

ACTS SERIES TWO
PENTECOSTAL POWER
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Acts 2:1-24
S-1632

I saw a UFO when I was in High School. Playing ball in Dallas one summer night.

OVERHEAD: Here is what it looked like. Everyone stood and watched. All four games halted. How many believe I saw a UFO? I did. I am not lying. In the newspaper next day. No explanation.

In Acts 2, on a Jewish feast day called Pentecost, the supernatural came like a UFO—wind blew; fire fell; people spoke in tongues! People were filled with the spirit.

And everyone stopped and stared—and life for those who watched—and life for us who believe today—need never be the same again.

- SLIDE #: But it seems to me that too many Christ Followers are living without the power. No filling. They have thrown out the white flag of surrender.
- SLIDE #: “Is this all there is? Is this the best Christianity has to offer?”
- SLIDE #: “I don’t see much power in my life. I don’t think Christianity works—at least not for me.”
- SLIDE #: “I guess that I’ll have my ups and downs like everyone else and some day I will get to go to heaven. Some day it will really pay off. But right now, this is the best I am going to get.”
- SLIDE #: Some of you say, “I go to church, I pray some prayers; but—where is the power?”
- SLIDE #: If all Christ did when He died on the cross was to save our souls, then He made us fit for Heaven and left us unfit for earth. The rest of the Good News is that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, ascended into Heaven and sent the Holy Spirit back on Pentecost—that He, in us, may make us fit to live on earth in every situation.

Engage with me in the sermon. When we finish, you will know exactly How to experience the Filling Power of God. We never need live an insipid Christian life again—Jesus Promised.

- SLIDE #: *John 14:16-18: And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. In Acts 2 He comes.*
- SLIDE #: *Acts 2:4: All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit ...*

The problem of powerless is not in the Christianity. More likely the problem is when we live as if we are orphans—as if we are all alone—isolated from the life and light of the Spirit.

- SLIDE #: *ACTS 2: 1-2: When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

Pentecost means 50. Write 50th over it. Was a feast that occurred 50 days after Passover.

Jewish law required that every Jewish male attend the feast of Pentecost. Jerusalem normal population was 50,000. Swelled to over 1,000,000 on Pentecost.

Sound of mighty wind—like a sonic boom as Holy Spirit split the air coming down from Heaven.

- SLIDE #: *ACTS 2: 3-4: They saw what seemed to be tongues (γλωσσα) of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues*

(γλωσσα) as the Spirit enabled them.

- **SLIDE #:** The substance was a luminous material which neither singed nor burned. The disciples watched in awe. They were within arm's length of the Shekinah glory of God.

Then the dancing "bonfire" began to break itself into individual flame-like tongues.

What did this mean? It symbolized the diffusion of Christ in the Spirit.

Apart from this phenomenon the disciples had no way of grasping the distribution of the infinite Christ in the Spirit. Omnipresence was a truth beyond them. But they could understand this. They saw it happen. Each Christian could have the ONE Christ.

Shape of a tongue. Not hand. It's as if God were saying, "Communicate. My concern is the world – let it out!"

- **SLIDE #:** Acts 2: 5-8: *Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language (διαλεκτος). Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language (διαλεκτος)?"*

Like Holy Spirit blew a big siren to gather a crowd. People come from miles around.

Word here is "dialect".

These men heard them in their own dialects! (Southern Parthians, Northern Pamphylia) Couldn't explain it! These folks were hicks from Galilee! Speaking clear unadulterated foreign languages that they had never learned! And in particular dialect and accent.

- **SLIDE #:** Acts 2: 9-11: *Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs-- we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues (γλωσσα)!"*
- **SLIDE #:** [Map] The purpose of speaking in *tongues* at Pentecost was to spread the Gospel. By witnessing to these foreigners, they were actually spreading the gospel to every part of the world.
- **SLIDE #:** They are thinking in Aramaic, but Jesus is reshaping their words into foreign languages. They started to speak in Aramaic, but Jesus took their words and miraculously reshaped them into 16 different language dialects. These Pentecostal languages operated horizontally— toward man.
- **SLIDE #:** This Pentecostal miracle is different from the spiritual gift of tongues Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14. Pentecostal tongues were known languages. The spiritual gift of tongues is a Holy Spirit prayer language which operates vertically toward God.
- **SLIDE #:** ACTS 2: 12-13: *Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."*
- **SLIDE #:** ACTS 2: 14-16: *Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

Love Peter's response in 2:13 – Not drunk – only 9:00 AM!

Since when does drinking cause you to speak in another dialect?

Drinking may cause you to use some language that you shouldn't use! But not another dialect.

Albuquerque trip with pastoral staff. Went to restaurant. Laughing and telling stories: thought we were drunk.

- **SLIDE #:** ACTS 2: 17-18: *In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*

Joel said that the Spirit's coming would be like rain, falling freely on everyone without regard for age, sex, or rank. Man, women, children, and even servants could receive Him, for there was to be no distinction. All during the last days, says Peter, anyone can be saved, for Christ has come in the Spirit and anyone can receive Him.

