

The Day of Pentecost (1)

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this morning, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the book of Acts, Acts chapter 2.
- Acts chapter 2. We're going to look at that whole passage that we read, but if we read again in verse 1. Acts chapter 2 at verse 1. When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place, and suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
- In a world where everything is, you could say, so fast-paced, and everyone, well, they're always rushing around, and we're always trying to get 101 things done at the same time.
- You know, we often say that there aren't enough hours in the day. You know, our lives, they're so busy, and we have so much to do, we have so much to get done, and there aren't enough hours in the day.
- And yet, when we look at things, well, we can get a lot done in one day. We can achieve a lot in one day. A lot can even happen in one day.
- [1 : 2 6] A lot can change in one day. And you know, far too often we're confronted with that reality, that from one day to the next, our lives can completely change.
- There can be an engagement, a pregnancy, a wedding. There can be a message of good news. Or there can be, on the other hand, an accident, an illness, the loss of a loved one.
- There can be the message of bad news. From one day to the next, our lives can change for the better, with relief, or recovery, or rejoicing. Or from one day to the next, our lives can change for the worse, with sickness, suffering, and sadness.
- But you know, my friend, for better or worse, our lives can change from one day to the next. But the wonderful truth that the Bible always reminds us of is that Jesus never changes.
- That despite all our changing circumstances and situations, Jesus never changes. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. But you know, when we consider this chapter in the book of Acts, we see that from one day to the next, everything changed.
- [2 : 3 4] Because in Acts chapter 2, it explains to us what happened on the day of Pentecost. Because on the day of Pentecost, there was a change. A change that brought new life.
- And I'd like us just to consider this important day in the life of the church. I want us to consider it both this week and, God willing, next week. I want us to think about the first half of this chapter this week, and then, God willing, next week we'll look at the second half of this chapter.
- Because this chapter, it deserves our attention. Because next to the day that Jesus died on the cross, the day of Pentecost was one of the most important days in the life of the church.
- And so, as we look at this chapter, chapter 2 in Acts, I want us just to ask the question, what kind of day was the day of Pentecost? What kind of day was the day of Pentecost?

And I want us to see that the day of Pentecost was a day of drama, it was a day of diversity, and it was a day of decision. What kind of day was the day of Pentecost? The day of Pentecost was a day of drama, a day of diversity, and a day of decision.

[3 : 44] So if we look first of all and see that the day of Pentecost was a day of drama. A day of drama. Look again at verse 1. We're told, Now Luke, the author of the book of Acts, he opens this chapter by saying when.

When the day of Pentecost arrived. And with this Luke is emphasizing to us that the day of Pentecost, it was not only a momentous day in the church's calendar. But it was also a day in which the church was anticipating.

The church was waiting for the Holy Spirit to come in power. And the church was waiting because that was the promise of Jesus. Jesus promised his disciples. He promised them in the upper room.

He said, I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper. He will be with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth. And he will dwell with you. And he will be in you. So Jesus had assured the disciples that when the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit will comfort the church.

The Spirit will teach the church. He will remind the church of Jesus' words. He will instruct the church. And he will fill the church with the power of God. But the church had to wait for the promise to be fulfilled.

[5 : 23] And that's what we find the church doing on the day of Pentecost. The church was waiting upon the Lord in prayer. The church was, as we read in verse 1, they were having a prayer meeting.

They were all gathered together in one place. They were all seeking the Lord. They were waiting upon the promise of the Spirit to be fulfilled. And needless to say, Jesus was true to his promise.

As he always is. The church had to wait upon the promises of Jesus. But it was worth the wait. It was worth the wait. And you know, there's a simple lesson for us right there.

That as a church. As a congregation. As individual Christians. We have to wait upon the promises of Jesus. We have to stand upon the promises of God.

That's what the hymn writer tells us. Stand upon the promises of Christ our Saviour. Because, why? He will be true to his promises. He will always be true to his promises.

[6 : 26] Because, and that's what we're seeing here. The church had to wait upon the Lord in prayer. Because the Lord would be faithful to his promise. And when the Lord was faithful to his promise.

The Spirit came in power. But the Holy Spirit, he came on a particular day. The day of Pentecost. Now the day of Pentecost.

It was actually a Jewish festival. A festival of thanksgiving. And it was celebrated in Jerusalem. Much like the festival of Passover. Where many of the Jews, they would come from all over the nation of Israel.

And they would come from beyond the nation of Israel. They would all gather and travel towards Jerusalem. And come together to celebrate all these different festivals. And that's why later on in the chapter, we read of lots of different people.

