

Acts 2

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Tape #8091
By Chuck Smith

The second chapter of the Book of Acts as we continue our journey through the Bible, *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come*, There were three major Jewish holidays that it was a requirement that every adult male within twenty miles of Jerusalem would have to come and present himself to God. If he lived more than twenty miles from Jerusalem he was to come as often as was practical. Thus at these three major feasts, there would be people, Jewish people, and those who had proselyted into the Jewish faith, who would come from all over the world to celebrate these three major feast days. The first one of course, was the Feast of Passover, in which they were remembering God's deliverance of their fathers out of Egypt. Then there was the Feast of Pentecost, which came fifty days after the day after the first day of the Unleavened Bread Feast. The Feast of Passover was also attached to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It began the first day after Passover and went for seven days. The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a Sabbath day and thus the first day after the Sabbath day of the Unleavened Bread they would count fifty days. Seven weeks of weeks and then the first day after the forty-nine, the seven weeks of weeks, would be the fiftieth day and it was called the Feast of Pentecost or First Fruits. It was the offering unto God, the thanksgiving for the harvest. At the first part of June, they harvested the winter grain crops. Thus it was a celebration, much like our Thanksgiving Day, in giving thanks to God for the gathering in of the grain crops. So it was on this Feast of Pentecost, the second of the major feasts, the third one of course the Feast of Tabernacles or *Cukkah (Succoth)* and that happened in the fall. This Feast of Pentecost was usually the best attended of the feasts because the traveling conditions were better at this time of the year, especially if they were traveling from areas in the Roman Empire. It was easier to travel in June than at any time of the year. During the time of the feast of the Tabernacles in the latter part of September or October, it was usually quite hot. Usually sort of cold at the Feast of Passover, especially traveling on the Mediterranean. So the Feast of Pentecost was usually the best attended.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, (the fiftieth day after the Feast of Unleavened Bread) *they were all with one accord in one place*. Now in the latter part of the Gospel according to Luke, we read in the last verse of Luke's gospel, *and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God*. So that is while they were waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit. So it is quite possible that they were gathered in one of the rooms of the temple, in one accord, in one place.

²*And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting*. Now here he calls it a house. So it leaves the question whether or not the experience took place in a house or in the temple, but the fact that thousands of people gathered because three thousand people accepted the Lord, it would be hard to imagine that taking place in a house, but there in the area of the temple, the temple precincts.

³*Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them*. ⁴*And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*. Notice there are different supernatural phenomenon accompanying the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church. One, there was the sound like a mighty rushing wind. Sort of the sound of a hurricane. Secondly, there were these cloven or divided tongues of fire that appeared above their heads upon each of them. Thirdly, they were all speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gave them the ability or the utterance or as the Catholic version says the Spirit prompted their speech. The word other tongues in Greek is *glossa*, and it means an unknown tongue, that is unknown to the person who is speaking. They began to speak in sounds that they did not understand. It was unknown to them. Speaking in tongues is a gift that is mentioned in the Bible. Here is the first instance of its exercise. And interestingly enough of the three phenomenon that accompanied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the speaking of tongues it the only one that was repeated and it was repeated on several occasions. Then Paul devotes a full chapter in Corinthians predominately to the subject of speaking in tongues, 1 Corinthians 14. The interesting thing is that though to them it was *glossa*, a language that they did not understand, yet, those people who where there from all over the world to worship the Lord at this feast, they understood and they marveled and said how is it that these people, all Galileans and yet they are speaking in our

own languages. There the Greek word is *dialeketos*, from which we get our word dialect. They are speaking in our own dialects. So they wondered and were amazed that they heard these people speaking in their own dialect. There are some fifteen different dialects mentioned here and yet they realized that all of the people speaking were Galileans. So this was the phenomenon that attracted the attention throughout Jerusalem.

