

## UNIT 1: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Lesson 12

May 24, 2026

# Baptism in the Holy Spirit:

**God gave the Holy Spirit so every believer may be filled with the Holy Spirit.**

## THE LESSON OVERVIEW

Jesus promised to His disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that, when they received this gift, they would also receive spiritual power to be His witnesses. Worldly power (political, social, and economic) corrupts many. In contrast to that, the spiritual power that comes with the baptism in the Holy Spirit purifies and consecrates people to worship with reverence and joy, to pray effectively, to overcome evil with good, and to minister to the needs of others. On this Pentecost Sunday, we are reminded that the gift of the Holy Spirit is available to all believers in Christ, and we need the power of the Spirit.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This lesson is based on the first two chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, believed to have been written by Luke, who also wrote the Gospel According to Luke (compare Luke 1:1-4 with Acts 1:1). Luke, a physician, and a colleague of the Apostle Paul (see Colossians 4:14), may have been a native of Philippi in Macedonia. He wrote his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles probably in AD 61-64.

## THE LESSON OUTLINE

### 1. BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT FORETOLD: Acts 1:4-8.

- A. Promised by the Father, (4-5)
- B. Questioned About the Future, (6-8)

### 2. BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT RECEIVED: Acts 2:1-13.

- A. Received at Pentecost, (1-4)
- B. Evidence of the Spirit's Coming, (5-13)

### 3. SPIRIT BAPTISM FOR ALL BELIEVERS: Acts 2: 14-18, 37-39.

- A. Prophecy Fulfilled, (14-18)
- B. Promised to All Believers, (37-39)

## DISCUSSING THE LESSON

### 1. BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT FORETOLD: Acts 1:4-8.

#### A. Promised by the Father, Acts 1:4-5.

For forty days following His resurrection, Jesus showed Himself “by many infallible proofs” (v. 3) to be risen from the dead. During this time, Jesus taught His disciples about the kingdom of God. As the time drew near for Him to ascend to the Father, Jesus commanded His disciples to remain in Jerusalem after His ascension, to “wait for the promise of the Father” (v. 4).

Earlier, before His death, Jesus told His disciples about the Holy Spirit who the Father would send (see John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26). Now, Jesus assured His disciples that the gift of the Holy Spirit, promised by the Father in the Old Testament prophecies, (see Isaiah 44:3; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28-29; and Zechariah 12:10) would be fulfilled. Today, this promise of the Father is to every believer in Christ. To be baptized in the Holy Spirit, believers in Christ need only to believe and receive this promise of the Father.

#### B. Questioned About the Future, Acts 1:6-8.

In response to Jesus’ assurance that His disciples would be baptized in the Holy Spirit, they had a question. They wanted to know if Jesus, concurrent with their baptism in the Holy Spirit, would restore the kingdom to Israel. Jesus replied that they were asking for information they did not need to know, “which the Father has put in His own power” (v. 7).

We, like those first disciples of Jesus, may be curious about many things we do not know, and which may be unknowable to us. Things in the Father’s power that are unknowable to us are not essential to know for our well-being. What is important is that we receive all that God has promised us, and He has promised us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In verse 8, Jesus drew His disciples’ attention back to what they really needed to know. They would receive spiritual power (enabling) to be His witnesses when they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said the circle of influence of their witnessing would begin at Jerusalem, spread to all of Judea, then to Samaria, and, finally, to the whole world.

Like Jesus, these disciples of His were Jews, and they understood from the passage in Isaiah 43:1-10 that God chose devout Israelites (Jews) to be His witnesses to the Gentile world. Now, Jesus said to them that the Holy Spirit would empower them to be His witnesses to the world, and that, in doing so, they would help fulfill the God-given witnessing destiny of Israel.

The Apostles and first disciples of Jesus were His “primary” witnesses, and all who have come after them are His “secondary” witnesses. For both the primary and secondary witnesses of Christ, the spiritual power of effectively witnessing for His was, and still is, the enabling power of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 5:32).

### 2. BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT RECEIVED: Acts 2:1-13.

#### A. Received at Pentecost, Acts 2:1-4.

After Jesus’ ascension to the Father, His disciples (around 120 believers, Acts 1:15) returned to Jerusalem, and, as He had commanded the, waited to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. After

several days of waiting, “with one accord in prayer and supplication” (v. 4), Jesus’ disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit on the Jewish feast day called Pentecost.

