

## “Outpouring of the Holy Spirit - NT Pentecost”

Scripture: Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-21

Graphics: Holy Spirit, outpouring, fire, wind

Big Truth: The Holy Spirit was not only poured out into the church at Pentecost, but has been poured out on the world since the beginning. The Holy Spirit brought new life from chaos at Creation. The Holy Spirit gives wisdom, courage, and vision to judges, warriors, and prophets. The Holy Spirit prepares the way for the Messiah, who saves. The Holy Spirit empowers and fills the church for mission. We will be ready to receive new life, wisdom and strength, preparation for the Messiah, and power and infilling to be bold witnesses when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives.

Focus Phrase: The Holy Spirit’s outpouring fills me with a bold witness for Jesus.

### 1. Introduction

- A. On the day that Jesus ascended to heaven, we read in Acts 1:8, he said to his disciples, **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**
- B. The two words that I want us to focus on today - beside the Holy Spirit, of course, on this Pentecost Sunday - are POWER and WITNESSES.
- C. When you experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, you will receive POWER. For the past few weeks, we’ve seen what that outpouring did in Old Testament, at Creation, in the lives of the people, and on the Messiah to come.
  - i. At Creation, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit created new life out of chaos. That’s power! And when the Holy Spirit begins to work more and more in OUR lives, we find that OUR chaos starts to give way to new life. Not easy life. Not pain-free life. Not always fun life. But NEW LIFE!
  - ii. When the Holy Spirit powerfully came upon, rushed upon, possessed the Judges, Warriors and Prophets in the Old Testament, they were filled with supernatural wisdom to discern and lead, supernatural courage to fight the enemies of God’s people, and supernatural vision to see God’s plan!
  - iii. Last week, we were anointed for the work of changing the world. As followers of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah for the Jewish people, our Lord, and our Savior, we’re filled with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to do the **world-changing work of Jesus today**.
  - iv. And every morning, you and I are called to pray, “Come Holy Spirit, be powerfully poured out on me for the world changing work of new life. Give me wisdom, courage, and vision to be the hands and feet of Jesus!”
- D. But there’s at least one more outcome of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the world, which we’ll look at today.

- E. When the Holy Spirit that, in Acts 1:8, Jesus promised would come was poured out on the disciples of Jesus on the day of Pentecost, they received POWER to be WITNESSES.
- F. To be a **witness** is to tell others about what you've seen, heard, and experienced about the Risen Christ in your life.
- G. And so, this morning, as we're celebrating the birthday of the church, we also get one more outcome of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our lives - to witness boldly to the world for Jesus.
- H. Here's where we're heading: **The Holy Spirit's outpouring fills me with a bold witness for Jesus.**
- I. Let's pray and then we can open our bibles to Acts chapter 2 and relive the first Pentecost Day with the disciples...
- J. **PRAY! (Jesus, You are Lord...)**
- K. Acts 2, starting in verse 1. We'll break this into two sections this morning, so let's settle in to hear the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit!

## 2. Scripture

### A. READ Acts 2:1-13

- i. The term Pentecost simply means 'fiftieth day'. In Jewish tradition, 50 days after the Passover, they would celebrate the Festival of Weeks.
- ii. The Festival of Weeks was one of the three annual festivals during which the Jewish people would gather together in Jerusalem. During this festival, they would celebrate the wheat harvest and would bring a first-fruits offering to the Temple in Jerusalem.
- iii. The Festival of Weeks was also a celebration of the revelation of the Five Books of the Torah by God to Moses and to the Israelites at Mount Sinai.
- iv. So, we have an outpouring of gratitude and a celebration of God's Word. That's amazing history because God chose Pentecost to empower the church with an outpouring of the presence of the Holy Spirit, which I view as the planting of the wheat...SO THAT the church could boldly witness to the Word of God in the world, who is Jesus, and experience a harvest of souls for Jesus.
- v. **God never wastes an opportunity to help us connect the dots. Amen?** It was during this Festival of Weeks, right after Jesus rose from the dead, that God chose to publicly pour out the Holy Spirit on the church!
- vi. And He didn't just send the Spirit, right? If we read that description of what happened, it was wild and willy! Suddenly, from heaven...a sound like the rush of a violent wind...and it filled the entire house. (let's try this...everyone make a fool of yourself and make a rushing wind sound).

