

*Notes from Andy: I'm basically trying to communicate 4 things in really short space - the video is probably just 8 minutes today. You should watch the video and be prepped to pause it between #2 and #3. Here are the 4 points – each one comes out of the passage you read today.*

- 1) *the Spirit comes to us,*
- 2) *the Spirit communicates about Jesus*
- 3) *the Spirit convicts our hearts about Jesus and*
- 4) *the Spirit creates a new community.*

*I tried to give you a bunch of ideas or prompts below that will help you tease these out with your students. But I hope you take some time to study the passage and prepare it yourself and have fun leading! The basic rule you want to follow in getting students to engage in the Scriptures is ...*

- 1) *ask questions that help them observe what's happening (who, what, where, how, when etc. )*
- 2) *Then move to questions that help them understand what's happening (why? How? What about ... what do you think ...)*
- 3) *Only then move to ask questions about connections with us and how God might be working - teaching - leading us now to see Jesus.*

### **First, set the scene..**

*Leader preview notes*

Sometimes when you read a book it can be difficult to pick out the main character ... at first. As Camille mentioned two weeks ago, "Acts" is a funny name – who is acting? What are the actions? Well it's really 3 actors –

**First**, the disciples are really doing lots of stuff.

But **second**, really, as Camille pointed out, it's what the risen Jesus is doing – its about his "continuing" teaching and action.

But **third** – its about how Jesus is at work – by his own Spirit he sends to be with us, in us, fill us, teach us, lead us, and so much more. Everything Jesus did FOR You, his Spirit works out IN YOU. The main character in this chapter is .... The Holy Spirit.

- What the disciples are doing at the start: maybe a little over 100 of them, and they've gathered in a room for prayer and worship — praying and waiting, as Jesus told them! (1:4 *wait for the promise of the Father – the Spirit!* / 1:8 *you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth*) –
- God is on the move. God is taking the initiative! Just as Jesus said: God's Spirit is coming in presence and power to move the disciples out in mission to be his witnesses!

### **Second, read Acts 2 out loud together.**

**Third, watch the first several minutes until you come to the break (slide on screen) between points 2 and 3. Then, discuss so far...**

1) The Spirit comes (2:1-4) - What happens here: God's personal and powerful presence comes down to be with his people – to be in those who believe in Jesus.

*Ideas for questions:*

- What do you notice here? How is the environment described? What do they experience? What happens to their words?

- Real quick – this was a powerful, one-time event. Signs and portents – pay attention! Demonstration of the Spirit’s power and presence.

2) Here’s the second big thing the Spirit does – The Spirit communicates about Jesus! (2:5-40)

*Ideas for questions:*

- Look at the consequence of the Holy Spirit coming into their lives – did you catch this when you read it? What do they all start doing?
- There’s a divided response to this: why are some people amazed? What do others think are happening?
- What do the people hear in the words the disciples are saying? (Hint: v 11)
- You might want to point out that the disciples aren’t just chatting people up: *they are telling them the good news of what God has done in giving us Jesus and sending his Spirit.* That means that what the Holy Spirit is doing right now in giving this gift of languages is that the Spirit is communicating about Jesus! The Spirit is making it possible for *everyone on earth to hear the good news of Jesus.*

*Optional - share with your students if you find it appropriate:* First, when God’s spirit is making it possible for the same message to go out in every language – it’s like a total reversal of what happened once in the Old Testament? Do you remember a time when all the people on earth got together to build a tower at Babel to make themselves famous and declare themselves gods? And at that moment, God broke their language and splintered them up into different languages and cultures? Well this time that god is at work, the grace of Jesus by the power of his Spirit "reverses the curse of Babel," uniting across racial & linguistic lines in the message of Jesus.

- One big implication here – From this moment on – the good news of Jesus is for all people. Peter says God is breaking into this world, right here, right now, and doing something new: Jesus has come – has lived, died, and risen again – he is the start of a brand new day for everyone one earth.<sup>1</sup>
- What does that mean for the source of our unity with other Christians? Who really makes us “one?”
- And how can that unity be a source for understanding and loving and serving each other?

**Fourth, resume the video (last several minutes) and then discuss...**

3)and #3 follows right after that! The Spirit convicts people’s hearts about Jesus. (2:16-40) - yes, this overlaps with the other - the point is, as Peter preaches, God’s Spirit takes the truth in God’s word and speaks it right to their hearts.

*Ideas for questions:*

- Have your students look through vs.22-36 and read them again. Draw up a list of everything that Peter says about Jesus. Put it in two lists: 1) things about who Jesus, 2) things about what Jesus did. Feel free to use a bit sheet of paper or whiteboard for this
- What do you think about what Peter says - is he more just telling them the facts/telling a story, or is he making an argument/stating a case? Why do you think that? (*Answer: its both, obviously, but v36 helps you see his main point.*)
- How do people respon? Why do you think they respond that way?

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<sup>1</sup> Stott, acts 73

- Do you think you have ever been “cut to the heart” or “convicted in the heart” by the Spirit? Why? What was it like? How did you respond? (*Leaders: that might be a great moment for you to tell a story from your own life*).

4) last thing: the Spirit creates a new community (2:41-47).the church.

*Ideas for questions*

- How is the church described?
  - (Hint - there are widely considered to be four major things here - teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread (think both meals and the Lord’s supper), and prayers).
  - Where do we see examples of the same thing in our church?
  - What might happen if we totally ignored one or more of those?
- What’s the response of the people in the community around them?
- What do you think the disciples in this new community were known for?
- What do you think we Christians in our community seem to be known for?
- Now ... who is it that is adding people to the new community? (See v 41 and v57). What does that say about who is really on the move here in this passage?
- Do you ever think about the Lord Jesus being “on the move” among us, or “adding” people to our fellowship? What might that look like? How might he work in or through us to do that?

A final note: if I was going to close out the night, I might say something like ...

What’s your response to this passage? Is it something like ... “hey now, that seems like a really big deal – like, maybe too costly for me to try. That asks too much of me.” Maybe so – but remember: who created this community? Who drives its message? Who makes it work? Who gives it power? God’s own Spirit creates the new community. You can’t resist it. You belong to it. The Spirit is in charge of us. Each one of us has a place here, no one of us has to be alone, and each one of us is sent out in mission to people very different than us. But the Spirit is in charge of that, too. A Spirit-filled believer is part of God’s new community, the church. And “a Spirit-filled church is a missionary church” – taking the message of Jesus to everyone.

Then finish off your time by praying together.

- Ask each person to pick one of those 4 things the spirit does and pray that God would do that in our midst.
- Or have your group talk about one that together you want to ask God to who you, do among you, or work through you in the week ahead.