



Acts chapter 2 is one of the most famous and unique passages of the Bible. The event at Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, was a pivotal moment in Biblical and church history and the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies. Jesus promised that after he had gone to Heaven he would send the Holy Spirit to dwell in them and give them power so that they could go out into all the world to proclaim the good news of Jesus. This presence and power of God is for us as well.

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God for believers

The apostles and other believers are still meeting together in the room praying. Suddenly they heard a sound like wind saw what was like tongues of fire; a very strange phenomena which in many ways symbolise the Holy Spirit. It pointed Jews back to Mount Sinai when God met with his people. The believers were filled with the Holy Spirit just as Jesus promised they would be (Acts 1:4-5). The Holy Spirit's presence was for all believers for all the time unlike his activity in the Old Testament. The presence of the Holy Spirit in us is a comfort and assurance when it comes to bearing witness for Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the power of God for believers

The result of the filling of with the Holy Spirit spoken of in this passage is that the believers spoke in foreign tongues/languages. They were praising God, declaring his wonders in the languages of the people who were staying in Jerusalem. The apostles did not know these languages and so this was a miracle, a super natural activity from Heaven. The fact that tongues was the result of this work of the Spirit was to show the world that the gospel is for all nations, in one sense fulling Acts 1:8, and so that people from all over the known world could hear of Jesus

Christ and respond. Pentecost was a festival celebrating the harvest; now it is known as a celebration of the first harvest of thousands of Christian believers.

Here are some suggested questions to dig deeper and to discuss for application...

How do feel or what do you think when people preach about evangelism? What are your fears about talking to others about Jesus?

What happened in that room on the day of Pentecost and how do the sound like wind and the tongues of fire symbolise the nature and character of the Holy Spirit? (see John 3:1-8; Exodus 3:1-6; 19:16-19; 40:34-35) How does the coming of the Holy Spirit fulfil prophecy? (Ez 36:26-27; Joel 2:28-32; John 14:16, 16:7)

How does the knowledge and experience of the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life help you when it comes to speaking of Jesus?

Discuss generally what the Bible says the role of the Holy Spirit is in the life of a believer? (refer to specific Bible passages/verses)

What was the result of the believers being filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts 2? Dwell on what this would have been like both for the apostles and those hearing their own language?

What was the significance of people being in Jerusalem from all over the world?

What change do we see in the believers after they are filled with the Holy Spirit? What were the effects of being filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts ? (Acts 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9, 52)

Encourage one another with examples when you've prayed for the Holy Spirit's help to speak for Jesus? How can the Holy Spirit give us power to individually and as a church to bear witness for him in Oxford?