

The Holy Spirit - Book of Acts

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There are more references to the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts than any other book of the Bible. (56 references)

Name _____

¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2-NIV)

Max Lucado in his latest best seller about the Holy Spirit describes Christianity as rowboat-like Christianity or sailboat like Christianity. (*Help Is Here*)

Two women row and sail on the open seas, both achieving amazing physical feats of endurance. Both have boats. Both complete solo trips that amazed the world. One circumnavigated the globe at 14 years old. The other rowed from West Africa to South America.

Katie Spoutz, from America rowed from West Africa to South America. But this wasn't just any row job; when Katie arrived in Guyana, South America, after 70 days at sea, she set a world record for the **youngest** ever solo ocean rower and the only American to row solo from Africa to South America.

Her boat, owned by well-known adventurers Colin and Julia Angus, had to withstand hurricanes. Equipped with a desalinator, **Katie** was able to convert salt water to fresh water. She carried enough food to supply her with 5,000 calories per day. Equipped with a satellite phone, **Katie** rowed 3000 miles powered only by the strength of her body.

Laura Decker of the Netherlands, 14 years old, captured the strength of the wind, instead of leaning on the strength of her body. In 2012, she became the youngest person to sail around the world.

Laura sailed around the world from 2010 - 2012, starting at the age of fourteen, when she completed her sea voyage around the world, she was sixteen. Author of a book called *One Girl One Dream*, it is now published in four languages including Dutch, English, German and Polish.

Her attempt to sail around the world were hindered by the Dutch childcare and government who thought differently about her plans and tried to stop her by starting a series of court cases, which eventually took over 10 months! Eight court cases later the judges gave responsibility for the decision back to her parents, who then allowed her to make the trip.

At age 14, Laura set off on the biggest journey of her life onboard a 12-meter, bright red Ketch called **Guppy**. Her one and half year journey survived all kinds of storms and reefs, but in the end, her dream was in the record book.

Which of the two trips is the hardest, do you think? Both faced storms. Both suffered long periods of isolation. Both tax your emotions to the max, but even a novice on the water knows that sailing wins out over rowing any day.

Rowboat-like Christianity depletes and disappoints. Sailboat-like Christianity strengthens and soars.

If I had to choose between sailing and rowing, I know what wins out every time.

When I bike across Kansas, in a week I will do it on pedal power, some will do it on electrical or engine power. Or a combination, thereof. I will sweat; they will cruise. We both will take bugs in the face. We both will pass up and be passed up.

In the end, only my legs, a little wind and some downhill will bring me across the finish line. I hope! BAK bike enthusiasts who cruise with another source of power will still have stories to tell at night. Get wet if it rains. Become sun and wind burnt.

Pedal power or electric power. You make the choice.

Rowing to your destination. Sailing to your destination.

You make the choice.

Is anybody tired of their faith relying more on their strength than on the power of the wind?

Is anybody ready to put aside exhaustion, for exuberance?

Is anybody ready to put aside running, for resting.

Is anybody ready to put aside rowing, for sailing?

In John 3, we are introduced to the power of the wind. The elusiveness of the wind. The invisibility of the wind. Jesus tells Nicodemus, the Holy Spirit is like the wind.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus as night. Nic at night. He was careful to come at night; he did not want to expose his seeker heart. Like a heavy weight boxer landing a punch, Jesus gets in the first blow,

³ *Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." (John 3-NIV)*

Jesus is talking to the pope of Judaism. Nicodemus had an office full of degrees hanging on his wall. Nic did not need credentials, he needed Christ. Literally. Immediately. Forever!

At our first birth we become brand-new humans. At our second birth we become brand-new creations. (John 3:5-6)

In our first birth we become brand new humans. Cute little babies. Adorable. Fresh from the womb.

In our second birth, from above we become brand-new creations. Born again. Born from above. We are made alive by a spiritual birth. We spend all of eternity with Christ, because we are born spiritually. Living in a future home, which requires a spiritual birth.

Look closely. Is that the Holy Spirit? Who is that in the birthing room? The Holy Spirit has a front row seat and oversees our second birth.

⁵ *Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the **Spirit gives birth to spirit.**" (John 3-NIV)*

So, who oversees our second birth? The Holy Spirit.

Flesh produces flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. That which is born of a dog, is a dog. That which is born of a bird, is a bird. That which is born of a Spirit is spirit.

