

“Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful  
and kindle in us the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and we shall be created  
and you shall renew the face of the earth.”

Let me ask you something.  
If you were about to launch  
the most important movement in human history  
something that would cover every continent... survive empires...  
outlast governments... and transform billions of lives...

***How would you do it?***

Well... Start by hiring the best PR firm you could find.  
Then get a proper venue. Something up to the task...  
NFL stadiums here in the USA...  
Soccer stadiums for the rest of the world...  
Lots of them  
You'd develop a social media strategy... recruit the best influencers...  
design “must wear” merchandise.  
Plus... The hottest 100 musical acts  
Along with the biggest A list celebrities in the world.

Now... ***How did God do it?***

He gathered 120 terrified people in an upper room  
And told them to wait. That's it. That's the strategy. Wait.  
And honestly? If I'd been one of those disciples...  
I'd a been losin' my mind.  
"Lord... I love you...  
but you've been gone for ten days now...  
and the Romans are still very much a thing...  
and we're just... sitting here. Stress-eating.

But here's the thing about God  
*He never once... asked for our input...*  
And on that particular morning...  
fifty days after Passover  
on the Jewish feast of Pentecost  
the Holy Spirit showed up and blew the roof off everything.

Before we get into what happened that day...  
we need to back up a bit...  
because the story of the Holy Spirit...  
*actually* begins on Easter Sunday evening.

The disciples were huddled in a locked room.  
They are terrified. Completely understandable.  
Their teacher was just executed.  
They are *known associates*.  
And... They're probably next.

So the door's locked... lights down low... The mood?  
Somewhere between a funeral and a hostage abduction.  
And then Jesus... *walks through the wall*.  
**Through. The. Wall.**

we tend to read that part so casually.  
*Jesus came and stood among them.*  
Like it's nothing. The man walked through solid stone.  
If that had happened to me... I'd be on the floor.  
making sounds no human has ever made.  
But Jesus, calm as ever, says:  
*"Peace be with you."*

He shows them his hands and his side... scars from the cross  
*and their grief... turns to joy.*

Then he says something extraordinary:

*"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

And he breathes on them and says:

*"Receive the Holy Spirit."*

*He breathes on them.*

Like God breathing life into Adam at the very beginning of creation.

It's deliberate. It's poetic. It's a new creation moment.

The disciples... huddled in a locked room... frightened fugitives...

Now boldly stepped into the world... as commissioned ambassadors.

But the fullness of the Spirit?

That's still coming. That's ten days away.

And it is going to be something else entirely.

*When the day of Pentecost came...*

*they were all together in one place.*

I love this. They were *all together in one place.*

Sounds simple... but think about it.

One hundred and twenty people.

Staying together.

Unified.

Waiting in prayer for something...

they couldn't fully explain or describe

to anyone who asked...

*Hey, what are you guys up to in there?*

*We're waiting for the Holy Spirit.*

*The what?*

*The Helper. The Comforter. The one Jesus promised.*

*Is he... coming soon?*

*We don't know.*

That right there... is what we call faith.

Obedient... patient... undignified... awkward... faith.

And then... suddenly... it happens.

A sound like a violent rushing wind fills the entire house.

Tongues of fire appear and rest on each person.

And every single one of them is filled with the Holy Spirit

and begins speaking in other languages they had never even heard.

Try to imagine this scene.

Not the sanitized stained-glass version.

The real thing. Wind howling through a room... no storm outside.

Fire that doesn't burn, hovering over people's heads.

A hundred and twenty ordinary Galileans

fishermen, women, tax collectors

suddenly speaking fluent Egyptian and Parthian and Cappadocian.

This is not a polite, orderly religious meeting.

This is absolutely wild.

Not surprisingly... the sound draws a crowd...

And pretty quickly... And the crowd splits into two camps...

a very human response to anything unusual.

The first group was *genuinely astonished*.

These were devout Jews from every nation under heaven

And...

they heard their *own native languages*  
coming out of the mouths of Galileans.

People from modern-day Iran heard Farsi.

People from Libya heard their dialect.

People from Rome heard Latin.

***"How is this happening? What does this mean?"***

Those are actually great questions.

***Those are the questions of people whose hearts are cracking open.***

The second group?

Suspicious...

They look at these disciples... and conclude...

***"They've had too much wine."***

At nine in the morning.

Look... I don't want to make fun of them... ***but really?***

At nine in the morning? That's your explanation?

Not... ***Hey, this is kind of miraculous...***

But... ***Yep, these folks started drinking at dawn...***

To be fair, they had no idea what was happening.

We rarely do... when God shows up... with full power.

This is where the story becomes breathtaking...

Albeit... for a different reason.

***Because the person who stands up to address the crowd... is Peter.***

Simon Peter.

The same Peter who...  
fifty-three days earlier  
stood in a courtyard  
and denied three times  
that he even knew Jesus.

The same Peter  
who wept bitterly over his own cowardice.  
That Peter.

And this Peter  
filled with the Holy Spirit  
stood up in front of thousands of people  
in the city where Jesus was just crucified... and preaches.

He quotes the prophet Joel:

***"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.  
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,  
your young men will see visions,  
your old men will dream dreams..."***

This isn't just a sermon. It is a ***declaration***.  
The dream of every prophet  
the longing of every faithful soul from Abraham to Zechariah  
the Spirit of God poured out on all flesh  
not just prophets and kings and priests  
but everyone... daughters and sons... servants and free  
it is happening... *right now*.

And The Church was born.

Here's what I want you to take home.  
The disciples received something  
in that locked room on Easter Sunday  
a commissioning... a breath... a promise...  
But they didn't achieve the fullness  
until they had waited... prayed... and remained together.

We live in a culture that is profoundly allergic... *to waiting*.  
We've all felt genuinely frustrated  
when a web page takes more than three seconds to load.

We don't wait... for anything.  
We want the promise... without the upper room.  
We want the fire without praying for ten days.

Look... the upper room is *not wasted time*.  
It's *formation* time.  
It's the space... where *fear becomes faith*...  
where scattered disciples... become unified community...  
where God prepares vessels... for what He's about to pour.

And here is the most stunning part of the whole story:  
God did not send the Spirit  
to a room full of people  
who had everything figured out.

He sent it to a room full of people  
who were confused... grieving... afraid... imperfect.

One recently had a spectacular public failure.  
Others abandoned Jesus at the cross... and ran.

If that group of people qualified for the fire of God... *So Do You*.

The Holy Spirit hasn't changed job description.

***Still the Comforter... Still the Counselor...***

***Still the one...***

who empowers ordinary people...

to do extraordinary things

in the name of Jesus.

He still speaks. He still moves. He still fills.

And unlike those early disciples

we don't have to wait for Pentecost anymore

because Pentecost has already come.

The Spirit is already here... already given... already available...

***to every person who trusts in Jesus.***

### **So... What Are You Waiting For?**

I want to close by coming back to where we started

that image of 120 people in a room, smaller than this one... waiting.

They could have left. They could have said,

"This is getting weird, I've got fish to catch."

They could have let fear win and scattered back to their old lives.

But they stayed. Together. Expectant.

And because they stayed, the world was never the same.

You may be in an upper room season right now.

A season of waiting, of uncertainty,

of feeling like the promise is real

but the fulfillment seems far away.

Can I encourage you?

Stay.

Stay together.

Stay prayerful.

Stay expectant.

Because the same God  
who split the air with rushing wind over Jerusalem  
is still in the business of showing up  
in rooms full of ordinary, imperfect, waiting people  
and setting them on fire.

May that be us.

Every single Sunday.

And every day in between.

Amen.