

(1) Movement Gains Traction  
Week 2: Access to Power  
Acts 2:1-13

Intro series...

Before leaving Jesus left his followers with the family business. He commissioned them to continue doing what he had been doing with them.

(2) <sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. <sup>20</sup> Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

Last week Matt did an excellent job kicking things off with Acts chapter 1.

What happened in chapter 1?

He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father,

which, he said, "you heard from me; <sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:3-5

- Jesus has been teaching them over again post resurrection. Things look different on this side of the resurrection.

**But you will receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

- They have been waiting.
- Having meetings and getting organized.
- As they wait the next big religious celebration comes, Pentecost.

® This is where this new movement that Jesus has commissioned them to start can begin to gain some traction and not spin their wheels. What we are going to see is a movement. That has always been a **better word to describe** this than the church growing or Christianity. It's a movement of disciples making disciples. **But it has to get some traction right here at the beginning.** Forward movement demands some traction.

When I think of traction this is what I picture.

- (3) Football player changing direction
- (4) A soccer player pushing off
- (5) A snow tire
- (6) Tire spinning

Lets dive into chapter 2. (7) When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. Acts 2:1

What is Pentecost?

- Jewish harvest festival
- Feast of Weeks in OT because it was 7 weeks after Passover
- **One of 3 Jewish pilgrimage festivals** where people were expected to come and bring gifts and offerings (Ex. 23:14-17)
- At the end of the **barley harvest** and the beginning of the wheat harvest
- A traditional time of baptism for Christians...White dress lead to the name White Sunday.

Let's pick up with verse 2...(8) When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. <sup>5</sup> Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. (9) <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. <sup>7</sup> And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? <sup>9</sup> Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, (10) <sup>10</sup> Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, <sup>11</sup> both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." <sup>12</sup> And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" <sup>13</sup> But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." Acts 2:1-12 (ESV)

**Here's the scene.** We have all this different nationalities coming to Jerusalem from this festival. In a room you have probably the 120 people from chapter

1:15. The sound of the wind and people shouting praises to God in all different languages causes people to run toward the room where they were meeting.

Ⓜ This is the moment where this group becomes a movement by gaining traction. But it's at this point where the whole thing could get stuck. But if it gets' stuck and doesn't start to move it will die. Other grass roots movements have been started only to be crushed never getting to the point of spreading.

There would have been a temptation to jump ahead and not wait. To try to leverage all these people in Jerusalem for Pentecost. That would have been disastrous. But then again Jesus knew what he was doing.

What they needed was what we just saw. (11-12) They need access to power...The Holy Spirit! (The presence of the risen Christ) He did say that he would never leave or forsake them.

The plan was clear and it was effective. But with the resistance they are going to get and the culture that will fight against them they need more than just a really good plan.

If you have a good business plan something that provides a product or service that people will want. The

numbers work out but you've got to have some cash to help the thing have a chance come to life.

This movement will need power. The power they will need starts with...(13-14) Life giving breath of God

Ⓜ God has to breath into it before it can come to life. We have to settle in our own minds and hearts where life comes from. If we think that we give life to anything that has a hope for continuing then we are kidding ourselves.

(15) <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Acts 2:2

All through scripture wind or breath is a symbol for God's life giving power. Maybe you've heard this story from the prophet Ezekiel in the O.T.

(16) <sup>4</sup> Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the LORD!' <sup>5</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you live again! (17) <sup>6</sup> I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'...(18) <sup>10</sup> So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath

came into their bodies. They all came to life and stood up on their feet—a great army. Ezekiel 37:4-6 & 10 (NLT)

A great army demands the breath of God give them life before they can go and conquer.

(19) <sup>7</sup> So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit." John 3:7-8 (NLT)

® Being "born again" for the second time demands wind or the breath of God to animate their spiritually dead lives.

® For Jesus' disciples making disciples grass roots movement to get started God has to breathe into it from the very beginning. There will be no traction that leads to forward movement without the Holy Spirit giving this perfect plan power.

