**The Pentecost Outpouring**

**The Word**

Read together Acts 2:1-41

**The Big Idea**

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out on God’s people to empower them to be effective witnesses of the crucified and risen Jesus.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. How did the comments made on Sunday about the last days sit with the way you’ve thought about the end times?

2. At Pentecost, Jesus’ way of humble self-sacrifice is vindicated by God over and against the worldly power and pride of the Jewish leaders. Pentecost is a profound example of Jesus’ promise: “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.” Where do you find it most challenging to go the way of humble love and service rather than assert your rights and defend your honor? What are the situations where you struggle to believe that meekness is actually the proper response?

3. Pentecost demonstrated the Spirit’s power to equip Jesus’ disciples for effective ministry. Practically speaking, how do we access the power and help of the Spirit in our daily lives, especially as we seek to minister to others?

4. Where do you most sense a need for the Spirit of Jesus in your own life at this time?

**Sermon Outline**

I. We are in the “last days” (v. 17)

A. The ascension of Jesus and the pouring out of his Spirit signal the last days

 B. This is the consistent witness of the New Testament (see Hb 1:1-2, 1 Cor 10:11)

C. We have been in the last days for 2000 year. We don’t need to concern ourselves with the exact timing of things, but rather focus on the opportunity in these days

D. The last days are marked by an intensification of conflict/evil but also gospel ministry (see v. 20-21 as well as Matthew 24:7-14)

E. This requires us to be awake, prayerful, and intentional with our lives: 1 Peter 4:7-8

II. The last days are marked by the reign of a crucified Messiah in heaven

 A. God has vindicated the crucified one and made him Lord and Christ (v. 36)

 B. This was such a radical statement for the original audience

 1. This vindicated Jesus himself

a. His crucifixion was a moment of profound shame and humiliation which signaled to everyone that God was not with him and his way was not God’s way

b. The ascension clarifies that actually he was God’s man all along, and Peter’s sermon focuses on how God was working through him from the beginning (see v. 22-24, 32-33)

2. It also vindicated his whole way of being in the world

a. The world assumes that worldly power, pride, and force win in the end.

b. But God’s making Jesus Lord and Christ demonstrates that his upside down way of life (humility, service, sacrifice, the last shall be first, the meek will inherit the earth, etc.) wins in the end

3. It also shows that his kingdom advances not through worldly force but through humble, faithful, courageous acts of love and sacrifice. Throughout Acts the kingdom advances in surprising ways as followers of Jesus offer

C. As those who are living in the last times, we have to choose the way of humble service, sacrificial love, and courageous witness even when we’re tempted to go the way of worldly power, to defend our honor at all costs and to protect our privileges.

IV. The “Gift” of the Spirit poured out on God’s people

A. The Spirit is intimately connected with Jesus (v. 33)

1. See John 14:16-18

2. So fundamentally, the Spirit brings the presence of Jesus to his people today.

B. Consider what marked Jesus’ life

 1. A passion for God

 2. A passion for the world to know God

 C. This is what happens within the disciples when Jesus’ Spirit is poured out on them

1. They are filled with a fresh passion for “the wonders of God” (v. 11)

2. They are filled with a passion for the world to know God and a boldness to witness to the world.

D. In the last days, the Spirit is now available to all (see v. 17-18 and 38-39)

1. In the former days (the old covenant) the Spirit came upon persons who were almost exclusively mighty men: kings, prophets, priests, warriors

2. In the last days there is a “democratization of the Spirit” on every kind of person.

V. Consider Peter’s journey in those past 3 months

A. He entered Jerusalem with lots of confidence in his own abilities

B. He was profoundly humbled by his failures and the weakness of his own flesh

C. He was profoundly forgiven and restored by Jesus

D. He was filled with Jesus’ Spirit to do great things not by his own abilities or powers but by the Spirit of Jesus

VI. We are called to step out into the world knowing “we’ve got what it takes,” not in and of ourselves but with the Spirit of Jesus in us.