

Lesson 2 | June 12, 2022

Waiting for the Holy Spirit

Study Text: Luke 24:44–53; Acts 1:1–26; 2:1–4

Central Truth: God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him.

Key Verse: Acts 5:32

We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him (KJV).

“We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey him” (NLT).

Learning Objectives

- Students should accept that God’s desire is for all believers in Christ to be filled with His Spirit.
- Students will cultivate a desire to draw closer to God to be more open to the working of the Spirit in their life.
- Students will be encouraged to set aside time regularly to seek the Lord and to ask Him to fill them with the Holy Spirit.

Introducing the Lesson

Say: As we begin this seven-week study of the first twelve chapters of the Book of Acts, we will be expanding on the Pentecost lesson we explored last week. **Pentecost was just the beginning of a much larger plan God had for the expansion of His Church. But it all began with waiting for the Holy Spirit—neither running ahead nor lagging behind!** Today’s study begins in the Book of Luke to provide needed background for what we are about to study. **Both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts were written by Luke, who traveled with Paul and served as his personal physician. The Book of Acts could be considered as a sequel to the Gospel of Luke.**

Opening Activity—Not Included

Ask: What are some things that require an accompanying tool or other item in order for them to be useful? (Answers might include battery-powered tools, cans that need an opener, lamps that need a bulb, etc.)

Say: Today’s lesson is a reminder that the Holy Spirit’s presence and power is the means needed to fulfill the mission of taking the gospel throughout the world. (Share your highlights from the following text.) We cannot witness and testify of the Good News without the help of the Holy Spirit.

A popular saying is “good things come to those who wait.” While that may not always be true, God had something good for the followers of Jesus. But they did have to wait for it. On the Day of Pentecost, the followers of Jesus received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. God’s timing—their waiting—helped to fulfill His purpose when this gift was given to the early believers. That purpose continues to be fulfilled through Spirit-filled believers today.

Part 1—Commanded To Wait Spirit’s Power Promised

Luke 24:44–49

[Luk 24:44-49 KJV] 44 And he said unto them, These [are] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and [in] the prophets, and [in] the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Say: These verses are set in the evening of that first Easter Sunday. The disciples were just beginning to understand the significance of the Resurrection. Earlier in the day, Jesus had appeared to Mary Magdalene and to some of His disciples. Then He had appeared to two of His followers as they walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus, revealing who He was only as He blessed the meal He was eating with them. In their excitement, they hurried back to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

God knows what lies ahead. Peter spoke to a huge crowd on the day of Pentecost after being baptized in the Holy Spirit. Peter and John were arrested for healing a man lame from birth. When Stephen was killed, a great persecution broke out in Jerusalem. All these events led to the apostles and disciples needing supernatural help.

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His followers on several occasions. In this appearance recorded in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus reminded them of what He had taught them about the need for Him to suffer on the cross and be raised again to life to provide for the forgiveness of sins. His disciples were to be witnesses of

Jesus to the world. But first, they needed to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, the gift the Father had promised to them. With the Spirit's help, the followers of Jesus had the mission, the message, and the means to fulfill their calling.

On this occasion, Jesus opened their minds to understand what the Scriptures had foretold about His work as the Messiah to fulfill God's plan for the redemption of humankind. **Jesus' reference to the law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms includes all of what today is known as the Old Testament. Each of these three divisions contained prophecies related to Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.**

The apostles were firsthand witnesses of Jesus' ministry and resurrection. Their mission was to proclaim the good news throughout the earth with Jerusalem as the starting point (verses 47–48). The message was of the need for people to repent to receive the forgiveness of sins. The means to fulfill the mission of proclaiming the message would be the power and work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's presence and power in the lives of believers was a promise from the Father.

Discuss

? Why do Christians need the Spirit's presence and power at work in their lives?

? How would you explain what repentance means to someone without a church background?

