

THE SPIRIT BRINGS THE POWER

#3 in "Acts: The Road Before Us"

Acts 2:1–47

1. [1] INTRODUCTION

a. Let me tell you about one of my personal nightmares:

- i. We've planned the perfect road trip.
- ii. I've got the route mapped – predownloaded all my offline maps on Google Maps.
- iii. Bags are packed. Snacks are loaded.
- iv. Everyone is in the car. I close the driver's door and turn the key
- v. And nothing happens

b. A map on my phone can only do so much.

- i. It tells you where you could go.
- ii. It tells you the road exists.
- iii. And the routes eventually connect!
- iv. But it cannot move you an inch down that road.
- v. EVEN IF YOU HAVE A MAP
 1. You still need power to move you forward

c. That's exactly where we are at the end of Acts 1.

- i. Jesus has given his followers the most important roadmap in history —
 1. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the ends of the earth.
- ii. The disciples know the destination. They're in position.
- iii. But Jesus told them explicitly: WAIT; don't get on the road yet.
 1. Don't try to drive this on your own power. Wait for the power to come.

d. Acts 2 is the moment the engine turns over.

- i. With a blast of fire that sets everything in motion drives it forward

e. [2] Today we'll see how The Spirit Brings the Power

- i. For the continuing mission of Jesus into our world → through his followers
- f. Turn with me to Acts chapter 2.
 - i. We'll walk through this together and I'll read sections as we go.

2. THE CHURCH IS SUPERNATURAL BEFORE IT IS ORGANIZATIONAL (vv. 1–4)

- a. [3] The chapter opens with a deceptively simple sentence: "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place." (Acts 2:1)

- i. They were together — united, still obeying the risen Jesus,
 - 1. not scattered, not impatient, not independently doing their own thing.
 - ii. This is what active, obedient waiting looks like:
 - 1. gathered, dependent, anticipating.
- b. And then, suddenly, everything erupts:
- i. "Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..." (Acts 2:2–4)
- c. **If you know your Old Testament, alarms start going off simultaneously when you read this:**
- i. Wind. Breath. Spirit.
 - 1. The *ruakh* of God — the invisible, animating, life-giving presence of God that hovered over the dark, chaotic waters in Genesis 1.
 - ii. Fire.
 - 1. The burning bush on Sinai, where God spoke to Moses and marked that ground as holy, as a meeting place between heaven and earth.
 - 2. Fire again on the mountain itself, when God descended in smoke and fire and the people trembled at the base.
 - 3. Fire again when the glory of God filled the tabernacle, and again when it filled Solomon's temple —
 - a. the unmistakable sign: God is here,
 - b. this is where heaven and earth meet,
 - i. this is HOLY GROUND, temple place talk
- d. Every one of those scenes in the Hebrew Bible follows the same pattern:
- i. wind, fire, the presence of God marking out a new temple —
 - ii. a place where heaven and earth overlap.
- e. **And in Acts 2, God is marking out a new temple — but it is not a building.**
- i. The fire doesn't descend on a structure;
 - 1. it distributes and rests on each one of Jesus' disciples
 - a. — individually, personally.
 - ii. God's dwelling presence has moved — **the new temple is a people!**
 - iii. The Spirit of God now lives not in a Holy of Holies behind a curtain, but in the gathered family of God.

