



for reflection & discussion:

1. When did you try to control a relationship or situation and it went badly? What did you learn (or fail to learn if we asked a neutral observer)?
2. Read the key Acts passages.
3. Would people today (who say they follow Jesus), be more or less open to prayer and waiting for an empowering experience with the Spirit? Why or why not? What would we replace the Spirit's power and presence with?
4. Throughout Acts, the Spirit is pushing out the "bounds" of the church. By the time we get to Acts 15 and also Acts 10 with Cornelius, Christianity is shaped very differently than Judaism. Why are we (like the Galatians) tempted to reject the Holy Spirit's empowerment and guidance into a Jesus-only way of living?
5. Paul speaks of the order of God vs the control of humans. How do you see this tension in your life, the church, and how we engage with the non-christian world?
6. How can we make more space for the presence of the Spirit in our gatherings and lives?
7. Other thoughts?



FIVE SHIFTS OF TRUE REVIVAL + REFORMATION

A reformation is a period of recalibration and course-correction. Any community around for as long as the church will experience inevitable drift over time. Yet the Spirit has worked again and again throughout history to draw the church back toward its center. Key moments come when particular ideas and practices are rethought and core truths are rediscovered.

Rapid cultural and technological change, clergy scandals, church divisions, and political turmoil have resulted in a period where "deconstruction" is the buzzword. Many Christians find themselves rethinking their faith, and many outside the church dismiss Christianity as having nothing true or relevant left to say to the world.

THIS SUNDAY: SHIFT 4.5 PENTECOST, THE SPIRIT SHIFT

Acts 1:1-8, Acts 2:1-21, 1 Corinthians 12:12-14

The fourth element of this new Jesus-centred move of God is: "A clarified purpose and a fresh empowerment The Holy Spirit empowers us to partner in God's work of reconciling all things." This Sunday, the church celebrates the birth of the church at the sending of the Holy Spirit. This start was marked by physical sensations and the strange gift of speaking in words and sounds the speaker did not learn. What can we learn about the strange gift of Speaking in Tongues for today?



connect

- need prayer?
- ask questions
- get information
- make comments
- meet with pastor Shel or Josh
- sign-up for our weekly e-newsletter
- join a Home Church



TEXTS

Pentecost Texts: *Acts 2:1-21, 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)*
1 Corinthians 14:1-19

REVIEW

Five Shifts: More of a Restoration to Early Church

Shift 1: A different way of reading scripture

- God always looks like Jesus, and all scripture is properly read through him.
- Psalm 1: way of the law, stand, sit, walk

Shift 2: A bigger gospel

- To be saved includes belonging to a community under Jesus called to live the life of the future now.

Shift 3: A new relationship with power

- Evil is overcome through the power of suffering love.
- Matthew 5:3-12

Shift 4: A clarified purpose and a fresh empowerment

- The Holy Spirit empowers us to partner with God's work of reconciling all things.

Shift 5: A new approach to disagreement

- The church is defined by our shared center, not by the lines we draw.

The mystical life is normal Christian Life... "Mystical experiences are not foreign to scriptural tradition but are the norm within scriptural tradition. These mystics found in Scripture—and I only mentioned ten, there are many more—are witnesses to the possibility of mystical experiences in our own lives.... By 'mystics,' we simply mean a person who seeks, and at some level attains, a direct experience within the mystery of God." (Zahnd, WETOF, 125).

REVIEW THE APPLICATION - Now What?

- Pay Attention: The Spirit arrives in ways that challenge and defy expectations.
- Repent: The Spirit shows up and challenges
- Move close: The Spirit grants the disciples new languages to challenge their own nationalism and to help them experience and participate in reconciliation.

WHAT'S UP WITH SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

▪ Up Front: The weird gift?

▪ What it enables:

- Play
 - Jubilees
- Empowerment
- Liberation
 - Language as idolatry
 - Totalizing systems

So what?

- Seek the giver!
- Do not be ignorant of the gifts
- Use the gift - the gift will also push you beyond...