



November 1, 2020 • "Fresh Wind" • Pastor Dan Chun

I have found that being a follower of Jesus is one huge adventure. I don't need to travel anywhere. Being a Christian is an adventure because I don't always know where the Lord is leading me. Sometimes it really stretches my faith. He's unpredictable. He always leads me into something that I think is beyond my capability. It can be scary or exciting ... or both.

Well, our church is going through an adventure far greater than we could ever have imagined. We are about to embark on a very special four weeks!

So, what is God doing in our midst? It's why the elders and staff and I are calling us to call upon the Lord in a big congregational prayer walk on part of our golf course on Saturday, November 14, to seek His wisdom. We are asking for the Lord to have His Holy Spirit fall upon us, lead us, guide us.

Speaking about the Holy Spirit, today we begin our four-part study from the Book of Acts as part of our Fresh Wind sermon series and small group study, which marks the midpoint of our 2-year Raise the Sails generosity journey.

What happens in the first chapter of the Book of Acts is so important for us to understand for today. It has a lot to do with the fresh wind of the Holy Spirit. Our story from the Bible begins with Jesus. He has risen from the dead and stays on earth for 40 days to give Him enough time to show people that He really was indeed resurrected. But He also wants to give His final charges, like "Go into the world and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit and teach them to obey," not just listen, but obey *all* that He had

commanded them. Notice, not obey some, but obey *all* that He had commanded them.

This was the very first Zoom meeting as He then zoomed up into the air, into the iCloud! (That is such a bad joke! I don't know if it is a dad joke or a Dan joke.)

Before Jesus left, He told the disciples that, in a few days, the Holy Spirit will come upon them. Now when someone says to me in a few days, I think 2 or 3 days, but 2 or 3 days later nothing happens. Fourth day nothing happens. Maybe some of the disciples start to argue, "Does 'few' mean two days, three days, or four days?" Five days—nothing. Six days—nothing. Maybe they are getting antsy. When you are waiting for a friend and she doesn't come for six days, that is major trouble. Or your Christmas gift comes six days late—that is a long time. Seven days pass—nothing. Eight days pass—nothing. Nine days they are waiting around—still nothing. Tenth day, it's like, "Whatever!" #can't wait! They all go to a room together. Normal day.

But then, *boom!* It happens! A crazy supernatural thing happens. The Holy Spirit falls upon the disciples, just like *wham!* They were in a room together, just talking story, when they saw and heard a violent, rushing, forceful wind enter the room! But it wasn't just the audio, it was also the visual. There seemed to be like a tongue of fire above each of the disciples' heads. Then, back to the audio, they began to speak in tongues, at least 12 languages, known to the citizens in the area, but unknown to the disciples.

They were so overwhelmed with the Spirit, so full of joy, that they stagger out into the street as they had so much authentic, divine gladness.

The townspeople in Jerusalem thought they were drunk and were amazed at how many languages they could speak.

The fresh wind of the Holy Spirit came like a powerful wind upon them and—*whoosh*—it went into them. Four things amazingly happened to the disciples. It's the mark of a Spirit-filled life and so it can happen to you—a fiery passion. There are four characteristics of people filled with the Holy Spirit.

### **People of the Spirit...**

- 1. will be supernaturally empowered by God**
- 2. will be unified.**
- 3. will be generous.**
- 4. will be centered on Jesus.**

**First point—supernaturally empowered by God.** After the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples, the Apostle Peter, one who denied Christ at least three times, the fisherman who often misspoke, suddenly became eloquent in the Spirit and declared, quoting a prophet named Joel,

### **Acts 2:17-19**

*<sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> Even on My servants, both men and women, I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. <sup>19</sup> I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below.”*

This new fresh wind of the Spirit that came upon them allowed followers of Jesus of all ages—young and kupuna—to risk, to have courage, to see visions from God, to have dreams, big dreams that come from God, and that they would see miracles here on earth.

Remember, it was the fresh wind of the Spirit that allowed one of our kupuna 15 years ago to have a dream that pointed us to buy the Ko‘olau property, which was not even on our radar and it wasn’t even for sale. You see, it had to be a supernatural leading from the Lord or else we would not have moved on it. And it came through a dream, from a man named Don Parker, who said he never dreamed.

Know that, if you ask the Holy Spirit to come into your life, to fill you no matter what your age, young or old, the Spirit will guide you and lead you and speak to you.

We have been a church learning especially over the last 20 years what it means to pray in the Spirit and expect to see miracle healings or to experience prophetic words, which we define as divine words from God that primarily do three things—encourage, strengthen, or comfort people. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit. Have you ever prayed that prayer? Maybe I should lead you in that prayer. But first, back to the story.

After the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples on that day of Pentecost, according to our Scripture passage, Peter told the townspeople in this story about Jesus. See what their response was! Let’s continue in our story in the book of Acts.