Spirit's Power Needed

Acts 1:4–8

[Act 1:1-8 KJV] 1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power,

after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Say: Jesus focused on final instructions that would help prepare His disciples for their mission of proclaiming the kingdom of God. The keynote of His teaching was their need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. With the power of the Spirit at work in them and through them, they would be witnesses of Jesus wherever they went. **While they were naturally curious as to God’s plan for the future of the Jewish nation, they were to focus instead on the mission of taking the gospel to the nations.** (Share your highlights from the following text.)

While there was a great mission assigned to the disciples, Jesus instructed them to remain in Jerusalem until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4). John the Baptist had baptized people in water. The disciples would receive the baptism in the Spirit John had spoken of to be empowered for service (Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:8).

The apostles asked Jesus about the restoration of Israel as a sovereign nation (verse 6). **While it may seem out of place, they would have known that an outpouring of the Spirit was tied to the restoration of Israel in prophecies relating to the last days (Ezekiel 36 and 37; Joel 2:28–32). Jesus gently redirected their attention to the task at hand. God, in His timing, would fulfill the promise of restoring the rule of God to Israel.** But they were to be His witnesses as they took the gospel to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:7–8).

Christians can get caught up trying to decipher end-time events and fail to stay on mission. Disciples of Jesus are to go with the gospel to all nations. It is telling that the Greek word for witness is the word we get “martyr” from. **The power to stand for Christ as His followers and proclaim the gospel even when facing opposition comes only from being full of the Holy Spirit.**

Resource Packet Item 1: The Spirit Promised

Distribute the work sheet and have students discuss their responses to the questions. Discuss why the power of the Spirit is still necessary for Christians today.

Discuss

? How should knowing these are the last days affect how Christians respond to the mission of taking the gospel to the ends of the earth?

? How have you experienced the Holy Spirit’s help when sharing the gospel with others?

Part 2—Worshipping and Waiting

Worshipping

Luke 24:50–53

Luk 24:50-53 KJV] 50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. 51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: 53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Say: After giving final instructions to His followers concerning their need to be clothed with power from on high through the gift of the Holy Spirit, Jesus blessed them. Then He ascended into heaven. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Jesus' last words to His disciples were a blessing. What was included in the blessing He gave as He ascended into heaven? We cannot state anything for certain, but it may have been along the lines of His prayer for them in John 17. In this prayer Jesus asked for them to be protected, to have unity, and to experience joy as they were sent into the world to proclaim the kingdom of God.

As Jesus ascended into heaven, the disciples worshipped Him (Luke 24:52). He was their long-awaited Messiah, the risen Savior, and the exalted Lord. Any lingering doubts they had seemed to have vanished as evidenced by their worship and great joy. The temple became their regular place to meet and worship God as they waited for Christ's promise—the baptism in the Holy Spirit (verse 53).

The events of the last few weeks likely caused them to see many of the things they had experienced alongside Jesus with fresh faith. Reading through Peter's sermon in Acts 2 reveals their clear understanding of who Jesus is and what He came to do. The disciples were obedient. They stayed in Jerusalem, gathering regularly in the temple to worship God as they waited for the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Discuss

? Why is the Ascension an essential part of the gospel?

? How does a greater understanding of Jesus increase your desire to worship Him?

Waiting

Acts 1:9–14

[Act 1:9-14 KJV] 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James [the son] of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas [the brother] of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Say: Waiting is never easy, but it's hard to argue when messengers from heaven give the command. Imagine the bewilderment of the disciples as they made their way back to Jerusalem. Within the past forty days, they had seen their beloved Master crucified and had talked with Him after His resurrection. Now they had seen heavenly messengers who had told them to wait in Jerusalem. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Have you ever been told to bow your head in prayer then the one leading the prayer has a long pause?

