

Unexpected Pentecost Series - Week 2

Acts 2:1-18

1. Promises

Ex. The power of a promise (Kids, Business & Relationships)

- A. Life moves forward by promises being made and crumbles when promises are broken
- B. God is a promise making and a promise keeping God
- C. the story of God in Scripture is pulled forward by God making and fulfilling promises, promises are fulfilled in his ultimate promise in this first great promise to send Christ

2. God Fulfills His Promise

a. On the day of Pentecost Jesus fulfilled a promise - John 16:7

B. Jesus said that if he did not ascend to the father, that the Holy Spirit would not be sent by the father

C. Last week we talked about the ascension of Christ and this week we are talking about Pentecost Sunday, the day Christ fulfilled His promise

D. Jesus says that it is for our good that He would ascend to the father, because it would be good for us to receive the Holy Spirit

What is happening on this day that is good for us?

E. On the day of Pentecost we see God fulfilling a promise that fulfills a deeper promise, the promise to renew the world

3. The Redemptive Arc of Scripture

A. Creation, Fall, Redemption & Renewal

B. At this moment, God's promise to renew the world starts to take shape in that we see that the way he will renew the world is by renewing people by his Spirit

Ex. Construction: Pouring concrete

C. God's continued work in this world will be built upon what happened this day, namely the filling of his people with his life giving Spirit

- Over the next two weeks we are going to unpack all that happened here
- Today we're looking at the nature of how God fulfills his promises, which is quite simply...

4. Unexpected

a. God fulfills his promises in unexpected ways, and many times this offends our minds

B. The Incarnation and the crucifixion are perfect examples. He confronts the powers of this world by entering the world as a vulnerable baby. He defeats violence and oppression through the weakness of the cross.

Ex. God speaks to the religious & irreligious alike

C. God fulfills his promises, but often in unexpected ways

God's people waited for God to send his Spirit into the world, upon all people, but this was not the way people expected

D. Peter quotes from the prophet Joel, 2 which was written 800 years before this moment, which doesn't mention anything about tongues of fire

5. Details...

A. God kept this detail to himself

B. One of the challenging things about trusting God and walking by faith is that God doesn't share all the details

Ex. Road trips, Saturday plans

Ex. Suffering, loneliness, true friends

God is at work in your life, but chances are his work is unexpected to you

C. If you don't know Jesus, the good news is that God is still at work in your life

Ex. Turn the camera off - We are always under God's eye

6. "This is what was spoken"

a. If God fulfills his promises in unexpected ways and since he keeps details to himself, one of the critical things we need is the ability to discern when God is at work

B. with the help of the Holy Spirit, Peter is able to discern that what was happening was God fulfilling his promise

C. People around were dismissing what was happening, even mocking it, but Peter understood things as they really were

Discussion Questions:

1. Ten days after the ascension of Christ we witness in Acts 2:1-18 Christ fulfilling his promise to send the Holy Spirit. This moment affirms one of the greatest attributes of God, namely that he is faithful and fulfills his promises. In your life, how have you experienced the faithfulness of God? Are there promises from God you are presently waiting on to be fulfilled?

2. Theologians have described Acts 2 as the "birthplace of the church" because on that day the Holy Spirit empowered God's people for the mission of God in the world. God's vision for his people is that we are to be a people empowered by the Holy Spirit. In your life how is God empowering you to live out his mission in the world?

3. Acts 2:1-18 not only reveals that God fulfills his promises, but it reveals the unexpected nature in which God fulfills his promises. In the Old Testament God promised to send his Spirit, and in Acts 2 he fulfills that promise, but he chose to do so in unexpected ways through the gift of tongues. It was surprising and disorienting for many on that day. In your life, what are some of the unexpected ways God has fulfilled his promises?

4. As people we often crave to know the details of how God's plans will unfold. At times we can argue that it would be easier to trust God if we just knew the details, but often the need to have the details can easily hide our deeper desire, namely to control God. Describe a situation in your life where you are trusting God to fulfill his promises while not knowing the details of how God will come through.

5. Because God fulfills his promises in unexpected ways and he typically doesn't share the details, it's quite easy to not recognize when God is at work. As a result, we can resist or even disdain when God is at work similar to the crowd who ridiculed the disciples. In Acts 2 Peter stands up and helps people to discern that God was at work. Take a moment to pray and ask God where he is at work in your life that has gone on unnoticed to you. Ask the Holy Spirit to highlight what he is doing in your life.

