



▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

Saturday/Sunday, 5/19-20/18 **“Words of Praise and Power”**

Acts 2:1-13

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs — we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Family Activity: Pentecost is a day that we celebrate receiving the Holy Spirit! Pentecost is a day we consider the birthday of the church with red as liturgical color. On this day, the Holy Spirit came to the first believers so that they could share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the world. This week, take time to celebrate the birthday of the church with a Pentecost party!

Monday, 5/21/18 **“Amazed or Confused”**

Acts 2:14-21

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. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

*“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.*

*Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.
I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*

- This passage from Acts continues from the Sunday scripture. We hear the Holy Spirit has done this amazing thing and allowed the believers to speak in new languages so that they could proclaim the Good News. Instead of being amazed, some of the people present simply made fun of them and thought they had been drinking. What has God done in your life that someone else might not initially understand?
- In this scripture we see that Peter helps to interpret what God is doing for those who couldn't yet understand. How have you been able to be an “interpreter” of God's actions?

Prayer: Dear God, you are amazing and we praise your holy name. We know that there are people who are close to us that can't always understand how you are working in our world. Help us to have the words to be able to share your mighty acts with others, so that they may come to believe in you. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Tuesday, 5/22/18

“Fully Ready”

Acts 2:36-39

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

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. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

- Peter's words are spoken to a group of people that had just witnessed Pentecost and yet somehow, they still hadn't been fully ready to truly experience the living power of God through the Holy Spirit. Looking back, when is a time in your life that you weren't quite ready to truly experience God? How would you say that you have experienced the Holy Spirit lately?
- The Holy Spirit is a gift and promise for each of us. Peter shares that part of being able to fully receive the Holy Spirit is repentance. Repentance is the act of turning from what separates us from God. While we would love for this to be a one-time thing, repentance is often a choice we have to make frequently. What is something in your life that you feel God has called you to turn from? How would this help you to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit more fully?

Prayer: Holy God, we confess that we don't always see the ways you are working in our lives. We ask for you to open our eyes so that we may see you clearly and our ears so that we may hear your voice. Guide us so that we may not only recognize you, but so that we can help others to recognize you as well. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Wednesday, 5/23/18

“A Promise Fulfilled”

John 14:15-24

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—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. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

- We started this week reading about Pentecost and the Holy Spirit's arrival. In this passage from the Gospel of John, we read the promise from Jesus. How does knowing this scripture is fulfilled inform your understanding of God?
- How have you experienced God as the Spirit of truth?

Prayer: Faithful God, we thank you for sending your Spirit of truth to dwell in us. Even when we cannot see your plans, help us to always remember that you are always working for good in our lives. We praise you for all the promises you have already fulfilled and those that you have assured us will come. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Thursday, 5/24/18

“The Advocate”

John 14:25-31

“All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, 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. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

“You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me.

“Come now; let us leave.”

- Jesus calls the Holy Spirit “the Advocate.” What does the idea of an advocate mean to you? How would you identify the Holy Spirit as an advocate in your life?
- Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will teach and remind us. How have you seen or experienced this in your life? If you were to describe the Holy Spirit to someone who is new in their faith journey, what would you say?

Prayer: Dear God, we are in awe of the amazing gift of the Holy Spirit that you have given to us. Help us to be open to the ways the Holy Spirit is teaching us and reminding us. Grant us the awareness to be able to see your guidance today and every day. Fill us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Friday, 5/25/18

“Praising God”

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 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, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- Not long after this amazing Pentecost experience, we read this description of how the first believers lived. How does this inspire you? How does it challenge you?
- Through praising God and being faithful to God we hear that the Lord increased the number of believers. How have you seen growth from praising God?

Prayer: God we are so thankful for your gift of the Holy Spirit. We invite the Holy Spirit into our lives and ask that you fill us so that we are overflowing. Guide us to use these gifts so that we may always be praising you through our words, our actions and our thoughts. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.

**This week’s devotional was written by Pastor Jessica Richard
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