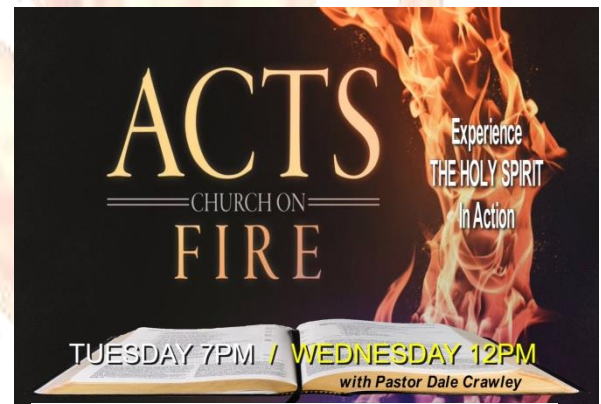


ACTS 2: The Promise ... *“The Coming and Empowerment of The Holy Spirit!”*

In Old Testament* times ... the Spirit of God *“came upon”* isolated individuals or smaller groups only on special occasions and only in a temporary way to help them accomplish God's purposes (Exodus 31:3; Judges 14:6; 1 Samuel 16:13).



September 10th – 11th, 2019

As the apostles were gathered together in Jerusalem for the *feast of Pentecost*, the time had come for the fulfillment of Christ's promise to send his Spirit completely and permanently upon all believers (Luke 24:49; John 14:16-17, 26; 16:5-15). *This marvelous outpouring of God provided the supernatural power for believers to take the life-changing message of the gospel to the ends of the earth* (Acts 1:8).

This is the day Christ made good on his promise to send the Helper, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit who would take up permanent residence in those who put their faith in Christ. And what a day it was! God's individualized pouring out of his Spirit into the lives of 120 believers resulted in the effective pouring out of his story, changing the lives of three thousand people in one day!

Active Waiting (v. 1):

Jesus had promised them the Holy Spirit and so they waited for him to come; however, they were not inactive. They seemed to be regularly gathering for prayer and encouragement. As we wait for the falling of the Holy Spirit, we should not be inactive, but wait with a sense of urgency and anticipation.

The Spirit Falls on Everyone (vv. 2-3):

It is incredibly significant that when the Holy Spirit does come, He does not come simply on the 12, or simply on the men, or simply on the women, etc.

The Holy Spirit comes and rests on everyone who was there. The promise of the Holy Spirit is a promise to every believer, not just leaders of the movement. This is an incredible truth that has significant outworking in the church. All of us have gifts and a role. All of us are called into mission and are equipped for the work. This is explained a lot more in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.

The Believers Begin to Speak in Other Tongues (vv. 4-13):

The scene described in Acts 2 is a crazy one. Not only are there tongues of fire falling on people, but then these people begin speaking in all kinds of different languages. In addition, the people who happen to be there (Jews who speak all kinds of different languages) all hear these men speak in their own language.

This is the Holy Spirit's initial splash on the scene (at least in this context of indwelling every believer—He obviously has been present during all of history); we should expect a little bit of a bang!

There are tons of parallels between the curse of Babel and the redemption of the church here ...

- ***At Babel*** ... humanity united in rebellion against God and therefore God scrambled their languages.
- ***At Pentecost*** ... the people of God are uniting in the service of God to draw in people of every tongue, tribe, and nation.

Peter Gets Up and Prophetically Explains What Is Going On (vv. 14-41):

The essence of Peter's message is that the Messiah has come, but they (the Jews) killed Him. This is an incredible evil, but not outside of the plan of God. Though they had missed the Messiah and killed Him, Jesus was doing something for them that was beyond belief. He was dying as their substitute.

Though Jesus died, death could not hold Him. He is ALIVE, just as was promised / predicted by David. Jesus has risen in victory over death. "You killed Him, but He won. He's alive."

Isn't it interesting that the core of Peter's sermon ... is on the resurrection? He preaches this in the very place where Jesus was killed and buried. The fact that Jesus' followers began in the very place where He was killed and buried ... breaks all the known rules for how myths are formed.

(37-41) The people "are cut to the heart". The people are convicted of their sin and rightly acknowledge that they killed God. All true belief begins with an awareness of our sin and unworthiness. It is here that the grace of God becomes truly amazing!

They repent (turn from their sin) and are baptized (publically declare their faith in Jesus Christ). Repentance and faith are like the two different sides of the same coin. You turn from something to something else. Notice also that this isn't simply a private turning in the "quietness of their own heart." This is a very public turning and identification with Jesus and His people.

Jesus commands us to be baptized! ***It is the first act of obedience for the believer in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are forgiven ... Their sin is atoned for and they are made clean ... They receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.***

This promise was not just for the first few in the door, it is what happens to every believer!

3000 people respond the first day! Incredible! This is what the Holy Spirit does; He saves people ... by opening their eyes to the reality of who Jesus is and what He has done.

Key Points:

- The Holy Spirit falls on *“all present”* (the priesthood of every believer). This ties into the promise of Exodus 19 (Kingdom of Priests) and 1 Peter 2:9-10.
- *“All people hear and understand the message in their own language.”* This is the reversal of the curse in Babel (for a moment) ... so that God’s purposes are accomplished. Rather than uniting in opposition to God, God unites them as He begins to call people from all different places.
- Peter preaches the most seeker-insensitive sermon (*“You killed God!”*) and 3000 are saved and baptized.
- **The Holy Spirit changes everything!**

Application/Discussion Questions:

1. How do you know that the Holy Spirit dwells in you?
2. Have you ever boldly shared the Gospel with anyone? If so, where and when?
How do you do it?
3. Have you been baptized? If not, why not?