From all different nations. They had travelled to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of Pentecost. And there were actually three annual festivals that the Jews would travel to Jerusalem for.

[7 : 30] There was the festival of the day of atonement. There was the Passover. And there was Pentecost. But what's interesting is that Passover and Pentecost. They were very, very closely related.

Because as you know, the Jews, they celebrated Passover. And the Passover had always commemorated the occasion when the angel of death, he passed over the houses of the Israelites when they were in slavery and bondage in Egypt.

When the angel of death passed over their houses because they had the blood of a spotless lamb on the lintel and the doorposts of their house. And on that night, it was that same night that the children of Israel, they escaped from Egypt.

They escaped from their slavery and bondage in Egypt. And so the day of Passover, you could say, was always a day of salvation. The day of Passover was a day of salvation.

And as you know, the Passover had always pointed forward to Jesus' death on the cross. Because Jesus himself, he offered up himself to God during the feast of Passover.

[8 : 38] Jesus offered himself to God as the spotless Passover lamb of God. Knowing that his blood would cleanse us from all our sin.

And so the day of Passover was a day of salvation. But the day of Pentecost and the festival of Pentecost, it took place 50 days after the Passover.

That's what the Greek word Pentecost means. It means 50 days. So Pentecost, 50 days. And so the day of Pentecost, it was celebrated 50 days after the day of the Passover.

But what's really interesting is that it said that on the day of Pentecost, so on the Passover, the children of Israel, they came out of Egypt.

50 days later, the day of Pentecost, was when the Lord gave his law to the children of Israel on Mount Sinai. That's when the Torah was given, the day of Pentecost.

[9 : 39] The law was given. And of course, the law had included the Ten Commandments. But when the law was given, the children of Israel became a committed people to serving the Lord.

When the law was given, the children of Israel, they were to be a committed people to serve the Lord. And so what we ought to notice, and what I find so fascinating, is that Passover was a day of salvation, but Pentecost was a day of serving.

Passover was a day of salvation, and Pentecost was a day of serving. And as I said, all this points forward to Jesus in the New Testament. Because Passover was a day of salvation when Jesus died upon the cross to take away our sins.

But Pentecost was a day of service when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon the church to serve and to spread the gospel to the whole world.

And you know, the wonderful thing about Passover and Pentecost is that it reminds every Christian that we have been saved to serve.

[10 : 48] It ought to remind us straight away, Passover and Pentecost, we have been saved to serve. We're not to sit idle. We have been saved to serve.

And we're to serve in the church of Jesus Christ by the power and the enabling of the Holy Spirit. But as we said, the day of Pentecost was a day of drama.

And it was a day of drama because as the church gathered together to pray, we're told in verse 2, It says, The power of the Holy Spirit.

And Luke describes this dramatic moment like the mighty sound of a rushing wind. Now, we all live in the Western Isles. We all know what the rush and howl of wind sounds like.

But you know, this mighty rushing wind, it didn't come in from the Atlantic. It came down from heaven. And we're told that it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

[12 : 12] Now, the wind that filled, it wasn't wind that filled the house. It was the Spirit. The Spirit filled the house. And so on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came down upon the church, like this mighty rushing wind, He filled the church with power.

And the way in which the church knew that the Holy Spirit had come in power was when they looked at each other. Because they could see tongues of fire resting on one another.

They could see tongues of fire, as it says, resting on them. And you know, the fire, it was just as John the Baptist said. John the Baptist had proclaimed when Jesus would come.

He says, I baptize with water, but the one coming after me, Jesus, He will baptize you, the church, with the Holy Spirit and with fire. And that's what we see happening here.

We see the church being baptized with fire. But why fire? Why tongues of fire? Well, fire, as we know, it purifies.

[13 : 21] So fire is a symbol of purity. And the person who was coming upon the church in power, the person who was going to fill the church with power, was a person of purity.

That's why we call Him the Holy Spirit. And the role of the Holy Spirit, it was and it still is. His role is to purify the church.

The Holy Spirit's role is to present the church faultless before the glory of Jesus with exceeding joy. So my friend, the day of Pentecost, it was a day of drama.

And the suddenness of this event, it should demonstrate to us that it was no ordinary act. This wasn't the outcome of church planning. This was the outcome of the church praying.

This wasn't the work of strategy. This was the work of the Spirit. The Spirit coming upon the church in power. Heaven coming down to earth and coming upon the church in power and filling the church and enabling the church to serve and to spread the gospel to all nations.

[14 : 31] It's a wonderful day. What kind of day was the day of Pentecost? It was a day of drama. But secondly, we see that the day of Pentecost was a day of diversity. It was a day of diversity.

