

I. Introduction

- A. Christians believe that the story that began in the Bible continues today. God is still God. He is still active the world today. He is still working, still shepherding, still empowering, still over-ruling, still guiding all of human history, and all of cosmic history to its God appointed end.
- B. The story of the work of God continues even today.
- C. The church is a central part of that story, and so is every single Christian. Each of us is born, lives, and dies as interconnected subplots in God's grand narrative. We matter. We make a difference.
- D. What we do or don't do with God will make a difference for all eternity—specifically in the lives of the people that cross our paths.
- E. There is a book in the Bible that makes this exact point. It is called the Acts of the Apostles, or Acts for short. The book of Acts is the sequel to the book of Luke, and was written by Luke. Luke was a medical doctor, and Luke was the sidekick of perhaps the greatest church leader ever after Christ, whose name was Paul.
- F. So we are spending the summer listening to God's message for us through this book. The title of our series is **OUR TURN...** Lessons from the Book of Acts.
- G. And today, we come face to face with one of the most remarkable passages of Scripture.
- H. Here in Acts 2 Dr Luke describes what is called the day of Pentecost. We are going to spend a couple of messages on this place in the Bible. There's so much awesomeness here, and honestly weirdness here, that we're going to devote more than one message to this topic.
- I. Our topic today is... **It's Our Turn TO BE PENTECOSTAL.**
- J. I know... surprising right? Hear me out.

II. Overview

- A. Here's the whole section in tiny print.
 - 1. **The EVENT (Acts 2:1-13)** - The Holy Spirit comes and the people speak in tongues
 - 2. **The EXPLANATION (Acts 2:14-36)** - Peter Explains what this means in a sermon
 - 3. **The INVITATION (Acts 2:37-41)** - Peter gives a salvation invitation, and 3,000 people get saved
- B. Let's roll up our sleeves and dig in.
 - 1. So, we will start with the Event:

III. The Event (Acts 2:1-13)

- A. *"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* (Acts 2:1-4)
- B. That's the main trigger of the Day of Pentecost, and the rest of the chapter tries to make sense of it. Let's take it apart.
 - 1. **The Day is the Feast Day of Pentecost.**
 - a) The day of Pentecost was one of three great feast days in Ancient Israel. On this day, every Jewish male traveled to Jerusalem. The population of Jerusalem swelled to many times its normal size.
 - b) The Jews were dispersed all over the world. So, on this day, Jewish men were regathered to Jerusalem from all over the world. As the centuries passed, they became less and less Jewish in their styles and clothing and language, even though they stayed Jewish in their faith.
 - c) The Feast of Pentecost was fifty days after another Jewish holiday, called the Passover.
 - d) It was also called the Feast of Weeks, because it was seven weeks after Passover, the time when Jesus was crucified.
 - e) It was also called the Feast of Harvest, because it coincided with the beginning of harvest time. We'll come back to this factoid. So, the events of this day happen on the Day of Pentecost.
 - 2. **The People were all the Christians, gathered waiting for the Promise of God to come true.**
 - a) This is Acts chapter 2. In Acts chapter 1, Jesus literally turned on his anti-gravity abilities and floated up into the sky, all the way to heaven. He ascended, so that event is called the Ascension of Christ. But before the Ascension, Jesus told his little gathering of believers to wait longer in Jerusalem.
 - (1) *"Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, 'Which,' He said, 'you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'"* (Acts 1:4-5)
 - b) Notice a couple of things: it's the Baptism of the Holy Spirit which Jesus specifically calls The Promise... the Promise of the Father.
 - c) So, they were waiting for the Promise, waiting for the big thing God had promised through Jesus. We could spend a week just on this.
 - 3. **The Spirit came in power with visible and audible manifestations.**
 - a) The first manifestation was the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. I grew up in Chicago, and I actually spent my whole childhood living literally in the approach path to O'Hare airport. Every three and a half of minutes, a jet flew over head. All conversation stopped. We just got used to it. So I'm imagining this "sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind" like that. It would definitely draw attention.
 - b) The second miraculous element was the tongues as of fire. This appearance as of fire split up, and a tongue of fire that wasn't fire landed on every person there. I say it that way because the verse says "divided tongues AS of fire." So nobody was burned.
 - c) So manifestation one was the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and manifestation two was the tongues of fire resting on each Christian there.

