

STUDENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

EMPOWERED – Session 1

Power for a New Beginning

Acts 2:1–21

SESSION FOCUS

The Book of Acts begins with an ordinary group of believers gathered in prayer, waiting for what Jesus had promised. Then Pentecost happens. The Holy Spirit is poured out, and everything changes.

This session explores who the Holy Spirit is, why the Spirit matters, and how God continues to empower ordinary believers today. The goal is not simply to learn information about the Holy Spirit, but to begin understanding what it means to live with awareness of and dependence on God's presence in everyday life.

OPENING REFLECTION

Take a few quiet moments before beginning.

- When you hear the phrase “Holy Spirit,” what thoughts or emotions immediately come to mind?
- Have your past church experiences shaped the way you think about the Holy Spirit?
- Do you tend to think of the Holy Spirit as close and personal, or distant and confusing?
- What questions or assumptions do you bring into this session?

Personal Notes:

SCRIPTURE READING

Read Acts 2:1–21 slowly.

As you read, notice:

- the movement of the passage
- the emotional tone
- the reactions of the people
- and how the Holy Spirit is described.

Pay attention to repeated words or ideas.

KEY IDEA

The Holy Spirit is not merely a force, emotion, or abstract idea.

The Holy Spirit is the active presence of God empowering believers for transformation, faithfulness, mission, and everyday Christian life.

PART 1: WAITING FOR GOD

(Acts 2:1)

Before Pentecost, the disciples were waiting together in prayer and expectation.

Sometimes spiritual growth begins not with activity, but with waiting.

Reflection Questions

1. Why is waiting often difficult?
2. How does modern life shape our ability to slow down and listen?
3. What might the disciples have been feeling as they waited?

Personal Notes:

PART 2: THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES

(Acts 2:2–13)

The coming of the Holy Spirit is dramatic, surprising, and impossible to control. The Spirit moves in a way that draws attention not to the disciples themselves, but to the work of God.

Reflection Questions

4. What stands out most to you about the way the Holy Spirit appears in this passage?
5. Why do people sometimes become uncomfortable discussing the Holy Spirit?
6. What is the difference between emotional excitement and genuine spiritual transformation?

Personal Notes:

PART 3: THE HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERS ORDINARY PEOPLE

(Acts 2:14–18)

Peter explains that God's Spirit is now being poured out broadly upon ordinary people.

The Spirit is not reserved for spiritual elites.

Reflection Questions

7. Why do many people feel spiritually unqualified or inadequate?
8. How does this passage challenge the idea that God only works through extraordinary people?
9. What might it mean for everyday life to be Spirit-led?

Personal Notes:

PART 4: THE HOLY SPIRIT POINTS PEOPLE TOWARD JESUS

(Acts 2:22–21; John 16:13–14)

The Holy Spirit always points people toward Jesus.

The goal of the Spirit's work is not spectacle, confusion, or self-promotion, but transformation and faithfulness centered on Christ.

Reflection Questions

10. Why is it important that the Holy Spirit points people toward Jesus?
11. What can happen when spiritual experiences become disconnected from Christ?
12. How can believers remain open to the Holy Spirit while also practicing discernment?

Personal Notes:

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a few quiet moments to reflect honestly.

- What part of this session challenged or encouraged you most?
- Where do you most need the Holy Spirit's guidance or strength right now?
- What would it look like to become more aware of God's presence in your everyday life?

Personal Response:

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray for:

- openness to the Holy Spirit
- wisdom and discernment
- deeper awareness of God's presence

- and willingness to grow in dependence on God.
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OPTIONAL PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

This week:

- Re-read Acts 2:1–21 slowly each day
- Spend a few quiet moments daily asking:

“Holy Spirit, help me become more aware of Your presence.”

- Notice moments where you sense God’s guidance, conviction, comfort, or peace.
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FINAL THOUGHT

Pentecost was not the beginning of spiritual performance.

It was the beginning of ordinary believers learning to live empowered by the presence of God.

The same Holy Spirit who empowered the early Church continues to guide and form believers today.

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