Suddenly Jesus makes the connection between the Kingdom of God, the Holy Spirit and Wind. 3 rapid fire concepts, leaving the theological juggernaut Nic, scratching his head.

Jesus is just warming up, and he tells Nicodemus, the Holy Spirit is like the wind. The Spirit blows wherever he wishes. He is invisible, but you feel him, hear him in the mountains and feel him in the desert.

When it came to describing the Holy Spirit, Jesus could have chosen any number of metaphors-oceans, galaxies, even boating on the Sea of Galilee.

When Jesus chose to describe the Holy Spirit, He chose the "wind" metaphor. (John 3:8)

⁸ *The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit. (John 3-NIV)*

The Holy Spirit is like wind. The Holy Spirit is holy, and we need the holiness of God living in us. We need a source of strength to replace rowing and pedaling power.

The Holy Spirit is like wind. The Holy Spirit is not governed by disintegrating bodies, declining limbs, decaying mental and emotional health.

The Spirit is like wind. He is the Holy Spirit, and he moves where he wants, as the Holy Spirit fills rooms and fills hearts, creates new tongues and helps to control your tongue as James reminds us.

The Spirit is like wind. I am not from Kansas, but I got here as fast as I could. I have lived in Kansas for over 15 years, which makes me an expert on wind.

Because windy days are inevitable in Kansas, I have built an elaborate system of safeguards against winds ill effects.

I stand downwind at funerals so my combover does not go over. As cycling enthusiasts I monitor wind direction, like a new mom monitors baby's needs. When I put gas in the car, I guard against spillage blowing gas onto my clothes.

*My wind-blown car door has done its share of dinging doors.

*My Chief's has blown off my head.

*And on a Sunday morning, walking to the car, a time or two I have chased my sermon notes down the street.

Kansas wind is here to stay. Get used to it or suffer its consequences. What is true of Kansas wind is equally true of the Holy Spirit as a wind. Your life is impacted frequently from the Spirit's activity.

As suddenly as the Holy Spirit arrives as a mighty rushing wind, and tongues of fire, and new languages not previously known, **the Spirit now moves beyond those walls.**

When the Holy Spirit arrived in Acts 2:1-4, we saw three supernatural manifestations of the Spirit-wind, fire and supernatural speech. Out of the three manifestations of wind, fire and supernatural speech it is only the language gift that continues today.

Wind did not happen again. Fire did not happen again.

But the speaking in tongues did. And continues today, for those who are interested in this gift. Not all are. Some mock this gift. We see this in our text, when you don't understand something is from God, then many write it off, or make fun of it, ¹³ *Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2-NIV)*

Acts 2 is an introduction to the gift of spiritual language or speaking in tongues.

We have been talking about the Holy Spirit's arrival as a mighty rushing wind. Wind is a symbol of God's presence and power. Spirit. Wind. Breath. All are the same word in the Bible. In the Old Testament it is Hebrew-*ruach*. In the New Testament it is Greek- *nuema*. **The word for Spirit is synonymous with wind and breath.**

Each Holy Spirit empowered believer moves into the streets of Jerusalem. As those in the streets come in contact with newly minted Holy Spirit filled believers, they begin declaring the **wonders of God...**

...they hear the message of Jesus atoning death, Jesus supernatural resurrection and 40 days of appearances and the invitation to a grace filled relationship with Christ through repentance, baptism. They hear about this message **in their own tongue.**

The arrival of the Holy Spirit rocks Jerusalem's religious community, leading to the question, **"What's up with this?"**

The arrival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, leaves a lasting impact on Jerusalem, God's people and the world. People were walking around saying, what's up with this? What's up with this?

.... we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" ¹² *Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"* ¹³ *Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2-NIV)*

Those in Jerusalem had never seen such an event. Spiritual chaos is filling the streets of Jerusalem. Because people are hearing Christ followers speaking about Christ in 15 different languages.

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,*^[b]

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?" ¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2-NIV)

Let me make a comment about verse 13. Jews only drink wine with food, never wine alone. And they only drink it in the evening. So, this is a silly slander about drunkenness. And those being mocked know it.

The 120 Christ disciples pour into the streets and begin to tell those whom they come in contact with about the **wonders of God's grace**. But they do it in languages that are not native. This truly is supernatural proclamation.

As those who experience this supernatural event begin to ask questions about it, such as "what does this mean? A crowd forms.

My thoughts on this: the Holy Spirit is pulling this group of locals and outsiders together for the first outpouring outside of Pentecost. Or a next generation of Holy Spirit outpouring.

