



# BE THE CHURCH

Acts 2:1-13, 38, 44-47  
Ryan Pfeiffer

The Welcoming Presence of God

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**MAIN IDEA:** The “Church” is a community that represents the welcoming presence of God on earth as it is in heaven.

**READ** Acts 2:1-13

- The Spirit shows up in power and “*enabled*” the believers to speak in different languages.
- 4 times Luke references this. WHY? What does it represent?
- **Revelations 5:9** *And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”*

**A few keys ways the Spirit empowers us to be the welcoming presence of God:**

- Unity: Unified in our differences
- Loyalty: Gathered around Jesus
- Hospitality: Opening our lives

**UNITY: UNIFIED IN OUR DIFFERENCES:** *6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, BECAUSE each one heard their own language being spoken.*

- Supernatural and pragmatic. But also RELATIONAL. Welcoming.
- Belonging. A feeling of being KNOWN & UNDERSTOOD. “You get me” feeling.
- Differences tend to inflame hostility and divide us.
- Eph 2:15 *His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, 16 and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.*
- God doesn’t erase the differences... he meets people where they are at and speaks their language.

**LOYALTY: GATHERED AROUND JESUS.** *38 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. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

- Their differences don’t divide them because EVERYONE IS called to a higher loyalty than their previous loyalties.
- Jesus and God’s kingdom become the center of our life. Everything is ordered around that new loyalty.
- Our differences aren’t erased... they are re-oriented and transformed.
- Everyone has to continually REPENT... CHANGE... as we come toward Jesus together.

- Col 2:11 *Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or un- circumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, (REPUBLICAN & DEMOCRAT) but Christ is all, and is in all.*
- Joshua 5. *Joshua went up to him and asked, “Are you for us or for our enemies?” 14 “Neither,” he replied, “but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.” Then Joshua fell facedown to the ground in reverence, and asked him, “What message does my Lord have for his servant?”*
- When God said “neither” to Joshua, what was He revealing about Himself to Joshua?
- What does this teach us today?
- Re-ALIGNED —> new Loyalty in Christ.

**HOSPITALITY: OPENING OUR LIVES.** *44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.*

- Opening of homes and possessions
- Opening of our perspectives and opinions
- Sharing of our stories and experiences
- Opening of our hearts our faith
- Opening of our lives

Ends with 47...*And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

**REFLECT AND DISCUSS.**

- When have you felt really welcomed? What did that feel like and mean to you?
- Have you ever felt unwelcomed? Describe how that moment impacted you.
- Where do you sense God’s invitation to grow? In Unity, Loyalty, or Hospitality?