### **Acts 2:37-39**

*<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Him.”*

Repentance is important. Baptism is super important. And then comes the filling of the Holy Spirit in a special way.

The Bible text says that the people heard this and were baptized and 3,000 people converted that day! 3,000 people! Then—get this—our passage leads us to **point #2—people of the Spirit will be called into unity.** We pick it up in this verse. We will soon see what happened after the Holy Spirit fell on all of the people.

### **Acts 2:42**

*<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

They were unified. Notice the word “devoted.” They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, meaning they devoted their whole life to learn more about this Jesus. But they also devoted themselves to be a fellowship of believers—a real community! And they devoted themselves to the sacrament of the breaking of bread in communion, remembering always Jesus died for them but was resurrected. And they devoted themselves to prayer.

The question is: are we devoted to those things? There will be unity if we are devoted to seeking the presence of God in our worship and the breaking of bread, in prayer, in studying the Word, in a regular fellowship of a community of followers of Jesus. That’s what Church is all about.

The fresh wind of the Spirit brought them together for that reason.

When we are devoted people, we will be unified. We are called to unity.

During coronavirus, during an election year, now more than ever, we need to be unified. Don’t let any division get in our way.

Scholar, pastor, author Tim Keller once wrote that back in the first century, “There was no other religion that took in all groups and all strata of society. The one tenable explanation of Christianity’s inclusiveness was probably its teaching of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. For if Jesus was not a teacher showing the way of salvation, but the Son of God who accomplished salvation, then members of both sexes and all races, the learned and the unlearned, the high and the low, the able and the non-able, might all be able to share in the salvation made possible in Christ.” [Keller, T. J. (2013). *The Timothy Keller Sermon Archive*. New York City: Redeemer Presbyterian Church.]

I mean if Mary Magdalene who had 7 demons could be restored and join the group, and if Matthew the tax collector who ripped off his own Jewish people could be part of the original band of 12 disciples, and if two loud boisterous sons of Thunder named James and John could be included, and a guy named Thomas who was always doubting and seeing the cup half full

could join the team, then I think all people could be invited and included. God called them to unity.

So let’s talk about the elephant in the room. Or, should I talk about the other party—the donkey in the room? Or, the independents?

Now, more than ever, we need to be unified in Christ, no matter what political party or persuasion we may be from, no matter if you do or don’t get the candidate you want. This is the Church!

Know there is someone trying to play with our minds right now. This is the ultimate hacker—a demonic hacker—Satan himself.

Yeah, I know. It’s hard for modern thinking, scientific-minded, sophisticated Americans to believe that there is a spiritual personal evil that is always working against us. But I say just look at the world and you tell me if there is not an incredible evil working far beyond just human sin.

Jesus told us He knows more than we about the spiritual world and Jesus calls our enemy—the Devil—a fallen angel. Jesus also calls him Satan.

But no worry—no need to be scared—for if you have the Holy Spirit, Jesus says, “Greater is He (the Spirit) who is in you than this Satan who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4)

If we have experienced the fresh wind of the Spirit, we will be unified. Satan divides. The Spirit unifies. Satan tears apart. Satan’s work is fragmentation. He desires to divide, distract. What did Jesus call the Devil? “The father of lies.” (John 8:42).

Don’t let the Evil One get to you during this election season. Be unified even with those who might vote and think differently than you for we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

To keep going in order in our passage, the next verse reaffirms the first quality of a Christian community that experiences the fresh wind of the Spirit—the supernatural.

### **Acts 2:43**

*<sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles.*

Signs and wonders is the Bible's terminology for miracles that are signs that there is a loving, living God.

The supernatural should be a natural part of our walk in the Spirit. For the Christian, their lives are naturally supernatural.

Then the next verse tells us of a **third quality of fresh wind in a Christian Spirit-led community—they will be generous.**

Let's continue in our passage about these early Christians.

### **Acts 2:44-47**

*<sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.*

The Early Christians shared with one another generously, selling possessions to share their funds and many scholars think that even means property so that all would be helped who were in need. When we bought the Ko'olau campus, a few people literally sold property so we could have a campus devoted—yes, devoted—to God.

One of the reasons churches are created is to help those in need, whether inside the church or outside the church.

The reason we started last year our Raise the Sails generosity journey was to realize how generous God has been to us and how He calls us to be as generous as God has been generous with us so that we share with those in need.

We have a fund called the Good Samaritan Fund. If you are a member of this church and you are in need of help for a month's rent or an electric bill, just to get by, our church will help if you fulfill certain criteria. It's a fund members contribute to to help those in need. It's our way to share what we have with others.

