

These Are Not Drunken – Acts 2:1-28

I. Introduction:

- A. Our message this morning was from **Acts 2:40** – *“Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”*
1. We began reading from **verse 29** – *“Men & brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David.”*
 2. While I was preparing for that message, I began looking over the entire chapter.
 3. Coming to **verse 15**, I was reminded of another scripture I had just seen in my sermon idea notebook.
 4. Peter said, *“These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.”*
- B. The other scripture which popped into my mind was **Ephesians 5:18** – *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”*
1. These two scriptures are double-linked – they both speak of the filling of the Holy Spirit, and they are linked by *“drunk”* and *“drunken.”*
 2. A question then struck me: *“Why did some of the people at Pentecost say that God’s servants were drunk?”*
 3. From that two more questions emerged: *“Should Christians be offended if people think they are drunken?”*
 4. And, *“Should God’s people actually display characteristics of drunkenness?”* **Surely not.**
 5. In trying to answer these questions, I think we might have a lesson or two.

II. To get the background, let’s consider what took place on that very special Day of Pentecost.

- A. *“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.”*
1. *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.*
 2. *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.*
 3. *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*
- B. Remember that the Jewish day began at sun down, and when this took place it was 9:00 the following morning – when the Day of Pentecost was fully come.
1. And the brethren – the church members – probably all 120 of them (**Acts 1:15**) were in one accord.
 - a. What does that mean? There are so many possible ways to be in accord.
 - b. Without getting into another message and all the options, let’s just say they were all humbly awaiting the Lord’s blessing and direction for their future ministries.
 2. All then of a sudden there was the sound of a rushing mighty wind.
 - a. There may not have actually been any wind; the text just says *“the sound of wind.”*
 3. The Holy Spirit then filled the house where they were meeting, **and** He filled all those brethren.
 - a. There was both the baptism – the immersion – of the church by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. **And** the saints were filled with the Holy Spirit.
 4. Then like the Old Testament’s burning bush, those brethren became human torches – but without injury or consumption.
 5. And they began to speak with languages they had never spoken before, as the Spirit gave them power.
 6. In **verse 4**, the word *“tongues”* is *“glossa”* and it means *“language.”* To speak in tongues is *“glossolalia.”*
 7. At that point, these Spirit-filled linguists poured out of the house, filled to overflowing with the gospel.
- C. *“And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.”*
1. *“Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.*
 2. *And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?”*
 3. From there we are told about people who spoke about 16 different languages.
 4. In **verse 8**, *“language”* is the Greek word *“dialektos.”*
 - a. *“Glossa”* and *“dialektos”* are basically interchangeable.

- b. In reality one is a *“language”* and the other refers to a *“dialect”* – a branch – of a language.
- D. Some of those multilingual people were visiting Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, but many others were living and permanently *“dwelling”* in the city.
1. Because of the nature of that Jewish society, they were forced to speak either Hebrew or Aramaic when in public, so it was unusual to hear their native tongues perfectly spoken by other people.
 2. But on this special day, they said, *“We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.”*
 3. *And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?”*
- E. Apparently, led by the Spirit, those 120 Christians spread throughout the city, sharing what they knew of Christ.
1. I wish that we were given some examples of what was said – translated, of course, into English.
 2. *“We do hear them speak in our (dialetois) the wonderful works of God.”*
 3. Did the saints speak of the **miracles of Christ? Resurrections? Healings?**
 - a. Did they recount the **feeding** of the 5,000 and the 4,000?
 - b. Did they refer to **Christ’s** bold **opposition** of the corrupt religious practices of the day?
 - c. Did they speak of the **attempts on Jesus’ life** which went miraculously unfulfilled until the time of the crucifixion?
 4. They certainly must have **emphasized the cross** and its purpose, followed by the **resurrection** and ultimately **Jesus’ ascension** into Heaven.
 5. *“And (they people) were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?”*

