**Acts 2**

I. Pentecost

A. Pentecost (= “fiftieth”) takes place 50 days after Passover, and it celebrates the end of the grain harvest

B. God strategically chose this day because many international people were gathered and he wanted to bring in a great spiritual harvest (3000 people saved)

II. The Holy Spirit came with power (v. 1-21)

A. The sound of a violent wind (v. 2)

1. The Spirit, like this wind, is invisible but powerful and totally free to move however he wants (in ways we don’t have control over)

2. The sound like the blowing of a violent wind = the Spirit is the unharnessed, unlimited power of God

B. The sight of tongues of fire (v. 3)

1. God’s holy presence is often represented by fire in the OT

2. Fire represents God’s presence which is both pure and purifying. That day the Holy Spirit purified their hearts and their vision of God’s greatness

C. The speaking in tongues (v. 4)

1. The nature of their speaking

a. They were empowered to speak other existing human languages, so they could share the gospel with the international community gathered in Jerusalem for the festival

b. This reveals the Spirit’s heart for the nations

c. This is a reversal of the Tower of Babel

2. The content of their speaking

a. They were “declaring the wonders of God” (v. 11)

b. The Spirit had given them a powerful experience of the greatness of God, and that spilled over into their joyful and courageous sharing of that greatness with others

III. Jesus Christ was faithfully preached

A. Peter preaches on the life (v. 22), death (v. 23), resurrection (v. 24-32), and ascension (v. 33-36) of Jesus of Nazareth

B. The Spirit convicted the crowds (v. 37)

C. Peter’s charge to the people (v. 38-39)

1. Repent and be baptized

= change your mind about Jesus and put your faith in him

2. You will receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit

IV. Conclusion

A. We can fall into two errors as we approach this passage

1. We make this normative and expect this same manifestation of the Spirit today

This can set us up for disappointment and lead us to dismissing the other more usual and less dramatic but still authentic ways the Spirit is working in our midst

2. We don’t long for this to happen and we don’t pray that God would do fresh and powerful work in our hearts and community

We settle for a life in which we don’t expect the Spirit to move and act in ways that might be powerful or surprising

B. The powerful work of the Spirit in church history

1. The Spirit has worked significant revival at various times in church history

= the Reformation, Great Awakenings, etc.

2. Oftentimes, these revivals are initiated by the church praying, waiting on God, asking him to do a fresh work

3. Are we people who pray big prayers and have hearts for God’s to do fresh work in our midst and in our communities? Are we praying that God would bring in a harvest of people who would put their faith in Jesus?

4. Consider the story of the 1st Great Awakening in New England in the 1730’s

The town had experienced a time of dullness of religion, but then God used the untimely deaths of two girls to wake the town up. And his Spirit moved in powerful ways. In the words of Jonathan Edwards: “God has seemed to go out of his usual way in the quickness of His work, and the swift progress His Spirit has made on the hearts of many….There was scarcely a single person in the town, either old or young, that was left unconcerned about the great things of the eternal world …The town seemed to be full of the presence of God…it never was so full of love and full of joy. It was a time for joy in families…our public assemblies were beautiful; the congregation was alive in God’s service, everyone earnestly intent on the public worship…. God was served in the beauty of holiness.’

**Discussion Questions**

1. How did Sunday’s message increase your appreciation for or understanding of what happened on Pentecost?

2. The Holy Spirit brought power, purity, and courageous witness on that first Pentecost (consider the sound of wind, the fire, and the gospel preached in foreign languages in v. 2-4). Consider the Holy Spirit’s work in your own life over the years. What are some concrete and specific ways you’ve seen Him work in your life?

3. Consider Peter’s conclusion in v. 38-39. How would you contextualize that message to a person today? That is, how would you get at those truths in language that would be relatable for a non-Christian in today’s world?

4. On Sunday it was stated that we need to avoid two opposite errors: one is to make what happened at Pentecost normative for the church today and not recognize the uniqueness of that event. The other is to not long and pray for God to do similar acts of power and transformation through his Spirit in the church today.

5. Have you ever been in a season of life or in a particular community where you believe you witnessed the Holy Spirit working in a particular powerful and obvious way over a period of time? If so, what did you experience?

6. If you had a prayer for the Spirit to move in a particular way at this time in your life or family’s life or church family’s life, how specifically would you like to see Him move? Take some time to pray together for those requests.