If you need some financial help to get by, then write the Good Samaritan Fund at [goodsam@fpchawaiil.org](mailto:goodsam@fpchawaiil.org) and the Good Samaritan team will confidentially review your request. Again, this is for members and regular attenders of the church and not for *all* the residents of Hawaii. The fund wouldn't last if it were for the 1.3 million residents. Of course, we also try to help those inside the church with spiritual counsel, encouragement, and prayer.

For the residents of the state outside the church, we try to help in other ways. Like the early church, we have shared what we have with others in helping families in the community by doing many projects as you saw in the earlier video by giving gift cards, boxes of food or needed supplies, or if needed, wash the laundry of the houseless and those in need.

Before COVID-19, we generously shared our building with thousands of people every month for their life-giving experiences of graduations, proms, fundraisers, seminars, funerals, weddings, parties.

Now that the golf course is gone, as you saw in the video, we hope all 246 acres of our property will be used by the community and, if the Department of Land and Natural Resources allows us, it might be used for farming, food production, vocational training, and environmental education, for public and private schools, for camps, retreats. We want to use *all* that we have and be generous to share it, to restore people's spirits, souls, bodies and not just keep the land so we can look at it and use it just for ourselves.

We want people to be refreshed by the winds of the Spirit. We want people to know Jesus. We want the citizens of Hawaii to drink the living water of Christ that will never have them thirst again.

Not to forget, we have sent out people to many lands in Asia, Africa, and Central America to help those in

need to fight poverty and sex trafficking and to help people medically. We want to generously share *all* that we have with others—no matter what creed, color, or culture.

Again, think of the early church right after Pentecost. As Tim Keller wrote of the early church, think of our church! There was every culture possible, every race, every class, every temperament.

Here's what' is so astonishing. These are people who seemingly therefore had nothing in common. They do not have a common culture. They do not have a common personality. They do not have a common temperament. They do not have a common class. And yet these are the people who immediately are in each other's homes every night. They were together. They were together! You couldn't keep them apart. How could this be?

The answer is it was the Holy Spirit, that fresh wind, unifying them, teaching them, allowing them to be generous with those unlike them, with those so different than they.

Finally, the early Church was defined by a **fourth quality of a Spirit-led community—it was centered on Jesus.**

It's all about Jesus. When the Apostle Peter spoke to the people of Jerusalem just after the Holy Spirit rushed in like a wind in that room and tongues of fire appeared on the disciples' heads, this supposedly uneducated fisherman gave this eloquent, anointed speech, as inspired by the Holy Spirit. This is what Peter said:

### **Acts 2:21-28**

<sup>21</sup> “But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

<sup>22</sup> People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through Him, as you well know.

<sup>23</sup> But God knew what would happen, and His prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed Him to a cross and killed Him. <sup>24</sup> But God

released Him from the horrors of death and raised Him back to life, for death could not keep Him in its grip. <sup>25</sup> King David said this about Him:

“I see that the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for He is right beside me. <sup>26</sup> No wonder my heart is glad, and my tongue shouts His praises! My body rests in hope. <sup>27</sup> For You will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave. <sup>28</sup> You have shown me the way of life, and You will fill me with the joy of your presence.”

Sounds like Pentecost. Then Peter continued.

### **Acts 2:32**

<sup>32</sup> “God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. <sup>33</sup> Now He is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God’s right hand. And the Father, as He had promised, gave Him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today.”

### **Acts 2:36-40**

<sup>36</sup> “So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!”

<sup>37</sup> Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”

<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.”

<sup>40</sup> Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation!”

There it is. That's the gospel. That's the good news.

We may think the world is messed up. We may think this is a crooked generation, with a polluted earth, with no one else to blame but ourselves. We may hear of

crime and injustice, and racial prejudice. And we hope a politician will save us.

But the honest answer is this. Our only true, perfect hope is Jesus Christ. Our only true hope is if more people turn to Him. Our only hope is people really devoting themselves to prayer, studying His Word, being in community, and worshiping Him.

Our only hope is if we ask the Holy Spirit to fill us that we might live lives that are generous to those in need spiritually, emotionally, physically.

Our real hope is in a real God, a true God who came to this earth and allowed Himself to die, so that we might know of His love and that He might fight the curse of sin that plagues our land.

When we realize all what He has done for us, His incredible generosity, we desire to reflect that same kind of generosity with people inside our church, with people outside our church, with our beautiful, spacious property, with everyone. We want to raise the sails of His love to spread to all.

As the old hymn says, "Amazing love, how can it be, that you, my Lord, would die for me?" (*And Can It Be* by Charles Wesley)

Amen? Amen.

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**Note:** Sunday sermon texts, as well as audio and video recordings of sermons, are available at [www.fpchawaii.org/messages](http://www.fpchawaii.org/messages).

You can also listen to the sermon podcast by simply clicking on this link: <https://soundcloud.com/first-prez-honolulu/fresh-wind-110120>