

“On Fire for Jesus!”

Acts 2:14-21

5-24/2026

*(Show Pentecost Slide)*

Last week, as we heard about the ascension of Jesus to heaven,

I spoke about all the unprecedented things

The disciples were living through

It is hard for us to comprehend

what these last fifty or so days have been for the disciples

*(Show Blank Slide)*

They have been following Jesus, their rabbi, teacher, and Lord

For about three years

Then Jesus is arrested by a mob in the middle of the night

The disciples **slip away into the dark and run away**

Jesus is executed the next day

The disciples hide out in **a locked room**

Assuming that they are next to be arrested and executed

Then Jesus appears in the room after his resurrection

And convinces them that he is alive

They are reunited with their Savior and their Lord

And then, forty days later,

Ten days ago

While he is speaking with them

Jesus is lifted up into heaven and disappears in a cloud

And the disciples are again leaderless and left alone

Once again, waiting, and perhaps a bit anxious

The only instruction with which they are left

Is that they are to proclaim Jesus to the end of the earth

And they are to wait until it's time to start

**And now** it is fifty days after Easter...

*(Show Pentecost painting Slide)*

<sup>1</sup> *When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place.*

<sup>2</sup> *Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind*

*filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what*

*seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them.*

<sup>4</sup> *They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other*

*languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.*

– Acts 2:1-4

Before you know it,

They are out of that house

And Peter is preaching to a crowd in the street

*(Show Peter Preaching Slide)*

These disciples who ran away in fear for their lives

Who rejoiced when they were greeted by the resurrected Jesus

Who were confused when Jesus ascended to heaven...

These disciples are now

Empowered

Inspired – which means filled with the Holy Spirit

Emboldened

Preaching in the streets to a crowd

gathered from across the Roman Empire

The Companion, the Advocate, the Holy Spirit

Has filled them

And the people, as Luke tells us,

<sup>5</sup> *[There were] pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in*

*Jerusalem.*

– Acts 2:5

Are hearing the disciples declare the mighty works of God

<sup>6</sup> *...They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in*

*their native languages. <sup>7</sup> They were surprised and amazed, saying,*

*"Look, aren't all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one*

*of them? <sup>8</sup> How then can each of us hear them speaking in our*

*native language?*

– Act 6b-8

And then Peter begins to preach, quoting from the Prophet Joel,

<sup>14</sup> Peter stood with the other eleven apostles. He raised his voice and declared, "Judeans and everyone living in Jerusalem! Know this! Listen carefully to my words!" <sup>15</sup> These people aren't drunk, as you suspect; after all, it's only nine o'clock in the morning! <sup>16</sup> Rather, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> In the last days, God says,  
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.  
Your young will see visions.  
Your elders will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> Even upon my servants, men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> I will cause wonders to occur in the heavens above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood and fire and a cloud of smoke.

<sup>20</sup> The sun will be changed into darkness,  
and the moon will be changed into blood,  
before the great and spectacular day of the Lord comes.

<sup>21</sup> And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.  
— Acts 2:14-21

And then Peter starts to **really** preach

And ends his sermon with this

<sup>38</sup> "Change your hearts and lives. Each of you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> This promise is for you, your children, and for all who are far away—as many as the Lord our God invites."

— Acts 2:38-39

And boom!

Or maybe with a Splash!

3,000 people are baptized that day

And the Church is born

Happy Birthday!

(We should have balloons!)

**(Show Fire Title Slide)**

*I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy.  
Your young will see visions.  
Your elders will dream dreams.*

This morning we recognize and offer a blessing  
To our high school graduates

*Your young will see visions.*

In a little while, our graduates share their hopes and dreams  
Their plans, their vision of their futures

But the visions, and the dreams, and the prophecies  
That Simon Peter is preaching about from Joel (the prophet)  
Is something more profound

To what is Peter responding?

The mystified and surprised and amazed crowd was there  
Because what each of them were hearing  
Coming from that room that was filled with the Holy Spirit

And what were those disciples proclaiming?  
They were declaring the mighty works of God

In his first sermon to the crowd,  
Peter is preaching about Jesus of Nazareth  
How he was betrayed,  
killed on a cross,  
and raised up by God

<sup>36</sup> "Therefore, let all Israel know beyond question that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

— Acts 2:36

In addition to the hopes and dreams  
of your post high school career,  
you – and all of us, young and elders and even servants –  
are to tell, to prophecy of the power and love of God  
And do it boldly, not timidly

Remember all those times in confirmation  
when I said  
*"once you get out of high school and someone says.."*.  
And then prepared you for a time in your future  
When you would be challenged to question your faith  
and the truth of the Bible

Remember those discussions we had about  
Creation  
The ten plagues in Egypt  
The Ten Commandments  
(I could go on...)

You have been given and know the truth.  
And now, by the grace of the Holy Spirit,  
You are empowered to respond in kindness from your heart  
As you honestly tell of your faith  
in the love and grace of Jesus

Is this only the work of these sons and daughters of us –  
Of the young who prophecy and see visions?

May all of us  
Filled and empowered with the Holy Spirit  
Be inspired and emboldened  
To declare the mighty work of God in our lives

Let us recognize and remember  
that the ground upon which we stand  
whether it is Jerusalem or Pine Island  
is indeed holy ground

Let us praise Jesus now...

(Response Hymn "Holy Ground"

# 2272)