- iv. This is exactly what the prophets had promised — Ezekiel, Isaiah, Joel — that in the messianic age, God would pour out his Spirit and come to dwell in his people in a new way.
 - f. This is foundational for us, because churches drift — almost inevitably — into thinking they are primarily organizations.
 - i. **We build programs and systems and structures,**
 - 1. and those things can serve us and the mission Jesus gave us.
 - ii. But if we're not careful, we end up running the church on human horsepower and wondering why it feels hollow and exhausting.
 - iii. Jesus told them explicitly in chapter 1: **Wait.**
 - 1. Do not move without the Spirit.
 - 2. Do not start the engine without the power of God Almighty
 - iv. **Modern Western Christianity hates that instruction —**
 - 1. we want movement and results immediately —
 - 2. but Jesus made them sit in dependence first, because activity without the Spirit eventually becomes just busyness.
 - g. **Tru Community Church does not exist to run programs or fill a calendar — it exists because God here and doing something in this community.**
 - i. That means our church only has something to offer others because of the Spirit — and the moment we forget that, we become just another organization.
3. **[4] THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS ORDINARY PEOPLE AND IMMEDIATELY SENDS THEM OUT (5–13)**
- a. The Spirit spills them out of that house and into the streets, and Jerusalem is packed.
 - i. "Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven." (Acts 2:5)
 - ii. **Pentecost** — the Feast of Weeks, which happened 50 days after Passover (Penta-Cost) — was one of three pilgrimage feasts that brought hundreds of thousands of Jewish people from across the ancient world into Jerusalem,
 - 1. and the city was overflowing.
 - 2. Likely going from around 100,000 → 3 million!
 - iii. And it's not lost on me that **it happens to be Pentecost Sunday as we gather here today** — almost 2,000 years later, still talking about the same moment.

- b. **Luke pauses the narrative to list region after region represented:** Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, Arabia.
 - i. At first it reads like a geography lesson nobody asked for, but Luke is doing something deeply intentional.
 - ii. **Look at the maps on our wall** — Acts 1:8 said the Good News would be witnessed to in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth.
 - iii. **And, on day one of the new age, the ends of the earth are already in Jerusalem because it's Pentecost**, and the gospel starts traveling outward before a single missionary journey has been planned.
 - iv. The missionary ripple begins immediately!
- c. And the disciples are speaking — in languages they could not possibly have learned — about **"the wonders of God." (Acts 2:11)**
 - i. **Slow down here: the miracle isn't just multilingual speech** — it's that each person is hearing the mighty works of God in their own heart language.
 - ii. **This is what Jesus is still doing through his Spirit: speaking to individual hearts** in languages they already know and can receive, through ordinary followers of Jesus who have been filled.
- d. There is also a reversal happening here that Luke's first readers would have felt in their bones.
 - i. Back in Genesis 11, humanity united in pride and self-exaltation at the Tower of Babel, and God confused their languages and scattered them across the earth
 - 1. So that they could not reach up to heaven, fallen as they were
 - ii. **Here in Acts 2, through the Spirit, those same languages become the very means of salvation** —
 - 1. Heaven came down to earth through the message of salvation in Jesus
 - iii. **The many languages also become the roadmap for the reunification of a scattered and fractured people**
 - 1. not into one empire under human ambition, but into one eternal family under King Jesus.
 - 2. Not uniformity — unity, which is a completely different thing.
 - 3. People from radically different backgrounds, different cultures, different histories, gathered around a shared allegiance to one Lord.
 - iv. That is the kind of community the gospel creates when it's actually working.

- e. And of course, some people mock — "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2:13)
 - i. Some people encounter the work of God and lean in with wonder and ask the right questions.
 - ii. Others explain it away.
 - iii. Psalm 1 says the scoffer sits in the seat of scoffing: settled, unwilling to move.
 - 1. **There are always people for whom no sign is sufficient, no miracle is convincing, no evidence is quite enough.**
 - 2. That hasn't changed, and we shouldn't be surprised by it.
 - 3. Nor deterred.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT TRANSFORMS TIMID PEOPLE INTO BOLD ONES —

AND THIS IS AMONG THE MOST UNDERRATED MIRACLES IN THE CHAPTER (vv. 14–21)

- a. "Then Peter stood up... raised his voice and addressed the crowd" (v 14)
 - i. I want you to slow down here for a moment, because this is not a small thing.
 - ii. **This is the same Peter** who, just weeks before, was huddled around a charcoal fire in the courtyard of the high priest's house while Jesus was on trial inside.
 - iii. A servant girl looked at him and said, "You also were with him," and Peter, scared for his skin, said "I don't know what you're talking about." (Lk 22:55-62)
 - iv. He denied Jesus three times before the rooster crowed, and he went out and wept bitterly.
- b. **That Peter** — the one who was undone by a servant girl — **now stands up and addresses a rowdy crowd of thousands.**
 - i. What happened? The Spirit happened!
 - ii. **Jesus *beside* him became the Spirit of Jesus *inside* him, and that changed everything about who Peter was able to be.**
- c. Peter opens his mouth and preaches Scripture, beginning with Joel: "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. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy." (Acts 2:17–18)
 - i. These are the last days — not the final few minutes before Christ returns, but the entire era inaugurated by his resurrection and the outpouring of the Spirit.
 - 1. **We have been living in this era for 2,000 years, and it is still today.**
 - ii. And what defines it?

