



# PENTECOST





## **Pentecost Devotional Guide**

Pentecost is the season where we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit after Jesus ascended into Heaven (**Acts 1-2**). Just as the Holy Spirit came on the first followers of Jesus, we too have the Holy Spirit on us and in us. This devotional gives space to process the promise and coming of the Holy Spirit as well as what it means for us today.

As we enter into the Pentecost season, may you find comfort, encouragement, guidance, and power as you continue to encounter the Holy Spirit.

Lessons:

Week 1 - May 6 - 12

Week 2 - May 13 - 19

Week 3 - May 20 - 26

Salem Alliance Church Events:

Pentecost Weekend: May 18-19, 2024

Pentecost Worship Night: Sunday May 19 at 6:30pm

## Promised

### Week 1

As you begin this week, read **Acts 1:3-13** below. This is the story of Jesus' last interaction with His disciples before He ascended into heaven. As you read, take time to notice which parts of the story stand out to you. You may want to circle or underline these things.

*3 During the forty days after [Jesus] suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.*

*4 Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

*6 So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"*

*7 He replied, "The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

*9 After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. 10 As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. 11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!"*

*12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. ...*



As you prayerfully look over the words or phrases you marked, why do you think those parts of the story stood out to you?

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After Jesus died, the disciples had to wait in their grief and disillusionment, not knowing what would happen. Then Jesus rose from the dead. Now, Jesus was about to leave them, and told them to wait for the gift the Father had promised, which was the Holy Spirit. What do you imagine the disciples were experiencing in this season of waiting?

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In your life, what benefits have you experienced in seasons of waiting?

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What are some things you are currently waiting on God for?

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In a season of waiting, we may begin to question God or His character or we may find that trust begins to rise in us. Where have you seen waiting impact your relationship with God; whether positively or negatively?

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**Acknowledging any of these impacts and feelings can help us process what we are experiencing, both emotionally and spiritually. Take a moment to recognize the things that are stirring in your heart, mind, and spirit and begin processing those things with the Lord.**

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In some sense, the disciples knew who they were waiting for; Jesus had been pretty clear about the fact that once He left them, God would send the Holy Spirit. Most of the promises about the Holy Spirit were given during the Last Supper when Jesus described the Holy Spirit and why God would be sending Him.

Read through **John 14:16-21, 26-29** and **16:5-9, 12-15** below and on the next page, a few times. Let the promises about the Holy Spirit sink into your heart and mind.

*16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you. 19 Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. 20 When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. 21 Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."*

*26 But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.*

*27 "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid. 28 Remember what I told you: I am going away, but I will come back to you again. If you really loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, who is greater than I am. 29 I have told you these things before they happen so that when they do happen, you will believe.*



5 "But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. 6 Instead, you grieve because of what I've told you. 7 But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Advocate [Or Comforter, or Encourager, or Counselor.] won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. 9 The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me.

12 "There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. 14 He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'



Setting aside what you may already know about the Holy Spirit and using just the passages above, how would you describe the Holy Spirit and the roles He plays?

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Put yourself in the disciple's shoes as they processed what Jesus had told them about the Holy Spirit. Imagine what they might have anticipated as they waited and wondered. Write your thoughts here.

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How have you experienced the Holy Spirit in the ways Jesus described Him?

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When you think about the gift of the Holy Spirit, what expectations or emotions rise in you?

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As you end your time, pray this prayer of invitation.

Come, Holy Spirit.

We invite You into this space.

We invite You into our lives.

We invite You into our relationships.

We invite You into our jobs.

We invite You into our families.

We invite You into our schools.

We invite You into our actions.

We invite You into the details of our day.

Fill us with Your power.

Your wisdom.

Your encouragement.

Your peace.

Your comfort.

Your guidance.

Your truth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

## Coming Week 2

Read **Acts 2:1-41** below. As you read, take time to notice which parts of the story stand out to you. You may want to circle or underline the things that you notice.

*1 On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. 2 Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. 3 Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. 4 And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.*

*5 At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. 6 When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.*

*7 They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, 8 and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! 9 Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, 10 Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!" 12 They stood there amazed and perplexed. "What can this mean?" they asked each other.*

*13 But others in the crowd ridiculed them, saying, "They're just drunk, that's all!"*

*14 Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. 15 These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the*

morning is much too early for that. 16 No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel:

17 'In the last days,' God says,  
'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions,  
and your old men will dream dreams.

18 In those days I will pour out my Spirit  
even on my servants—men and women alike—  
and they will prophesy.

19 And I will cause wonders in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below—  
blood and fire and clouds of smoke.

20 The sun will become dark,  
and the moon will turn blood red  
before that great and glorious day of the Lord arrives.

21 But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved.'

22 "People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. 23 But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him.

24 But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip. 25 King David said this about him:

'I see that the Lord is always with me.  
I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.

26 No wonder my heart is glad,  
and my tongue shouts his praises!

My body rests in hope.

27 For you will not leave my soul among the dead  
or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.

28 You have shown me the way of life,  
and you will fill me with the joy of your presence.'



29 "Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. 30 But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne. 31 David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah's resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave. 32 "God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. 33 Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today. 34 For David himself never ascended into heaven, yet he said,

'The Lord said to my Lord,  
"Sit in the place of honor at my right hand  
35 until I humble your enemies,  
making them a footstool under your feet.'"

36 "So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!" 37 Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God." 40 Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!" 41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.



As you prayerfully look over the words or phrases you marked, why do you think those parts of the story stood out to you?

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Imagine you were there when the Holy Spirit came. What would you have experienced? How might you have responded?

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Have you ever had an experience with the Holy Spirit like that? If you feel comfortable, share your experience with your group.

