



## LC STUDY GUIDE

### “True Belonging: Church Edition”

The Passage: Verses from Acts 2  
For Sunday’s sermon preached on 6/9

#### How to use the LC Study Guide

Hello Leaders! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to pursue Christian community and the study of Scripture—study that leads to life transformation in Christ and strives to serve “the other.”

These studies have been designed with the following aspects in mind:

1. To facilitate a discussion on the passage of Scripture that was preached that particular Sunday using the Inductive Bible Study Method. In summary, this method stresses “Observation” (what the reader can see from the text), “Interpretation” (what we can learn when we study the text with various tools, commentaries, and resources), and “Application” (how we can apply the Scripture to our lives).
2. Groups using this study range from the new leader to the highly experienced. Groups themselves have their own context. This study attempts to hit the middle. The stronger studies require about an hour or two of leader preparation to contextualize this resource to the needs and personalities of your group.
3. In addition to prep time, please spend time in prayer during preparation and before and after the study. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the Word of Scripture and we are humbled that He uses our combined efforts as part of this work. (For more tips on using this study, please see the endnotes.)

As always, we are so grateful for you, your gifting, your servant leadership, and all that you do for the cause of Christ. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Tim, on behalf of the LC Team

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We are concluding the ministry year with a wrap-up series *True Belonging: Church Edition*. And today we want to see what we can learn from one of the most dramatic and significant passages after Jesus’ resurrection. In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples, signs and wonders are experienced, and the church is launched.

While we won’t read all 47 verses in Acts 2, we’ll read selected verses and look at the last six of the chapter and focus on the power of the Holy Spirit, the gospel, and the virtue found in Christian community.

<sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.<sup>2</sup> Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:1-4

<sup>14</sup> Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and said, “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you.... <sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup> No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<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....

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

Acts 2:14-21

<sup>37</sup> When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

**<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, “Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”**

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<sup>41</sup> Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Acts 2:37-41

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

O – By this point in the story of Pentecost, Luke has described some extraordinary miracles and happenings. Here in verses 42-47, he describes the genesis of this new community of Christ-followers in Jerusalem. What blessings/benefits can we see in a committed community?

I – In verse 42, the word used for “devoted” (*proskartereo*) is a common word that describes “a steadfast and single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action.” Unity becomes a predominant theme and a repeated call throughout the entire New Testament. In a chapter filled with miraculous events, why do you think Luke finishes the story of Pentecost like this?

*(Not only is it vital for the survival of the early church; Christian unity is essential for mission, discipleship, and service. After professing that Jesus is Lord, Christian unity is the only way to advance the gospel.)*

I – The “breaking of bread” is a debated term by theologians. Some insist that it’s a “big agape feast” of food while some maintain it’s a reference to the Lord’s Supper. While we may not know exactly what Luke meant, what does the “breaking of bread” mean to us today? What virtues can all believers receive from this moment?

*(Observing the Lord’s Supper is the universal practice of the global Church and the gathering of believers to eat together has always been part of Christian fellowship.)*

I – In v. 43, Luke says that “everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.” He is inferring that “everyone” includes the non-believers of Jerusalem. Imagine you were a non-believer in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost. What would you think of this scene? How might you respond in the coming days?

*(Answering this might help us understand how so many were added to the number of the church day after day. Also, for those interested in biblical literature, it’s worth noting that Luke again picks up Joel’s prophecy language and points back to Jesus’ miraculous wonders in offering evidence that this was the Father’s work. He’s a both an excellent story-teller and a thoughtful writer.)*

A – What signs and wonders have we been part of—including both “miraculous” and “non-miraculous”? What can Christ’s united church today do to move non-believers to be amazed or at least curious to inquire about the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus?

O – Verse 45 show us the early believers’ sacrificial nature and verse 46 shows us their commitment to worship and community. How did such simple things become part of a foundation for a movement that would change the course of history?

*(Sacrifice, worship and community are among the core virtues that God uses to build His Kingdom.)*

A – What can we learn from the genesis of the Church? What can we intentionally apply today as individual believers, as a small group, and as a church body?

- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
- b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
- c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
- d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
- e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.