

STUDY GUIDE

Reading for week 2: Acts 2-4:36



WHATS THE STORY?

The Holy Spirit descends on the early church, rewriting human history and creating a new community of God's people united in their faith in Jesus and their pursuit of the will of the Spirit. The community follows the lead of Peter and John in their emulation of Jesus.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What would a modern-day church reflecting the actions and spirit of this early church look like?
- How do we practice listening for the Spirit?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: How did the Holy Spirit arrive on the scene?

Who is the Holy Spirit and how does He interact with us?

How has the Holy Spirit affected the spiritual growth of your family?

A Deeper Look

Luke continues to paint a beautiful picture of God's wisdom through history and story by way of Old Testament sentiments and typologies. Luke has revealed the climax of his second volume as early as the second chapter, which will bleed into the rest of the book. Acts 2 is the Magnum Opus of Luke's two-volume work. It records the grand arrival of the Holy Spirit in a way that both shows God's presence among individual believers in the same way as it was among the traveling Tabernacle (Exod. 13:20-22) and inverts the story of the Tower of Babel, using different languages to draw people into the new kingdom instead of scattering and confusing. Later in the chapter, we see the new temple of God (the people) re-enacting a practice that was done for the Tabernacle in Exodus 35:4-29 and the Temple 1 Chronicles 29:6-9. This time instead of donating to a construction project for God's presence, they donate to one another as we humans have become the flesh and blood dwelling place of God.

Acts 3 shows Christ's apostle Peter following right in step with his teacher. While entering the gate called 'Beautiful' he stops and sees a paralyzed beggar in the same way Christ 'saw' those he had healed. The healing of this man has echoes of Christ's healings (Mk 10:46-52, Jn 5:1-18, Mk 2:1-12, Jn 9, and Lk 18:35-43). The event displays the power of the Spirit within the new community of God. Peter then takes advantage of the moment giving glory to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob while preaching the new parameters of God's kingdom spoke of by Moses in Duet. 18:15-19.

Acts 4 shows us that after providing a restoration like Christ's comes a persecution like Christ's. However, through persecution came the growth of 5,000 new believers. Luke then bookends the beginning of the Church with the same characteristic's we saw in Acts 2: one heart, one mind, and caring for one another even if that means valuing our new family over our possessions and over even ourselves.