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The coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was completely different to the ways anyone had ever experienced the Spirit of God before. Previously, the Spirit had only ever come to a specific person, for a specific period of time, and for a specific purpose. Now, the Holy Spirit was poured out on each and every follower and they all experienced His presence and power.



What impact might the coming of the Holy Spirit have had for the followers of Jesus?

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As you read over Peter's speech to the crowds (**Acts 2:14-39**), in what ways do you think the Holy Spirit influenced his words?

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What was the result of Peter's preaching? (**Acts 2:41**)

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What could it look like, today, for the Holy Spirit to move supernaturally in order to demonstrate who God is and draw people to God? (For example: healing, miracles, supernatural insight, etc.)

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**Spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to move in supernatural ways in order for others to see God.**

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Peter was able to explain to the crowd how the history of the Jewish people led to and predicted the Messiah and the coming of the Holy Spirit. How can recounting history help point people to Jesus today?

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Make note of how your personal history and story has pointed or could point people to Jesus. Write some highlights below.

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**Recall the promises about who the Holy Spirit is from Lesson One. Spend some time thanking God for the coming of the promised Holy Spirit.**

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As you end your time, pray this prayer of invitation.

“Lord, send the gift of your Spirit to fill this place and myself  
and the world.

Touch me with truth that burns like fire,  
with beauty that moves me like the wind;  
and set me free, Lord,

free to try new ways of living;

free to forgive myself and others;

free to love and laugh and sing;

free to lay aside my burden of security;

free to join the battle for justice and peace;

free to see and listen and wonder again

at the gracious mystery of things and persons;

Free to be, to give, to receive, to rejoice as a child of your  
Spirit.”

Taken from “Guerrillas of Grace”



# What Does This Mean For Us?

## Week 3

As you start this week's devotion, take a moment to read over **Acts 2:42-47**, which describes the activities of the early church. As you read, consider using the practice of Lectio Divina—which means divine reading. This is a meditative way of reading the Bible in which we let go of our agendas and open ourselves to what God is trying to say. Read the passage out loud three times. Each time you read, focus on a different aspect of engaging with the Scripture:

- **Read:** The first time through, slowly read the passage and notice what words or phrases stick out to you.
- **Meditate:** For the second reading focus your thoughts in order to understand deeply. Like Mary (**Luke 10:38-42**) listened deeply to Jesus' words, this is the time to contemplate what God is saying to you through His Word.
- **Pray:** As you read it a third time, enter into a dialogue with God about what you are reading.

*42 All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and prayer. 43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— 47, all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.*



What part of the early Christian experience inspires or challenges you?

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What questions stir in you as you read about their experience in fellowship, giving, and worship?

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The early Christians experienced the transformative work of the Holy Spirit both in them and upon them. However, the concept of the Holy Spirit being both in and upon us can be challenging to grasp. To help us visualize this better, let's consider the Holy Spirit's work as water.

Imagine water on us, like taking a shower, jumping into a pool, or getting wet in the rain. In these examples, water covers us, cleanses us, and makes us feel refreshed. This is similar to the Holy Spirit's work upon us, as it cleanses us and makes us new. **1 Corinthians 6:11** tells us, *"But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."*

On the other hand, when we are thirsty and dehydrated, taking in water not only quenches our thirst but it also nourishes and refreshes us. **Ephesians 5:18** instructs us to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Greek word for "filled" used here is πληροῦσθε (plērousthe), which is a continuous present tense. This verse means "to be continually filled

with the fullness of the Spirit.” If we need to drink plenty of water daily to be healthy, then how much more should we continually ask the Holy Spirit to fill us so we can stay spiritually sharp and healthy?



As believers, we are created to display God's glory and carry His presence. This is God's promise set into motion through His Word. Please look at the following passages to understand the roles the Holy Spirit can play in our lives. Underline the things that you are noticing.

### **Romans 5:5**

*And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.*

### **1 Corinthians 6:19-20**

*19 Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price.*

### **1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

*7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. 8 To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. 9 The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. 10 He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. 11 It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.*

**2 Corinthians 1:22**

*... and he has identified us as his own by placing the Holy Spirit in our hearts as the first installment that guarantees everything he has promised us.*

**Colossians 1:8**

*He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you.*

**Galatians 5:22-23, 25**

*22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

*25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.*



What stands out to you in these passages?

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How have you experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?

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Part of how the Holy Spirit empowers us as believers is the ability to respond to His nudges as we interact with those in our spheres of influence. What could it look like for you to be attentive to how the Holy Spirit is nudging you as you share your knowledge of and experiences with God with others?

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**Take a moment to write a prayer of gratitude to God for fulfilling the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

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Going back to the water illustration. It's the water that soaks, saturates, and hydrates us. Yet, we get to be active participants in this process. Below are four simple prayers to help remind us of the ways we can engage with the Holy Spirit being on us and in us as we live out the calling God has given us in our day to day lives.

**Center:** Start by drawing into God's presence and focusing on His character and your identity in Him.

*I am here, Lord. You are \_\_\_\_\_(insert a characteristic of God) and I am your beloved child.*

**Surrender:** Offer up your agenda and pick up God's agenda as you listen to and follow/obey Holy Spirit.

*I offer up my will and my plans, may Your will be done.*

**Ask:** Ask for a filling of the Holy Spirit to equip and empower you for the mission He has for you.

*Come, Holy Spirit, lead me through this day.*

**Seek:** Much like the passage we started the lesson with, we all need fellowship and community. Seek out and be intentional bearers of Christ wherever you go.

*Holy Spirit, give me eyes to see those You want me to connect with today.*