Pentecost was a grateful celebration to God for the beginning of the wheat harvest and, also, for His giving the Ten Commandments to Israel at Sinai. When God’s time arrived, “when the day of Pentecost was fully come” (2:1), the disciples of Jesus were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The first sign or evidence of the Holy Spirit’s coming was “a sound” like that of “a rushing mighty wind.” This sound, “from heaven,” filled the whole house “where they were sitting.”

The second sign or evidence of the Holy Spirit’s coming was the appearance of a presence “like as a fire” in the place where Jesus’ disciples were assembled. From this central fire-like presence, visible flames broke away and became positioned over the heads of the disciples. At that instant, the disciples were “filled with the Holy Ghost,” and a third sign or evidence of the Spirit’s coming was manifested. The disciples “began to speak with other tongues [languages not their own], as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

When the disciples of Jesus were “filled with the Holy Spirit,” this was the baptism in the Spirit promised to them by Jesus and God the Father. The first two signs of the Spirit’s coming (sound and fire) were not repeated on subsequent occasions when people were filled with the Holy Spirit. However, the sign or evidence of speaking with other tongues was represented. Therefore, speaking with other tongues, as the Spirit gives the utterance, is regarded as the initial and normative evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

For Jews, Pentecost marked the beginning of the wheat harvest. For the disciples of Jesus, Pentecost marked the beginning of a new era of grace in which believers in Jesus Christ are filled with the Holy Spirit. For Jews, Pentecost was a reminder of the old Covenant based on the Law. For the disciples of Jesus, Pentecost confirmed the reliability of the new Covenant of grace and the Spirit, given by Christ to all who believe in Him.

## **B. Evidence of the Spirit’s Coming, Acts 2:5-13.**

On the Day of Pentecost, had the disciples of Jesus prophesied (“as the Spirit gave them utterance,” v. 4) in their own language (Galilean Aramaic), this probably would have drawn little or no attention from the multitude of devout Jews gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost. However, “when this [the disciples of Jesus speaking in languages not their own] was noised abroad” (v. 6), a large, curious crowd gathered around the place where the disciples were assembled.

The crowd of devout Jews were “amazed and marveled” (v. 7), because they heard the Galilean disciples of Jesus speaking in at least a dozen different Gentile languages understood by the Jews from those Gentile nations, “the wonderful works of God” (v. 11). Most of the devout Jews heard this as evidence that something unusual, highly significant, and of a spiritual nature was occurring in the disciples of Jesus.

The crowds of devout Jews who heard the disciples of Jesus “speaking with other tongues” understood the words they spoke, but still they needed an interpretation of what this meant. While some mocked, accusing the disciples of Jesus of being mildly intoxicated on new wine (v.

13), others inquired, “What does this mean?” (v. 12). Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (vv. 14-40), based on Joel’s prophecy (v. 16), was the Biblical answer to their question.

Speaking with other tongues, “as the Spirit gives the utterance,” is evidence of God’s presence, power, and work in and through the believer in Christ. This evidence may seem strange to those not familiar with it, but it may gain their attention so the Gospel can be proclaimed to them. This happened on the Day of Pentecost.

### **3. SPIRIT BAPTISM FOR ALL BELIEVERS: Acts 2:14-18, 37-39.**

#### **A. Prophecy Fulfilled, Acts 2:14-18.**

In response to those who asked, “What does this mean?,” Peter first said the disciples of Jesus were not drunk on new wine, as some in the crowd had charged. (As Christians, we should not allow false accusations and misconceptions about our beliefs and behavior to go unchallenged.)

Then, Peter said, “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel” (v. 16), citing the passage in Joel 2:28-30, a prophecy well-known to Peter’s Jewish audience. Peter went on to explain that this prophecy was beginning to be fulfilled, in that the disciples of Jesus had received the gift of the Holy Spirit – the outpouring of the Spirit foretold by Joel.

The disciples of Jesus used Scripture to examine and validate their experience of receiving the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. All spiritual manifestations thought to be of the Holy Spirit are to be judged by Holy Scripture. If our experience of the Holy Spirit agrees with Holy Scripture, we can be confident it is of God.

While regeneration (the new birth, a new life spiritually) has always been a reality for all who have lived by faith in God, in the Old Testament era, the gift of the Holy Spirit (as spiritual enabling for leadership and ministry) was limited to the few – prophets, priests, artisans, judges, and kings.

Now, Peter said, beginning with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church on the Day of Pentecost, the gift of the Holy Spirit would be available to all believers in Jesus Christ (see v. 38). As Joel foretold in his prophecy, the gift of the Spirit would be for all of God’s people, young and old, male, and female (v.18).

