

Church - Acts 2:1-47 Pentecost Part 1 - The Birth of the Church

This fall for our Bible study we're asking - what is the church? The question today is about the beginning of the church: when did the church get started? And who started it?

[Pentecost] Let's read about the birth of the church in Acts 2.¹

What two things happened to the disciples filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?

They had tongues of fire appear over their heads and they spoke in other languages.

What was the fire over their heads?
Or, WHO was the fire over their heads?
God!

Do you know where God lived with Israel in the Old Testament?

God, looking like a great fire, lived inside the temple in Jerusalem.

How could a holy fiery God live in a temple in the middle of a bunch of sinful people and not burn them up in his wrath?

There were priests who offered up all these animal sacrifices for the sins of Israel.

So what do you think God coming down from heaven on the disciples at Pentecost meant?

It means God doesn't live in the temple anymore. Now God lives in his people, in the church! Pentecost is the beginning of the church! Now the church is a living temple and the people in the church are like living stones.

But how can a holy, fiery wrathful God live inside sinners?!?!?

Because of Jesus and his holy perfect life for us and his sacrificial death on the cross that pays the penalty for our sins. Pentecost is a

miraculous, visible sign that Jesus accomplished it and made it possible for God to dwell with us. God living in a temple in the Old Testament was a picture of the reality that God really lives inside his people.

Does every Christian have the Holy Spirit?
Can you know if the Holy Spirit lives in you?
If you believe in Jesus, and if you love him and love those Jesus loves - you have the Holy Spirit.

Who helps us turn away from our sin and believe in Jesus?
Who shows us our sin and need of Jesus?
Once we believe in Jesus, who makes us look more and more like Jesus?

Who gives us power to love all kinds of people, even really annoying people?
Who gives us power to share the good news about Jesus with others?

Ephesians 1:14: "The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory."

Can the Holy Spirit ever lose you?
So can you ever lose the Holy Spirit?

What does having the Holy Spirit promise us is still to come?

Heaven, eternal glory, life-everlasting and the Holy Spirit will get us there!

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*, Chapter 85, The Spirit Comes, 438-441.