Look at verse 5. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And as this sound, the multitude came together.

And they were bewildered because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language?

And so, as we see here, as Luke continues to describe what happened on the day of Pentecost, he explains that when the Holy Spirit came upon the church, he came down like a mighty rushing wind and he filled the church with power.

But because of this powerful and dramatic moment, it not only affected those who were gathering at the prayer meeting, it also affected all those who were in the community, those who were in the city of Jerusalem.

[15 : 40] Because we're told, as we read in verse 5, that there were Jews dwelling in Jerusalem who had come from all these different nations. And as we said earlier, the reason that there was all these Jews from all these different nations who were in Jerusalem, the reason that they were there is they were there for the festival of Pentecost.

Jews would travel from all over Israel, from the south, from the north, from the east, and they would come from all the different surrounding nations, and they would come and celebrate the festival of Pentecost.

But as the Jews gathered in Jerusalem on this particular day, the day of Pentecost, something remarkable happened. Because as we read in verse 4, that when the Holy Spirit came upon the church, the church was filled with power, and they began to speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance.

So when the Holy Spirit came upon the church and filled the church with power, the apostolic church was given the gift of speaking in tongues, speaking other languages.

And of course, this wonderful provision from heaven was for the purpose of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Speaking in tongues, it wasn't to hinder the gospel.

[17 : 01] It was to spread the gospel. Because we're told in verse 6 that at this sound, the sound of the mighty rushing wind, when the Holy Spirit came upon the church and filled the church with power, at this sound, the church started speaking.

And the multitudes that had gathered from all these different nations, they started hearing them speak in their own language. And as you would expect, all those who were gathered from other nations, they were amazed.

They were confused and bewildered at first. But as they listened to the church speak the gospel to them in their native language, they were completely amazed and astonished that they even asked, as it says in verse 7, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language? Now, as devout Jews, who had gathered in from all these different nations, they would have all spoken Aramaic.

But as Jews living outside of Israel, they would have also spoken their native tongue. But, you know, they never expected to hear someone speaking to them in their own language, let alone preaching the gospel to them.

[18 : 20] And they never expected Galileans, of all people, to be preaching the gospel to them in their own language. But, you know, what we have to understand is that when the Holy Spirit came upon the church and filled the church with power, they began to speak in other tongues.

And the reason they did this was because this was God's gift and blessing to the church. The gift of speaking in tongues or the gift of speaking in other languages so that people could understand them.

It was a gift and a blessing to the church. And God's gift and blessing to the church was so that this gospel, this wonderful gospel that we have, is so that it could spread to all nations.

But, you know, what we have to understand is that all these diverse languages that were given as a gift and blessing to the church, they were given as a gift and a blessing. Because centuries earlier, diverse languages became a curse to the church.

You remember way back in Genesis 11, we're told, when you read Genesis 11, we're told there that at that time there was only one language that was spoken in the whole world.

[19 : 40] But when you read through Genesis 11, we're told that because of the sinful pride of mankind, the people sought to make a name for themselves. And they built this city and then they started building this tower that would go all the way up into heaven.

They wanted to be like God. And because of their sinful pride, God cursed them. He cursed the people. And he cursed them by confusing their languages so that they wouldn't understand one another.

And the Lord also dispersed the people. He dispersed them throughout all the nations of the world. And the Lord called this tower that they tried to build all the way to heaven, the Lord called it the Tower of Babel.

It wasn't the Tower of Babel, but the Tower of Babel. Because the Lord confused the languages. He made them babble to one another. And he dispersed the people to all these different nations.

You know, what we ought to see here on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came and filled the church with power, and the church began to speak in all these different tongues, this was God's gift of blessing to the church.

[20 : 51] It was a reversal of God's judgment. It was a reversal of the events that had taken place in Genesis chapter 11 with the Tower of Babel so that the church in the New Testament, in the New Covenant era, they would be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and they would be enabled to fulfill the Great Commission.

The Great Commission of Jesus go and make disciples of all nations. All nations. And so the day of Pentecost was a day of diversity.

Because on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled the church with power. They were given this gift of speaking languages so that people from all the nations of the world would understand the message of the gospel.

And you know, my friend, language was God's blessing to the church. This was God's gift to the church so that the gospel could spread to all nations. For centuries, as we saw, language had been a barrier.

It had been a barrier to the spread of the gospel. But on the day of Pentecost, the language barrier was brought down and the way was made open for people throughout the nations of the world to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 11] And you know, it should always remind us that language should never be a barrier to the spread of the gospel. Language should never get in the way of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

The day of Pentecost should remind us that language was key to spreading the gospel, not hindering it. It was key to making known to people this wonderful and glorious news.

