

With Sister Paulette Morrison on September 5, 2021



Introduction

As we delve into the foundational chapters of the Book of Acts, exploring the birth of the early church and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. Our reading and listening session took us on a journey through pivotal moments, revealing how faith, unity, and divine intervention shaped the lives of the apostles and the believers who followed. We reflected on how these stories resonate with our lives today.

The Ascension and the Upper Room

Luke begins by reminding us of Jesus' ministry, ascension, and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:1-2: "*The former account I made, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach until the day he was taken up, after he had given orders through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.*"

Jesus instructed them to wait for the promise of the Father:

Acts 1:4: "*...do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for 'the promise of the Father,' about which you have heard me speak*"

In the upper room, the apostles devoted themselves to prayer.

Acts 1:13-14: "*When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room where they were staying... These all continued together in prayer with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.*"

Pentecost: The Holy Spirit Arrives

The Day of Pentecost marked a turning point. The Holy Spirit descended upon the believers with power and glory.

Acts 2:1-4: "*Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like a violent wind swept through the house and filled the whole building. And tongues, like flames of fire that were divided, appeared to them and rested on each one of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.*"

Witnesses were astonished to hear them speaking in their own languages.

Acts 2:7-11: "*And they were completely baffled, saying, “Look, are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus and the province of Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own languages the wonderful deeds of God!”*"

Some mocked, but Peter, filled with the Spirit, stood up to preach.

Acts 2:13-16: "*But others jeered at them, saying, “They are filled with sweet wine!” But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: “You Jews, and all you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; pay careful attention to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine in the morning. But this is what was spoken about through the prophet Joel...*"

Peter urged them to repent and be baptized.

Acts 2:38-40: *Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself.” And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!”*"

A Miracle at the Beautiful Gate

Peter and John encounter a crippled beggar at the temple gate.

Acts 3:2-4: "*Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for money from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked them for money. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us!”*"

Peter, filled with faith, offered him something far greater than money.

Acts 3:6: "*But Peter said, “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!”*"

Peter's message to the people: God sent His Son to bless them.

Acts 3:25-26: "*You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your ancestors when he said to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ God raised up his servant and sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your evil ways.*"

Readers and Listeners' Topics

- **Obedience:** Evangelist Dobney
- **The Power of the Holy Spirit:** Evangelist Mullings
- **Spirit of Togetherness:** Sister Francis
- **The Twelve Apostles:** Deaconess Morrison-Ellis
- **Healing at the Beautiful Gate:** Evangelist Ekor
- **Activating your Faith:** Sister Haughton
- **Wait for the Promise:** Minister Marjorie

Reflection

As we conclude our journey through these powerful passages, let us reflect on the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, the importance of unity, and the call to share the Good News with the world. May we be inspired to activate our faith and wait expectantly for the promises of God.