, Africa, and Europe and demonstrates that God was already setting the stage for a **worldwide gospel mission**. Pentecost was not accidental—it was strategic.

Transition:
"With all of this happening, how did the people respond?"

The Reaction – Amazed and Confused (Acts 2:12)

- Amazement: “How can this be?”
- Confusion: “What does this mean?”
- Curiosity opens the door to truth

Note that the crowd didn’t fully understand—but they were open. Sometimes God will do something in our lives that we don’t immediately understand, but it draws us to seek Him more deeply.

Transition:
“This moment actually connects to something much earlier in Scripture.”

Reversal of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)



The Core Reason: Human Pride & Self-Exaltation

The people said:

“Let us build… a tower… and make a name for ourselves” (Gen. 11:4)

👉 **What was the issue?**

It wasn’t just construction—it was **motivation**

They were trying to:

- Glorify themselves instead of God
- Build independence from God
- Centralize power and identity around human achievement

Reversal of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)

1. Disobedience to God's Command

God had already commanded humanity:

👉 Genesis 1:28 — "Be fruitful… fill the earth"

👉 Genesis 9:1 — Reaffirmed after the flood

But instead:

They **stayed together in one place**

They resisted spreading across the earth

👉 God divided them to **fulfill His original plan**

Reversal of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)

⚠️ **2. To Stop Unified Rebellion**

👉 Genesis 11:6

“Nothing they propose to do will be withheld from them”

Meaning:

- Their unity was being used for **wrong purposes**
- United rebellion can become **dangerous and limitless**

👉 God intervened to prevent **greater corruption**

Reversal of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)

🌎 **3. To Scatter the Nations**

👉 Genesis 11:8

- God confused their language
- Communication broke down
- People scattered across the earth

Result:

- Different nations formed
- Different languages developed

Reversal of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)

🧠 **4. To Humble Humanity**

- The Tower of Babel is a lesson that:
- Human achievement without God leads to **pride**
- God will not allow self-glorification to replace Him

👉 It was an act of **correction, not cruelty**

Key Spiritual Lessons

- The Gospel is for everyone
- God meets people where they are
- The Holy Spirit empowers communication
- Barriers are removed through the Spirit

God still speaks in ways people can understand. The Holy Spirit equips us to reach others beyond our natural ability—across cultures, backgrounds, and differences.

Transition:
“Let’s bring this home personally.”

📊 How God Speaks to Us

Way God Speaks	Description	Scripture Reference	What It Looks Like in Life
📖 Through His Word	God speaks clearly through Scripture; His truth is the foundation	2 Timothy 3:16	A verse stands out, brings clarity, correction, or encouragement
🕊️ Through the Holy Spirit	The Spirit guides, convicts, and gives inner direction	John 16:13	Inner peace, a "check" in your spirit, or strong prompting
🙏 Through Prayer	A two-way conversation where we speak and listen	Jeremiah 33:3	Clarity, impressions, or answers that come during/after prayer
👥 Through People	God uses wise, spiritual counsel to guide us	Proverbs 11:14	A pastor, mentor, or friend confirms what God is saying
🌿 Through Circumstances	God can guide through life situations and outcomes	Romans 8:28	Open doors, closed doors, unexpected shifts
🌙 Through Dreams & Visions	God may speak through supernatural means	Joel 2:28	Meaningful dreams, visions, or strong spiritual impressions

Discernment Filter

Question to Ask	Purpose
Does it align with Scripture?	God never contradicts His Word
Does it bring peace, not confusion?	The Spirit brings clarity
Is it consistent with God's character?	God is loving, just, and true
Is it confirmed in more than one way?	God often confirms His voice

"God speaks in many ways—but His voice will always align with His Word and lead us into truth."

Reflection & Application

- How is God speaking to you today?
- Are you open to His voice?
- Who is God calling you to reach?

Notes:

Encourage reflection. The same Spirit at Pentecost is active today. The challenge is to not just hear—but respond.

Final Points from Acts 2:37-41
The Response to the Message

🎯 **Key Takeaways**

- **The Word of God should pierce the heart**
  → "They were cut to the heart" (v.37)
- **Conviction requires a response**
  → "What shall we do?"
- **Salvation involves clear steps**
  - Repent
  - Be baptized
  - Receive the Holy Spirit
- **God's promise is for everyone**
  → "For you, your children, and all who are far off"
- **A transformed life leads to public commitment**
  → 3,000 souls were added

Final Points from Acts 2:5-12
The Outpouring & Confusion of the Crowd

🎯 Key Takeaways

- **God meets people where they are**
  → He spoke in their *own language* so they could understand
- **The Gospel is for all people—not just one group**
  → Different nations, cultures, and backgrounds were present
- **The Holy Spirit removes barriers**
  → Language, culture, and distance are no obstacle for God
- **God's work will often leave people amazed—but questioning**
  → "What does this mean?" (v.12)
- **Not everyone will understand or accept immediately**
  → Some were curious, others skeptical (v.13 context)

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