

Pentecost Sunday

May 28th

Discipleship Guide



LIVING STONES CHURCH

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Pentecost Intro

Pentecost Sunday is the church's celebration of the day God first sent the Holy Spirit to Christians.

Pentecost is one of several Old Testament festivals or feasts that God commanded Israel to celebrate. Pentecost was originally known as *the Feast of Weeks*, a single-day, annual celebration marking the renewal of Israel's covenant with God as well as Israel's grain harvest. Israel celebrated the Feast of Weeks by offering the first portion of their harvested crops to God.

Because the Feast of Weeks came 50 days after Passover (another feast celebrating God's grace in freeing Israel from slavery and death), it became known as *Pentecost*, which means fiftieth.

In the book of Acts, we read that the first Christians were gathered in Jerusalem because Jesus, after His resurrection, had told them to wait for the Holy Spirit. It was on the day of Pentecost that the Holy Spirit came and empowered these once-fearful Christians to preach the gospel, speak the gospel in other languages, and perform miracles as signs that show Jesus really is the divine Lord and Savior of God's people. With this

in mind, take a look at the timing of the first Pentecost after Jesus's death and resurrection:

- A. Jesus is crucified on a Friday during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It's during this festival that Israel celebrated the Passover.*
- B. Jesus's body is in a tomb on the Sabbath (Saturday).*
- C. Jesus resurrects from the dead on the first day of a new week.*
- D. Fifty days later, the Holy Spirit is given to the church on Pentecost.*

The Holy Spirit, then, brings a new kind of harvest: the people of God! We are redeemed from our sin and death because the blood of the true Passover Lamb, Jesus, covers all who trust in Him alone. Because Jesus has died in our place, God's wrath passes over us, and we are declared righteous in God's court, adopted as His children, and given His Spirit as a guarantee that we'll one day be forever freed from the presence of sin and death. That's the ultimate exodus we all need and want.

And after being indwelt by the Spirit, we are empowered here and now, in this broken world, to offer ourselves as living sacrifices to God (see Romans 12:1-2) as we remember how free we are.

The Holy Spirit & Christians

MAIN POINT

The Holy Spirit graciously blesses us with His presence and power, gives us a new heart that wants to please God, and brings us permanently into eternal relationship with Himself, Jesus, and the Father.

GROUP INTRO

There are many misunderstandings about the Holy Spirit, but Community Group is a safe place to study what Scripture says about Him.

What is your understanding of the Holy Spirit?
Who is He? What does He do?

TEXT

1. Read John 16:12-14, Acts 5:1-4, and Ephesians 4:29-30. How do these passages help us see that the Holy Spirit is not a “thing” or “force” but a personal *He*?

Leader help:

In John, Jesus tells His disciples that the Holy Spirit (He) will guide, speak, declare, and then glorify and communicate with Jesus. A thing or force doesn't communicate personally in this way.

In Acts, Peter tells Ananias that he lied to the Holy Spirit. A thing or force can't be lied to.

In Ephesians, Paul reminds us that, by our sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit. A thing or force cannot be grieved.

2. Read Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 13:14, and Jude 1:20-21. What do these passages tell us about the authority and identity of the Holy Spirit?

Leader help: By mentioning the Father, Son, and Spirit together in these passages, the authors are communicating that all three act together with equal authority and power, and yet, the Father, Son, and Spirit are all distinct. In other words, the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, etc. And neither did the Father become the Son or the Son become the Spirit. From eternity past, the three persons of the trinity have been equal in authority and power but distinct persons.

3. Read 2 Peter 1:16-21, Romans 8:14-17, and Romans 8:26-28. According to these passages, what does the Holy Spirit give to us? Why does He provide this?

Leader help: The Holy Spirit has given us:

The “prophetic word”, i.e. Scripture (2 Pet. 1:19-21)

Permanent adoption into God’s family (Rom. 8:15)

Ongoing confidence that we belong to God (Rom. 8:16)

The inheritance that Jesus earned (Rom. 8:17)

Help (Rom. 8:26)

Guidance and prayers (Rom. 8:26-27)

All because He loves us and has brought us into union with Jesus.

APPLICATION

1. If you’re a Christian, what would be different about you and your life if you did not have the Holy Spirit living in you?
2. What events, experiences, or emotions in your life make it difficult for you to believe that the Holy Spirit indwells you? How does the Bible help us when we have these difficulties and doubts?

3. Describe a time in your life when the Holy Spirit helped you overcome sin, experience God's love, or evangelize to someone who doesn't know Jesus.
4. Where in your life do you currently need the help of the Spirit? Why?

PRAYER

Celebrate the reality of the Holy Spirit - His presence, power, and love.

Biblical passage to guide this prayer: Romans 8:9

Ask the Spirit for help where you need help.

Biblical passage to guide this prayer: John 14:16

Confess the ways you may have grieved the Spirit through your sin or unbelief.

Biblical passage to guide this prayer: 1 Thessalonians 5:19