



LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

TEXT: Acts 2:1–41

MAIN IDEA: The Holy Spirit is the power behind the gospel.

LEADERS:

- Welcome back to Community season! May God bless you in the coming weeks as you make disciples who make disciples.
- If you or someone you know is a young adult looking to connect with others in the same stage of life, while also hearing some teaching that is super relevant to you, then look no further than College-ish! We will be meeting on Mondays from May 30–July 4 at 7 pm at our Totowa campus. No sign-up necessary. More details to come.
- Servant's Heart ministry is running a class right now in their Workmanship Program, which teaches important hands-on work skills to people in Paterson. YOUR GROUP has the opportunity to partner with them by providing a meal for their students and volunteers (about 35 people). The available dates are May 12, 17, 26, and 31, and June 9 and 14. If you're interested, you can sign up on their website (servantsheartnj.org/wpmeals).
- Baptism is coming up on May 22! If you are a believer in Jesus, but have never taken the plunge, this is your opportunity to obey Jesus by proclaiming your new life in him through baptism. Sign up on the digital bulletin through May 8.

GETTING STARTED:

- Watch this week's Community Extras Video.
 - **Icebreaker:** This week's message is all about the Holy Spirit. Share one remarkable thing that the Spirit has done in your life.
 - **Opener:** What's your New Year's resolution?
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GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ryan noted that Christians display two extreme attitudes towards the Holy Spirit. One is neglect, as if he is the member of the Trinity whom we don't really like to talk about. The other is overemphasis, where talk about the Spirit can be used to stomp honest questions and to justify all sorts of things that are at best questionable.



What are some reasons for each of these extremes, and what, in your opinion, is the key to a more balanced and biblical approach?



Some people have observed that, for modern Christians, the Holy Spirit is almost a forgotten member of the Trinity. Do you think this is accurate, and if so, why is this the case?



FIVE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This week's passage begins with the Apostles gathered together (probably with other disciples as well), waiting for the fulfillment of Jesus' promise of power through the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit Empowers Us for Ministry

Read Acts 2:1–13

💡 What is the Apostles' primary task, and how does the gift of speaking in tongues enable them to do that?

💡 In 1 Corinthians 14:22, Paul writes, "Tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers." Where in this text do you see that principle at work?

💡 How has the Holy Spirit empowered you for the ministry God has for you?

The Holy Spirit Opens Ears to the Gospel

💡 In what way does this passage teach that the Holy Spirit opens ears to the gospel?

💡 When have you seen the Holy Spirit miraculously open someone's eyes to the beauty and truth of the gospel?

💡 Whom will you pray for, that God would do this for them?

💡 Why do you think Luke points out that, while some were amazed, others mocked, accusing the Apostles, "They are filled with new wine"? (v. 13)

The Holy Spirit Changes Our Character

💡 How was Peter's character changed by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost?

Leaders: For help on Peter's former character, see Luke 5:8; 22:33–34, 54–62.

💡 What are some aspects of your character that the Holy Spirit has changed, and what are some that you would like him to change?



The Holy Spirit Fulfills Scripture

Read Acts 2:14–36

In the Old Testament, God promised that one day his Spirit would dwell within his people, giving us a new heart and enabling us to walk according to his ways. This can be found in the New Covenant promises of Ezekiel 36:25–27 and Joel 2:28–29 (Peter quotes Joel in his sermon).



In the Old Testament, the Spirit empowered certain individuals to do incredible things. What specifically is said in the words of Joel, quoted by Peter in verses 17–21, that expands this empowerment to all of God's people?



The common belief within Judaism in the first century was that the voice of God through his prophets had stopped. But now, with the fulfillment of God's promises given through Joel, that era of silence had come to an end. How would this have impacted the thinking of the early Christians?

Leaders: An example of this belief is found in 1 Maccabees 9:27: "Thus there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time the prophets had ceased to appear among them."



In verse 21, Peter finishes his quotation of Joel with the words, "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." What extraordinary truth about Jesus does this show that the Apostles understood from the very earliest days of the church?

The Holy Spirit Brings Conviction, Repentance, and Salvation

Read Acts 2:37–41



Where do we see each of these elements in this passage: conviction, repentance, and salvation?



How would you define each of these?



What are some interesting differences between how Peter invites his hearers to respond to the gospel, and how we typically invite people to respond to the gospel?

PRAYER TIME

Pray that the Lord would make you more aware of the Spirit's work in your own life, and in the lives of others around you.

Pray that the Lord would make you better at hearing his voice.



Pray for the Spirit to bring conviction, repentance, and salvation for those you are trying to reach with the gospel.

Let's also remember to pray also for the church's witness in light of the continued battle over the human rights of the unborn in our country.