

A Whirlwind...

Acts 2

Context

Jesus was here on earth—chose 12 disciples
Disciples spent time with Jesus, but didn't really understand what was happening
Jesus betrayed by one of their own and crucified
Disciples were afraid for their own lives and rightly so
Jesus resurrected
Disciples were happy but didn't understand
Jesus ascended into heaven
Disciples confused at this second going
Waited for the Holy Spirit?? What is that??
Religious leaders of the day are against them
They are afraid for their own lives — they could be crucified also

It is these frightened and cowed disciples that we find in the upper room waiting
While there it is time to celebrate Pentecost
Pentecost is one of the feasts of ancient Judaism—roots in Leviticus 23:15-21
Called both the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of First Fruits
Scheduled to begin at the end of harvest
Called Pentecost because it began 50 days after first Sunday after Passover
Festival of Weeks when they presented an offering of the first fruits of their grain
Celebrated the harvest and the giving of the law to Moses
During the festival they renewed the covenant with Moses
...the covenant between the people and God
It had become one of 3 pilgrim festivals to Jerusalem
Along with Passover (50 days earlier) and Tabernacles (4 months later)
Pilgrims came from all over to celebrate the festival—gathered in Jerusalem
People from the diaspora—dispersed Jews came back to Jerusalem
Diaspora—the name applied to the Jews living outside of Palestine
that maintain their religious faith among the Gentiles.
God had warned the Jews through Moses that dispersion
among other nations would be their lot if
they departed from the Mosaic Law (Deut 4:27; 28:64-68).
These prophecies were largely fulfilled in the two captivities,
by Assyria and Babylonia.
Especially from the time of Alexander the Great,
many thousands of Jews emigrated
for the purposes of trade and commerce into
neighboring countries, particularly the cities.
By the time of Christ the dispersion must have been several times
the population of Palestine.

This year—the Feast of Pentecost came while the disciples waited in the upper room
The city was bustling with visitors

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During Pentecost the Holy Spirit came
The Holy Spirit made his presence known to the people
The Invisible was made visible
Sound like a strong wind—gale force
In Greek and Hebrew—Spirit=wind=breath
pneuma and ruach
Like a wildfire—visual or metaphor—but felt!
Wind and Fire was evident outside the room to people in the city
Language—people could hear in their own language
Instant interpretation
No one was left out that day—all heard

The Holy Spirit came
These disciples who were afraid were suddenly made bold
They left their hiding place in the upper room
You could not have kept them inside
They told what God had done in Christ Jesus—they named the miracle
They were given the ability to speak so that everyone could understand them
The city was filled with people speaking many different languages
but they all could understand the disciples
What happened there that day would be carried back to their homes
all over that part of the world

Peter told the people what had happened
they listened and repented
3000 new believers were added on that day

The Holy Spirit came that day and stayed...
Resulted in... *Anointed courage and boldness*
Empowered speech
Magnetic community

Holy Spirit is made “visible” when he comes—we can know/hear/see evidence of the Spirit
God comes all the way to us... but not to stay hidden or under cover

Holy Spirit is here today... BUT we don't have to wait for it... it is here NOW
We don't have to repeat the same story
Often sing “Come, Holy Spirit, Come” but the Holy Spirit has already come
Live into the truth of that
Someone said last week, “we didn't talk about Acts 2, we lived it”
That's true! The Holy Spirit came among us

When the Spirit came to the disciples—they didn't stay inside and separate
The wait was over and they knew it
They knew the Spirit had come and they went in power and fullness of the Spirit

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They said “yes” to what was happening among them
Not— are we up for this
Let’s wait and see what happens
Don’t get caught up in the heat of the moment
Is this really God—or just me?
Are you sure?

Lay down your/our excuses
Live in the truth of the Spirit

As a people of God called Friends in North Seattle—we say yes!

Holy Spirit

transforms us
source of power
always with us

gives us words to say
empowers us
makes up for our weaknesses