

As we begin this morning, I want y'all to picture a massive dam for hydroelectric power under construction, like the Aswan High Dam on the Nile, 375 feet high and 11,000 feet across. Egypt's President Nasser announced the plan for construction in 1953. The dam was completed in 1970, and in 1971, there was a grand dedication ceremony. The 12 turbines, with their ten billion kilowatt-hour capacity, were unleashed with enough power to light every city in Egypt. The Nile River wasn't completely stopped during the lengthy construction period. As the reservoir was filling, part of the river was allowed to flow past the construction for the country folk downstream, who depended on it. They drank it; they washed in it; it watered their crops and turned their mill wheels, for it was their life. But on the day when the reservoir poured through the turbines, a power was unleashed that spread far beyond the few folks downriver and brought possibilities they had only dreamed of.

In our text today in Acts, we will read through the events that took place on Pentecost. Pentecost is like the opening day of the Aswan High Dam. Before Pentecost, the river of God's Spirit blessed the people of Israel, and it was their very life. But after Pentecost, the Spirit's power spread to light the whole world. None of the benefits enjoyed in the pre-Pentecostal days were taken away. But ten billion kilowatts were added to

enable the church to bring the light of the gospel to every tongue, tribe, and nation.

What we have learned so far is that God has put us on a mission, and that mission, as we phrase it here at Foothills Church, is to connect people to Jesus to grow them up to love and serve him. is to go into all the world and make disciples of Christ... Followers of Jesus. I have a hard enough time trying to get my kids to get the eggs out of the chicken coup daily... Yet I am called to make disciples? Help someone shift their worldview, values, and priorities off of themselves and onto Jesus. There is no way I can do that on my strength, wisdom, education, talents, etc. Jesus himself knew we were inadequate to accomplish this mission on our strength. Remember, he gave the disciples this instruction:

*"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." ... But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." - Acts 1: 4-8*

God doesn't call us into something without empowering us to do that thing. In Acts 2:1-3, we see the Dam of God's power released upon the followers on the day of Pentecost.

**Transition:** What we will uncover in the events that take place in chapter two is the filling of God's Spirit and what happens when you live a Spirit-

filled life. However, before we exegete this benchmark occasion within Christianity, I want us to recognize that the Holy Spirit is a testament to God's faithfulness.

### **God fulfills His promises (v. 1-3)**

God made a promise, and he fulfilled it. In a world filled with people who often renege on their promises, it is hard for us to trust people. We worship a God who fulfills his promises. As a result, we can trust Him. Believer... just diagnosed with cancer, our God is faithful. He fulfills his promises—parents who feel completely overwhelmed with work, practices, and doctor appointments. Parents burdened with worry over their teenage making decision of their own. Just as God has called you to love, care, and guide... Called you to raise your children in the manner they shall go. God is faithful. God has promised not to call you into anything; he won't empower you to see through. God fulfills His promises. When you feel tired, exhausted, maybe a loss for words because there is a mountain ahead of you, and you have no idea how you will climb it. Recognize this is where the Disciples were on the day of Pentecost, and God's faithfulness is on full display as the Spirit makes his entrance like Kramer on Seinfeld.

Transition: Now, there are a couple of things I think we can extract from the Spirit's entrance that informs us about the Spirit's role in our life.

*2 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. (Acts 1:1-2)*

As the Spirit makes his entrance, those witnessing this describe the Spirit with two outward symbols that enlighten us about the Spirit's role in our life.

### **Role #1: The Spirit empowers our life (Wind).**

Throughout the OT, authors used analogous terms to describe God's physical presence. This is called a theophany. Wind is a common theophany (physical description to describe God) throughout the Old Testament. The sound of what those in that room heard that day when the Spirit entered was wind, but they also felt, it was palpable. These outward symbols demonstrate the inward effects of what is to come to those in the room that day. As you have probably heard, those of us on the peaching team, when we describe the power of the Holy Spirit, we often use the analogy of a sailboat. Just as sailboats are under the power of wind, so are Spirit-filled followers of Christ.