#### **B. Promised to All Believers, Acts 2:37-39.**

On the day of Pentecost, Peter “with the eleven” (v. 14), proclaimed the Gospel. He preached the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, proving Him to be the Messiah-Savior promised by God in Old Testament prophecies. Hearing the Gospel, many in the audience began asking the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (v. 37).

Peter’s answer was, in effect, repent of your sin, be baptized as believers in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you too shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (v. 38). Peter explained that the promised gift of the Holy Spirit is to all who will believe in Christ, for all generations, “as many as the Lord our God shall call” (v. 39).

By regeneration (conversion, the new birth) we received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that makes us Christians (see Romans 8:9). Then, as regenerate persons, we are candidates for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit (see Acts 8:14-17) – receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit as spiritual enabling for service to God as witnesses of Jesus Christ.

As happened on the Day of Pentecost, some people today are confused about the meaning of the Pentecostal experience but are open to receiving a message that declares the wonders of the Lord. Others may have personal struggles and perhaps anxiety about accepting the message of the baptism in the Spirit. Finally, some may ridicule the experience. Peter addressed all three groups in his Pentecost message.

### **CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP**

“Be you always being filled with the Holy Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). Explain: This is the literal translation of Paul’s command. Ask, **Why is it needed, after we have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, to constantly be filled with the Holy Spirit?** After responses, ask everyone to pray to be continually, daily, filled with the Spirit.

### **MINISTRY IN ACTION**

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an essential gift that transforms our understanding, fills us with divine power, and enable us to be effective witnesses for Christ. Peter’s preaching at Pentecost highlights how the Spirit can use us in powerful ways when we yield to Him.

## WORKSHEET

### All About the Day of Pentecost

**Like Christmas and Easter, Pentecost Sunday** is observed by Christians (Catholics, Protestants, and Pentecostals) because it has a highly significant historical and spiritual meaning for us.

**As the New Testament** tells of the birth of Jesus (Christmas), and of the resurrection of Jesus (Easter), it also tells that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples and Apostles of Jesus on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4).

**Acts 2:1** is the only verse in the New Testament that tells the Day of Pentecost (a Jewish religious festival) was when the Holy Spirit came, as promised by Jesus Christ (1"4-5).

**The word Pentecost, which means "fiftieth day,"** is found only three times in the New Testament, and nowhere in the Old Testament. The three times in the New Testament are Acts 2:1; then Acts 20:16 says the Apostle Paul was hurrying to be in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost; and in 1 Corinthians 16:8, Paul said he would remain in Ephesus until Pentecost.

**In the Old Testament, the equivalent term for Pentecost is Feast of Weeks** (Exodus 34:22; Deuteronomy 16:9-10, 16). The Feast of Weeks was a celebration of the wheat harvest, seven weeks, or fifty days, after the Passover.

**Guided by Old Testament practice** regarding the Feast of Weeks, Christians observe Pentecost Sunday on the fiftieth day, the seventh Sunday, after Easter.

**Pentecost Sunday is also called "Whitsunday,"** meaning "White Sunday." First used in the twelfth century, Whitsunday seems to have originated from the practice of newly baptized converts to Christ dressing in white on that Sunday.

**Pentecostals:** "Various Christian religious bodies that emphasize individual experiences of grace, spiritual gifts (as glossolalia and faith healing), expressive worship, and evangelism" (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary).

**The Day of Pentecost: Acts 1:1-8 and 2:1-4, 36-41**

Compare the two baptisms described in Acts 1:1-8 and 2:1-4, 41.

Baptized with _____	Baptized in the _____
Who is baptized? _____	_____
Who is the baptizer? _____	_____
The purpose: _____	_____

“The Amplified New Testament translates the word power (Acts 1:8) as ‘ability, efficiency, and might.’ The Holy Spirit gives the ability to stand up for Christ. The Holy Spirit also gives efficiency- peak performance, maximum productivity for time and energy expended. The Spirit also gives might, which implies force and strength. The spiritual power provided by the Holy Spirit makes the Christian life more than adequate for every situation of life.” – Ray Hughes

Read Acts 2:37-39.

- How was the crowd affected by Peter’s message (v. 37)? How does this relate to Jesus’ statement in John 16:7-9?
- Explain the connection between repentance, water baptism, and the gift of the Holy Spirit (v. 38).
- According to verse 39, who can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?