4. The Spirit's main manifestation was speaking in tongues.

- a) The followers of Jesus were suddenly able to speak in human languages they had never studied and never knew before. These languages represented most of the known world.
- b) Normally, when people today talk about speaking in tongues, this is NOT what they are talking about.
- c) The modern version of speaking in tongues is not speaking in languages. Instead, today speaking in tongues is what is called ecstatic utterance.
 - (1) Ecstatic utterance means syllables without meaning coming from a person in an altered state.
 - (2) Let's set this aside for now. Because ecstatic utterance is not what happened on the day of Pentecost.
- d) On the Day of Pentecost, the believers had a sudden and miraculous ability to speak in human languages they had never known before.
- e) This is a good time to bring in the next paragraph:
 - (1) *"Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. They were amazed and astonished, saying, 'Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?' 'And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?' 'Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.' And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others were mocking and saying, 'They are full of sweet wine.'"* (Acts 2:5-13)
- f) Remember that it is the feast of Pentecost. For this feast people had journeyed to Jerusalem from all over the known world (vv. 8-10). And no matter where they came from, they heard in their own languages the wonderful works of God (v. 11).
- g) Imagine the scene... uncultured Galileans fluently speaking all the languages of the known world... and all of them praising God for his grace, and for Jesus and for the cross and the resurrection and the exodus the walls of Jericho and parting the Jordan river... the wonderful works of God declared in every language represented there. Amazing.
- h) Whatever else speaking in tongues meant on this day, it meant the powerful declaration of what God had done for the human race, which is a declaration of what we call grace.

5. All these manifestations were signs of the Filling of the Spirit.

- a) Luke says so, right there in verse 4, and they were all filled with the Spirit.
 - b) We will come back to this, but let me just point out that the Filling of the Spirit gave the people of God a supernatural ability to proclaim the grace of God.
 - (1) It was supernatural because of the mode of their speaking — speaking in other languages.
 - (2) It was supernatural because of the content of their speaking — speaking the message of the amazing grace of God.
 - c) And if you were here for lesson one in this series, you will remember that there is an important distinction between what is supernatural and what is miracle.
 - (1) Speaking in languages you have never learned before, that is both supernatural and a miracle.
 - (2) Speaking of the marvelous grace of God, that is supernatural but not a miracle.
 - d) Which is really important, because everything the Spirit of God does is supernatural, but that doesn't mean everything is a miracle. And if you are always looking for miracles, you are going to miss most of what God is doing in your life.
- C. So, that is the set up. That's it. That's the main event of the day of Pentecost. And now, to make life easier, Peter stands up to explain it. Remember, a crowd has gathered. Most of them are amazed to hear these fishermen speaking their languages. But some of them are scoffers... they just say the whole thing is a drunken party. Up stands Peter with one of the greatest sermons ever delivered.
- D. So, this is the second section, called...

IV. The EXPLANATION (Acts 2:14-36)

- A. *"But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: 'Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. 'For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day;'"* (Acts 2:14-15)
 1. What is happening here? God is doing something amazing through his people. The onlooking world forms its judgments.
 2. Luke uses six words to describe the crowd's reactions:
 - a) Confounded (6), Amazed (7), Marvelled (7), amazed (12), In doubt (12), Mocking [calling them drunk] (13).
 3. This is always going to be the case. We can be the most godly, true, logical, loving, holy people in the world. Some will be grateful and impressed. Some will be annoyed and will scoff.
 4. Because no matter what we do in the power of God, at the end of the day, it's the condition of the heart that makes the difference. And this is why we constantly pray that God will soften the hearts of our unsaved friends. That the Spirit of God will plow up the hardened soil of the heart, and make them receptive to the seed of the gospel.
 5. I have studied Peter's message many times, and every time I see something more. This time, for today's message, I've found something here that really blows me away.
 6. And I'm even more blown away because I've never seen this before, even though it's hiding in plain sight.
 7. Here we go:
- B. *"But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: '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. and on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out my Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven*

above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'" (Acts 2:16-21)

