

Additional passage:

READ Matthew 5:43-48. **Mark what stands out to you.**

⁴³ "There is a saying, 'Love your *friends* and hate your enemies.' ⁴⁴ But I say: Love your *enemies!* Pray for those who *persecute* you! ⁴⁵ In that way you will be acting as true sons of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust too. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what good is that? Even scoundrels do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are friendly only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even the heathen do that. ⁴⁸ But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

REFLECT In light of Acts 2:41-47 (Page 3) Write your thoughts from this passage.

RESPOND (Application for this week) **WHAT** were the significant scriptures for you this week? (Write them out.)

WHY are those scriptures *significant to you* at this time in your life?

HOW can you practically apply what God spoke to you about this week? [Try to respond in terms of specific action steps, specific people, long-term plan.]

WHAT will be the time frame for your application?

(1) Start Date _____ (2) *Progress* Check Date(s) _____ (3) Finish Date _____
/ / /

WHO I can ask to hold me accountable for my application: _____

Sermon-Based Devotional

Lawrence Free Methodist Church

(Based on a Sermon by Pastor Alex Alexander on May 20, 2018)

Series: The Book of ACTS: WE ARE THE CHURCH

This week: Church on Mission

[Acts 2:1-4, 22-47]

God calls us to rely on the Holy Spirit as we share the gospel, call people to faith, and live in community.

READ John 14:15-18 **Mark what stands out to you.**

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (Jesus)

When the Holy Spirit is sent to us, God is present, and that, of course, means that Jesus Himself is present with us.

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from John 14:15-18.

1. The Holy Spirit comes to indwell every believer.

Here's how the Book of Acts describes the coming of the Holy Spirit

READ Acts 2:1-4 **Mark what stands out to you.**

¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from Acts 2:1-4.

God's kingdom will continue to advance as God continues His work through His church in His world through His Holy Spirit.

2. The Holy Spirit comes to empower the spread of the gospel.

READ ACTS 2:22-40 Mark everything that stands out to you.

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know—²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David says concerning Him, “*I saw the Lord always before me, for He is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; ²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. ²⁷ For You will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let Your Holy One see corruption. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.*”

²⁹“Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.³⁰ Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that He would set one of his descendants on his throne,³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “*The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, ³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.*””³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “*Brothers, what shall we do?*”

³⁸ And Peter said to them, “*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 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.*”⁴⁰ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “*Save yourselves from this crooked generation.*”

REFLECT Write your observations and thoughts from Acts 2:22-40.

This passage contains all the ingredients of the Gospel message – everything that anyone needs to hear and know in order to put their faith in Christ and to know him. What is said that you would consider the irreducible minimum for someone to understand and know how they can become a child of God?

Love compels us to speak out. The Spirit compels us to speak out as well. The mission of the church—to go out into the world and share the good news of God’s reconciling work in Jesus—is a reflection of the heart of the Holy Spirit, who is more eager than anyone to celebrate the work of the Father and the Son. Knowing this should dramatically shift the way we think about sharing the gospel. At its most basic level, perhaps the easiest way to be more bold in sharing the gospel is by seeking to be filled with the Spirit.

3. The Holy Spirit comes to build the community of faith.

READ ACTS 2:41-47 Mark everything that stands out to you.

⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching & the fellowship, to the breaking of bread & to prayer.

⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

REFLECT Write your observations & thoughts from Acts 2:41-47. **I.E. the word “awe” (v. 43) is defined as: “Power to inspire,-- solemn wonder.” And that word is from a literal translation of the passage – so it is a very accurate description of what was going on with “every” (v. 43) person there. Something unique and special was happening – and it apparently affected many lives in the community in such a way that others were putting their faith in Jesus through miraculous means & through social & relational things they initiated! (Now write your observations & thoughts. What are some principles you could apply from what you observed in this passage?)**

We seek this Spirit-transformed life not merely by imitating these behaviors but by seeking God’s presence, by asking Him to fill us with His Spirit and renew our love for Him, His Word, and His gospel.

Conclusion

While receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is a once-and-for-all occasion when we put our faith in Jesus, being filled with the Spirit is the lifelong responsibility of the believer, turning to God in faith and joy and learning to live with a deeper and more abiding trust in Him. As we are filled, then, we should overflow—to our friends, our neighbors, our families, and more—with the love and joy that come from abiding in the gospel of our Savior.

(Go to Page 4 for more stuff & your synopsis and application for this week. →)