Now it said, ⁵*And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.*

⁶*And when this--*The this here is something that we don't know precisely. Is this the noise like a mighty rushing wind? Very possibly. Years ago when Pastor Chuck was living in Huntington Beach one morning he was wakened by a sound like a rushing mighty wind. It was a roar. It continued until he finally got up and got dressed and went to see what was causing this sound like a mighty, rushing wind. It happened about four blocks from their house. An oil well blew in and the gas was blowing all over. But he wasn't the only one there. He thought that practically everyone in Huntington Beach was there watching this gusher as it was blowing in. The sound is what attracted all of the people. You hear a sound like that and you are curious what in the world is causing the sound and you go out and search it out. So it could be that it was the sound of the mighty, rushing wind that attracted their attention and drew them.

Or it could be that, you know, that news travels very fast, people said something happening down here. A bunch of people speaking in strange languages and all, you know. Something is going on, there are little things like fire on each of their heads and they are speaking in the languages.

So whatever it was it attracted a crowd, a very large crowd, indeed. *sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.* ⁷*Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? Notice the different reactions. They were confused. They were amazed. They marveled.* ⁸*And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? (Here, we are given the different dialects.)* ⁹*Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,* ¹⁰*Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,* ¹¹*Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."*

Now Paul in explaining the gift of speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:2 pg. 1405, declared *For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.* Here they were glorifying God in these other languages. Paul the Apostle goes on in his instruction on the use of the gift, declares that if it is used in a public assembly, then it requires the accompanying gift of the interpretation of tongues in order that everyone might understand what is being said. For if there is no one there who has the gift of interpretation and people are speaking in tongues, Paul said how are the others who don't understand the language, say "Amen" at your giving of thanks if they don't understand what you are saying? Indeed, he said, you do praise God well, but the others aren't benefited. So he is encouraging the limitation of its use in a public assembly, two or at most three and only if there is someone there with the gift of interpretation. If there is no one there with the gift of interpretation, then the person should not give forth an utterance in tongues, but he should speak of himself to God. But it is addressed to God. It is praise. It can be worship. It can be giving of thanks. It can be just intercessory prayer. Paul said when I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prays though my understanding is unfruitful. That is, I don't understand what I am saying. So what shall I say? He said, I will pray the spirit, in tongues, and I will pray with understanding also. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with understanding also. So I understand this gift to have its highest use in a person's private devotional life as they are worshipping God, praising God and as they are praying.

Paul the Apostle, writing to the Romans in chapter 8:26 pg. 1377, *Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings, which cannot be uttered.* That is, we always don't know how to pray as we

should. That is we always don't know what is the will of God in a particular situation. So how shall I pray for it? If I don't know what is God's will in the matter, I have difficulty praying. So he said, the spirit helps that particular need that we have, not always knowing what is the will of God. And He will make intercession with groanings, which cannot be uttered. So it is a gift to help you in your personal devotional life, in your prayer life, in your giving of thanks unto God. That is where the gift has its greatest use and expression in a person's own devotional experiences. And Paul definitely limited and discouraged the exercise of the gift in a public assembly, especially if there were sinners present.

So the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church. Now once the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church, never again did they wait for the Holy Spirit or tarry for the Holy Spirit. It was given as a gift to the church and after the initial waiting and the gift was given to the church, after that the Holy Spirit was imparted through the laying on of hands by the Apostles or by another disciple or just by the hearing of faith and an open heart and God baptized them or filled them with the Holy Spirit. You have a wide variety of experiences. In Samaria when Philip went and preached Christ unto them, when the church in Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had received the gospel, they sent unto them Peter and John for as yet they had not received the Holy Spirit. So when Peter and John came they laid hands on them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. There was this one man who was converted. His name was Simon. He was formerly a sorcerer. He saw that through the laying on of hands the Holy Spirit was imparted. He sought to buy that power from Peter and John that he might do the same thing. Of course, Peter rebuked him and asked him to repent, that the wickedness of his heart might be forgiven, thinking that God's gift could be purchased.

When Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, and as the result of that dramatic experience of this bright light, was blinded for a period of time and thus was led into Damascus, where he was staying on the street called Straight, God spoke to a disciple, whose name was Ananias, and told him to go and lay hands on Paul, that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. So he is not an Apostle but yet he came and prayed for Paul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Spirit.

In the case of the house of Cornelius in Caesarea, where Peter went by the instruction of the Holy Spirit to share the gospel with them, while Peter was yet speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon them. He didn't lay his hands on them. In fact, he sort of apologized to the church in Jerusalem, he said you know, the Lord told me to go and I just went. I mean, you know it was God that did it. I didn't do it. It was God that did it! Because they were sort of calling him on the carpet because he went into the house of a Gentile. So they, but Peter just was speaking and the Holy Spirit came upon them.

A variety of ways, that's good, because we like to pattern God. We like to put Him in a box. We like to say, well this is the way God works, so that the churches so often have been divided over how God does things. Because this is the way God did it in my life and so if it didn't happen to you like it happened to me, you don't have the genuine thing, you know. So people are always trying to put God into a box, so God did things in a variety of ways so that there wouldn't be that tendency of trying to conform Him to one pattern. God can do things as He wishes, anytime He wishes. It doesn't have to happen to me like it happened to you or vice versa. God is very versatile in the way that He works with us. It's to keep men from trying to organize God, trying to confine God to a formula or to a pattern. But just that freedom in the Spirit. Jesus said the wind blows wherever it wishes, you can hear the sound thereof but you can't really tell from where it is coming or where it is going. And so is he that is born of the Spirit. There is that freedom there. There is that "not structured", "not patterned", "not programmed" way, but the Spirit can move however He desires, whenever and wherever. The important thing is that we be open to the Spirit and how He wants to move. Here was the initial outpouring. After that the Spirit was just received by faith.

¹²*So they were all amazed and perplexed, (Now these people were all amazed that is the crowd that had gathered. They had doubts or that is they were perplexed), saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"*

13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine." There are always those in the crowd, you know, that are looking for a laugh. They are making fun of it. They're drunk.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. *15* For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. It's only nine o'clock in the morning, too early to be drunk. *16* But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;
Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
Your young men shall see visions,

Your old men shall dream dreams. This is the fulfillment of God's promise. Now back in chapter one, you remember Jesus said, wait in Jerusalem until you receive the promise of the Father of which I have been speaking to you about. No doubt the promise was that of Joel, chapter two, because when it happened Peter immediately turned them to that prophecy and to that promise. So Jesus had been telling them about this promise in Joel. So when these people were saying, what does this mean? Peter said this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. I believe that it is of ultimate importance that if there be any spiritual manifestation or phenomena taking place that we be able to point to the Scriptures to give to people a Scriptural basis for what is going on. I think that that is vital. I am not interested in any type of spiritual phenomena for which I do not have a solid Scriptural basis. I think that one of the problems today is that there is a lot of spiritual phenomena taking place for which there is no Scriptural basis. Thus I question the validity of some of the spiritual phenomena that is happening today. I attribute the phenomena to things other than a genuine work of the Holy Spirit. Whether or not it is psychological phenomena or a metaphysical phenomena or whatever, unless you have solid Scriptural basis for it, you really are on dangerous ground. You cannot use experience as a criteria for the truth because people can come along with all kinds of weird and wild experiences. If they say, well, it made me closer to God and all. I don't care. Experience cannot be the basis for Scriptural truths or for truth. You see if we allow experiences to be the criteria and basis for truth, then what are you going to do when the Mormons testify that when they started to read the Book of Mormon they prayed, Lord if this is Your Word, as I read it, give me a burning heart? And they will testify one after another that as they began to read the Book of Mormon their hearts began to burn. And so they have the burning heart experience and by that they are convinced that the Book of Mormon is God's Word for the Latter Day Saints. Because experience becomes the criteria for which I know truth. So when you open experience as the criteria, then you have no authority and you have confusion because of how many different experiences that people can have.