Here's where it get's person. It's no longer theory about how God works. It becomes experience! (20-21) **Filling and empowering regular people**

Remember who is in this room. It's fisherman, men and women who just started follow Jesus. They weren't the elite. Jesus didn't try to win over the most powerful

people and then have them use their influence to convince others to join in. Jesus wanted to start with regular people who he would breathe power into. Not him leveraging some other lesser power.

Let's read it again. But first to make sure we are clear about what we are reading we need to do something. Repeat after me, "This is my story."

(22) And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:3-4

® The risen Jesus who was from the beginning and made all things is now living in regular people. It's not about key leaders. It's not about the brightest and best. The plan of this movement is not a top down approach it's a bottom up approach and the only way that works is if the power is in regular people. People have to be able to do that "go make disciples baptizing and teaching them to obey" stuff and they can't unless the Holy Spirit, breath of God is blown into them.

We must have the Holy Spirit to speak the language of the culture we are in.



Therefore tongues of fire on each one speaks of the new covenant where God's presence rests on individuals not just the nation of Israel or key leaders.

The movement won't gain any traction until this happens. It will spin its wheels for a few moments and then dies of exhaustion.

If you remember the great commission it has this little phrase, "go and make disciples of all the nations." And in Acts 1 it talks about Jerusalem, all Judea, and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

So how can you start of movement in Palestine with a bunch of uneducated people and demand that it is an international movement? This thing can't be regional. It can't be dependent on one culture or it won't spread across the world. Doesn't that seem unrealistic?

This power that is needed for traction is...(23-24)

Universal and unifying

Let's look at it again. It's Pentecost one of the festivals where people from all around that part of the world come to Jerusalem.

(25) <sup>5</sup> Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup> And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in

his own language. (26) <sup>7</sup> And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans...we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God." <sup>12</sup> And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" <sup>13</sup> But others mocking said, "They are filled with new wine." Acts 2:5-7 & 11b-12

**Everyone heard it in his or her own language. We could talk about that until tomorrow. The message was heard within their culture. There wasn't a demand to accept a certain culture or language in order to hear and receive. God met them where they were. Sounds like Jesus coming to us.**

**The Holy Spirit brings power to proclaim the gospel everywhere.**

- **No longer are they tied to returning to Jerusalem for the temple, the Hebrew language. Now they are free to go back home to proclaim the gospel.**

**They heard in their native languages not the international language Greek.**

**Culture will not be dominated. Culture eats strategy for breakfast. (Peter Drucker)**

"Is there a power that can unify the divided nations of the earth without subjugating them? Is there a way making people one, without at the same time making them all the same...It is precisely that sort of **unity** which the Holy

Spirit brings. And he declares his intention in the matter right at the beginning, on the day of Pentecost, by the miracle he performed." NIV Application Commentary

Unity not imperialism

Here's the picture of what the Holy Spirit is creating.

(27)<sup>9</sup> After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. Rev. 7:9 (NLT)

They didn't become vanilla. They had their own flavor.

Here's the problem. We can stop right here and not circle back to why they needed the power in the beginning. We can make the power about our ability to hang in there in this crazy world and survive until heaven. Then the power because about me having a happy life and being rescued. The power was necessary for them to continue the mission they had been commissioned to do. They were to introduce people to this Jesus who could breath life into them, empower

them and make them a part of His expanding Kingdom. This isn't a self-help program. The power is for the mission that we can have that life to the fullest.

(28-29) **Do you need some traction?** Are you spinning your wheels? Do you lack the power necessary to enter into this culture as ambassadors?

Our desire to become a disciple making church needs to continue to get traction.

(30-31) **Give The Holy Spirit access to your life**

- Are you resisting his word?
- Are you resisting sharing your life with others?  
Get into a bridge group.
- Are you staying so busy keeping yourself in a constant state of movement and noise so that you can't hear God speak?

Ⓜ What is one thing you can do right now that will invite the life giving power producing breath of God into your life?

"At its heart, the power of Pentecost is an experience of the immediacy of God. God is indeed with us, and we can

experience his nearness and powerful enabling to minister in the Spirit." Pg 95 note 23