

## Setting Our Sails, Trusting God's Wind

Joel 2:28–32 • Acts 2:1–13

**Acts 2:1** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

**Acts 2:5** Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." **12** All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" **13** But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

When I was in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, my parents bought me and my brother our first skateboards. We were pumped! These were the early days of skateboarding, and none of us really knew what we were doing. Nobody wore helmets or pads. Being the inventive lads that we were, pretty soon my brother and I were coming up with things to make skateboarding interesting. We built a ramp to jump...that was painful. We towed each other behind a bike. One of our better ideas was to get giant beach towels and use them as sails. That actually worked! Wind has been an important symbol for the Holy Spirit since the beginning of the church that we read about in our passage for today. For those of us who are trying to know God better, this passage has lots of fabulous ideas.

First, when the Holy Spirit comes it is surprising. Harry Reider tells a story about the first car that he ever owned. He was sixteen years old and his father took him to a car auction and bought a pink car for \$75. It was a 1957 Ford that his dad insisted that the color was really "coral." "I can't drive a pink car to school!" to which his father replied, "Son, a poor ride is better than a proud walk." Harry said that his dad said it so convincingly that he figured it was probably somewhere in the Bible. Then his dad opened the hood and to Harry's surprise was a 390 engine that had two four-barrel carburetors. The car had been a South Carolina highway patrol car and was a "police interceptor." At the time, there was no other engine that was as powerful as this one. Harry said there were some very interesting things that happened when Corvettes or other high-end roadsters would pull up beside his pink '57 Ford at red lights. The drivers in the other cars would sneeringly look over at him and Harry would just nod and then turn his attention back to the light. When the light changed, he would shock them by leaving them in the dust. Harry's car didn't look like much but there was power under the hood. What

we have to understand is that power can come into our lives after we have received the Holy Spirit. We may not look like much to others, but if the Spirit of God is working, the world will be shocked at what God can do through us.

Second, knowing the Bible helps us understand. An elderly woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled, "STOP! Acts 2:38!" (Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven.) The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done. As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar, "Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a Scripture to you." "Scripture?" replied the burglar. "She said she had an axe and two 38's!" The Book of Acts may not stop every crime around us, but the deeper your life in the Word, the more beauty and grace will find you in surprising ways.

Third, whatever the Holy Spirit is doing, it will have God's mark. C.H. Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers of the 1800s, told the story of the preacher who was walking in the country side and stopped by a farm house for a drink of water. The old farmer who lived there went out to talk to the preacher. As they were talking the preacher noticed that the barn had a weather vane on it that was spinning around in the wind. On the weather vane, the words, "GOD IS LOVE," were engraved. The preacher said to the man, "I don't think that is a very good way to talk about God's love. Are you saying that God's love is Wishy Washy and changes depending on the way the wind blows?" "No, no," said the farmer. "That weather vane is saying, "No matter which way the wind blows, God is Love." Whatever the Spirit is doing, it's God doing it and so it is always love.

My brother's and my idea for a wind-powered skateboard worked great, provided the wind was blowing the way we wanted to go, but in that way it had all sorts of challenges similar to ours in the faith. That we would let God power us by His Spirit. That we would let God speak through His Word. That we would learn to trust that God's Spirit and His Love. God knows what He's doing, and if we trust in Him and His Spirit, God will blow us where we are meant to be. May we set our sails to God's wind, and trust in Him in all things.