- vii. As that was happening, tongues of fire appeared out of nowhere and these fire-tongues came to rest on each of them. And they were each FILLED with the Holy Spirit.
- viii. Now...the Holy Spirit was NOT the wind. The Holy Spirit was NOT the fire. Just like as Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit was NOT the dove.
- ix. The Holy Spirit was the Holy Spirit. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon a room or a church or a people or a community, it's not quiet and neat. I mean, you KNOW when the Holy Spirit is in the house!
- x. On that first Pentecost, wind and fire and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit led TO something. It didn't lead to the disciples going out to heal people - although that came later. It didn't result in the disciples worshiping, although they did. They didn't run around asking for money or building church buildings, although that happened eventually.
- xi. When the Holy Spirit came upon them in this grand and public outpouring of wind and fire, they began to SPEAK. And, specifically, they began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them abilities which they apparently didn't have prior to that Day.
- xii. The \$10 theological term for this miraculous experience is **xenolalia**, which literally means to speak in other languages as the Spirit gives ability. This is different from **glossolalia**, which is speaking in a God-given prayer language, which we read about in other parts of the NT.
- xiii. This xenolalia was happening all at once. It attracted the attention of people that were nearby. The wind, the fire, and the speaking in other languages must've made quite the ruckus! And loud!
- xiv. People from all over, devout Jews, came together to see what was going on. Each of them, no matter where they were from, could understand what was being said in their own language.
- xv. But what was being spoken, you ask? You guessed it: a WITNESS about God's deeds of POWER! We aren't sure what they were saying but I'm sure it included the Spirit's powerful work at Creation...how God worked through the judges and the warriors like David...and how the Prophets spoke about God power and might.
- xvi. But, mostly, I bet, (come on...) they spoke boldly, in other languages, about the single fact that God raised Jesus from the DEAD and He walked out of that grave, ascended back to heaven, and is present with them!
- xvii. But people were still confused. "What does this mean? Are they drunk?" That's what the crowd was saying! But Peter, who was one of the guys filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in one of those languages, began to do what? SPEAK. That's what the Holy Spirit outpouring did. It gave him

the words to speak...the boldness to speak. Let's keep reading to see what Peter said...

## **B. READ Acts 2:14-21**

- i. Peter stood up, raised his voice, and addressed the people who were amazed and perplexed about what was happening. And when he began to speak, the Holy Spirit was upon him, and he recalled the words from my sermon last week. How cool is that?! Just kidding...actually, the words from my sermon last week were from the prophet Joel, in chapter 2, about dreams and visions and what will happen to the world because of the Spirit being poured out on the Messiah.
- ii. Except, that day, the same Spirit told Peter that not only do the words from Joel apply to Jesus Messiah, but those words, that outpouring, is for everyone! This outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the fulfillment of prophecy!
- iii. So, these men are not drunk, but are just beginning the process of changing the world for Jesus, through the Holy Spirit's outpouring.
- iv. And it **BEGAN** with speaking boldly about Jesus.
- v. So that, verse 21, (say this with me - on screen) **"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."**
- vi. Now, as you read on in Acts 2, you'll find that Peter preached the first gospel sermon...a message about Jesus and why he's important and what his life, death, and resurrection did for the Jewish people.
- vii. After the message, we read in verse 37, "Now when they [the crowds] heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter **said**, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord God calls to him."
- viii. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved!"
- ix. It starts with words. The invitation is with words. The witness is with words. The response is with words - repent and call on the name of the Lord!
- x. I don't mind the phrase that's sometimes attributed to St. Francis, "Preach the Gospel at all times; when necessary, use words." I get it...and don't disagree. But, church, if the early disciples followed that mantra, I think the first Pentecost would have turned out vastly different. I'm not sure anyone would've been converted? Everyone would've been looking at the

disciples and thinking, “Well, I don’t have a tongue of fire on me, so I guess I’m not saved.”