1. **The Spirit poured out on ordinary people:** sons and daughters, young and old, men and women, servants —
 2. not just the professionally religious, not just the theologically trained, not just the visibly gifted.
- d. This is key for how we think about ourselves and about mission.
- i. **Sometimes people in the church** — maybe people in this room — quietly **believe that mission belongs to the especially equipped:** the extroverts, the trained, the confident, the ones who seem made for it — maybe the pastor, staff, or those who have been here longest.
 - ii. Acts 2 dismantles that idea immediately.
 - iii. The Spirit is poured out on ordinary disciples, which means
 1. **the mission belongs to all of us — not just a few of us.**
 - iv. God has always had a tendency to choose the unlikely, the ones the world would overlook, to do things that exceed what the world considers possible.
 - v. That is still his tendency, and if you feel unqualified, you are in excellent biblical company.

5. [6] THE GOSPEL IS ALWAYS ABOUT JESUS AND ALWAYS DEMANDS A RESPONSE (vv. 22–40)

- a. Peter stands up and preaches one of the most carefully constructed sermons in the New Testament —
 - i. and I'd encourage you to read the whole thing this week in verses 22-40.
- b. But here's what I want you to notice about it:
- c. Peter draws a straight line from King David through the prophets to the resurrection of Jesus:

[7] "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 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." (Acts 2:32–33)

 - i. What they are witnessing in the streets of Jerusalem is the overflow of the ascended, exalted Jesus pouring out his Spirit, **just as long prophesied!**
 - ii. The tongues of fire, the languages, the boldness of Peter — all of it is evidence that Jesus is truly still alive and reigning.
- d. And then Peter says something that must have landed like a punch: **"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."** (Acts 2:36)
 - i. Not "the Romans crucified him" — you crucified him!

- ii. Not "certain religious leaders crucified him" — you.
 - iii. Every person in that crowd was being called to personally reckon with their own sin and rejection of the one God sent.
 - 1. This is conviction, not shame manipulation
 - a. Shame says, "Look how terrible you are."
 - b. Conviction says, "Look what God has done, and look what that means about where you stand."
 - e. [8] The rowdy crowd is cut to the heart, and they ask the only right question: "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)
 - i. That is the question the Spirit produces in a person who is genuinely awake and open. Receptive. Ready.
 - ii. Not "how do I explain this away?" Not "is there another interpretation?"
 - 1. Just: what now?
 - f. And Peter's answer is the same gospel that has echoed through 2,000 years of church history: "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. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off — for all whom the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38–39)
 - i. All who are far off — that phrase reaches across the centuries and lands right here.
 - 1. Non-Jewish Gentiles in Kansas. People who had no claim on these promises by birth or ethnicity or heritage.
 - ii. **We are the ones who were far off, and yet we have been brought near** — grafted into the family of God through Christ.
 - 1. Sit with that for a second.
6. [9] THE HS CREATES NOT JUST CONVERTS BUT A COMMUNITY BUILT FOR MISSION (41–47)
- a. Around 3,000 people respond to the Spirit that day — and I want you to try to picture the logistics of that baptism service for just a moment:
 - i. They were in Jerusalem, not the Jordan River.
 - ii. The temple pools, the cisterns, the streams nearby — can you imagine the beautiful, joyful chaos of trying to baptize 3,000 people while the crowd is still spilling through the streets?
 - iii. This is the best kind of problem a church can have!
 - 1. We just have to fill a metal tank and try to get the heaters working!