Sailors regularly have to be aware of which way the wind is blowing, and then in response, if they want to move forward, they have to position their sails so that the wind pushes forward their sails. Followers of Christ, we have to be aware of the Spirit wind movement in our lives. We must regularly position the sails of our heart, mind, and soul in a way that

allows the Spirit wind to fill us and empower our thoughts, decisions, actions, and wills. Our life sails are positioned through spiritual disciplines like prayer, reflection, scripture reading, silence, solitude, etc.

Transition: The Spirit came in like a rushing wind that day, but also fire, the text says, which clues us into another role of the Spirit.

*3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of **fire** that separated and came to rest on each of them. (Acts 1:3)*

## **Role #2: The Spirit refines our life. (Fire)**

Just as wind is a power source, so is fire. When the OT used the word "fire" to describe God, it was meant in the context of judgment and cleansing. When the Holy Spirit comes into our life, we open ourselves to God's refining fire as it refines, cleans, molds, shapes, and forms us into who God wants us to be. Through the tool of conviction, the Spirit can do a mighty work of exposing the sin in our lives and burning it all up before that sin burns us.

**Transition:** Immediately in these first three verses, we get an external glimpse of the internal work the Spirit does when we allow it to rest on us just like it did the followers of Jesus that day.

*3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to **rest** on each of them. (Acts 1:3)*

### **Role #3: The Spirit governs our life.**

The word here for "rest" is pretty self-explanatory. To sit down or cause to sit. However, another more profound connotation of the Greek word *Kathizo* means to appoint or put in charge to be in a high position, formally, to sit on the right side.<sup>1</sup> *Kathizo* is the same word that is used when Jesus reclined at the table during the last supper or when Jesus is described as sitting at the right hand of the Father. I do not want us to glance over this. To invite the Spirit to rest on your life to fill your life, and he continues in v.4, means to allow the Spirit to take a position of authority. The throne of your life is not a loveseat. No, the Spirit has rested on the throne of your life. You're not sharing; you're off the throne, and Spirit has rested in your place. For the Spirit to be the authority in your life means you seek His advice before yours, you seek His will before yours, His wisdom before yours. You love what He loves and hate what he hates. You obey what he tells you to do. You submit to Him.

This authoritative language, combined with the first part of v. 4:

*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 - Acts 1:3-4*

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<sup>1</sup> James Swanson, [\*Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek \(New Testament\)\*](#) (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

As one commentator puts it, "Luke uses the word *"fill"* to describe the experience. This word is used when people are given an initial endowment of the Spirit to equip them for God's service; related words describe the continuous process of being filled with the Spirit or the corresponding state of being full. These references indicate that a person already filled with the Spirit can receive a fresh filling for a specific task, or a continuous filling."<sup>2</sup> "Filling" is the same word used for the verb "to baptize," which can often cause confusion within theological circles. However, Luke is trying to emphasize that this filling is a complete submersion. There are no compartments within the lives of the followers that were empty... but filled. However, just like water baptism, baptism of the Spirit happens only once at the moment of conversion for the believer; when the Spirit comes, He marks and seals you as His. As Paul puts it:

*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,- Eph 1:13*

However, the filling of the Spirit is something that can take place moment by moment as we regularly have to position the sails of our life in a manner that allows the Spirit to empower us.

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<sup>2</sup> TNTC Acts 2:4

Transition: We will see in the remainder of these verses the effects of what happens to a Spirit-Filled life. By witnessing the impact of a Spirit-filled life, I hope encourages us to desire the Spirit's filling in our life regularly. Let's look at the first effect.

**Effect #1: The Spirit equips you to do things you couldn't.**

*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!"- Acts 1:4-11*

That's something, isn't it? Here are followers of Jesus who probably could only speak their language of origin moments before, and then all of a sudden, at a moment's notice, they are speaking all sorts of languages. God was equipping these followers of Jesus to do what God called them to do. To be Christ's witnesses in all the world, we need to be able to speak their languages.

