

The Acts of the Apostles

Lesson 2 – Pentecost

Introduction

The Festival of Pentecost marks the birthday of the Christian Church—and what a celebration it was! The Apostle Peter preached a sermon that both convicted its hearers and held out the comfort of the gospel. The Holy Spirit used the powerful message of the crucified and risen Christ to bring some 3,000 souls into the Kingdom of God that day.

The Word of the Lord is no less powerful today, and the message of Jesus Christ is still the tool that that Spirit uses to overcome sinful hearts and to transform lives.

Tongues of Fire and Foreign Tongues

Read Acts 2:1-13. What do you know about the Old Testament Festival of Pentecost. Why was this an ideal time for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit?

What physical signs of the Spirit's presence were made known on Pentecost?

What were the “tongues” that the disciples spoke (*xenoglossia*)?

Application

The practice of speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*) is still found in some churches today. What differences do you note between today's tongues and the tongues in which the disciples spoke?

Imagine being there! Just like other key events in the Bible, part of us wishes that we could have been there at Pentecost to see and experience what they say and experienced. If we had been, would our faith somehow be more superior?

Peter's Pentecost Sermon

Read Acts 2:14-41. Why was it Peter who spoke up to address the crowd?

What evidence did Peter offer the scoffers and skeptics that these tongues were not gibberish?

Peter cites three Old Testament prophecies as being fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth and in the events of Pentecost. How was each prophecy fulfilled?

- **Joel 2:28-32**
- **Psalm 16:8-11**
- **Psalm 110:1**

How did Peter's sermon both convict the people and offer them comfort?

Peter called upon the people to repent. What is repentance? Write your definition below.

What was the reaction of the listeners who heard Peter's sermon?

Application

We trust that God's Word is powerful and will accomplish God's purpose (**Isaiah 55:8-11**). What twofold purpose does God's Word bring about? Are you ever reluctant to share God's Word because you are afraid of the outcome?

Peter had a foundation to build on as he connected the dots between key Old Testament prophecies and the fulfillment in Jesus Christ. When we share the Word with others in our life, how can we determine where to start? Is there any foundation from which to build?

Peter's Pentecost Sermon

Read Acts 2:42-47. What behaviors marked the Christians in the early church?

Why did God give the apostles the ability to perform miraculous signs and wonders? Does God still give this ability today?

Agree or disagree: The believers practiced a form of communism in the early church. Explain your answer.

What made the early Christians so eager to sell and/or give away their possessions?

How did the people in Jerusalem view the Christians?

Application

Compare the practice of Christianity today with that of the earliest first-century believers, and consider:

- What similarities in attitude and practice do you see?
- What differences in attitude and practice do you see?
- Are Christians today as sincere and genuine as those in the first century? Defend your answer.