

Empowered to Be a Community

Key Verse: *“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*

—Acts 2:4

Selected Scripture:
Acts 2

“another Comforter, . . . Even the Spirit of truth” (John 14:16,17), which would help and assist his disciples and footstep followers after his departure.

The term ‘Holy Spirit’ is used to describe the invisible holy power and influence of God. As early as the second verse of the Bible, we find this power referred to, “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” (Gen. 1:2) It was this power, mentioned here in connection with God’s creative works, which he has used to accomplish the purposes of his plan for mankind. The word Spirit as used in both the Old and New Testaments signifies ‘wind’ or ‘breath.’ In the New Testament, it is translated from the Greek word *pneuma*. This word is familiar to us, as it is the root for such common terms as ‘pneumatic tires’ and ‘pneumonia,’ the definitions of which relate, respectively,

TODAY’S LESSON FOCUSES

on one of the most significant events in the history of the Christian church—the giving of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost is a Greek word, signifying ‘the fiftieth day.’ Appropriately, this important event occurred fifty days following the resurrection of Jesus. Before his death, Jesus had promised that he would send

to tires filled with air (wind) and disease relating to lack of air to the lungs and related breathing difficulties.

Although breath, air, and wind are invisible of themselves, their influence is not. We constantly see the effect of these in many visible ways. Indeed, without air, our physical bodies and all life on earth would perish. On the Day of Pentecost, God used the literal effect of the wind and air to describe the giving of the Holy Spirit to the disciples. “Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” (Acts 2:2) Additionally, the Key Verse mentions that the disciples began to speak in other languages, thus using their ‘breath’ as influenced by the power of God.

The most important effect of God’s Spirit, however, was not in these visual evidences, but in the hearts and minds of the disciples, as they now began to understand his plans and purposes much more fully than before. In none of the disciples was this change more manifest than in Peter. In the last hours of Jesus’ life on earth, even up to the days just prior to Pentecost, Peter clearly was uncertain and confused about the purpose of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Now, however, having received the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, he not only understood these things for himself, but he also immediately began preaching them to those gathered there in Jerusalem.—vss. 14-36

Just as it was with Peter, the inward work of the Holy Spirit—that of enlightening our mind, guiding our words, thoughts, and actions—is to be the primary work of God’s invisible power and influence upon the church, as shown in the closing verses of Acts 2. “They continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.—vss. 42,46 ■