

Preaching in Power

Acts 2:14-41

1. The **Holy Spirit** Fills the 120 (Acts 2:1-4)

- The Day of Pentecost marks the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling Jesus' promise of power.
- Two emblems signify the Holy Spirit's presence: the **wind**, representing His mystery and irresistible power, and **tongues of fire**, symbolizing His purifying and enabling work.
- The event empowered the 120 believers to communicate the wonderful works of God in many known languages).

2. The **Hearing** of Languages by the Crowd (Acts 2:5-13)

- The miracle was that this: Jews from every nation were present in Jerusalem and were amazed to hear their own dialects being spoken by Galileans.
- Some were amazed and perplexed, while others mocked, believing they were intoxicated.

3. The **Heralding** of a Gospel Sermon (Acts 2:14-37)

An Explanation of the Phenomenon (Acts 2:15-21)

Not Drunk (Acts 2:15) - Peter counters the accusation of drunkenness, noting the time of day (9 AM). He draws a parallel between a drunk man and a Spirit-filled man: A drunk man is joyous, bold, uninhibited, under the control of a substance, and does unusual things (things that wouldn't be done if sober). A Spirit-filled man is joyous, bold, uninhibited, under the control of the Spirit, and may do unusual things.

Fulfilling Prophecy (Acts 2:16-21) - Peter's preaching expounded Scripture. As Peter begins to preach, the Word of God lays the foundation for calling his audience to repent. Peter uses several Old Testament passages in his sermon (Joel 2:28-32; Psalm 16:8-11; and Psalm 110:1), which may have been quoted from memory. John Polhill cites how Peter's sermon forms three divisions: **1) Scriptural Proof Concerning the Pentecost Experience (2:14-21); 2) Scriptural Proof Concerning Christ's Messiahship (2:22-36); 3) Invitation and Response (2:37-41).**¹ Peter is endeavoring to expound Scripture in his message.

¹ John Polhill, *New American Commentary: Acts* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 107-116.

A Declaration of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-35)

1. **Authenticated (Acts 2:22)**
2. **Crucified (Acts 2:23)** The cross illustrates human sin and reveals God's love.
3. **Resurrected (Acts 2:24-32)** Jesus' resurrection is a pronouncement of victory and the promise of a living presence.
4. **Ascended (Acts 2:33-34)**
5. **Glorified (Acts 2:35)**

4. The Harvest of 3,000 Converts (Acts 2:38-41)

- A. **Conviction (Acts 2:37)** Peter's sermon led to deep conviction in the hearts of his listeners.
- B. **Confession (Acts 2:38-40)** Peter calls for repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - **Misinterpretation of Acts 2:38: Some claim baptism is necessary for salvation.** However, the word "for" here signifies "because of" and not "in order to." **Example: A poster reading "WANTED: John Doe FOR Murder" does not mean John Doe is wanted for the purpose of committing murder, but because he has already committed it.**
 - Baptism is a symbol, not the means of salvation. **Illustration: A wedding ring is a symbol of marriage. Wearing one does not make you married, and removing it does not make you unmarried. Similarly, baptism shows others you are saved but does not save you.**
- C. **Conversion (Acts 2:41)** Peter's sermon was simple, Scriptural, Christ-centered, and Spirit-empowered. 3,000 responded, forming the first Christian community.

5. The Harmony of the First Church (Acts 2:42-47)

- Following their conversion, the early believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. The early church exhibited unity, generosity, and joy, growing daily as the Lord added to their number.

Applications for Today:

- 1) **The purpose of being Spirit-filled is empowerment for evangelism.** Acts 1:8 clearly says that the Holy Spirit would empower the believer to be His witnesses. The greatest witnessing you will ever do (or should do) is when you are filled with the Spirit and open to His leading.
- 2) **Preaching 101 is expounding Scripture, engaging the audience, and being empowered by the Spirit.** Peter looked directly at them and spoke clearly (engaging), was filled with the Spirit (empowered), and showed how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament (expounding Scripture).
- 3) **You need to join a local body of believers.** The 3,000 were identified and known. Others later "joined" them. Church membership is more formal today, but it is exemplified in this account.