Several years ago, back in the late forties, there was a church up in Saticoy that was attracted a lot of people because as they would worship the Lord in what is called "total praise", there would come this ringing sound. They interpreted it as the angels joining their worship. It was quite a phenomenal thing. Hundreds of people were going up to listen to the praise and to hear the angels join the praise. It was attracting a lot of attention and quite a few people. Now "total praise" is where you go Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah. Then at a slightly higher pitch others go, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah and so forth. You are all singing Hallelujah in harmony at different notes. You couldn't explain it but could definitely hear the harmonic ring as the people were praising. They would get all excited when it would start to ring. Then it would really get everyone excited that the angels came to join in.

Well, Pastor Chuck went to a PTA meeting in Huntington Beach when one of his daughter was there in school. They had a speech therapist who talked about different things of speech and sound and so forth. He was a very interesting speaker. Then he was going to demonstrate harmonics. So he said, put your head down. Make it very nasal and say, "Ninety nine nuns." Then at a slightly higher harmonizing pitch, say, "Ninety nine nuns." He got them saying "Ninety nine nuns" at various tones on the scale and it started ringing! Now I don't

think it was the angels saying, "Ninety nine nuns." But there was a explanation for this harmonic ring that started when they would be praising the Lord totally.

I think that with many of these things that are thought of as supernatural phenomena, such as what they call being slain in the spirit, uncontrolled type of shaking, talking like a chicken, or laughing uncontrollably, I think that these can be explained through sometimes psychology and there are other explanations for them. But if you don't have a solid Scriptural basis for what is happening, you are on shaky ground at the best!

Here was supernatural phenomena taking place. The people said what does this mean? Peter said this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel and he gave them the Scriptural basis for the phenomena that they were observing. The promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ *And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.* ¹⁹ *I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.* ²⁰ *The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.* ²¹ *And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'* Now this prophecy of Joel was for the last days. I believe we are living in the last days. I believe that Peter believed that he was living in the last days. The promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is for this age, the church age. Notice that it takes you right through the Great Tribulation period because he speaks of the events of the Great Tribulation. That Jesus quotes from Joel and declares that it will be immediately after the tribulation of those days. They will see the Son of Man coming with power and great glory but the moon turning into blood and the sun into darkness and so forth. The signs in the heavens, the meteorite showers and so forth are all things that are spoken of for things that will take place during the great tribulation period. Now, that would indicate that the gift of the Holy Spirit, the power of Holy Spirit should be operating right on through the tribulation period to the return of Jesus Christ. So that is the prophecy of Joel that takes you through right to the coming until to the great and notable day of the Lord comes. That is that great and notable day when Jesus returns to establish the Kingdom of God upon the earth. So to say that the gifts of the Spirit have ceased, I believe is not correct. I believe that there is a valid work of the Spirit and valid gifts of the Spirit that are operating today that God desires that they should operate today. I think that we need to be filled with the Spirit and coveting the better gifts of the Spirit as Paul exhorted the Corinthians in chapter 12.

So Peter having given to them the Scriptural basis for the phenomenon they were observing as he answered their question. What does this mean? He told them what it meant and then he began to preach to them. This is the first sermon anointed by the Holy Spirit. The sermon centers on the person of Jesus Christ. Peter said seven things about Him. The fourth and the central thing is that God raised Him from the dead. The resurrection of Christ was the heart of the message of the gospel and remains today the heart of the gospel and the message of the gospel is the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Paul said to the Corinthians, the gospel that I preach unto you, see 1 Corinthians 15:3 *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.* That's the gospel, but it centers in the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

So he calls their attention once again. ²² *"Men of Israel, hear these words:* He identifies them first of all of the subject: *Jesus of Nazareth,*

The second thing, he was: *a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know--* As I said, the literal there is a Man attested or proved by or to be of God, by all of these wonders and miracles that He did. When Nicodemus came to Jesus at night in John, chapter 3, he said we know that You are a Teacher come from God because no man can do the things that you are doing except God be with him. Over and over Jesus called upon His works as the witness to His authenticity. He said believe Me or else believe Me for My works' sake. He was constantly showing or

pointing to His works as proof that He was indeed the promised Messiah. So Peter picks this up. He said He was attested or proved to be of God because of the signs and wonders of all that He did of which you are all aware.