And you know, my friend, if language is holding back the spread of the gospel, then it's a curse upon the church, not a blessing. If language is holding back the spread of the gospel, it's a curse upon the church, not a blessing.

Diverse languages were given on the day of Pentecost as God's blessing to the church so that the gospel would spread, so that people the world over would know this glorious message of salvation.

You know, that's what Jesus promised. When the Holy Spirit comes, you will be my witnesses from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth.

[23 : 25] But you know what I always find fascinating about the day of Pentecost? Is the people and nations who heard the gospel first. Many of the nations who are represented or were represented in Jerusalem that we see here in verses 8 and 9.

Today they are war-torn nations that have no time for the gospel. And yet they received the gospel first. We're told in verses 9 and 10 that there were Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, which you could say is modern-day Iran.

There were residents from Mesopotamia in the east, which covers the nations of Iraq, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. There were those from Judea, which is the south of Israel.

It's the land of Jordan. Others were from the north, Cappadocia, we're told, Pontus, Asia, Pamphylia, and Phrygia, which is now modern-day Turkey. And there were some from the west, from the continent of Africa.

There were from Egypt and Libya, from Cyrene. And there were even others as far west as Rome, in Italy. And you know, the day of Pentecost was a day of diversity.

[24 : 40] Because it was a day when the Lord gathered all the nations of the world, from north, south, east, and west. He brought them all together so that they would hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and go out with it to all the nations of the world.

You know, that's why the day of Pentecost, it's described as a day of drama, a day of diversity, and also a day of decision. A day of decision. And that's what I want us to see lastly and briefly.

What kind of day was the day of Pentecost? A day of drama, a day of diversity, and a day of decision. Look at verse 12. And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, What does this mean?

But others, mocking, said they're filled with new wine. But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, Let this be known to you and give ear to my words, for these people are not drunk as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And so when the Holy Spirit, this day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the church and filled the church with power, they were enabled to speak in tongues.

[26 : 00] And all those gathered in Jerusalem from all these different nations, they were hearing the mighty works of God in their own language. They were hearing the gospel being spoken to them in their native tongue.

And the people, they were amazed at what they were hearing. They were perplexed as to how it was possible to listen to Galileans speaking to them in their native tongue.

But you know, the people were amazed, others were perplexed, but as you would expect, what happens, that's what always happens when the gospel starts to make progress in a community.

There were those who mocked it. Some were amazed, some were perplexed, others mocked it. And they mocked the church, and they mocked the message of the gospel, and they claimed that what's going on isn't actually an act of God.

It's not real. These church members, they're just drunk. Drunk with new wine. And you know, it's hard, even nowadays, hard to understand how they came to that conclusion that the church was drunk.

[27 : 06] You know, I've never met a drunk person who could all of a sudden speak a foreign language. Maybe you have, I don't know, but I've never met one. And yet, here, this is what they're claiming.

They're just talking nonsense. But as we read, Peter stands up on the day of Pentecost. He gives his first sermon, and he affirms that the church isn't drunk.

It's only nine o'clock in the morning. And Peter explains that what's happening on the day of Pentecost is what was promised and prophesied by the Old Testament prophet Joel.

He says in verse 16, this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my spirit in all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

And your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. Even on my male servants and female servants. In those days I will pour out my spirit and they shall prophesy.

[28 : 05] And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below. Blood and fire and vapour of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness. The moon to blood.

Before the day of the Lord comes. The great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

And you know, by quoting the prophet Joel, Peter affirms that the day of Pentecost was actually a day that was promised. It was a day that was prophesied way back in the Old Testament.

But more than that, Peter affirms that the day of Pentecost, he affirms that it would be a day of drama. He affirms that it would be a day when the spirit would come upon the church and fill the church with power.

Peter also affirms that the day of Pentecost would be a day of diversity. Where peoples from all nations, languages, tribes, and tongues, they would all hear the gospel in their own language before Jesus would return again.

[29 : 09] And Peter also affirmed that the day of Pentecost would be a day of decision. A day of decision because that's what we read in verse 21. It shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

My friend, the day of Pentecost was a day of decision. And you know, I love this verse, verse 21, because it reminds us about the glory of the gospel and the simplicity of salvation.

That this gospel message, which we have been given in our own language, it's to be offered to whosoever. Whosoever. Don't you just love that word?

Whosoever. Whosoever. It means that there's no type of person in this entire world who is exempt from the message of the gospel.