- b. But here is one of the most important things Acts 2 teaches us, and it is one that modern Christianity has a way of quietly missing.
 - i. **The Spirit does not merely create converts — the Spirit creates a community.**
 - ii. People in Acts are not invited into a private spiritual journey;
 - 1. **they are immediately swept into shared life together.**
 - iii. **Salvation in the New Testament is always communal** — you are born into a family, not handed a certificate and sent home alone.
- c. [10] Luke gives us verses 42–47 as one of the clearest portraits of church life in the entire Bible, and it is worth reading slowly: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people." (Acts 2:42–47a)
 - i. Luke structured this passage deliberately: verse 42 is the summary and verses 43–47 unpack each of those four practices.
 - 1. Devotion to the apostles' teaching — a community anchored in Scripture and in the ongoing work of God.
 - 2. Fellowship, koinonia — shared life and shared resources, radical generosity flowing from transformed hearts.
 - 3. The breaking of bread — both ordinary meals together and the Lord's Supper, the remembrance that keeps everything grounded.
 - 4. Prayer and praise — hearts oriented upward, interceding together, with glad and sincere joy.
- d. This passage is exactly where our LIFE Group vision is rooted
 - i. When we designed our LIFE Groups around Learning biblical truth, intercession, fellowship, and extending life to others,
 - 1. we were tracing this passage about the first church.
 - ii. Because this is not a model Luke invented out of thin air — **this is what Spirit-filled community naturally produces when people are genuinely surrendered to Jesus together.**
 - 1. Meals together. Scripture together. Prayer together.
 - 2. Generosity together. Joy and singing and glad celebrations together.

- e. And the result? **"And the Lord added to their number daily those being saved." (2:47)**
 - i. THE LORD added! It wasn't because of their marketing.
 - ii. Not because of their programming. Or their kids ministry or their buildings.
 - iii. But because the life of Jesus was visibly present among his people, and other people could see it and wanted to be part of it.
 - iv. **The community WAS the witness.**

7. **[11] THE ROAD IS STILL BEFORE US — AND IT STILL REQUIRES THE SAME SPIRIT AND THE SAME SURRENDER (Application)**

- a. Acts 2 is not just history to be admired — it is a picture of what we are called to become, individually and together as a church, right here, right now.
 - i. **The maps on our wall are not decoration — they are a call.**
 - ii. **St. George, Manhattan, Wamego** — that is our Jerusalem. Where we live.
 - iii. **Riley County and Pottawatomie County** — that is our Judea,
 - 1. familiar enough but requiring intentionality to move out a little.
 - iv. **Kansas** — that is our Samaria, a little farther beyond our comfort zones
 - v. And beyond Kansas — that is our **"ends of the earth,"** and we believe God has us in conversations and partnerships that will eventually reach there too.
 - vi. Acts 1:8 is still the roadmap and Acts 2 is still the engine, and neither of those things has expired.
- b. But all of that depends on us being the kind of church Acts 2:42–47 describes, not just in aspiration but in actual practice. **Not perfectly, but genuinely.**
 - i. **If we are going to be a church that ripples the gospel outward** into St. George and Manhattan and Wamego, and out into Riley County to KS and beyond,
 - 1. **we need to be a people who are genuinely doing this Christian life together** — not just attending the same event on Sunday mornings.
 - ii. **Getting into a LIFE Group** is not a program we're asking you to support;
 - 1. it is the kind of community Jesus designed you to live in.
 - iii. Some of the most spiritually significant moments in my own life did not happen from a pulpit — they happened in life together —
 - 1. around dinner tables and fire pits, in late-night prayer with people who were also broken and trusting, in confession moments that **only happened because someone knew me well enough** —
 - 2. **in the context of a group small enough** for this life to actually happen.
- c. For some of you the Spirit is pressing on something that feels a little scary right now.

- i. [12] Maybe it's being willing to join a LIFE Group or other similar small group
- ii. **Maybe it is a discipling relationship** you have been putting off because vulnerability feels like too much risk.
- iii. **Maybe it is a conversation with your neighbor** about Jesus that you have talked yourself out of a dozen times.
- iv. **Maybe it is saying yes to a next step** that requires trusting the Spirit more than your own competence, and that gap terrifies you.
- v. And you feel more like the pre-Pentecost Peter than the post-Pentecost one.
 - 1. Acts 2 says: that is the same person. The Spirit is the difference.
- vi. The Spirit still chooses the unexpected. The Spirit still uses the timid. The Spirit still sends ordinary people into their workplaces, neighborhoods and beyond as witnesses who cannot be fully explained apart from God.
- d. We began this morning with a car that wouldn't start — a roadmap, a destination, a full tank of anticipation, but no engine.
 - i. Then the power came. The Holy Spirit is the engine.
- e. Acts 2 is the moment it turned over — and it has not stopped running since.
 - i. **The road that begins in Jerusalem runs through right through this HWY 24 corridor — and it runs through whatever God is asking of you right now.**
 - ii. The map hasn't changed. The power source hasn't changed.
 - 1. The question is simply whether we are willing to go where he leads.
- f. **INVITE UP JEREMIAH AND URIAH / PRAY OVER THEIR TRIP**