And ²³*Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; So the third thing, the crucifixion of Jesus.* Now, he points out the crucifixion of Jesus was not just an accident. It wasn't man out of control. It wasn't a mob kind of situation, but it was the plan of God. It was something that God had planned all along. Now that is a very easy point to prove. It is proved by the fact that it was prophesied throughout the Scriptures. Take Psalm 22, *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?* The very cry of Jesus from the cross. *They that see Me ridicule Me: They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying "He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!"* And these very things happened on the cross and yet David wrote about them a thousand years before the cross. He said *they pierced My hands and My feet. David said, They divide My garment among them and for My clothing they cast lots.* These things were all predicted. So the fact that they happened a thousand years later indicates that God knew it a thousand years before and had planned it, and thus had put it in the hearts of the prophets to write these things.

In Isaiah 53, you have the account of God's Suffering Servant. You read *He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.* Even the scourging was prophesied. *All of us like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.* It goes on to describe how He was numbered with the transgressors, how He made His grave with the wicked.

So these things being prophesied in advance prove that it was the plan of God. He spoke about it five hundred to a thousand years before it actually took place. And so it is God's determined plan or counsel. It was something that God decided. And that is why it is such a mute and foolish argument as to try to place the blame for the crucifixion of Jesus on the Jews. A position that the church, historically, has tried to blame the Jews and unfortunately, there have been many times where the Jews were persecuted by the church because they called them the Christ killers. That's so wrong! If you want to find the blame for Jesus Christ, look in the mirror! It was for your sins that Jesus died. It was for my sins that He died and it was God's plan that Jesus should come and give His life for our sins. And thus it is manifestly wrong to try to lay blame and persecute the Jews for the death of Jesus Christ. So Peter speaks to them of the death or the crucifixion declaring it was by God's determined purpose and foreknowledge, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.

But, now we get to the heart, ²⁴*whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.* It wasn't possible that death could hold Jesus. Death could not keep its prey, Jesus, My Savior. He tore the bars away. Jesus, My Lord. And so it was not possible that He could be held by it. It wasn't possible for death to hold Jesus. Death could not keep its prey, Jesus, My Savior. He tore the bars away. Jesus, My Lord. So it was not possible that He could be held.

But now, when he comes to this fourth point, he then turns to the Scriptures to verify from Scripture the things he is declaring concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I want you to note how familiar Peter was with the Scriptures. He had a good working knowledge of the Scriptures as he is speaking. He starts out quoting a good portion of the passage of Joel 2. I don't think he said, hand me the scroll of Joel, let's see, and he read it. No, he had it in his heart.

Now he is quoting from the Psalms and he has a good working knowledge of the Scriptures. Now he begins to give them the Scriptural foundation and basis for the belief and the resurrection of the Messiah. ²⁵*For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. ²⁶Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. ²⁷For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. ²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'*

So having quoted this portion out of Psalm 16, which they recognized to be a Psalm concerning the Messiah. He said, ²⁹"Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Even to the present day you can go to Jerusalem and in the area where they call it the upper room, up on Mt. Zion, in the room down below the upper room, there is a large silver casket and the Jews believe that David's remains are there in that casket. You will see them in there burning candles and praying at the tomb of David, there on Mt. Zion. Peter said his tomb is with us to this day.