III. These events led up to an ACCUSATION.

A. Acts 2:13 – *“Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.”*

1. What did those wicked mocking people see which provoked this accusation?
 2. **Verse 9** tells us that some of the *“dwellers of Judaea”* heard what was said of the wonderful works of God.
 3. Does that mean that **Aramaic** was also one of the tongues which the Spirit gave to the saints that day?
 4. If so, then for those brethren, there was no miracle, and that doesn’t seem likely.
 5. I think that **Aramaic** and even **Hebrew** were **NOT** among the dialects being spoken.
- B. But again, why would someone say that the brethren were drunk – full of new wine?
1. What do you picture when you hear that someone was drunk?
 2. When you see a drunk, what does he do to drive you to that assumption?
 3. Would the ability to speak in a foreign language make you suspect drunkenness?
 4. That would make no sense at all.
- C. I have no proof, but I imagine that those who made the accusation were local Judean Pharisees or scribes.
1. I have no proof, but it seems to me that the people making the charge couldn’t understand the *“glossa”* which they heard.
 2. So they didn’t hear of the wonderful works of God.
 3. All they recognized was **useless gibberish** – *“what does this babbler say?”*
 4. Even so, there would have been no reason to conclude that these Christians were drunk.
 5. Drunkenness doesn’t really explain the miraculous languages – there must have been something more.
- D. I wish that none of us were familiar with the characteristics of drunkenness, but unfortunately some of us are.
1. From your observations, or limited experience, wouldn’t you say that alcohol takes a person out of himself?
 2. Until someone becomes an out-and-out, full-time drunk, he often has two personalities – there is the sober person and there is the very different inebriated person.
 3. Sometimes the drunk becomes a happy extrovert, but some people become sullen and somber.
 4. And then sometimes drunks become mean and abusive.
 5. None of these are the person that they usually are without the wine or beer or other alcohol.
 6. Could it be that some of the neighbors of these Spirit-filled saints, saw and heard them, concluding merely that they were different – out of character – not themselves?

- E. If so, what was it that they saw?
1. Perhaps it was a Spirit-filled **enthusiasm** and **excitement** which did not exist in them before.
 2. Not just a few of them – not just the ladies – but even the twelve had been in hiding just before the crucifixion and off-and-on later.
 3. But now just look at them. They couldn't stay hidden. They couldn't keep quiet.
 4. They came boiling out of that house like steam from a tea kettle.
 5. The tongues of fire may have left them, but the spiritual heat it produced had not.
 6. There was a spiritual glow about them much like that of Moses after he spoke with the Lord.
- F. We often refer to the evidence of the Spirit from Paul's list in **Galatians 5**.
1. *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, patience."*
 2. Do we have any right to move beyond this list? Is this an enumeration of all the fruit of the Spirit?
 3. For example, would I be in error if I added **"fearlessness"** as one of the fruit of the Spirit?
 4. **II Timothy 1:7** – *"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."*
 5. There was a fearlessness about these people which didn't exist before – they were out of character.
- G. And there was **power, love** and **soundness of mind**, too – they had never had such clarity of mind.
1. And love.... they had never been so in love with Christ, and it was spilling over into love toward their nasty neighbors.
 2. No one had ever called these people **"zealots"** before, but now they were filled with an **evangelical zeal** which was **as undeniable** as it was completely **out of place**.
 3. They **wouldn't shut up**, and they were **speaking in tongues** which they had never spoken before.
 4. They were talking about **Christ**, about **Heaven**, about **resurrection**, about **repentance** and **justification**.
 5. When they used to talk politics, sports and Martian land-rovers, they had become theologians.
 6. These radical changes provoked the laughing, mocking declaration: *"These men are full of new wine."*

IV. Consider Peter's **EXPLANATION** of all this.

- A. **Verse 13** – *"Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine."*
1. *"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all Be that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day."*
 2. This reference to **9:00 in the morning** was not a simple **pointing to the clock**.
 3. This is **not a quote** from **Isaiah 5:11** – *"Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!"*
 4. The day was Pentecost, and even more than usual, it was unlawful for anyone to eat or drink before the completion of the morning devotions at the fourth hour.
 5. It was forbidden that anyone should even converse with someone who ate or drank before the fourth hour.
- B. Peter says, while that is true, this is actually *"that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;*
1. *And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*
 2. *And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."*
- C. Peter refers to the **second chapter** of **Joel**, which, as he says, is **a prophecy of the end times**.
1. In a limited sense, the end times began with the ascension of Christ.
 - a. There is a sense in which **WE are in those end times**.
 - b. We are living in the light of the soon to be glorified Christ.

2. But most of what **Joel** spoke is yet to come – *“And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.”*
 3. Even though Peter may have been expecting the immediate appearance of a darkened sun and bloody moon, he was primarily referring to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the saints of God in the last days.
 4. *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”*
 5. The verb *“to prophesy”* refers to **the forth-telling** of God’s Word – **sometimes in foretelling** the future – but more often in **simply declaring** what God’s Word says through preaching.
 6. I hope that I don’t get into trouble saying this: but I am a prophet of God, and so should you be.
- D. Now, going back to what was taking place on that day in **Acts 2**, what was **Peter’s explanation**?
1. He was saying, *“these saints are not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, these people are filled with the Spirit of God.”*
 2. They were out of character, because up to that point they had not been the saints they should have been.
 3. They had been saved by the grace of God, but for the most part they had been serving God in the flesh – because the Holy Spirit had not come in the fulness of His power.
 4. They were as dry and nearly dead as thorn bushes growing at the foot of Mt. Sinai, until the Lord ignited them with His Spirit.
 5. And in their emblazoned new condition they were becoming instruments for the evangelization of the lost and for the call of future Moses into the ministry.
- E. I said earlier that **Ephesians 5:18** came to my mind as read **Acts 2:13** and **15**.
1. Please join me at **Ephesians 5:15**.
 2. *“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*
 3. *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
 4. *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
 5. *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”*
 6. As you can see, we’ve read the scriptures both before and after Paul’s statement – *“But be filled with the Spirit.”*
 7. What we’ve done is look at the **context** of **verse 18**. And what does the context say?
- F. *“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
1. We are living in evil days – days of the untoward generation – Paul tells us so.
 2. We are living in a day when drunkenness, intoxication, and walking through life *“high”* is common place – even if it is only the third hour of the day.
 3. And to be blunt – **Drunkards are fools**; they are **time-wasters**; they **never walk circumspectly**.
 - a. What does that mean – to walk circumspectly?
 - b. It means to live carefully and in consideration of one’s surroundings.
 - c. The drunkard is a danger to himself and others because he doesn’t walk circumspectly.
 4. But when God’s people are filled with His Spirit, they often forget their own needs, and looking around them, they become more aware of the needs of others.
 5. *“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*
 6. And their neighbors *“were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which*

speaking Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?"

- G. Paul says, *"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."*
1. What is the will of the Lord?
 2. In this context it is not to be *"drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but (to) be filled with the Spirit."*
 3. Paul takes his thoughts in a slightly different direction from **Acts 2**.
 4. He says, to be filled with the Spirit means, among other things, *"speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*
 - a. *Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
 - b. *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*
- H. Please notice the punctuation which our translators have provided for us in **Ephesians 5**.
1. This is all one extended sentence, concluding with *"submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*
 2. We might look at **verses 19** and **20** – singing and giving thanks – interpreting them personally & privately.
 3. But **verse 21** takes us back to the body of the Lord's church.
 4. The filling of the Spirit is not a gift of God for our personal enjoyment.
 5. It is for the blessing of God's church and for the evangelization of the world.
 6. And how did Peter conclude his quote of **Joel 2?** – *"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*
- I. As a crowd of Jews began to gather, drawn together through the glossolalia of the saints, Peter was led of the Spirit to stand and explain.
1. When some began to mock, saying *"these men are full of new wine,"* Peter denied it.
 2. He said, *"What you are seeing and hearing is not drunkenness, but the filling of the Holy Spirit."*
 3. *"You Aramaic speakers, may not have heard what these others heard in their own languages, but...."*
 4. *"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:*
 - a. *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:*
 - b. *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."*
 - c. *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."*
 - d. *"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*
- J. My thesis this evening is this – We should yearn to be filled with the Spirit as the 120 were on the Day of Pentecost, and as Paul exhorted the people in **Ephesians 5**.
1. And that filling should bring us out of ourselves – out of our normal character.
 2. It may cause some to make wild accusations against us.
 3. But that is all right, if it opens the door to the gospel and scriptural evangelism.
 4. The filling of the spirit should result in the exhortation, *"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."*
 5. And it should end with *"whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved."*
- K. Does your life provoke people to call upon the name of your Saviour?
1. Then you are probably not filled with the Spirit as those 120 saints were on the Day of Pentecost.
 2. But that is who we are supposed to be – drunken with the Spirit of the Almighty God.