8. THE ROAD LEADS TO THIS TABLE — AND THIS TABLE LEADS US BACK OUT (Communion)

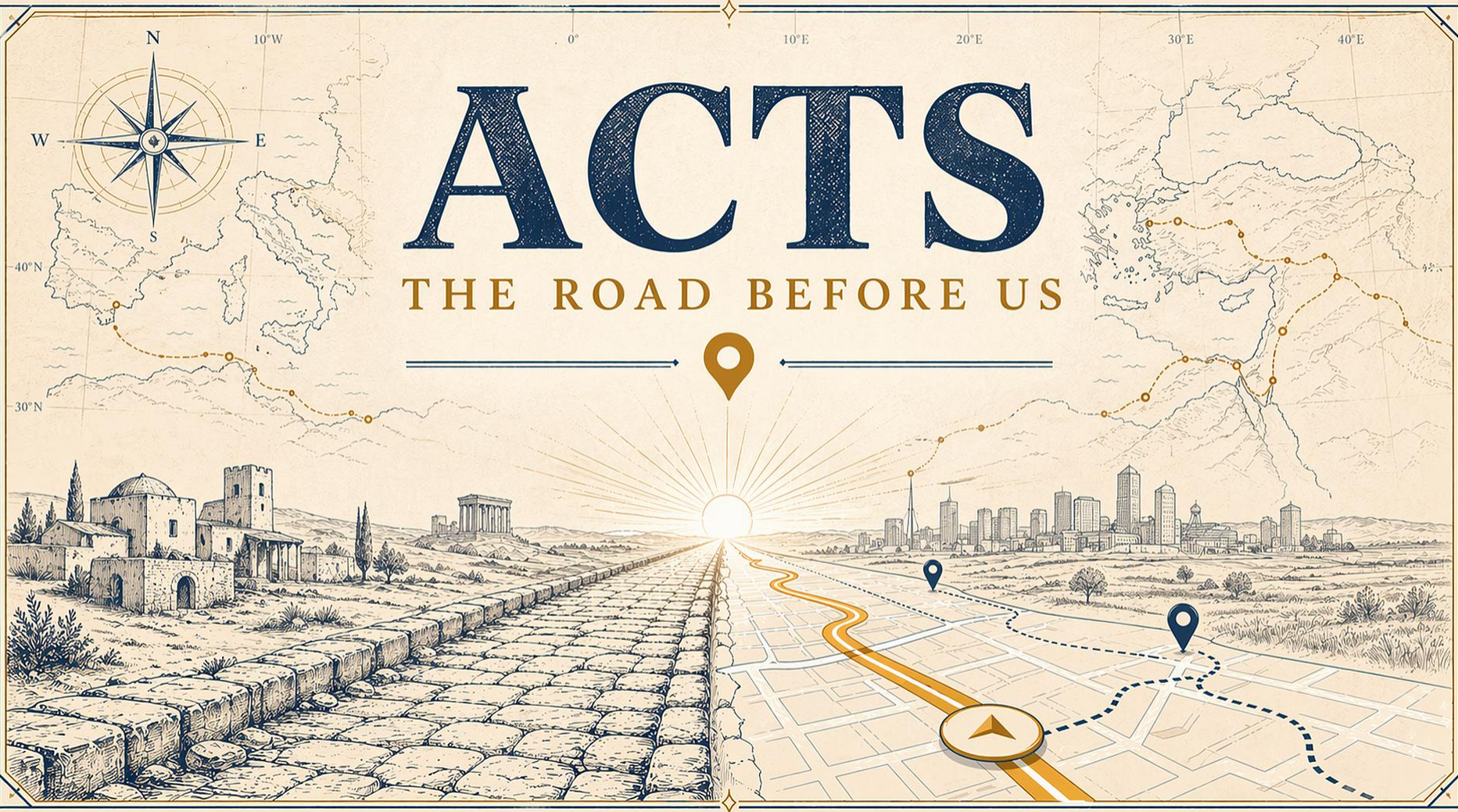
- a. One of the four rhythms Luke names at the heart of early church life is the breaking of bread —
 - i. Because in the early church, sharing the Lord's Supper was not a religious rite performed at a distance from real life — it was woven into shared meals, into ordinary evenings together in homes, into the repeated act of remembering together what Jesus had done and who they now were because of it.
 - ii. The table was not on the edge of community; the table was at the center of it.
- b. [13] And so we end this morning, coming to this same table —
 - i. because this is where the early church always came when the road felt long or the cost felt high — to remember who started this journey, who powers it, and who it all belongs to.
- c. **Maybe you came in today spiritually exhausted.**