³⁰Therefore, being a prophet, speaking of David, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. So he gives them the Scripture concerning the resurrection. You will not leave My soul in Hell. When the Jews asked Jesus for a sign that He was the Messiah, He said, a wicked and an adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three night in the belly of the great fish so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Paul the Apostle tells us that He who has ascended, that is Jesus, is the same One who first of all, descended into the lower parts of the earth. When he ascended, he led the captives from their captivity.

Peter tells us that he went and He preached to the souls that were in prison. But the prophecy of Isaiah is that He would open the prison doors to those that were bound. So when Jesus died, His soul descended into Hades. There He preached to the souls that were there in prison, Abraham and those that were being comforted by Abraham. And when He was raised from the dead, He led the captives from their captivity. So here Peter is affirming from the Scriptures, saying that David wasn't talking about himself. He's dead. He's buried. We still have his tomb. But he is making reference to the Messiah that would be out of David's descendants.

And he said, ³²This Jesus (having given them the Scriptural background, he affirmed that he was speaking of the resurrection of the Messiah, His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption), God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. We're all witnesses. We saw it! We were witnesses of the resurrection. We saw Him after the resurrection.

³³Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, So not only was He resurrected but He has ascended into heaven where He is being exalted to the right hand of God. and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. So the other three aspects, he is at the right hand of God exalted. He received from the Father, the promise of the Holy Spirit, which He now has imparted unto us. And this is what you see. This is what you're hearing is the Holy Spirit, who has been imparted to us by the resurrected Christ. You remember Jesus said to them in the 14th chapter of John. And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither see Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. And so He received the Holy Spirit from the Father, imparted It to the church, this which you now see and hear.

³⁴For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: *'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,* ³⁵*Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." ' 36*"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." ³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* There was the conviction. They realized that they had made a terrible mistake in crucifying God's promised Messiah. What shall we do? How shall we atone?

³⁸Then Peter said to them, *"Repent,* Now the word repent, originally, meant a change of thought or idea. Recognizing that my first thought was wrong. Rethinking the issue. But then the meaning became a little deeper. It was that of changing. Now you may realize that you are wrong, but you may go on doing the wrong

thing. You may realize that is a wrong idea but you may continue to follow it. So it is your pattern of life in consistency with your thinking. So having a change of mind which will bring a change of your life pattern. "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; Now Jesus said go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. So Peter said let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So Peter said to them, repent, be baptized for the remission of sins and *you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* ³⁹For the promise (what promise? The promise of Joel 2, that in the last days I will pour My Spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men shall see visions. Your old men shall dream dreams. Upon My servants and handmaidens, I will pour out My Spirit in that day says the Lord.) is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." That promise is to you and to your children and to those who are afar off even as many as the Lord our God does call. This promise of the power of the Holy Spirit is ours, who have been called by God and have submitted our lives to Jesus Christ. As many as the Lord our God shall call, the promise of the power of the Holy Spirit is to you! And we all need this power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives!

Now how it will be manifested is up to the Spirit. Paul tells us the Spirit divides to each man concerning the gifts of the Spirit to each man, severally, each man, as He will. That is His category. His sovereignty in the giving forth of the gift. But Paul said covet earnestly the best gift and yet I will show you a more excellent way. Though I have all of these gifts and powers and abilities, if I don't have love, it becomes meaningless. So the supremacy of love and the fruit of the Spirit in my life, the real evidence of the Spirit in my life will be the love that flows forth out of my life. And if I don't have that love, though I may speak with tongues or work miracles or what ever else, I would have a great difficulty in proving that I was genuinely filled with the Holy Spirit. The real evidence is this love working in and through our lives!

