

Acts 2:1-41

- I. 2:1-4 The Coming of the Holy Spirit
- II. 2:5-13 The Witness to the Multilingual Crowd
- III. 2:14-36 Peter's First Sermon
- IV. 2:37-41 The Response of the Crowd

- **Key Emphasis #1 in Acts: Jesus Christ, especially His death and resurrection**
- **Key Emphasis #2 in Acts: A Church Empowered by the Holy Spirit**
- **Key Emphasis #3 in Acts: A Church Actively Evangelizing the World**

- Outline of Acts (from Acts 1:8) Chapter
 - The Witness in Jerusalem 1 – 7
 - The Witness in Judea and Samaria 8 – 12
 - The Witness to the End of the Earth 13 – 28

Relevance: This is the *for Christ* portion of our *to Christ – in Christ – for Christ* vision at Horizon Central. The Holy Spirit will make us a church of active witnesses.

- I. 2:1-4 The Coming of the Holy Spirit

- A. 2:1 *Pentecost* = “Fiftieth” = (Shavuot *See Lev. 23:15-21*) This was a Holiday of Harvest. It signified the end of Israel's harvest season. Spiritually, at this point, Israel's harvest season is coming to an end and the Church is being born.

with one accord

This points back to Chapter 1

Acts 1:14 (NKJV) These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

- **Key Emphasis #4 in Acts: A Church Devoted to Prayer**

- i. The book of Acts is a book of action just as the title indicates. The disciples are out there working to reach the world. Nonetheless, *prayer* is mentioned 30 times in the book's 28 chapters. Prayer was an integral part of all that they did.

"When we rely upon organization, we get what organization can do; when we rely upon education, we get what education can do; when we rely upon eloquence, we get what eloquence can do. But when we rely upon prayer, we get what God can do."

- A. C. Dixon (1854-1925), pastor of Moody Church, Chicago (1906-1911); Metropolitan Tabernacle, London (1911-1919)

- B. 2:2-4 Four Details of the Spirit's Coming:
 - i. a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled the whole house (v.2)
 - ii. divided tongues as of fire that sat upon each of them (v.3)
 - iii. all filled with the Holy Spirit (v.4)
 - iv. (They all) began to speak with other tongues (languages) as the Spirit gave them utterance (v.4)

II. 2:5-13 The Witness to the Multilingual Crowd

- A. 2:5 *devout men from every nation* These were there for the feast. Pentecost was one of the three holidays for which Jewish men would gather in Jerusalem.
- B. 2:6 *when this sound occurred* This was probably the sound of the “rushing mighty wind” in v.2.

Everyone heard them speak in his own language To my knowledge this result is unique to the Day of Pentecost. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul explains that in the normal use of the “gift of tongues” the listener will not understand and therefore, interpretation is needed.

- C. 2:10 *Jews and proselytes* Proselytes were those who converted to Judaism from Gentile religions.
- D. 2:12-13 These are still the most common responses to speaking in tongues:
- Some are amazed. (v.12 & 7), some are perplexed. (v.12 & 6), others mock. (v.13).

III. 2:14-36 Peter's First Sermon

- A. Some might imagine that the Holy Spirit stopped working at this point, because the signs and wonders and miraculous things are winding down. Peter is about to begin *a Bible study* – and we all know how boring that can be!
- i. In reality, the Holy Spirit is bringing His work to a climax. He now led Peter to begin preaching – to bring the light of the Holy Spirit-inspired Scriptures into an otherwise confusing situation.
 - ii. The 120 speaking in various languages were not preaching to the crowd, but “speaking the wonderful works of God” (v.11). They were praising and thanking God. Again, 1 Corinthians 14 tells us that tongues are intended for prayer and giving of thanks (1 Cor. 14:14,17); they are not a means of preaching or teaching. Therefore the people were amazed, but confused at the same time – and God will now remedy that confusion.
 - iii. The crowd actually did have a common language: Greek, which was spoken all over the eastern Mediterranean. As Peter speaks to the crowd it's obvious that everyone understands him, even if Greek was not their native tongue.
- B. 2:16-21 Peter quotes Joel to explain that what they see and hear is the work of the Holy Spirit – but it's not the complete fulfillment of this prophecy. That looks forward to the Tribulation when God will pour out His Spirit in the last days.
- Application: Peter may have been a fisherman but he knew the Scriptures. Regardless of your background, the Lord can use you in a big way if you know His Word.
- C. 2:22-39 Now Peter turns their attention toward Jesus Christ. He is going to give them the Gospel. This is the Holy Spirit's climax for the Day of Pentecost.

- D. 2:23 This shows us the intertwining of human responsibility with the sovereignty of God. They put Jesus to death by lawless hands, but it was all done by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God.
- E. 2:24 *pains of death* literally, “*birth pangs* of death”. Christ couldn't remain in the grave any more than a baby can remain in the womb of its mother. Just as it is natural for a child, once conceived, to be born, so it was natural – to be expected – for Christ to rise from the dead.

IV. 2:37-41 The Response of the Crowd

- A. 2:37 Peter doesn't have to bring the crowd forward at an altar call; they are asking him what to do next.
- B. 2:38 Here Peter explains conversion pretty thoroughly:
 - i. **Repentance:** Turning away from sin as we turn our hearts towards God.
 - ii. **Baptism** in the name of Jesus, which can be further explained as follows:
 - a) **Faith in Christ:** Baptism is in the name of the Lord Jesus signifying that we are putting our faith in Him.
 - b) **Baptism as a believer** is the norm that we see in Scripture.
 - iii. **Remission of Sins:** When we put our faith in Christ our sins are forgiven. Baptism is symbolic of that, which is why it is the perfect way to declare our faith publicly.
 - iv. **The Gift of the Holy Spirit:** When we are born again as believers the Holy Spirit comes and indwells us.
- C. 2:39 We are among those *who are afar off*.
- D. 2:41 *three thousand souls* Jewish tradition tells us that on this same day God gave the Jews the Ten Commandments when they came out of Egypt. (See Exodus 32.) On that day 3000 people died as a result of the sin with the golden calf. Here three thousand souls are saved as they come to faith in Jesus Christ.
 - i. This was the culmination of the Spirit's work that day.

2 Corinthians 3:6 (NKJV) ... for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- ii. These people moved from being under the law to under grace, receiving new life by faith in Jesus Christ.