- i. Trying to live the Christian life in your own strength.
- ii. Trying to manufacture transformation through mere discipline and willpower and better habits.
- iii. Trying to hold appearances together for another week.
- iv. Acts 2 is the invitation to stop striving.**
 - 1. The Spirit is the engine. You were never meant to be.
- d. **Some of you need boldness again** — and boldness comes from the Spirit, not from trying harder.
- e. **Some of you need community again** — and community requires walking toward other people, which always involves some risk.
- f. **Some of you need to repent of something** — not in shame, not in self-condemnation, but in the honest posture of "what shall I do?" that opens your hands to receive what Jesus offers.
- g. **Some of you need to say yes to the next step** that requires something of you — the LIFE Group, the discipling relationship, the conversation, the commitment, the thing you keep saying "soon" about.
- h. The same Spirit who hovered over chaos in Genesis,
 - i. who descended on Sinai in fire,
 - ii. who filled the tabernacle and the temple,
 - iii. who rested on each one of those 120 ordinary people in that upper room —
- i. **that Spirit of Jesus Himself is present here right now, and the road is still before us.**
 - i. The mission has not changed. The Spirit has not gone quiet.
 - ii. The family of God is still being gathered — from every tongue and tribe and culture and corner of the earth.
 - iii. **And we — this small, ordinary, Spirit-dependent congregation in St. George, Kansas — are a part of that story.** No less than the disciples themselves.
- j. **So we come to this table together** — not as isolated individuals with private spiritual journeys, but as one family under one King, who died for us, who rose for us, who poured out his Spirit on us, and who is still sending us.
 - i. **We come to remember. To celebrate. To be strengthened. And to be sent.**

9. **[14] COME TO THE TABLE** — *invite all to come celebrate communion. Brief instructions.*