Doesn't matter who they are, where they live, where they're from, what language they speak, how old they are, what they've done, or what their past is. No one is exempt. No one is excluded. The offer is to whosoever.

[30 : 19] The gospel is a universal offer. It's for the whosoever. That includes everyone and excludes no one.

Whosoever, whether Jew or Gentile, religious or not, good or bad, male or female, rich or poor, young or old, whatever situation in life, whosoever, whether they're from Iran, Iraq or Italy, whosoever, whether they're from Braga, Brew, Borv, Barvis, wherever they're from, salvation is to be offered to whosoever.

Jesus is for whosoever. He's for you. The offer is as wide as possible. Whosoever.

But then Peter says it becomes as narrow as possible. Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

You know, my friend, there's one condition upon being saved. The condition is that you call upon the name of the Lord. The condition is that you call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved.

[31 : 36] And all you have to do is call upon him to be saved. All you have to do is repent of your sin and turn to Jesus for salvation. My friend, do you ever wonder why you're not saved yet?

I wonder why you're not saved yet. Do you ever wonder why you're not saved yet? Have you called upon the name of the Lord?

Have you actually called upon the name of the Lord to be saved? Have you asked him to save you? I mean, I'm sure I've told you before that you need to ask him.

That you need to earnestly ask him. You need to earnestly commit your life to him. But have you called upon him? Because the offer of the gospel is whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Whosoever. And you know, Peter, he'll remind us in his second sermon when we eventually get there in chapter 4. Peter will remind us in that sermon that there is salvation in no other name.

[32 : 45] You can't call upon the name of Allah. He'll do nothing for you. Can't call upon the name of any priest or prophet. They'll do nothing for you.

There is no other name, says Peter, under heaven given among men by which we must be saved other than the name of Jesus Christ. Have you called upon the name of the Lord?

Because my unconverted friend, the day of Pentecost, it was a day of decision. a day of decision. And it was on that day that the gospel would be made free, freely offered and fully given to those in the hearing.

So you make sure, or you make sure that you call upon the name of the Lord. You make sure that you earnestly seek Jesus to save you. You make sure that today is your day of decision.

salvation. Because now as the Bible says, now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation. My friend, you make sure that you call upon the name of the Lord before death comes and judgment calls and you stand before him and you give an account.

[34 : 01] And what I will not have is your blood on my hands. you need to call upon him. And if you've never done it, do it now.

Because the Bible clearly says, whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will, there's no doubt about it, will be saved.

What a day the day of Pentecost was. What a day. It was a day of drama. A day of diversity and a day of decision.

My unconverted friend, today is your day of decision. Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

You call upon him today. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord, our gracious God, Lord, we marvel at thy word, thy word that is living and active.

[35 : 13] And we pray that it would be living and active in our lives, that it would speak to us so clearly, that it would challenge us as those who are Christians and those who are not, that it would cause us to come on bended knee before King Jesus, and acknowledge him as Lord, and say even like the one of old, Lord, what will thou have me to do?

Lord, bless us, we pray, bless us in the week that lies ahead, a week that is unknown to us, but we commit ourselves into thy care and keeping, knowing that thou art the God who keeps our going out and out coming in.

Do us good, and we ask, go before us, for Jesus sake. Amen. We shall bring our service to a conclusion by singing the words of Psalm 107.

Psalm 107 in the Scottish Psalter. Psalm 107, we're singing from the beginning, it's on page 382, singing from the beginning down to the verse marked 8.

Psalm that reminds us that we are to praise God because he is good and his mercies, they are still being held out to us. And he's a God who gathers us, as it says in verse 3, from north, south, east, and west.

[36 : 39] And even if we're straying in the desert's pathless way, if we're wandering aimlessly, he gives to us a right way to go, and he guides us. And I love the prayer of verse 8.

This should be the prayer of the church. Oh, that men to the Lord, would give. Praise for his goodness then, and for his works of wonder done, and to the sons of men.

So, Psalm 107, from the beginning, down to the verse marked 8, to God's praise. Amen. Amen. Punta Son data Stalinism.

He serve and form avanily earth, animressive earth, reallyp order that hung■■ in self-avenworth, free.

I've gathered them much off the line from north, south, east, and west.

[38 : 02] This reign deserves a blessed way. No city found to rest.

For birds of God in heaven, their soul when streets and rest, they guide to the Lord and he them frees from their distress.

Then also in way■■. It's given cause of form die he out.

wall my time O that men to the Lord would give grace for his goodness then and for his
worth of wonder time unto the Son of men the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of
God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore

Amen