- xi. Pentecost is not about a charismatic, ecstatic event that birthed the church. It was that, but that wasn’t the point. That was only the vehicle God chose to get the bus to the station.
- xii. Pentecost is about empowering people with persuasive speeches about Jesus and his mission that are spoken to a vast, full range of people, places, languages, and cultures...SO THAT Jews, Gentiles, slave and free, male and female, young and old will, “call on the name of the Lord and be saved!” Using words!
- xiii. John Wesley called **gospel preaching** an “awakening experience.” Robert Wall said, “Good preaching compels people to deeper reflection and courageous action, and under the aegis of the Spirit can even transform scoffers into believers!”
- xiv. The church of Jesus Christ has no power to change lives or any kind of effective witness to the world apart from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit...onto those who are saved, called, and equipped to witness boldly using words that come from the Spirit.
- xv. And the message always points back to the risen Jesus. The message is always presented to everyone so that a response can be made. And, maybe most importantly, as we saw at the first Pentecost, the message about Jesus is proclaimed in a specific time and place, for a specific group of people. And it’s urgent...to restore the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven.

### 3. Application

- A. Now, I know that’s a LOT of big picture stuff. But, honestly, Pentecost was a big deal!
- B. But, remember, it wasn’t about flashy wind and fire that proved God is powerful. They already KNEW that. You and I know that! If you don’t, all you need to do is go outside and look up into the night sky. God is powerful!
- C. No, Pentecost then and now is about what’s coming. Birthday parties are great, but they’re a hopeful celebration of what’s to come. In fact, if you think about it, if you stop having birthdays, you don’t have a future here on earth, if you know what I mean.
- D. Every believer, every church, every part of society is changing...in a rebirth process. As believers, you and I are called to lean into a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit in order to be hopeful as we grow into God’s future for us.
- E. And that future requires that you boldly witness to the gospel truth about Jesus...to be persuasive in a way that is loving and winsome for Jesus.
- F. So that, everyone has the opportunity to believe in and follow Jesus for life!

- G. Here are some very simple ways to get yourself in that place to receive a fresh outpouring of the Spirit, and then witness boldly using words.
- i. First, be intentional about **putting yourself in a place** to have an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Best places are in worship and prayer, including the sacraments of holy communion and baptism. Those are the places you are likely to receive an outpouring of the Spirit.
  - ii. Second, **let the Spirit move** in powerful ways in your life. That means letting go of the throttle and letting the Spirit give the gas. That means praying every morning, “Holy Spirit fall afresh on me.” Don’t be afraid to feel the moving of the Spirit.
  - iii. Third thing: **Get into the Word (bible)** to know the message of Jesus. It’s not complicated. “Jesus came to be God with us. Jesus died to take the punishment for our sin. Jesus rose again to defeat death. And Jesus wants to forgive, save, and use you. Repent and be baptized.” Get into the Word and let the Spirit give you the words.
  - iv. Finally, in order to use your words for God, **proclaim Jesus boldly** and invite people to call on His name and be saved. That’s the scary part. But God will give you the people and the place and the words. Don’t be afraid to speak those words in your home, at your work, in your school, on your team...anywhere the Spirit leads you to speak.
- H. The Holy Spirit’s outpouring fills me with a bold witness for Jesus.

#### 4. Conclusion

- A. As we wrap up this Outpouring of the Holy Spirit series, I have to say, I’m going to miss it. It’s been really powerful to see the Spirit moving.
- B. I said last week to someone after worship, if this church becomes known by the world as the church that **prays with people and anoints people with oil**, because that’s what we’ve been about, then I KNOW the world will change as the Kingdom of Heaven comes down to earth in this place.
- C. The Holy Spirit is doing the work of new creation. The Spirit is pouring out on us wisdom and courage and vision. The Spirit is using you and me to change the world. Now is the time to speak the name of Jesus over our community, our church, our families, and this world.
- D. If you weren’t here last week and you want a fresh anointing with oil, as a symbol of the Holy Spirit, then during the last song, just come down front and there will be people here to anoint you. If you WERE here and want MORE anointing, nothing is stopping you. Come on!
- E. Before I pray, know this: the Holy Spirit is for real. The Holy Spirit is active and working in your life. The Holy Spirit wants to fall again on you so that you are empowered to speak the name of Jesus. Be bold! Let’s pray...