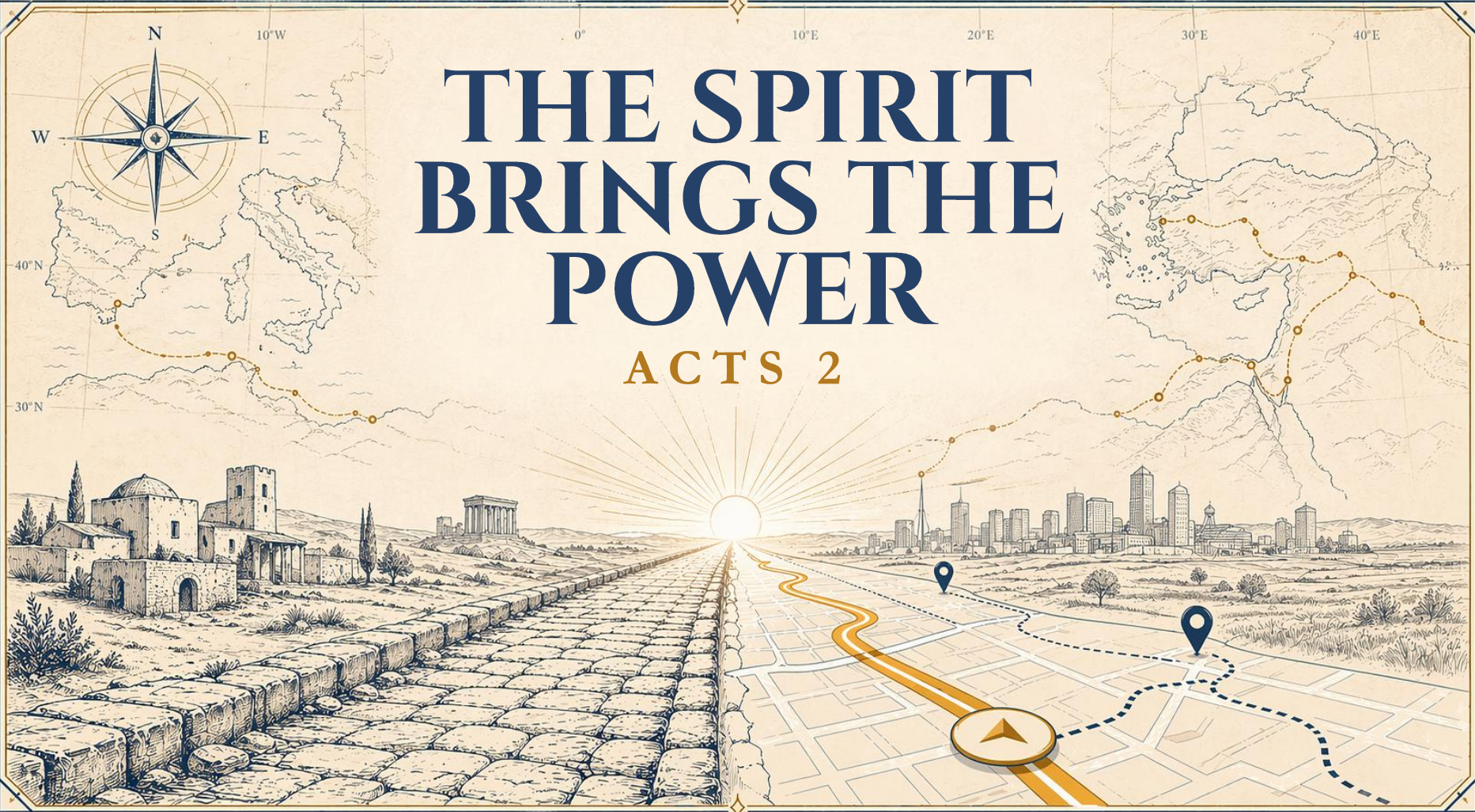
ACTS

THE ROAD BEFORE US



THE SPIRIT BRINGS THE POWER

ACTS 2



THE SUPERNATURAL CHURCH

ACTS 2: ¹ 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.



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THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS & SENDS

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. . . .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 . . . 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.”



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TIMID PEOPLE BECOME BOLD

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. . . . ¹⁶ 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.



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THE GOSPEL DEMANDS RESPONSE

²² “...Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs...as you yourselves know. ²³ ...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... ²⁷ ...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.’



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THE GOSPEL DEMANDS RESPONSE

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.”



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THE GOSPEL DEMANDS RESPONSE

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.”




COMMUNITY BUILT FOR MISSION

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

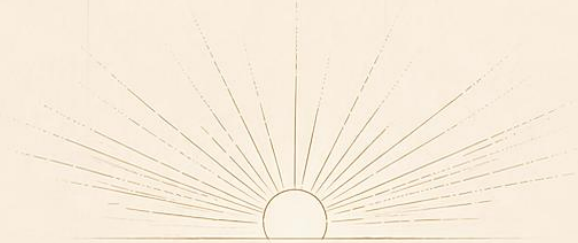
COMMUNITY BUILT FOR MISSION

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THE ROAD STILL BEFORE US

Jerusalem → Judea → Samaria → Ends of the Earth

HWY 24 → Pot. & Riley Co. → Kansas → Ends of the Earth



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HWY 24 → Pot. & Riley Co. → Kansas → Ends of the Earth

Join a LIFE Group

Discipling relationship

Conversation with neighbor

Saying yes to a scary next step of faith



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COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE



COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE

