

### Acts 1:12 – 2:47 – *The Spirit Descends*

Sometimes waiting leads to worrying, but godly anticipation is good. Since Pentecost predates Acts 2, we can better understand Acts 2 by first looking back further. Pentecost was celebrated 50 days after Firstfruits, fifty days from the crossing of the Red Sea, and now 50 days after Christ was resurrected that first Easter, when the Holy Spirit was poured out. Pentecost is also known as “Weeks” or Shavuot. Pentecost foreshadows the uniting of Jewish and Gentile believers into one body through the Holy Spirit, the coming of the Age of the Spirit, and the harvest time of the Great Commission.

There are some striking parallels to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai and the Holy Spirit being poured out on Pentecost. The giving of the Law was where God had distinguished between two people, Jew and Gentile. On Pentecost, God broke down that wall of separation through Christ. The noise and the tongues of flame would have been viewed as a parallel to the mighty noise and fire at Sinai nearly 1,500 years earlier. On Pentecost 3,000 came to spiritual life; when the Law was given, 3,000 died (Exodus 32:28). The Old Covenant was initiated at Passover but formalized at Pentecost (when the Law was given). The New Covenant was initiated at Passover (Good Friday) and formalized at Pentecost.

Jesus ascends then 10 days later the Holy Spirit descends. They did not pray to receive the promise they prayed as they waited on the promise. That wasn't all they did; they pick a new apostle in chapter 1 before the Spirit descends. Judas hung himself and then became bloated, his dead body broke the rope and he fell. Matthias was the correct choice, because Paul refers to the 12 in 1 Corinthians 15, and then himself. Also Paul was the special Apostle to the Gentiles.

In Acts 2, the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost in a way He had not come before. Though the Spirit of God has always been active, there is a sense in which His relationship to the believer is now different under the New Covenant. He baptized (joined) believers into one body (1 Corinthians 12:13), a united people Paul would later call the "body of Christ".

There are many different opinions about what happened on Pentecost in Acts 2. Ironically, believers are divided over the event that united us. We can avoid some of the controversy and get a clear picture if we will back away a bit and look first at the forest instead of trying to identify each tree. The big picture of what this was all about and how it affected the early church and what it means for us today, what are the main and plain things, that is what we want to discover and develop. This message is not strictly expositional but somewhat topical.

Fulfillment of promise (Luke 24:49) – John 14:16-17 – comforter, 14:26 – teacher, 15:26 – witness, 16:7-11 – conviction, 16:12-15 – revelation.

The people in Acts 2 weren't acting drunk; they were being mocked and accused of being drunk. They were just trying to dismiss them as crazy, etc. Pentecost (which was about a physical harvest) was the prophetic type of the Great Commission harvest we now experience. The anticipated harvest would entail all language groups and peoples, as suggested by the tongues (languages) spoken that day in Acts 2. Pentecost ushered in the uniting of all true believers into

the body of Christ. Pentecost ushered in the Age of the Spirit, an era in which believers are not merely regenerated by the Spirit, but also empowered, indwelt and sometimes filled by the Spirit.

Acts 6:3 – it was more than a onetime deal, and those men that were continuing to be filled were obvious. People ought to know you are a Christian because of what comes out of your mouth, what happens with your hands, what things you do with those legs, what kind of look you have on your face, what kind of things you do with your time, and what kind of things are on your mind. Fellow believers ought to know you are full of the Spirit and of wisdom. We should be seeking God for these things to be flowing in our lives, so that we may serve the Lord and serve others. God is still looking for people full of the Spirit and wisdom to serve.

If Christianity has never touched your tongue it has never touched your heart. However, I don't mean "speaking in tongues", per se. Once we are born again, the first new tongue we should be concerned with is in that language we already have. Yes, *the one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself* (1 Corinthians 14:4), but how is it that someone who claims Christ can be looking to use their tongue to build themselves up while also looking to use their tongue to tear others down? Yes, we are to be *praying at all times in the Spirit* (Ephesians 6:18), but how can you say that those things you speak and cannot interpret are good when all the other things we hear coming out of your mouth we cannot help but interpret as bad? Yes, by praying in the Spirit you *build yourselves up in your most holy faith* (Jude 20). Yet we must remember it is the most *holy* faith, and a faith that cannot stop lying, cursing, tearing down others, gossiping, etc. is not a faith that needs tongues; it is a faith that needs a tourniquet! The first new tongue we should be looking to speak with is one that speaks truth, love, encouragement, edification, and peace. Too often I have heard those who think they speak in the tongues of angels fail to realize that the one most people recognize as coming from them is the tongue of a viper. If there is venom on your lips there is poison in your heart. At Pentecost, we see that God filled their hearts, and filled their mouths (abundance of the heart mouth speaks).

Pentecost Empowers Us – Acts 1:4-8 – The Spirit empowers us to fulfill our primary goals of living for Christ (vs.1-13), winning others to Christ (vs.14-41), and edifying our brothers and sisters in Christ (vs.42-47). The Spirit gives us perspective on Scripture (vs.16-21, 24-36) and God's Sovereignty (vs.22-23), relating everything to Christ.

Pentecost Personalizes Us – The Holy Spirit is a person and He makes the person of Jesus personal to you. This is the power of the ascended Christ coming into men's lives by the Holy Spirit (vs.33). We have the down payment of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5 / Ephesians 1:13-14). Galatians 4:6 / Romans 8:14-16 – You are mine, and I am yours.

Pentecost Purifies Us – Acts 15:8-9 – We are supposed to be changing, especially if we claim to have the Spirit of God resident within us (vs.40). Galatians 5:22-23 / Ephesians 4:30 / 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 – The Spirit is here to make you more like Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Pentecost Unites Us – Acts 2:39 (cf. 11:17-18) – Broke down racial, gender, class, social, and age barriers (2:17-21), just as Jesus did (woman at the well, blind, lepers, sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, wealthy or poor) / Ephesians 2:13-22 / 1 Corinthians 6:17, 12:13 / 1 John 3:24, 4:13 – love for brethren. We are all Guided, Guarded, Gifted, and Gathered by the Spirit.