1. First of all, some Bibles have most of this in all caps. The Bible translations do that. The reason is because that's what they do when the New Testament quotes the Old Testament. I think it's hard to read that way, so changed the all caps into italics. Everything in italics is a quote from the Old Testament.
 2. To explain the speaking in tongues, and the noise, and the tongues of fire, Peter goes to the Old Testament. He is talking mainly to Jews, and they are familiar with the Old Testament.
 3. Peter can be like a lawyer. He can make his case from the Old Testament, and it will be decisive. Because the Old Testament is, was, and always will be the Word of God, and God's people respect it as the final authority.
 4. Specifically, Peter quotes the prophet Joel. Joel wrote about 800 years, eight centuries, before Christ.
 5. Before we get into this, I want to zoom out. In his message, Peter quotes the Old Testament three times. That's his outline. He quotes three Old Testament paragraphs. Each time, he is using the Bible to prove his point.
 - a) **Point one: the Savior/Messiah will come, and his coming will be marked with the outpouring of the Spirit of God, resulting in salvation. (Acts 2:14-21)** - That's this passage from Joel.
 - b) **Point two: the Savior/Messiah will die, but he will be raised from the dead. (Acts 2:22-28)** - Peter proves this by quoting David in the Psalms.
 - c) **Point three: the Savior/Messiah will be exalted to the throne of glory, and only when he is enthroned, can the fullness of the Spirit be poured out. (Acts 2:29-36)** - Peter proves this point again by quoting David in the Psalms.
 6. You cannot understand the Day of Pentecost without understanding Peter's sermon. This is about speaking in tongues. This is about the Filling of the Holy Spirit. This is above all else about the church's great mission of evangelism, because, if you've read this chapter, you know that 3,000 people get saved in one day!
 7. None of this makes sense without understanding Peter's sermon here.
 8. And Peter's sermon doesn't make sense without understanding the three Old Testament passages Peter quotes. Those Scriptures for the scaffolding of his inspired, apostolic explanation of Pentecost.
 9. So, permission to go deep?
- V. Please follow the logic... and please know I'm stripping this bare, because all of these puzzle pieces can be their own sermon. But I want you to see how they all fit together... AND how the Day of Pentecost is the fulfillment of the deep logic of the glorious plan of God.
- A. **From the beginning of Scripture, the greatest blessing a person can enjoy is fellowship and friendship with God himself.**
 - B. **This is what Adam and Eve enjoyed in the Garden of Eden. This is what they lost in the Fall.**
 1. There is a natural craving in every human heart of God. Our hearts are restless until they find rest in God.
 2. Sin created alienation from God. It broke the fellowship, shattered the friendship, and set the human race under condemnation from the justice of God.
 - C. **It is this fellowship between us and God that Jesus Christ restored by his redeeming work.**
 - D. **The ultimate Promise in Scripture is that we can walk day by day in the presence of God himself.**
 - E. **Until Jesus returns, our fellowship and friendship with God is experienced through the Holy Spirit.**
 1. The Father is invisible and in heaven above.
 2. The Son is visible in his resurrection body, and is also in heaven above.
 3. But the Spirit of God can be present in his fulness with every human everywhere, all the time.
 4. The big deal about the Holy Spirit is that he mediates the presence of God in our lives. (John 14:17)
 - F. **We cannot experience the presence of God, we are alienated from fellowship and friendship with God, until the redeeming work of Christ is fully complete.**
- VI. The Redeeming Work of Christ.
- A. It is this last truth that Peter emphasizes. It is this last truth that once the gathered crowd on the Day of Pentecost hears it, and sees it in Scripture, that their hearts are cut to the quick, and they rush to believe in Jesus as their Savior.
 - B. I've been talking with Margi and trying to figure out how to illustrate what Peter is saying, and what Pentecost means, and why all of this is connected here in Acts 2. So here's my illustration.
 - C. When a space shuttle is launched, a lot of factors have to be ready to go. Every system has to have a green light, every key has to be turned, every element has to be perfectly in place before we're ready to launch. At T-minus 9 minutes, the Launch Controller conducts what is called a poll, which means they ask every system controller if all systems are go. If all systems are go, the countdown resumes until launch and we have a blastoff.
 - D. What will it take to restore a fallen human race to fellowship and friendship with God?
 1. It will take the fullest completion of the redeeming work of Christ.
 - E. What are the major elements of the redeeming work of Christ?
 1. **The Plan of Salvation. The Incarnation. The Sinless life of Christ. The Crucifixion. The Resurrection. The Ascension.**
 - F. We call all this the Career of Christ, and we studied it point by point in our series Christus Victor.
 - G. With this, we have all systems green.
 - H. Except for one. There's still one key not yet turned, one green light not yet lit up, one element in the redeeming work of Christ as yet undone until a sinner can be reconciled to God... until a person like me can enjoy the fellowship and friendship with God I was created for.
 - I. What is the last piece of the puzzle that is not yet in place?
 - J. Jesus told his disciples what it would be:

