**Images of the Spirit**

**The Word**

Read together Acts 2:1-21

**The Big Idea**

At Pentecost Jesus pours out the Spirit on his followers. In Scripture, we see multiple images and metaphors for the Spirit that give us glimpses of the Spirit’s qualities and ministries.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Consider the Spirit’s work at Pentecost and the book of Acts. If someone asked you, “Why don’t we experience the Spirit the way the early church did?” how would you respond to them?

2. As you consider the 4 images of the Spirit given on Sunday, which image do you most connect with in terms of how you’ve actually experienced the Spirit’s work in your life over the years?

3. Which image is hardest for you to understand or connect with?

4. In talking about the Spirit as wind, we talked about God’s creative power to do what human strength, power, and resource can’t do. If you can, share a time in your life when you finally came to the end of your own strength and resources and cried out to God, and God responded in a significant way.

**Digging Deeper: Sermon Outline**

I. The Spirit as Wind: The creative power of God

 A. See verse 2

B. In Greek (pneuma) and Hebrew (ruach) there is one word for spirit, wind, and breath

 C. The ruach is the creative power of God in the world to do what human power can’t

1. Genesis 1:2: The Spirit hovering over the darkness of the deep before creation

2. Genesis 2:7: God breathing into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life

3. Exodus 14: God sending a strong eastern “ruach” to blow back the waters of the Red Sea and make a way of salvation

4. Ezekiel 37: God sending his “ruach” to revive the dead bones of Israel

5. John 3: Jesus talking about being born again through the Spirit

D. In our lives, we come up against the limitations of our own power and resources, and God’s Spirit works to do what we can’t do

 1. Conversion itself is an act of the Spirit

 2. Spiritual transformation is always an act of the Spirit

 We must come to the end of ourselves and surrender to him

II. The Spirit as Fire: the purifying presence of God

A. See v. 3

B. Fire is often associated with the presence of God in Scripture

1. Exodus 3: the burning bush

2. Exodus 19: The covenant at Mt. Sinai

3. Revelation 4:5: The seven torches of God that burn before his heavenly throne

C. Fire is purifying

 1. Fire takes things that are temporary/superficial and burns them up

 2. Fire takes things that are permanent/substantive (gold) and refines them

D. This I the Holy Spirit’s role in our lives

 1. To take things that are superficial and burn them

2. To take things that are permanent and refine them so that we have a more undivided passion for God and become more like Christ

III. The Spirit as water: The satisfying refreshment of God

A. See v. 33 (“poured out”)

B. The image of water in Scripture

 1. Ezekiel 36:24-27: I will sprinkle clean water on you

 2. John 7:37-38: Rivers of living water at the feast of tabernacles

C. The Spirit’s role in our lives is to bring the deep satisfying refreshment of God 1. All our distractions and idols leave our souls dry, unsatisfied, busied, burdened

2. In drawing us more wholeheartedly to God, the Spirit brings true satisfaction and deep refreshment to our souls

 a. The joy of the Spirit

 b. The peace of the Spirit

 c. The rest that comes from knowing God as our Abba through the Spirit

IV. The Spirit as Tongues: courageous witness to God

A. See v. 3-4

 B. Acts 1:8 gives the theme of Acts

1. Most often in Acts when someone is filled with the Spirit, they begin speaking the wonders of God

2. The Spirit leads and guides the early church in its mission to witness to Jesus: prompting them to speak, opening their eyes to opportunities, orchestrating circumstances to spread the gospel

C. In our lives today, the Spirit empowers us to be witnesses, led and guided by Him

V. Conclusion

What is one area in your life where you are powerless to change something and need the Spirit to work?