

## Session 1 - The Holy Spirit's Ministry in Acts 2

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### Listener's Guide | Dr. Randy White

#### 1. Introduction to the Study: Questioning Traditional Views

- **Purpose of the Book:**
  - *Goal:* To reexamine the commonly accepted roles of the Holy Spirit, moving beyond traditional interpretations.
  - *Approach:* A literal, scriptural analysis to understand each role of the Spirit.
  - *Focus on Distinction:* We'll explore the Spirit's role in Israel's prophetic promises versus His role in the Church, the body of Christ, as revealed in the dispensation of grace.
- **Method of Exploration:**
  - *The Twelve Elements:* We'll explore each element of the Spirit's ministry in the order it appears in the New Testament, aiming to avoid prioritizing or imposing a hierarchy.
  - **These twelve elements—the Spirit's work of regeneration, conviction, guidance and teaching, witness to Christ, empowerment, baptism into the body of Christ, spiritual gifts, indwelling, intercession, sealing, sanctification, and illumination—form the foundation of what has been accepted as the Spirit's ministry among those in the Church, the body of Christ.**
- **Why Acts 2?**
  - Often considered the "starting point" of the Holy Spirit's work in the Church Age.
  - *Our Approach:* We'll take a fresh look, assessing Acts 2 as the fulfillment of Israel's prophecies rather than as the foundation of the Church as we know it today.

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#### 2. The Shifting Understanding of the Spirit's Ministry

- **Historical Shift:**
  - *Second Great Awakening Impact:* Introduced an emphasis on personal experience, emotional conversion, and miraculous gifts.
  - *Comparison with Earlier Views:* The early church focused on gradual sanctification, scriptural illumination, and internal presence.
- **Implications for Today:**
  - Revivalist views shaped modern interpretations, especially around charismatic and experiential aspects of the Spirit's work.
  - *Our Approach:* We'll challenge these assumptions, seeking clarity directly from Scripture.

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#### 3. A Traditional Understanding of Acts 2

- **Evangelical Position:**
  - Acts 2 is seen as the formal beginning of the Spirit's ministry to the Church.

- Roles attributed to the Spirit: Conviction, regeneration, empowerment, guidance, sealing, and more.
  - **Inconsistencies in Traditional Interpretation:**
    - Some roles are traced back to Jesus’s pre-Pentecost ministry.
    - Selective continuity: Certain Pentecost events (e.g., speaking in tongues) are often considered temporary or for the apostolic age only.
  - **Key Point to Consider:**
    - If Acts 2 is foundational, consistency in applying its elements is necessary—selectivity challenges this view.
    - We’ll explore whether separating Israel’s Spirit promises from the Church can resolve these inconsistencies.
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#### 4. The Promise Unfolding: Preparing for Acts 2

- **Jesus’s Promise:**
    - *Acts 1:* Jesus instructed His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the “promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4-5).
    - Rooted in promises from Joel 2 and Ezekiel 36, which focus on Israel’s future restoration.
  - **Disciples’ Expectation:**
    - They gathered for Pentecost, a Jewish festival, with expectations rooted in Israel’s prophetic promises.
    - *Key Takeaway:* Acts 2 events are grounded in Israel’s messianic hope and kingdom promises.
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#### 5. Acts 2:1-4 – The Heart of the Matter

- **Events of Pentecost:**
    - *The Dramatic Arrival:* Sound of rushing wind, visible tongues of fire, and speaking in diverse languages.
    - Each element signifies the supernatural presence of the Spirit, fulfilling Jesus’s promise.
  - **Significance for the “Little Flock”:**
    - This group of Jewish believers sees these events as fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel.
    - The supernatural signs confirm the arrival of the Spirit but are specific to Israel’s expectations.
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#### 6. Acts 2:5-13 – The Immediate Aftermath

- **The Crowd’s Reaction:**
  - Jewish pilgrims from around the world are amazed as they hear the apostles speak in their native languages.
  - *Responses:* Wonder, confusion, and skepticism.
- **Importance of Context:**
  - God’s timing during Pentecost ensured a wide audience for these events, primarily Jewish.

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## 7. Acts 2:14-21 – Peter’s Explanation

- **Peter’s Interpretation of Events:**
  - Peter clarifies that these happenings fulfill Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28-32).
  - *Authority of Peter’s View:* He asserts that the events are precisely what the prophet Joel described, leaving little room for alternative interpretations.
- **Implications for Israel:**
  - Peter positions this as a continuation of Israel’s prophetic timeline, specifically for the “last days” as promised to Israel.

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## 8. Acts 2:22-36 – Peter’s Sermon

- **The Nation’s Misstep:**
  - Peter tells the crowd that they crucified the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.
  - Jesus’s resurrection as God’s vindication: Peter cites David’s prophecy to show Jesus’s identity as the Messiah.
- **The Message’s Impact:**
  - This revelation cuts to the heart of the listeners, making them aware of their responsibility in rejecting their Savior.

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## 9. Acts 2:37-41 – The Crowd’s Response

- **Conviction and Call to Repentance:**
  - The crowd is “pricked in their hearts” and asks what they should do.
  - *Peter’s Instructions:* Repent, be baptized in Jesus’s name, and receive the Holy Spirit.
- **Dual Requirement:**
  - *Verse 39:* Peter emphasizes the need for both God’s calling and the individual’s response.
  - *Interpretation for the Little Flock:* This specific calling appears tied to Israel’s promises rather than the later “anybody” gospel for the Church.

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## 10. Acts 2:42-47 – A New Assembly

- **Formation of a Messianic Community:**
  - The early Jewish believers form a distinct assembly, committed to the apostles’ teaching, prayer, and communal life.
- **Characteristics of this New Assembly:**
  - Sharing of possessions, worship in the temple, anticipation of the kingdom.
  - Rooted in Jewish identity, this assembly lives in expectation of the Messianic kingdom.
- **Key Takeaway:**
  - This early assembly is a unique Jewish messianic community and should not be confused with the later Church as it exists today.