

Day 1

December 31



Pray | For the Holy Spirit to inform your reading today.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

The perception of beauty is subjective because it isn't necessarily about what a thing looks like but the emotions it produces. And beauty defies mere sight—we can hear beautiful music; we can describe a sensation, or an act of love, as beautiful. The many and various facets of beauty make it difficult for us to define.

Do you think of the Holy Spirit this way? Perhaps the Spirit is alluded to in Scripture as 'wind' and 'breath' because capturing the whole of it in words is like trying to grab onto air. It is God's very Spirit, present from the beginning (Gen 1:2), and spoken of by Jesus as a comforter, counselor, and guide. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit—the very presence of God—indwells the disciples. What a beautiful gift!



Read | Acts 2:1-4



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

In today's reading, the Spirit arrives on the disciples with a powerful wind and tongues of fire. Why do you think the Spirit came upon them in such a remarkable way? Why doesn't the Spirit appear to us in this way today?

The terms 'wind' and 'fire' are used often throughout the Bible. Winds caused the storms that affected Jonah and later, the disciples; God sent down fire at Elijah's request and Nebuchadnezzar had his fiery furnace. Spend some time reflecting about the other various ways 'wind' and 'fire' are used in Scripture; use the index at the back of your Bible for help.

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are distinct yet one at the same time. How would you explain the truth of the Trinity to a non-believer, a new believer, or a child?

Day 2

January 1



Pray | For discernment of your part in God's plan.

“Coincidences are spiritual puns.” – G.K. Chesterton

The year before John Wilkes Booth killed Abraham Lincoln, Booth's brother, Edwin, saved the life of Lincoln's son, Robert Todd (historynet.com/edwin-booth). Strange coincidence or a part of God's plan?

Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, was celebrated about 50 days after Passover. The feast lasted a single day and was one of only three festivals that the law of Moses required Jews to attend (Ex 23:14-17). Crowds of Jewish people had been in Jerusalem for Passover a few weeks earlier, when Jesus was crucified. At Pentecost, Jerusalem is once again crowded with Jews from every nation—the day God happens to choose to send His Holy Spirit. Some might call this strange coincidence, but we know it is all a part of God's great plan.



Read | Acts 2:1-11



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Jesus had told the disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they had been “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49), which was a reference to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. In what ways would this period of waiting have been the same as or different than the period they experienced between Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection?

Do you think it was mere coincidence that God poured out His Holy Spirit on the disciples during a Jewish festival? What are some possible reasons that God might have chosen that particular day?

Have you had experiences that could have been coincidence, or could have been God at work in your life? How do you think we can tell the difference?

Day 3
January 2



Pray | Give thanks to God for the gift of His Spirit.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

If you are reading this, then you probably have good intentions. Likely, your good intentions include things like being in the Word every day, praying more often, and practicing gratitude. If so, you've most likely realized that good intentions are not enough. We are all sinners, prone to wander from God, and it takes much more than good intentions to focus our eyes back on Him.

Thankfully, our loving God knows our struggle with sinfulness versus good intentions. He has given each of us the gift of His Spirit—His presence, His power—to help us. The Spirit helps us understand His Word, prays for us when we don't have words, and fills us with gratitude. The power of the Holy Spirit is what makes it possible for us to be more like Christ.



Read | John 14:15-17; Acts 2:38-39



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

What thoughts or expectations do you have regarding the filling of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life? Have these expectations been fulfilled in your own life?

Are you struggling with making time for spiritual disciplines like daily Bible reading, prayer, and quiet time with God? Try spending time in prayer today, asking the Holy Spirit to help you in this struggle.

If you have repented of your sins and accepted Jesus as your Savior, you have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you. In what ways has the Holy Spirit been active in your life recently? If you haven't yet accepted Jesus into your heart, take some time to talk about it with a pastor or trusted Christian friend.

Day 4
January 3



Pray | To do all things for God's glory.

“It’s not about you.” – Rick Warren, [The Purpose Driven Life](#)

Say those four short words out loud, except change the ‘you’ to ‘me’. Repeat ten times daily...or more often, as needed. This is the Christian life—to make it less and less about ‘me’ and more about God; to make it about God’s purpose, God’s story, and most of all, God’s glory.

Yes, Jesus died for you and God sent His Holy Spirit to live in you. But He did it for His glory, not yours; not for you to take and keep for yourself, to sit at home and study the Word then never speak of it outside of church. He gives the gift of grace and His Spirit to empower you to spread His gospel—His good news—to everyone. Everywhere. It’s all about Him.



Read | [Acts 2:22-41](#)



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Immediately after being filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter preaches to the Jewish people gathered in Jerusalem. He gives us an excellent example of evangelism—he tells the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection, and then calls the people to repent and be forgiven. Take some time to rewrite Peter’s message in your own words.

Have you ever shared the gospel with a non-believer? If not, what’s holding you back? If yes, are there any ways you might adjust your message for the next time? Consider listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit to help you make it feel less like a sales pitch and more about reaching out to someone in love.

How does the filling of the Holy Spirit help us overcome our struggles in sharing the gospel and empower our evangelism?

Day 5

January 4



Pray | For the Holy Spirit to transform your heart.

“Good fences make good neighbors.” – Robert Frost, Mending Wall

Usually, when you force people to live in tight quarters, the result is not all hearts and rainbows. Proximity leads to conflicts, and conflicts lead to separation—if not physically, at least emotionally.

In Acts 2, however, the Holy Spirit intervenes in a powerful way. When we are filled abundantly with the Spirit, we begin to overflow with love for God and love for our neighbors; we are compelled to share our meals, our possessions, and our lives with others. We are led to develop rich, deeply committed relationships with God’s people. Although we may not, on this side of heaven, experience the depth of community God intended for us, if we allow our hearts to be transformed by the Spirit, we can come close.



Read | Acts 2:42-47; Mark 12:30-31



Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:

Do you believe it is possible to experience community with other Christians in a way similar to what is described in today’s verses? Why or why not?

What are some ways you personally could contribute to, or develop a more Spirit-filled community of faith?

At Five Oaks Church, ‘small groups’ exist to help connect individuals and families and encourage them to experience doing life together in Christian community. If you belong or have belonged to a small group, in what ways is/was it helpful in connecting with other believers? If you have never joined a small group, what is holding you back?

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