Have you ever felt at a loss for words when a good friend lost their spouse? Have you ever been staring at a computer to find the right words



to write? Any parents ever want to hide in the closet because you have done everything possible to prevent your teenager from dating the pastor's daughter? Spirit-filled people have a way of doing what they couldn't before on their strength, education, and skillset. Spirit-filled people are equipped with everything they need to accomplish God's purpose.

The disciples that day were given this ability to speak languages so that they could move and maybe get a new job and make more money. No, they were given this unique ability to serve God's purposes, not their own. So if you're wondering why God hasn't given you the words or wisdom or told you what to do next. Well, whose purpose are you pursuing? Gods?

Transition: When you start speaking different languages, people begin to notice. This leads me to the second effect.

**Effect #2: You will look different.**

*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." - Acts 2:12-13*

Friends, this is funny but also true. People who are not spirit-filled begin to rationalize away the impact of those who are. When you are Spirit-filled, your values change, your priorities change, and therefore your choices and behaviors look different to others...

"You forgave your spouse? Are you kidding me... you need to hold that over his head." "Why are you not angrier for how customer service treated you?" "You give how much money to the church?... are you drunk." A Spirit-filled life produces spiritual fruit,

*13 You, my brothers, and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ... 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. ... 19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. - Gal 5:13-26*

Transition: Within a spirit-filled life, you will look different to others because you are no longer drawing attention to yourself but to Jesus.

Which is the third effect.

### **Effect #3: Spirit-filled people point everyone to Jesus.**

*Peter Addresses the Crowd 14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.*

*15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 " 'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' 22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him: " 'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.' 29 "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy*

*Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' 36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."*

Peter stands up to the ruckus rationalizations of the people and he's smart... He uses attention captured by the dramatic changes in behavior by the Spirits filling by pointing people to Jesus. Let's learn from Peter here. Evangelism is not as hard as you think it is. We actually don't even need training because your life experience with God and the changes he has made in your life is all the experience you need. I love how the TV Series "The Chosen" puts it.

*"All I know is that I was one way, but now I am completely different, and the thing that happened in between was Him." - The Chosen*

The Spirit does not empower us to draw attention to ourselves. The Spirit does not draw attention to Himself as the charismatic movement likes to think. No, the Spirit has one goal: to draw people's attention to Jesus and Jesus alone. Take a look at what Jesus said:

*12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you." - John 16:12-15*

Some movements within Christianity rank a follower of Jesus based on how Spirit-filled they are in their ability to prophecy or speak in tongues etc. This twists Spirit's filling to be all about you. As we learn from Peter, it's not about you... It's about Jesus alone.

Transition: When you start pointing people to Jesus, you become contagious.

**Effect #4: You become contagious.**

*37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." 40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."*

You ever notice how when you are most in line with the Spirit, you can often hear comments like, "Dude, I want to have a marriage like yours." "I wish my kid would be more like yours." "You seem so at peace during this pandemic... I want that?" That's what is happening here. Peter, what do we need to do... And Peter capitalizes on it. Repent, stop making the decision you are making and start making new ones based no longer on selfish desires but God's. Get baptized, meaning surrender your life to God's allow him to be the King of your life. You won't find a better ruler.

Peter doesn't mince words...You shouldn't either. Friends, when people make those comments capitalize on them. Well, the reason our marriage is so good is because of Jesus. I no longer became selfish in my marriage, and we began to serve Jesus by serving one another. I know I know what you are thinking. I'm not a pastor; I don't know how to speak that way or what words to use... Just as the Spirit enabled those men to speak different languages, He can give you the words to evangelize to those around you. You just have to adjust the sails of your mouth and allow the Spirit to fill them.

Transition: When you do that, you will experience life transformation within yourself and those around you.

**Effect #5: Spirit-filled people get a front-row seat to transformation.**

*41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.- Acts 2:41*

A spirit-filled life impacts not just you but those around you. Peter and the disciples that day witnessed the spiritual transformation within themselves and those around them.

**To be filled, you need to be emptied.**

To have the Spirit's filling in your life, you have to empty yourself. You need to empty it all and place it at the feet of God: Your health, your marriage, your kids, your finances, etc. In order to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit you have to Empty your life... Give it all to Jesus by believing, trusting, allowing him to rest on the throne of your life.