

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide

FRESH POWER!

ACTS 1:3 – 2:4 (SB 06.05.2022)

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

If you've been around Maranatha for any length of time you know that one of the unique things about our church is that we celebrate the Jewish Feasts. Well, today happens to be the Feast of Pentecost. As Christians we remember that on Pentecost God sent His Holy Spirit to empower the church to reach the lost. I believe some of you are going to have a power-encounter with the Holy Spirit today. You have been barely scraping by, trying to live the Christian life in your own strength and it hasn't been working. What you need is a fresh dose of the Holy Spirit. That's what Pentecost is all about. The reason we celebrate the Jewish feasts at Maranatha is because we believe they reveal God's heart to us and unveil His plan for the world. There are 7 feasts that are sprinkled throughout the Jewish calendar. The first four are clustered together and take place in the Springtime - (Passover, Unleavened Bread, First-Fruits, and Pentecost). The other three feasts occur in the Fall - (Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles). Jesus perfectly fulfills all the Feasts. The Feasts are the shadow but Jesus is the real thing. He is our Passover Lamb. Every Passover sacrifice that the Israelites performed for 1,500 years was a rehearsal for when Jesus finally came. Jesus is also the First Fruits. When He conquered the grave, He became the first fruits of those who will rise from the dead. He is also our atonement! He is the fulfillment of every feast, and He fulfilled each one on the exact day they were celebrated. Let's get into our study...

1. What spoke to you from Pastor Daniel's sermon?
2. What is the most dramatic thing you have ever witnessed? Do you enjoy telling people about what you experienced? Why or why not?
3. What, in your own words, does it mean to be a witness? Why do you think Jesus chose that word to describe what His followers would be in the world?

Acts 1:8 gives the church, both, past and present, its marching orders. We are to faithfully share with the rest of the world the story of what Jesus has done for us. We can do so confidently because we believe that we have been changed by Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and sent out as witnesses to change the world.

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:1-8

1. If you had been there that day as Jesus ascended into Heaven, how would you have reacted or felt as Jesus commanded you to be His witness to all the nations?
2. In your opinion. What did Jesus mean when He said "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority."?
3. In your own words, what was Jesus' mission?
4. What was Jesus' purpose during the forty days after His resurrection? What does that have to do with us 2,000 years later?

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During the forty days after His resurrection and prior to His ascension, Jesus taught the disciples further about the kingdom of God and indicated that they would be part of His mission to continue the things He had begun “to do and teach.” Today, believers need to know what Jesus did and taught about the kingdom of God so they can understand their own mission as witnesses for Him.

5. According to Jesus in verse 8, what purpose does the power of the Holy Spirit serve? How does the scope of the task Jesus issues relate to this Holy Spirit power?

Jesus directly connected the power to accomplish the commission He was giving with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The equation is simple: without the Spirit, there is no power. The Spirit is the One who enables believers to overcome their fears and to fulfill what their Master has asked them to do.

6. What evidence could you point to that shows the Spirit’s power at work in your life or the life of our church?
7. Why was the Spirit important for the mission of the disciples? Why is He important for ours?

While the disciples clearly did not fully understand the nature of God’s kingdom in Christ, Jesus did not chastise them for their misunderstanding. Rather, He affirmed that they could never fully know what God had fixed to occur by His authority. Their role as Jesus’ disciples was to rely upon the power of the Holy Spirit to share the truth of the gospel locally and globally.

8. What does it mean to be Jesus’ witness? What are we witnesses to?
9. Are we witnesses if we never share Christ with others?

In a court of law, a witness is someone who has seen or experienced something and then tells others about it. In Christianity, a witness is someone who has experienced Jesus Christ through the gospel and then tells others about Him. But either way, the witness must be communicated.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 2:1-4

Suddenly, amid the sound of a great wind during Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples. In Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came to a prophet temporarily for a specific purpose. For the first time in history, the Holy Spirit came to take up His residence in the lives of believers.

1. What happened when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers? How do you interpret these signs?

The miraculous signs that accompanied the Spirit included sound, sight, and speech. The sound and the sight were preliminary; the speech was evidence they were filled with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with the Spirit is to be empowered by the Spirit. On this occasion the Spirit gave them ability for speech.

2. How does being filled with the Holy Spirit relate to bearing witness to Jesus?
3. If you had been present, how do you think you would have responded to the sudden arrival of the Holy Spirit? Why?
4. What were the two basic reactions of the residents of Jerusalem to the phenomenon of tongues?

Because of the festival celebrations, many foreigners were in Jerusalem at this time from all over the known world (vv. 9-11). Through the Holy Spirit’s power, the disciples were enabled to communicate the gospel to people who

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spoke a wide variety of languages. This amazed the crowd. Some even thought the disciples were drunk. Miracles and signs alone aren't enough to introduce people to Jesus and the salvation He offers, but what happened on the Day of Pentecost did give the apostles, led by Peter, a good foundation for teaching the gospel and a curious audience to hear it.

5. In what ways does the reality of the Spirit's life-giving, permanent presence in your heart affect your view of Christian living?

To be filled with the Spirit is to be empowered by the Spirit. Because of the festival celebrations, many foreigners were in Jerusalem (vv. 9-11). Through the Holy Spirit's power, the disciples were enabled to communicate to people who spoke various languages. This miracle amazed the crowd, but it alone wasn't enough to introduce people to Jesus. Peter rose up to this opportunity to share the gospel.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

We desperately need the Holy Spirit! We need Him to accomplish our mission. We need Him to help us pray. We need Him so we can be effective witnesses. We need Him so we can be better husbands and fathers and wives and grandmothers. We need Him so we can live the Christian life. So, how do we get Him? If you are a believer, you already have the Holy Spirit. The question isn't how much more of the Spirit can you get. The question is, how much more of you are you willing to give up and surrender over to Him?

1. Based on our study today, why would you say it is essential to be filled with the Holy Spirit?
2. What evidence shows that you have been filled with the Holy Spirit? How would you explain being filled with the Spirit to a new believer?
3. As a member of the church, how does the Spirit enable you to share the gospel and join in the church's mission? What is your next step in the mission?

PRAYER: Pray that in the midst of your roles that encompass family, work, and social contacts, you will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to reap the harvest. Pray for the willingness to participate in God's mission globally in any way He sees fit. Give thanks to God for choosing to involve you in the expansion of His Kingdom.

"Jesus said, 'If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your kids, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?'" {Luke 11:13}