1. *"But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."* (John 7:39)
- K. Jesus said we would not have blastoff until one final element was in place.
- L. Peter's sermon explicitly says what it would be.
 1. *"Therefore 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."* (Acts 2:33)
- M. What is that final element?
 1. **The Plan of Salvation. The Incarnation. The Sinless life of Christ. The Crucifixion. The Resurrection. The Ascension. The Enthronement of Christ**
- N. The Enthronement of Christ was the final element. The enthronement of Christ was the missing green light.
- O. But the moment Jesus Christ was received up into heaven, and was glorified, in that moment the entire work of redemption was finished, in that moment he sat down, in that moment our fellowship and friendship with God was finally and forever fully and without reservation available to all who believe.
 1. Think of that moment. I have no idea of how time transpires in heaven for the angels, and for the believers there of ages past. But that time when the Son of God, in his incarnation, was on earth... and not in heaven... who knows what that was like.
 2. But now Christ has been crucified. He has been broken the grace and risen again.
 3. And after that he ascended into heaven.
 4. And heaven welcomed him with open arms.
 - a) Who can imagine the celestial fireworks?
 - b) Who can fathom the heavenly choirs?
 - c) Who can scratch the surface of the joy of God?
 - d) Who can penetrate the mystery of the Father's approval and the Spirit's outpouring on Christ?
 - e) And the fanfare and the sheer joy and the abounding love and the deafening roar and the frightful holiness and the pomp and circumstance of Jesus Christ, the God man, now rising up to his full stature, and after long last—this One who still bears the scars from the crown of thorns, and whose hands and feet still show the wounds from the nails of the cross, and whose side still is scarred from the spear, and whose visage still shows the memory of that Old Rugged Cross—this one, this Savior, this Lord, this friend of sinners... this one, who is flesh and blood, to the eternal consternation of Satan... this one sits down on the throne of glory at the right hand of Majesty on High, and heaven erupts in a roar of applause, and the demons screech and flee to their doom, and Jesus Christ sits as his father makes his enemies a footstool for his feet.
 - f) What a moment. What glory. What redemption. What beauty. What a Savior. And what a salvation.
 - g) But there was more that happened in that moment.
 - h) The Father did his poll...
 - (1) Plan of Salvation... and the Trinity answered Green light.
 - (2) Incarnation... and the Son said Green Light
 - (3) The Sinless life of Christ... and all the saints cried out Green Light
 - (4) The Crucifixion... and the angels shouted Green Light
 - (5) The Resurrection... And all of heaven roared GREEN LIGHT.
 - (6) The Ascension... and the Father proclaimed... GREEN LIGHT.
 - (7) The enthronement? And the son of God proclaimed with all his might BLAST OFF!
 - i) Because the enthronement of Christ meant all systems green. The enthronement of Christ meant completion of all that had to happen to bring us back into friendship and fellowship with Almighty God.
 5. **When Christ took his throne in heaven, Pentecost took place on earth.**
 - P. The Spirit came in his fulness.
 - Q. What does it mean?
 - R. It means for the first time since Paradise was lost in the Garden of Eden, fellowship with God was now restored. Friendship with God was complete. The plan of salvation was finalized. Redemption was accomplished and now applied. All the lights were green for you and me and everyone who believes in Jesus being able to walk with God day by day in a beautiful friendship and fellowship with God.
 1. This is the heart and soul of the Day of Pentecost.
 2. And this is why I say it's our turn to be Pentecostal.
 - S. Because at its core, being Pentecostal isn't about speaking in tongues. It isn't about signs and wonders. It isn't about the rushing wind and the tongues of fire. None of that even made it into Peter's sermon.
 1. To be Pentecostal means to believe in the presence of God through the Holy Spirit in our lives...
 - a) And...
 2. To be Pentecostal means to have a testimony of the grace of God in your life... so that you can say I was a sinner, but now I'm saved.
 3. To be Pentecostal means to testify of the mighty works of God for you, in you, and through you.
 - a) It's our turn to be Pentecostal.
 - T. And we'll go even deeper into what this means next time.