

The Power of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-13

The Day of Pentecost – A Turning Point in History

This unique event marked the arrival of the Holy Spirit and fulfilled Jesus' promise of power from on high. It is as significant and as unique as the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and serves as the foundation for the Church's mission.

1. The **Setting** of Pentecost (Acts 2:1)

- The original Greek emphasizes *they were together*—unified in spirit and location. Something special happens when the people of God come together.
- The Day of Pentecost was also called the Feast of Weeks. It fell 50 days after Passover and was a celebration of the firstfruits of the harvest.

2. The **Sound** of Pentecost (Acts 2:2)

In both Greek and Hebrew, the words for "wind" and "spirit" are the same, and they can also mean "breath" depending on the context. Here's a breakdown:

- **In Hebrew:** The word "רוח" (**ruach**) can mean "wind," "spirit," or "breath." Its meaning depends on the context in which it appears. For example:
 - **Genesis 1:2:** "The Spirit of God (רוח אלהים / ruach Elohim) was hovering over the waters."
 - **Ecclesiastes 1:14:** "All is vanity and a striving after wind (רוח / ruach)."
- **In Greek:** The word "πνεῦμα" (**pneuma**) also carries the meanings of "wind," "spirit," or "breath." For example:
 - **John 3:8:** "The wind (πνεῦμα / pneuma) blows where it wishes..."
 - **Romans 8:16:** "The Spirit (πνεῦμα / pneuma) himself bears witness with our spirit..."

How is the Holy Spirit like wind?¹

- Wind exists pervasively everywhere on the earth.** The Holy Spirit is everywhere.
- Wind is air in continuous motion.** So too, the Holy Spirit is always moving.
- Wind is uncontrollable.** The Holy Spirit cannot be put in a box.
- Wind makes stagnant and stifling air full of vitality and freshness.** The Holy Spirit revives and brings vitality.

¹ Adapted from David Yonggi Cho, *Holy Spirit: My Senior Partner* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 1989), 52-53

3. The **Sight** of Pentecost (**Acts 2:3**)

How is the Holy Spirit like fire?

- A. **Fire Consumes** – The Holy Spirit also burns away the dross of sin. Hebrews 12:29 – “For our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 9:14 and 1 Peter 1:22 both speak of the purifying and cleansing work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- B. **Fire Empowers**
- C. **Fire Gives Light** – Without the Holy Spirit, we would not understand the Truth of God’s Word. (1 Corinthians 2:10-12)
- D. **Fire Transforms** – The Holy Spirit is like a fire that transforms whatever it is burning into its own likeness. ILLUSTRATION – If you put a poker in a fire, and it stays there long enough; the fire will be in the poker. When you become a Christian (which means like Christ), it is now the Holy Spirit’s job to help transform you into the image of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:18 and Romans 8:29)
- E. **Fire Attracts** – You don’t have to advertise a fire. People will rush to the scene of a fire. John Wesley, when asked how he drew such large crowds, is quoted as saying, “I set myself on fire, and people come to watch me burn.”

4. The **Spirit** of Pentecost (**Acts 2:4-5**)

- **The Baptism of the Spirit:** When you gave your life to Jesus, you received the Holy Spirit. This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, placing you into the body of Christ.
- **The Filling of the Spirit:** While the Holy Spirit resides in every believer, being filled with the Spirit means allowing Him full control of your life.
- You are not commanded to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. You are not to seek the Baptism. It is your position in Christ. You are commanded to seek the infilling (Ephesians 5:18)

5. The **Speech** of Pentecost (**Acts 2:4-13**)

- The disciples began to speak in other tongues, declaring the wonderful works of God.
- Devout Jews from many nations were gathered in Jerusalem, and they were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking in their own languages.
- This miraculous event drew the crowd’s attention, setting the stage for Peter to preach the Gospel.



*The Jewish Diaspora at Pentecost (Acts 2:9–11)
Source: Charles Swindoll (Acts Commentary)*