**The Book of Acts: Promises, Revitalization, Acts 2:1-4**

* If Chip and JoAnna Gaines knocked on your door and wanted to update one room in your house, which would you pick?
* With the 90th anniversary of the church approaching, what area of the church would you like to see physically updated/revitalized and why?

The thought of revitalization in our home, our church, perhaps an area of town or in a system (education, tax, government, etc) that needs it is always exciting. It always starts with memories of happy times and leads into dreams of what could come to be and fresh vision of life. Revitalization can be great fun, but at times it can be scary. Conflicts come when competing visions go different directions and obstacles can seem to block the road to sucess. Yet all projects tend to have one primary point person. For the believer, the final decision maker for our lives should be Christ.

* Typically, we consider working on different points of our life at the start of the new year. Think about some of those things you were hoping to do. Who can share an area that they wanted to and are improving in? What steps did you put in motion for that to happen?
* A key conviction of our church is prayer and fasting. What would you say to someone who asks you about the value of these in the life of a believer?

**Teaching:**

This year, the key word for our church is “Promises.” We are being taught and reminded of the promises of God and how He can be trusted to keep them. Last Sunday, Jerimiah taught on God’s promise to give the Holy Spirit to his people. Jerimiah walked us through the revitalization that came with the gift of the continual presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament sets the stage for the disciples' experience in Acts. We read in Leviticus about the rhythms and festivals that God put in place to distinguish His followers. One of these festivals was Pentecost, and it took place at the time of our reading in Acts.

In considering the direction Jesus provided his followers in Acts 1 to “wait for the Holy Spirit to come upon you”, we are wise to consider the context of what these believers knew from Old Testament scripture. We read in Numbers about God's spirit being put on leaders of the Israelites to help Moses shepherd the people. Ezekiel provides the picture of a valley of dry bones being filled with the spirit of God and coming alive again.

* Sometimes there are areas in our lives that affect us but are outside of our control. When one of those areas is being updated, how do you respond? Anxiety? Fear? Confidence? Excitement? Why do you think that is?

Now, let's read Acts 2:1-4:

“1When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

* Based off this passage, what thoughts and feelings may have been floating around in the room with the introduction of the Holy Spirit?
* How might our perspective change if we really knew/understood that every believer in the room has this same mighty Holy Spirit alive and inside of them?

Through the introduction and presence of the Holy Spirit, God completely revitalized His people. This does more than just re-energizing them. The Holy Spirit provided a new strength, a new life, and a restoration to His people that had not been present before.

The fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all believers was a significant moment for God’s people. The Jews had been longing for His spirit to come. Within this community, the Holy Spirit came onto them in a mighty way.

* What imagery accompanies this passage? Why does this matter and/or what do the images reference?

The people were immersed in the Holy Spirit. This gift brought clarity and help for the believers to understand their identity in Christ. The Spirit gives us the ability to live in Christ and to be who God wants us to be. It also leads to the confession and proclamation of Christ. God provides the gift of the Holy Spirit to both individuals and the community of believers. This community, this special form of togetherness, empowered the believers to live within this new context and power as a united force under the one influence of the Holy Spirit.

If we reread verse 4, “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.”

* What paradigm shifts potentially took place when the holy spirit filled “all of them”?
* The power of the Holy Spirit was given with no end date. What specifically did the spirit do within the believers? How do we see examples of this in our daily life?

**Application***:* The giving of the Holy Spirit is one more promise that God has given and fulfilled for all His people. It is an amazing gift from Jesus to each of His followers. This mighty gift defines our understanding of the Kingdom of God, enabling us with purpose and power so much bigger than our lives.

* How do God’s promises change your outlook as you prepare to head back into a week of work, school, home life?
* God promises to enable you to share His hope with others. How can we pray for you this week to share that hope?
* Who has God placed in your vicinity that needs His hope? Knowing what you know now, what might you do this week that you had not considered before?

**Pray***: Mighty King. You are faithful to keep your promises and to provide what is best for your children. Help us be patient in calling out to you. May the body of Christ live into the knowledge and power of the Holy Spirit. May we stand boldly on your promises, recognizing that it is the Holy Spirit that makes us an army of joy and peace, of hope and love.*