In Acts, Luke reported the ascension of Jesus, adding detail to the account. As Jesus rose, a cloud hid Him from the disciples' sight (Acts 1:9). Two men, likely angels, suddenly appeared among them (verse 10). Their message prodded the disciples to action and filled them with hope. Jesus would come back as was promised, but until then they had their marching orders (verse 11). Spurred by these messengers, the believers returned to Jerusalem to await the promised Holy Spirit. The Eleven, along with others, gathered in the Upper Room. **The Resurrection and Ascension had an obvious impact on the lives of those who were closest to Jesus. The community of faith included several women who had followed Jesus during His ministry (Luke 8:1–3). It also included Mary, Jesus' mother, and His half-brothers—who had come to believe in Him. James and Judas both have books in the Bible.**

Even though these believers did not know what to expect, they were obedient as they waited for the fulfillment of Jesus' promised Holy Spirit. As they waited they focused on prayer and worship. In the same way, as we wait on God to fulfill His plan for us, we can focus on prayer and worship.

Resource Packet Item 2: The Ascended Christ

Distribute the work sheet and assign the four questions to small groups. Ask the students to read the Scriptures and discuss the role of Jesus after His ascension to the right hand of the Father. As a class, discuss what the Ascension means for believers.

Discuss

? Should waiting on the Lord be considered an active or passive endeavor? Explain.

? What should be the attitude of believers as they wait for the promised return of Christ?

Part 3—Obeying and Receiving

Obeying

Acts 1:15–26

[Act 1:15-26 KJV] 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) 16 Men [and] brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. 17 For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. 18 Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. 19 And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. 20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. 21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. 23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all [men], shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, 25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. 26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Say: The disciples were obedient, waiting in Jerusalem to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. There were eleven remaining disciples of the Twelve who had followed Jesus, but the group gathered there included several women and others who believed on Him—a number of about 120 all together. They began to prepare for the task that Jesus had appointed them to do. This is possibly the first recorded church business meeting. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

How hard it must have been to replace one of their own. **Peter was obviously familiar with Old Testament Scripture because he understood that not only was Judas' betrayal foretold in Scripture, but the Scripture also spoke of the need for another to assume his ministry role (Psalm 69:25; 109:8). The apostles would need to choose another apostle to replace Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed Jesus.**

[Psa 69:25 KJV] 25 Let their habitation be desolate; [and] let none dwell in their tents.

[Psa 109:8 KJV] 8 Let his days be few; [and] let another take his office.

This new apostle would need to have been one of Jesus' followers throughout His earthly ministry. Two men who met the qualification were set forth: Barsabas and Matthias. **After praying for the Lord to reveal His choice, the believers cast lots to see who would step into this apostolic ministry. While casting lots may seem to be an odd way to make such a decision, it was a relatively common practice in Jewish culture of the time. It was mentioned several times in the Old Testament, and was used by Joshua in dividing the land among the tribes (see Joshua 18:3–10). People believed it was a way of making a fair and impartial decision and a way for God to make His will known to them. It is interesting that casting lots is not mentioned again after the coming of the Holy Spirit, who is our Teacher and Guide.**

Matthias was chosen to replace Judas. The Twelve were called to serve as the primary witnesses of Jesus' teaching and resurrection. Jesus also said they would serve in His coming kingdom in positions of authority over the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28). The Twelve filled a special role in Christ's kingdom and Church.

Discuss

? Why is obedience necessary to fulfill one's calling from the Lord?

? How do the Word and the Spirit guide believers?

Receiving

Acts 2:1–4

[Act 2:1-4 KJV] 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a

sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Say: It had been ten days since the ascension of Jesus. The disciples and other believers had spent the time praying and taking care of the business of replacing Judas, who had betrayed Jesus. No doubt the disciples were beginning to wonder when the promise Jesus had made would be fulfilled. They were about to experience that fulfillment. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The Day of Pentecost was the fiftieth day after Passover and was one of the three great feasts celebrated by Jewish people. This harvest festival drew Jewish people to Jerusalem to worship God. This meant the city was full of Jews and converts to Judaism from multiple countries (Acts 2:5–11). God’s timing was perfect in pouring out His Spirit on the followers of Jesus.

