

“The Wind and Fire”

Acts 2:1-4

Introduction

Years ago, the music band, Earth, Wind and Fire, impacted society with their captivating sound. Similar to how their words set to music influenced the musical landscape, God influenced the earth when the presence of the Holy Spirit entered the world: the Holy Spirit showed up as wind and fire at the beginning of the church age. In Acts 2:1-4, the disciples gathered in one place, and the Holy Spirit showed up suddenly, coming in like a rushing wind and accompanied by tongues of fire. His appearance was a sign of God's unmistakable presence among His people. The Spirit's presence was not tied to elaborate buildings, programming or spiritual entertainment—He simply invaded the people of God supernaturally and ignited their fire for Christ.

In today's church, there is an absence of the Holy Spirit. We are living in a time when the Spirit of God has been marginalized. Yet, the church is supposed to be the transformational environment for the Spirit of God to ignite His people. The church often functions as an extinguished fire that offers stale preaching, ineffective teaching and inattentive listening. For the church to be transformed, fresh wind and a fresh fire are needed in its people. For this to happen, God's people must offer Him their obedience, their time in His presence and their observance of His truth. The job of the Spirit is to make the truth of Jesus experiential in the life of people. For the unbeliever, the Word of God will convict them of sin and lead them to salvation. In the believer's life, God's Word transforms His children into the image of Christ, which allows them to impact the culture with the presence and the power of God.

When the Holy Spirit came to earth, the people of God were all gathered in one place. This underscores the important biblical doctrine of unity. The church of Jesus Christ will not see the full force of wind and fire on earth if we refuse to be biblically unified. God will not honor disunity or illegitimate unity. Therefore, the most important thing for the church to do is be "diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). John 3:8 reminds us that the Holy Spirit is unpredictable when it states, "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it is coming from and where it is going." Plainly said, the Spirit of God can blow your mind! When believers walk in unity, they receive corporately and individually so much more of the Holy Spirit than an isolated believer.

In Acts 2:4, the believers were filled with the Spirit and began speaking in foreign tongues. When you are full of the Holy Spirit, you are overcome with the Holy Spirit and can expect to accomplish things that human strength alone could not produce. To live in this exciting place with the presence of the Holy Spirit, we must not quench the Holy Spirit (1 Thess 5:19). Instead, we should be set aflame on the inside, and that experience with the Spirit should propel us to also experience a little heaven on earth as we see the glory of God (Acts 7:55). As a believer, you are a part of an unshakeable kingdom and "since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let's show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe" (Heb 12:28-29). Choose to prioritize the Holy Spirit. You will experience more of His presence when you choose to spend time with God, spend time in His Word and walk in His truth through your obedience.

Getting Started

1. What one point resonated with you from this week's sermon?
2. Do you think you have an active and ongoing personal relationship with the Spirit of God right now? Why or why not?

Let's Get Personal

1. Have you ever experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in a way that totally blew your mind? What unexpected, unexplainable circumstances of experience do you have in your spiritual history? Share your experience with your group.
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2. Prioritizing the Spirit involves prioritizing time to spend with God and in His Word. It also involves your commitment to obedience as you become aware of God's direction in your life based on your reading of the Scriptures. Do you consider yourself to be successful in prioritizing your experience with the Spirit of God? In what ways are you successfully engaging with God that makes that possible? In what ways are you struggling to prioritize your experience with the Spirit?
3. Recent days have both provided opportunities and challenges when it comes to the gathering of God's people in one place. With church services moving online more than ever before and with the difficulties of gathering together in recent days, have you been consistent in gathering with other believers? Why or why not?

Take the Next Step

1. The promise of the Spirit's work in our lives is exciting! There is no reason to be without this experience of God when He offers fresh wind and fresh fire to us. If you desire to be significantly influenced by the Spirit of God, what action were you encouraged to take as a result of hearing this sermon?
2. In what ways have you remained engaged with your local church community in recent days. Do you need to make any adjustments in your life to incorporate more involvement in the body of Christ? What can you do today to connect with your local church and to be more present even if that presence is primarily online right now?
3. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Acts 2:1-4; 4:8, 23; 6:2-3; 7:55; 9:17-20; 13:9; 1 Corinthians 7:5; 14:4; Ephesians 4:3; John 3:8; Hebrews 10:24; 12:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

Renew Your Mind

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit . . .”

Acts 2:4