⁴⁰*And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."* ⁴¹*Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. So the church began with a real bang! A good jump start as about three thousand people responded to Peter's invitation were baptized and going together with the church. Notice these are the activities of the early church. This is the pattern. This is the model.*

⁴²*And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine* (This is, they got in and started studying the Scripture, now with a new insight, now knowing that Jesus is the Messiah. The Old Testament suddenly becomes alive because you can find Him throughout the whole Book. He is there. And thus it's exciting now to read the Old Testament and discover Jesus in the Old Testament!) *and fellowship,* (The word fellowship is koinonia, this beautiful family kind of a spirit and feeling where we, as the Body of Christ, recognize that we are all a part of one another. We begin to work together in unity, in harmony as the Body of Christ.) *in the breaking of bread,* (The taking of the broken bread and the cup together as they remembered the death of Jesus Christ and His suffering for us.) *and in prayers.* **Four things, the study of the Word, the unifying in love, the breaking of bread together and praying.**

⁴³*Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.* ⁴⁴*Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,* ⁴⁵*and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.* ⁴⁶*So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, They were just all together. There was a lot of joy and it was just an exciting time for the church.*

We read they were, ⁴⁷*praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.* There you have the model or the pattern and the result. The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Now in this selling of their possessions and having all things in common, there is nothing to indicate that this was directed by the Lord. One of the first problems that arose in the early church, arose over this very issue. One of the couples sold some property and they brought in a portion of the amount that they had received; however, they were acting like they were giving every thing. So Ananias came in and he laid the money at the Apostles' feet. Peter said is that what you sold the place for? He said, yep. Peter said, look while you owned that property, no one asked you to sell it. No one required you to sell it. After you sold it, you weren't required to bring the funds in. It's not a requirement. It isn't something that we are making people do. Why have you decided in your heart to lie unto the Holy Spirit? You haven't lied to man, you've lied to God! This hypocrisy was exposed and he fell over dead. After a while his wife came in, not knowing what had happened to her husband because they had taken him out and buried him. And so Peter said, is that how much you sold it for? She said yeah. Why this conspiracy? She fell over dead. So the first problem, people falling over dead, happened as a result of this communal type of experiment that they tried.

The next issue in the church, the next problem that arose, is that as they were then distributing the churches' goods, those Jewish women who were living in a Hellenistic culture or following the Grecian culture, felt they were short changed. They felt those widows living according to the Hebrew culture were getting preferential treatment when they were disbursing the churches' welfare program. So they came and complained unto the Apostles that they were not getting an equal share. So that was the second problem that arose in the church. Both of them over this issue of having all things in common. We do know that later on it was almost disastrous for the church because they ran out of funds. Paul was having to take offerings from the Gentile churches, he said for the poor brethren in Jerusalem. It surely wasn't something that was intended. We don't find that happening in any of the other churches. We don't find that as the pattern that was established in the churches. It happened in the early church in Jerusalem. It could be that it was just one of those things that people were doing spontaneously. Everybody jumps into it, not really directed by God but just something that happens and people just follow along. It was never commanded in the Scriptures. There is nothing that says that that's what a person has to do. It was something that they did, maybe just out of emotion because was working. They were excited, God was working. A lot of times we just respond emotionally to the work of God. It's wonderful. It's good. It's a great thing, but it isn't something required by God. In this case the net result was not positive, but negative.

So we leave them, praising God having a great time, just excited over the things of the Spirit. And I pray that God's Spirit might work in our hearts, in our lives, in our church. That this excitement over the things of God, that has been a hallmark of the church, will never stop! That we will always be seeing God's special work of His Spirit that just excites our hearts and keeps us buzzing over what the Lord is doing. It's thrilling to see God at work! Just to you know to see it happening! It's just a blessing to just have the privilege of watching God work in our midst.

Father, we thank You for the work of Your Holy Spirit and the power of Your Holy Spirit. Lord as we continue to study concerning the early church and the life of the church and the work of Your Spirit within Your church, Lord we do pray that we might be open, open to whatever You want in and for the church today. That we might be witnesses unto You in our world. Lord thank You for what You've done. Thank You Lord for what You are doing. We stand in awe and wonder at Your beautiful work in our midst. Lord, continue Your work. Keep us in that place where You can do what You are desiring to do, in and through our lives as we surrender and commit ourselves and as we receive the promise, the gift of Your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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