

**Acts 1:12-23**  
*Pentecost and God Dwelling with His People*

**Learning Objectives**

- Learn about why Pentecost is important and how it plays into the story of God dwelling with his people
- Think about how God dwelling with us through the Holy Spirit affects our daily living

**Steps To Prepare (For Leaders)**

- This study will primarily focus on Acts 2:1-13, but please read all of Acts 1:12-2:13. If it is beneficial for your group, feel free to read the entirety of the Scripture and plan ahead to spend extra time doing so.
- If looking for a fuller understanding of the history of God dwelling with his people, read: Exodus 19:17-25, Leviticus 16, 1 Kings 8, Hebrews 9:1-10:18, Revelation 21

*Leader's Note: There are a lot of different views on the Holy Spirit and how he works in our lives and in our faith within Christianity. People in your small group will be coming from all different types of backgrounds. Discussions about these views and different experiences are valuable to have, but this study will not address them. If people in your group want to talk about their views further, it would be helpful to set up a different time to talk about it with them.*

---

**Pray for your time together as a group.**



Can you think of an unexpected event in history that changed the world forever? How did it change the course of history?

*Possible answers: 9/11 - changed the way we do security, changed our relationships with other countries, brought about fear, etc. OR Invention of printing press - gave common people more knowledge/power, spread of Christianity because people could read the Bible, etc.*

**Read Out Loud: Acts 2:1-13 (NIV)**

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.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language

being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?” 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

**?** When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, how did people respond? How do you think you would have responded?

*Possible Answers: Some were “utterly amazed,” (v.7) some were “perplexed,” (v. 12) and others thought they were drunk (v. 13).*

**Read Out Loud: Exodus: 13:17-22 (NIV)**

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” 18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt ready for battle.

19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him because Joseph had made the Israelites swear an oath. He had said, “God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up with you from this place.” 20 After leaving Sukkoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. 21 By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

**?** Based on this Old Testament passage, why is it significant that the Holy Spirit comes as wind and fire?

*Possible Answers: It shows that the Holy Spirit is God himself because God makes appearances as wind and fire in the OT. It also ties the OT and New Testament together, showing that God is the same today, yesterday and forever.*

**?** In the OT, God’s appearances to his people were fewer and at significant moments in the story. How did the people interact with God when he wasn’t physically there with them?

*Possible Answers: God’s presence was with his people through his Temple. The people sacrificed at the Temple, they prayed towards the Temple (1 Kings 8:29-30) and they worshipped God at the Temple.*

### The Temple

"The Temple in Jerusalem was the focus of the whole Jewish life and way of life...The point of the Temple..is that it was where heaven and earth met. It was the place where Israel's God, YHWH, had long ago promised to put his name, to make his glory present." - NT Wright, pg. 95-96 *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*

? God dwelled within an inner chamber of the temple called the Holy of Holies that only specific priests could enter. Why was He set apart from the people?

*Possible Answers: Because the people's sin separated them from God. His holiness made it so that He could dwell with them only in part, but not in whole. (Read Leviticus 16:15-17 for more on how this worked.)*

**Read Out Loud: 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 (NIV)** "16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? 17 If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's

temple is sacred, and you together are that temple."

? Considering that God's dwelling in the temple was set apart from his people in the OT, why is it significant that Paul calls us God's temple?

*Possible Answers: Because now, we are the place where God dwells with his people through his Holy Spirit. Before, we had to be separated from God, but because of the Gospel, there is no longer any separation, but pure connection to God.*

? In the OT, the temple was strictly for the Israelites. In Acts, the Holy Spirit enables the disciples to speak to people of all nations. What is significant about this difference?

*Possible Answers: In Christ, there is no difference between Jew or Greek or any nationality (Galatians 3:28).*

? How is it possible for God's spirit to dwell with us now when we used to have to be separated from Him?

*Possible Answers: Believing in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection makes it possible for us to dwell with God because he takes the punishment for our sin and presents us as blameless to God. Through him, we have access to the Father. (Hebrews 4:16, 10:19-22)*

? Can you think of a time when you experienced God's presence in your own life? How did you respond?

*Possible Answers: \*Try to keep this conversation based on worship or prayer and don't spend undue time on this question\* - Studying Scripture and feeling conviction or comfort, awe or fear of God, freedom from slavery of sin, thankfulness, etc.*

***For Discussion and Accountability***

**?** How would consciously remembering that God's spirit dwells within you change the way you live on a day-to-day basis?