

# WE ARE EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

## CCC DNA Statements

*The Holy Spirit within us enables us to live life beyond belief—a life filled with joy, purpose, and power. We live in a supernatural reality that includes yet transcends the physical universe.*

**Scripture Passages:** Acts 2:1–41

### OVERVIEW

Acts 2 tells the story of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost and resting on the people. This changed the church forever as God's presence was now with his people in a way it was not before. Prior to this event, God's presence was with the people in the Tabernacle. It only rested on individuals for a certain period of time and for a certain purpose. Now the Holy Spirit was available to all believers and it empowered the disciples for their ministry in the rest of the book of Acts. We still have the Holy Spirit's presence with us today, empowering us to do the work of God on earth.

### GROUP OBJECTIVES

- Listen to the Spirit as you study the text together.
- Read/skim through Acts 2:1–41 as a group.
- Discuss how the Holy Spirit empowered the believers for the furthering of the gospel in the book of Acts.
- Reflect and encourage one another in how we can be empowered by the Holy Spirit today.

### CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Share a story of a time when you were courageous. What did you feel in this moment?
- Share about a time when you had to be dependent on others in order to achieve something.

### OPENING PRAYER

- Pray for an awareness of the Holy Spirit's presence in the group, acknowledge our need for the Spirit's guidance, and ask God to show us what he desires to teach the group as you discuss the text about the Holy Spirit.

### BIBLE STUDY

**Read Acts 2:1–13, skim verses 14–41**

- Background information: Pentecost was one of three great pilgrimage feasts where the Jewish people traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the beginning of the first harvest season. Also known as the Festival of Weeks, it reminded the people of the gift of the land to their ancestors. It was celebrated fifty days after the first fruits were offered, and therefore it is also referred to as Pentecost (see Leviticus 23:9–21).
- Why was the Holy Spirit's coming significant for the followers of Jesus?
  - » Luke 24:49 reveals that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come.
    - Luke and Acts are a two-volume story written by Luke and therefore should be understood together.

- » Acts 1:4–5 shows this again.
- » Acts 2:17–21 shows Peter referencing that Joel had prophesied the coming of the Spirit on all people.
- The story of the Holy Spirit’s arrival contains elements of fire. Can you think of some examples of fire accompanying God’s presence in the Old Testament?
  - » The Lord descending on Mount Sinai with fire (Exodus 19:18).
  - » Moses and the burning bush (Exodus 3:2).
  - » The Lord leading the Israelites with a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21).
- What might have been the significance of the fire separating before it rested on each of them (v. 3)?
- What are some ways that Peter answers their question, ‘What does this mean?’ in verse 12? Skim verses 14–40.
  - » He shares with them what was spoken of by Joel (vs. 14–21).
    - Joel prophesied that the Spirit would come in a new way on all people.
  - » He tells them about Jesus (vs. 22–24).
  - » He appeals to the Old Testament text, which they knew well, to show how Jesus fits into the story of David (vs. 25–35).
  - » He declares Jesus as the Messiah and tells them to “Repent and be baptized” (vs. 36–40).
- What happened as a result of Peter’s gospel message (v. 41)?
- In what ways does the Spirit enable the disciples for their ministry in the book of Acts? Where do we see the Holy Spirit at work? Here are a few examples:
  - » Courage under persecution (Acts 4:31).
  - » Stephen in the face of martyrdom (Acts 7:55).
  - » Miracles and acts of power (Acts 3:6–10, 16:16–18, 13:9).
  - » The Spirit’s guidance on singling out Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2).
  - » Guiding them on their missionary journey (Acts 16:6–7, 20:22–23, 21:4).
- Share an example of a time you relied on the Holy Spirit. What did you learn from that experience?
- Why is the Holy Spirit’s empowerment important in our Christian walk? How does the reality of having the Holy Spirit change the way we live?
- In what ways can we grow in our awareness of and reliance on the Holy Spirit?
  - » Identifying and using our spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:6–8).
  - » Learning to discern the voice of God and being intentional to listen for it.
    - How do we know if it’s the Holy Spirit’s voice we hear or if it’s our own?
  - » Growing in obedience to the Holy Spirit’s promptings in our day-to-day lives.
    - What does it look like to be filled with the Spirit (Romans 8, Galatians 5:13–26)?

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

- Pray that our church and your group will be places where the Holy Spirit is at work.
- Pray that we would live our lives filled with the Spirit and would be sensitive to the Spirit’s guidance.
- Pray for an awareness of God’s Spirit in our day-to-day lives, that we may courageously walk in the Spirit.