

**“The Miracle of Pentecost”**

Acts 2:1-13

*Acts: The Unstoppable Gospel*

Acts chapter 2 is a monumental shift in the history of redemption. From this point on, every new believer experiences the miracle of regeneration and the permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27). This is the birth of the New Testament Church.

F.F. Bruce – “The new era of the Spirit had begun.”

**I. Pentecost: Feast of Firstfruits**

*Verse 1 – “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.”*

Why did God choose the Day of Pentecost to give birth to the Church?

- It foreshadows the harvest of souls that will take place under the New Covenant. (Deuteronomy 16:9-10; Matthew 9:37-38)
- The believers in Jerusalem are the firstfruits of a much greater harvest that will extend to the ends of the earth.

**II. Wind: God’s Life-Giving Breath**

*Verse 2 – “And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.”*

The Greek word *pneuma* and Hebrew word *ruach* can both be translated as spirit, wind or breath. (cf. Genesis 1:1-2, 2:7; Ezekiel 37:7-14)

In Acts 2, we are witnessing a new creation equally as important as the creation of heaven and earth. The new birth is a spiritual resurrection that results in eternal life (John 3:3-8).

**III. Fire: God’s Purifying Presence**

*Verse 3 – “And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.”*

R.C. Sproul calls this a theophany – a visible manifestation of the invisible God. Fire was a symbol of God’s presence in the Old Testament (Exodus 3:1-6, 13:21-22, 19:18).

God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:9), but now the fire has come to dwell within us.

Fire purifies, illuminates, and ignites!

Some Christians have light and no heat; others have heat and no light. But we need both!

#### IV. Tongues: God's Global Intention

Verse 4 – “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”

The disciples spoke in real human languages (*diálektos*) that could be understood by people who were familiar with them.

The 15 nations listed in verses 9-11 represent the known world where the Jews had been scattered in the Diaspora.

John Stott – “Ever since the early church fathers, commentators have seen the blessing of Pentecost as a deliberate and dramatic reversal of the curse of Babel. At Babel human languages were confused and the nations were scattered; in Jerusalem the language barrier was supernaturally overcome as a sign that the nations would now be gathered together in Christ, prefiguring the great day when the redeemed company will be drawn ‘from every nation, tribe, people, and language’. Besides, at Babel earth proudly tried to ascend to heaven, whereas in Jerusalem heaven humbly descended to earth.”

Why did the Holy Spirit cause the disciples to speak in the languages of the world?

- It's a sign that the gospel would reach the ends of the earth.
- The sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not speaking in tongues. It's being a powerful and effective witness for Christ.
- The main point of the passage is not about tongues. It's about the fulfillment of Acts 1:8!

#### V. Reaction: Wonder or Mockery

The crowd was bewildered and greatly perplexed, but also amazed and astonished. How will you respond to this message – in faith or unbelief, wonder or mockery?

##### **FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:**

1. In your own words, what was the significance of the Holy Spirit coming on the Day of Pentecost?
2. Which image of the Spirit – wind, fire, or tongues – interested you the most, and why?
3. What might be “quenching” the Spirit's fire in your life, and what would repentance or surrender look like this week?
4. In what practical ways can you be a more intentional witness for Christ in the places where God has already put you?
5. What name or names did you put up on the Prayer Wall, and why?