Holy Spirit Series: The Holy Spirit Fulfills God's Promises

Passage: Joel 2:28-29; Ezekiel 36:26-27, Jeremiah 31:33, Acts 2:1-4; 16-18, 33 (NLT)

SERIES RECAP & INTRO
We are in our third week of the series of The **Holy Spirit**. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity who lives within us, empowering us when we trust in Jesus, revealing truth, and helping us obey God. The Spirit comforts, enlightens, and empowers us to live righteously and reflect Christ to the world.

CONTEXT: In the Old Testament, we see the Holy Spirit use people for a purpose. This shows that the Holy Spirit is powerful, but not yet permanent. The Spirit worked throughout the Old Testament, often by giving people special abilities to serve and lead his people. The Spirit's presence in certain people was a sign of God's call on their lives.

HOOK: Ask the students to name something that works okay but becomes amazing when it gets an "upgrade" or a brand-new internal system (for example: swapping an old phone battery, upgrading your laptop, or updating an app on your phone). A simple change on the outside doesn't fix a broken system on the inside. To truly change how something operates, you need an internal upgrade. Today, we are going to see how the Holy Spirit is the ultimate fulfillment of God's ancient promises to change us from the inside out.

I. **The Holy Spirit promises us a new heart.** Ezekiel 36:26-27, Jeremiah 31:33

- ➔ For centuries, God's people tried to follow His rules on their own strength, but they constantly failed. Through the prophets, God promised a radical shift. Instead of writing laws on stone tablets, He promised to write them directly on human hearts.
- ➔ **Application:** Following God isn't about going through a list of rules to be a "good person." It is about a supernatural change of heart. God knew we couldn't change our behavior on our own, so He promised to give us His own Spirit to change our desires. The Holy Spirit changes your desires from the inside out.

- ➔ ***Discussion Question:*** Why do you think it's easier to try to follow rules (stone tablets) rather than letting God change our desires (new hearts)?

II. **The Holy Spirit promises everyone full access to God.** Joel 2:28-29

- ➔ In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit only came upon specific people (like kings, prophets, or judges) for specific tasks, and usually only for a limited time. Joel says that one day God promises a day when the Spirit would pour out into everyone: sons, daughters, old, young, male, and female servants.

- ➔ **Application:** In God's eyes, age, status, and gender doesn't limit your capability to be filled with the Spirit. You don't have to wait until you are an adult to experience God's presence or be used by Him.
- ➔ ***Discussion Question:*** You have the exact same access to God's presence right now as the most famous pastor or spiritual leader in the world. How does that change the way you view your prayers and your daily life?

III. God's Promise Fulfilled Acts 2:1-4 and Acts 2:16-17

- ➔ Acts 2 is the exact moment the waiting ended and the promise arrived. Peter stood up and directly quoted Joel 2 to explain the wild, world-changing event that was happening. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit arrived like a strong wind and tongues of fire, filling the believers and giving them power to speak about Jesus. The confused, scared disciples were instantly transformed into bold witnesses. The New Covenant was officially active.
- ➔ **Application:** The Holy Spirit is not just a quiet feeling; He is God's active power living inside us. He transforms timid people into courageous witnesses. You do not have to live life or share your faith using your own strength. The same power that split through Pentecost lives in every believer to help us do what is right.
- ➔ ***Discussion Question:*** If the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead and arrived in Acts 2 is in us, what is one area of your life where you need to start acting with that kind of boldness?

- ➔ **OUR BIG IDEA: We Trust God because The Holy Spirit Changes Everything**

- ➔ The Holy Spirit is God's physical presence and helper sent to fulfill Jesus' promise to never leave us believers alone. We aren't waiting on a promise; we are living in the fulfillment of it. That means we have the power to live boldly, speak truth, and love others exactly where we are. The same Holy Spirit that showed up in Acts 2 lives inside of us believers today.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(If you didn't use the discussion questions during the lesson, you can also use those now.)

1. Why do you think it's easier to try to follow rules (stone tablets) rather than letting God change our desires (new hearts)?

2. You have the exact same access to God's presence right now as the most famous pastor or spiritual leader in the world. How does that change the way you view your prayers and your daily life?

3. If the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead and arrived in Acts 2 is in us, what is one area of your life where you need to start acting with that kind of boldness?

4.What is the difference between trying to be a good Christian on your own power versus relying on the Holy Spirit? Where do you need the Holy Spirit's help or boldness the most this week?