

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE The Power of Pentecost

SERIES

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KEY SCRIPTURE Acts 2:1-4

SYNOPSIS The Holy Spirit has the power to suddenly change your situation.

HIGHLIGHTS



☞ The Power of Pentecost

Today is Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost = 50th day. Pentecost Sunday comes 7 weeks after Easter Sunday. In the Old Testament Pentecost was called the feast of weeks, since it was 7 weeks, or a week of weeks after Passover. Today, we celebrate Pentecost as the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church. Just before his ascension, Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then, in Acts 2, ten days later, we read the account of the Holy Spirit being given to those disciples.

☞ Acts 2:1-4

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

☞ The Setting:

They were all together = **unity**

Psalms 133:1

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!

Unity was one of the main things Jesus prayed for his disciples before he died. The New Testament talks about the importance of unity in numerous places.

Philippians 2:2-4

make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

☞ 1:13 they gathered in the upper room = **prayer**. People have a lot of ideas about how to pray...

*"The proper way for man to pray," said Deacon Lemuel Keyes; "is down upon his knees."
"Nay, I should say the way to pray," said Reverend Doctor Wise, "is standing straight with outstretched arms with upturned eyes." "Oh, no, no, no," said Elder Snow, "such posture is too proud. A man should pray with eyes fast-closed and head contritely bowed." "It seems to me his hands should be austere clasp'd in front. With both thumbs pointing to the ground," said Reverend Doctor Blunt. "Last year I fell in Hodgkin's well headfirst," said Cyril Brown. "With both my heels a-stickin' up, my head a-pointing' down; And I done prayed right then and there; best prayer I ever said, the prayin'est prayer I ever prayed, a-standin' on my head."*



--E. Stanley Jones... *Prayer is surrender--surrender to the will of God and cooperation with that will. If I throw out a boathook from the boat and catch hold of the shore and pull, do I pull the shore to me, or do I pull myself to the shore? Prayer is not pulling God to my will, but the aligning of my will to the will of God.*

☞ Waiting as instructed = **obedience**

They waited until the Day of Pentecost had fully come, but they didn't know ahead of time how long they would have to wait. We can imagine how their patience and kindness and compassion was tested during this time, yet they all stayed together and waited in obedience to the Lord.

The Holy Spirit was poured out when the people were together in unity, praying and obeying.

☞ **The Supernatural:**

Sound of rushing wind which filled the whole house. This is fitting since in both the Hebrew and Greek languages, the word for *spirit* is the same word for *breath* or wind.

In seconds, wind can bring devastating destruction, but it also powers windmills that produce energy which generates electricity. It keeps the air from becoming stagnant and it cools us down. It propelled the first explorers across the ocean.

☞ The **power** of wind is unmatched! (**Sound effect**) Wind can't be seen, but its effects sure can be felt and heard!

Ezekiel 37:9-10 (*the powerful breath of God can even bring the dead to life*)

9 Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet — a vast army.

The Holy Spirit released an explosive power that day strong enough to transform one hundred and twenty Jesus-followers into a mighty force for God, that literally changed the world. When God made Adam, he was lifeless until God breathed into Him. Likewise, when the disciples came together in one place, they too had no power to do what they were destined to do – until God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, breathed on them.

Fire which rested on each one

☞ The idea behind the picture of fire is usually **purification**, as a refiner uses fire to make pure gold; or fire can burn away what is temporary, leaving only what will last. Malachi 3:3 talks about God sitting as "a refiner and purifier of silver."

Filled with Holy Spirit



Under the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit rested on God's people more as a *nation*, that is, Israel. But under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit rests upon God's people as *individuals* – the tongues of fire sat upon *each* of them. This strange phenomenon was given to emphasize ☞ that the Spirit of God was **present** with and in and upon *each individual*. In addition, they spoke in tongues, indicating God's presence with them.

When the Holy Spirit is welcomed, he supplies us with a supernatural energy that empowers us to do what we could not naturally do on our own. You can be filled with the Spirit and experience the supernatural in your life. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, there is power, purification and the very presence of God.

☞ **The Suddenly:**

The word suddenly in the Greek, means just that, suddenly - they were taken off guard - it was a surprise. They were waiting for The Holy Spirit to come, just like Jesus had commanded them to do, but they weren't expecting Him to come like He did.

Cf. Acts 1:5... in a few days (few = 3 or 4; couple = 2; etc., 10??)... It was very likely a longer wait than they had expected, but, then it happened all at once, suddenly.

--Joel Osteen... *God can cause opportunity to find you. He has unexpected blessings where you suddenly meet the right person, or suddenly your health improves, or suddenly you're able to pay off your house. That's God shifting things in your favor.*

In 1 Kings 19 when Elijah was on the run and exhausted, all at once an angel came and ☞ provided food and water for him. When you're worn out and weary, God may suddenly **renew you**.

Isaiah 29:5 says that "your many enemies will become like fine dust, the ruthless hordes like blown chaff. Suddenly, in an instant." When it seems like the enemy has the upper hand and ☞ you're being overwhelmed, God can suddenly, in an instant, **rescue you**.

In Mark 10:52 Bartimaeus shouted for mercy and asked for his sight. Jesus responded and "immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road." No matter what ails you, ☞ the Lord is able to instantly **remedy** it. Even the worst-case scenario is not beyond his ability.

In Acts 16 Paul and Silas were held in prison and as they prayed and sang praises, suddenly a violent earthquake shook the place and they were free. Even when everything seems to be going wrong and the enemy has you trapped, keep on praising the Lord. God can suddenly ☞ **release you**.

And, one day, very soon, God will do one of the most profound "suddenlies" ever! **Jesus is** ☞ **returning soon** and it will happen suddenly – in a flash; in the twinkling of an eye; and we will be changed. Suddenly!



So, in all kinds of situations, God can suddenly intervene. God can suddenly heal. God can suddenly overturn the enemy. God can suddenly set you free. God can suddenly speak to you and strengthen you. Remember the promises. God has not forgotten... Abraham – 25 years; Israel – 40 years; etc. Are you ready? His promises could happen any moment, suddenly.

Summary:

What this passage tells us about the gift of the Holy Spirit:

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to us.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit is worth waiting for.
- The Holy Spirit comes as He wills, often not according to our expectation.
- The Holy Spirit is often given as God deals with the flesh and there is a dying to self.
- The Holy Spirit can bring sudden and powerful change.

Do you need a change? Let's come together in prayer and seek the Lord.