On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples who were gathered were filled with the Holy Spirit (2:4). **Three things marked this event. There was a “sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm” (verse 2, NLT). Next what “looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them.” In the Old Testament wind and fire were symbols of the Holy Spirit. The 120 believers would have connected these signs with their understanding of the Holy Spirit. These two signs were not repeated in other places where people were filled with the Spirit. The third sign was that “everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages” (verse 4, NLT) as “the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.” Jesus had told His disciples that this would happen (Mark 16:17). The sign of speaking in tongues was repeated as others were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44–46; 19:6). When we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, we will speak in tongues as well.**

Speaking in tongues was a supernatural sign to these believers and would soon become a supernatural sign to those who heard them (Acts 2:5–6). Peter would also experience the empowering of the Holy Spirit as he addressed those who had gathered (Acts 2:14–40).

God has called His people to proclaim the gospel. We also need the empowering of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this. Jesus promised this power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). Like Peter on the Day of Pentecost, we can expect the Holy Spirit to empower us to tell others about Jesus.

Resource Packet Item 3: The Spirit’s Work

Distribute the work sheet and have students do the matching exercise to emphasize how vital the Holy Spirit's work is in the lives of believers. Ask two or three students to read the Scripture associated with a work of the Spirit that means something special to them and have them briefly share why it is special.

Discuss

? How can believers stay full of the Holy Spirit?

? What things might be helpful to a believer seeking to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

What Is God Saying to Us?

Say: Often.

The Father's promised gift of the Holy Spirit is still available to those who follow Jesus Christ. Having observed how obedience to the Lord was required for the first believers to receive that gift, consider how obedience to the Lord might be displayed by believers today. Jesus clearly taught that living as His follower means having the Holy Spirit at work in one's life. Without the baptism in the Spirit, believers don't have the power to be effective witnesses of Jesus. The baptism in the Holy Spirit helps believers develop the fruit of the Spirit and manifest spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7–11). Believers who have not been filled with the Spirit should seek God to be filled with the Spirit. Believers who have been filled with Spirit are to learn how to walk in the Spirit and live by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16–25).

Living It Out

Ministry in Action

- If you have not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, ask the Father for this promised gift (Luke 11:13).
- Develop a greater awareness of the Spirit's leading in your life. Ask God to help you better hear the Spirit's voice.
- Consider what you can do to influence other believers to desire and seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Daily Bible Readings

Monday:

Moses' Wish for God's People.
Numbers 11:24–29

[Num 11:24-29 KJV] 24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle. 25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that [was] upon him, and gave [it] unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, [that], when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease. 26 But there remained two [of the] men in the

camp, the name of the one [was] Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they [were] of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp. 27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp. 28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, [one] of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them. 29 And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, [and] that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!

Tuesday:

The Spirit Spoke by David.

2 Samuel 23:1–5

[2Sa 23:1-5 KJV] 1 Now these [be] the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man [who was] raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word [was] in my tongue. 3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men [must be] just, ruling in the fear of God. 4 And [he shall be] as the light of the morning, [when] the sun riseth, [even] a morning without clouds; [as] the tender grass [springing] out of the earth by clear shining after rain. 5 Although my house [be] not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all [things], and sure: for [this is] all my salvation, and all [my] desire, although he make [it] not to grow.

Wednesday:

Jahaziel Prophesied by the Spirit.

2 Chronicles 20:14–19

[2Ch 20:14-19 KJV] 14 Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midst of the congregation; 15 And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle [is] not yours, but God's. 16 To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel. 17 Ye shall not [need] to fight in this [battle]: set yourselves, stand ye [still], and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD [will be] with you. 18 And Jehoshaphat bowed his head with [his] face to the ground: and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshipping the LORD. 19 And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites, and of the children of the Korhites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high.

Thursday:

The Promised Comforter.

John 14:15–19,26

[Jhn 14:15-19, 26 KJV] 15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 [Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. ... 26 But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Friday:

Life by the Spirit.
Romans 8:1–10

[Rom 8:1-10 KJV] 1 [There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded [is] death; but to be spiritually minded [is] life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind [is] enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ [be] in you, the body [is] dead because of sin; but the Spirit [is] life because of righteousness.

Saturday:

The Spirit Confirms the Gospel.
1 Corinthians 2:1–5

[1Co 2:1-5 KJV] 1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.