Beyond the 120. A supernatural work of the Holy Spirit is now moving beyond that first Pentecostal outpouring. To me this is even more significant. The first was in reaction to Jesus words, I must go but, the Holy Spirit will come. The next generation of outpouring is even more miraculous.

Let me outline these 42 verses by describing what the Holy Spirit does in the believer's life.

Holy Spirit: gives clarity; prioritizes your life; prepares you for eternity and focuses your life.

In the streets of Jerusalem Christ followers go immediately to work in evangelizing those interested in knowing what is going on.

To give the Great Commission an immediate boost of success the disciples supernatural proclamation happens in the native tongue of the listener. On top of all of that proclamation and chaos a rumor gets started that all the disciples and other Christ followers **are drunk**.

The supernatural power of God leads to a rumor; "they have had too much too much to drink." (Acts 2)

¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine." (Acts 2-NIV)

That explains it, they are all drunk. Which seems odd to me, because when my friends in college had too much alcohol, they tend to slur and slaughter their native tongue and not start speaking in new tongues like Acts is describing.

Those who are drunk tend to slur and slaughter their native tongue, not speak with new tongues.

There are two types of reactions in these verses-the curious and the critical. (vs 12) What does this mean? Curious. (vs 13) They are drunk on wine. Critical. The only explanation for this weird behavior is drunkenness.

Even today there are two opinions about speaking in tongues.

(1) There are the curious, I want to learn more. I am interested.

(2) Then there are the critical. They mock it. Dismiss it. Even demonize it.

And my prayers are that you would be open to all that God has for you as a Christ follower. We are living in the last days. Evil is being poured out, you need all of the power the Holy Spirit has to offer. Including spiritual gifts.

You can receive spiritual language-speaking in tongues if you want to thrive and survive these perilous times. So, don't dismiss what you don't understand, be open to the Holy Spirit's filling with power and spiritual gifts. Gifts of healing, languages, faith, miracles, as they are spelled out in 1 Cor 12-14.

What is interesting is that this analysis of the source of the speaking in tongues plays right into the purposes of God. Most read this and only see it as a misinterpretation of what was happening.

I see more here. Go over to Ephesians 5:18 and look at this verse: ¹⁸*Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-NIV)*

Paul says that if you want real power to live the Christian life, you must "be filled with the Spirit." Now, he contrasts "being filled with the spirit" against "being drunk with wine."

This is brilliant. The verse has two commands. The first is a prohibition: avoid drunkenness. If you struggle with controlling your drinking, we have a recovery program for this. And if you drink and drive, stop! This does not please God. If you are a Christ follower, you are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Stop!

Second, command is positive: be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Two commands. One prohibition. One permission.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that being filled with the Holy Spirit is like being intoxicated. As if some sort of spiritual inebriation keeps you from controlling a good thing.

Paul is not **comparing** these ideas, he is **contrasting** the idea of being "filled with the spirit," to being "filled with alcohol."

Would you agree that these events are the result of a strong influence that is at work in us? Influence of the Spirit and influence of alcohol?

Ok, do you see that? One more time.

Would you agree that these events are the result of a strong influence that is at work in us? Influence of the spirit and influence of alcohol?

Whereas excessive alcohol leads to unrestrained and irrational license of the flesh.

The drunkard is translated into a slurring, obnoxious and totally surrendering to all types of temptations humiliating the individual. Unless that is the kind of activity that you are proud of, this is a bad idea. Don't you agree?

Whereas the outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit leads to a restrained and rational conduct that honors God in every way. Thus, transforming the believer into the image of Jesus Christ.

So, most thinking people would understand that being under the **influences of alcoholic spirits** only leads to destruction in the end but being under the influences of the Holy Spirit of God leads to a life of God honoring living.

Now, that the issue is clarified, if you put “being filled with the spirit,” under the **grammatical microscope** you see a couple telling insights.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is a command. No suggestion or recommendation here by the word of God.

Being filled is plural. This is a responsibility for all believers. It is not instruction for a few or some can get a pass on this.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is in a passive tense. You have to let the Holy Spirit fill you. You must yield to the Holy Spirit’s work.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is a continuous activity. The present tense means that you do this often. Daily is preferred. And for many, they need multiple fillings in that day.

The Holy Spirits infilling is not a one-time dramatic and decisive spiritual activity like salvation that is once-and-for-all. It needs a continual filling.

