



Week #1: The Purpose and Power of the Church

- The foundation of our faith is the _____; the birth of the church is 50 days later in an _____.

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

⁷ He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Acts 1:1-11 (NIV)

- The Church has a clear mission: to be _____. (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20)

The blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

Acts 2:1-12 (NIV)

- **The Church has supernatural power: being filled with the _____.**
(Ephesians 5:16-18)

Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

*¹⁷ "In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people..."*

*²¹ "And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Acts 2:13-17; 21 (NIV)

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 2:32-33 (NIV)

- **The Church has the Gospel Message: Jesus is _____ and _____ is invited.** (John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:15)

"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 2:36-40 (NIV)

- The Church has begun, and now it's _____. (2 Corinthians 5:20, 1 Peter 3:15)

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be a witness for Jesus in your everyday life?
2. How does the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 challenge your understanding of God's power at work in the church today?
3. Why do you think Peter's sermon in Acts 2 had such a powerful effect on the crowd?
4. What does the diversity of languages and peoples at Pentecost tell us about God's vision for the church?

Recommended Resources

- [AND: The Gathered and Scattered Church by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay](#)
- [The Challenge of Acts: Rediscovering What the Church Was and Is by N.T. Wright](#)
- [N.T. Wright for Everyone: The Book of Acts by N.T. Wright](#)

(NIV) New International Version

Week #1: The Purpose and Power of the Church - **FILL**

- The foundation of our faith is the resurrection; the birth of the church is 50 days later in an upper room.

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

Acts 1:1-11 (NIV)

- The Church has a clear mission: to be witnesses (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:18-20)

The blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders

of God in our own tongues!”¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

Acts 2:1-12 (NIV)

- **The Church has supernatural power: being filled with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:16-18)**

Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people...”

²¹ “And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Acts 2:13-17; 21 (NIV)

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Acts 2:32-33 (NIV)

- **The Church has the Gospel Message: Jesus is alive and everyone is invited. (John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:15)**

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 2:36-40 (NIV)

- **The Church has begun, and now it's our turn. (2 Corinthians 5:20, 1 Peter 3:15)**

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to be a witness for Jesus in your everyday life?
2. How does the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 challenge your understanding of God's power at work in the church today?
3. Why do you think Peter's sermon in Acts 2 had such a powerful effect on the crowd?
4. What does the diversity of languages and peoples at Pentecost tell us about God's vision for the church?

Recommended Resources

- [AND: The Gathered and Scattered Church by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay](#)
- [The Challenge of Acts: Rediscovering What the Church Was and Is by N.T. Wright](#)
- [N.T. Wright for Everyone: The Book of Acts by N.T. Wright](#)

(NIV) New International Version