Then Peter stands up with the 11 next to him. Ok, and he raises his voice. And he addresses the entire crowd. This is huge. The next 25 verses contain an incredibly powerful and instructive full-length sermon. I suggest that you read it this week in your 15 minutes in a chair.

Peter had never given a full-length sermon in his entire life.

There is no record in the New Testament that he was a polished public speaker. Peter was a fisherman following Jesus around do the best he could to follow Jesus.

And all of a sudden Peter stands up and delivers this totally Holy Spirit inspired sermon. A supernatural power of proclamation came over Peter and wants to come over you.

The Holy Spirit can give you confidence and courage at the right moment to proclaim the message of Jesus.

You can have the confidence to bear public witness to faith in Jesus whether it is to a friend at Starbucks, to a co-worker on the work sight, 13 people in a life group, 50 people in bible study or over 500 people in a big church.

The supernatural outpouring of the Holy Spirit can give you the confidence and even the words to say, right at the moment to proclaim the message of Jesus when the opportunity arises.

The question is, will you like Peter, make such a Holy Spirit proclamation?

Let's look at the **content** of Peters sermon.

Holy Spirit outpouring gives clarity to your life. (vs 5-13)

We have told you up this point, clarity starts with being filled the Holy Spirit over a drunken spirit. My job as your pastor is to help you clarify.

Your empowerment by the Holy Spirit gives clarity to your ONE and Only Life. The reason people are all over the board with astrology, psychics, addictions, hedonist pleasure is, **it is all they know do, it is what they use to just get by.**

Without God, life has no purpose and without purpose life has no clarity. The greatest tragedy is not death, but life without clarity of a God-purpose.

Peters clarifies to the crowd what is going on...this is not drunkenness; this is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that God predicted 700 years before. 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." (Acts 2-NIV)

On Pentecost only a 120 of the initial Christ followers received the Holy Spirit. This is a far cry from the prophecy, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. In fact, there are still many other believers, still waiting for this outpouring. Another 380 saw Jesus during the 40 days of appearances and will soon be included in another outpouring.

³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. (Acts 4-NIV)

You are here today because God wants to give you clarity about purpose and meaning in the Holy Spirit. This series goes even a step further purpose, God wants to **give you power** to accomplish that meaning and purpose.

Holy Spirit outpouring prioritizes your life. (vs 14-36)

Concentrate and direct your life on what is important. You become effective when you are selective. What you should become selective in, is relying on Jesus Christ atoning death.

It is human nature to become distracted. To chase rabbits. To wander aimlessly. Nothing is as powerful as a prioritized life. It is like focused and concentrated light. With a magnifying glass you can take light and focus it with such intensity that you can burn paper. If you want your life to have an impact, prioritize. Stop trying to do it all. Quit dabbling.

Activity is not the same thing as productivity. And priority and productivity always start with God's formula for life with him. Peter tells those in that first sermon, that Jesus was from God, and his divine destiny led him to the cross.

As the audience squirms Peter presses his case about who Jesus was. Jesus declared the case against those who crucified Jesus-

²³ This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,^[a] put him to death by nailing him to the cross. (Acts 2:23-NIV)

In the end the only event that matters is Jesus' resurrection and God's exaltation of Jesus.

³² 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)

Jesus Christ is exalted, and the Holy Spirit is "poured out."

Holy Spirit outpouring prepares you for eternity. (vs 37-41)

Do you realize that there is long tomorrow stretched out in front of you when you die?
Are you living to make a legacy for yourself and forgetting to make a life for eternity?

Living to enjoy this life or make a name for yourself or experience all that life has to offer is a dead-end street.

A wiser goal would be to build an eternal life and eternal home. You can do the first and God does the second.

You were not put on earth to be recognized.

You were not put on earth to be remembered.

You were not put on earth to be adored.

You were put on earth by God to prepare for eternity. One day you will stand before God, and he will do an audit of your life.

Father,

I accept the fact that according to God's Word, Jesus was nailed to the cross and He died an atoning death to forgive my sins. Because of my faith in Jesus Christ, I am made alive by Jesus's spiritual birth in me. Spiritually reborn again. Born from above.

Fill me afresh with the Holy Spirit. I yield right now to the work of the Spirit. I am aware that I need multiple fillings each day. While salvation starts my life with Christ, the continual filling of the Holy Spirit empowers my life in Christ.

Today, I choose to be empowered by the wind of the Spirit. Here I stand, waiting once again, for the Holy Spirit's power to breathe on me.

To baptize me. To set me aflame.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.