There is a time span between verses 18 and 19, which is now 2000 years long. While the beginning of the last days was marked by great joy and spiritual blessing, the end of that age is to be characterized by destruction and disaster.

- **SLIDE #:** ACTS 2: 19-20: *I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

During the interval between Pentecost and Christ's visible return, anyone can be saved by inviting Jesus into his heart.

- **SLIDE #:** ACTS 2: 21: And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.—Next week.
- **SLIDE #:** The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit Only Occurred Once—At Pentecost In 32 A.D.—Or, At Our Salvation Experience (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Friends met H.A. Ironside. "We've been tarrying meeting." "What are you tarrying for?" "For the Holy Spirit to fall on us as he did at Pentecost." Ironside said, "Where do you find any spiritual warrant for this?" "Why, Jesus said, 'Tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye be imbued with power from on high'." Ironside said, "Aren't you confusing location and time? You're tarrying over here in California and Jesus said to tarry at Jerusalem. That's 10,000 miles too far away. Furthermore, you're tarrying now and Jesus told his disciples to tarry in the first century. You're 1900 years too late!" He was absolutely right.

This is good news: We are no longer waiting for the Holy Spirit—He is waiting for us.

Baptism of Holy Spirit puts us into body of Christ. Occurs at moment of salvation. It's not experiential. Doesn't necessarily have any accompanying signs. Like justification. It's a positional truth.

- **SLIDE #:** The Filling Of The Holy Spirit Is To Be An Ongoing, Moment-by-Moment Experience Of The Life And Power Of God (Ephesians 5:16-18).

- SLIDE #: EPHESIANS 5:16-18: *Be very careful, then, how you live-- not as unwise but as wise, ... Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*

Key here is not to pour something in to fill it up. The operative picture is drunk. To be drunk means to be under the influence of the alcohol—to surrender one's mind, body and spirit to its influence.

To be filled with the Spirit is to voluntarily put yourself under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Story of landing in El Paso; landing gear light no on. Touched down. Called Julie on cell, did not go through.

Only one thought: will it hold. Dominated everything.

In the same way we are to allow the Holy Spirit to have complete control over our hearts and minds. To allow Him to influence every crack and crevice of our being—out thoughts, motives, relationships and dreams.

Finish story: Plane touched down. The landing gear held.

- SLIDE #: Brethalizer Test for the Holy spirit's filling.

WHAT MIGHT BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT LOOK LIKE?

- SLIDE #: Total Dependence.

Most dependence is learned in the valleys. God is an expert at engineering our circumstances so that we find that there is no where else to turn but to Him.

Steve Hall Story: Pastor, hard, demanding, his way the only way, daughter suddenly stricken, with in moments of death. Change transforming.

Prayed with him this week: softness, compassion, new look at people.

Some call this Brokenness.

- SLIDE #: Total Surrender

STORY of Mark Cochran and surrender at Gold's Gym.

Too many of us try to short-circuit the process by trying to have what we think is the best of both worlds. We sort of ask the Holy Spirit for help (dependence) and then tell Him how to do it (surrender) and the result is a cheap, short-lived imitation of the real thing.

- SLIDE #: We try to live in the Kingdom of God and in our own Kingdom at the same time.

Tex-Mex the closer you get to the border. Try to live in Texas and in Mexico.

Tongues of the border country: Gripe-Praise

- SLIDE #: Only problem with straddling the fence is that eventually we are going to get hurt in the middle.

- SLIDE #: Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. It has been tried and found hard. So it is not wanted. (We have to surrender and depend on Someone else—this is hard—but why would we have it otherwise?)

Tithing and God's financial plan: Only test God gives in the Bible.

Paul leaves the terms of the filling and invests most of his teaching around the concept of our relationship with Jesus Christ in terms of a walk.

- SLIDE #: Galatians 5:16, 18: So I say, live (Greek: walk) by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.... But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

To walk is to be led by the Holy Spirit. We take our cues from Him.

Unfamiliar building and stopped to ask for directions? "See these stairs to third floor, left to second door, down the hall to the water cooler with the blue bottle..." complicated as some of our lives. How comforting it is when they says, "Follow me and I will show you where you need to go."

He is not a traffic cop pointing directions, He is a Comforter-Counselor-Divine Friend who leads at a perfect pace to exactly where He wants us to go in life.

To walk by the Spirit is to live with a moment-by-moment dependency on and sensitivity to the initial promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit intends to produce the character of Jesus Christ in us.

- SLIDE #: Galatians 2:20: I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

What does it look like? The Fruit of the Spirit.

- SLIDE #: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control

If you are not careful, "I need to be more loving ... patient self-controlled..."

No, the fruit of the Spirit is never intended to be a demonstration of our dedication and resolve. It is the evidence of our dependency on and sensitivity to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Men think this is wimpy. HS never produced a wimp.

Hundreds of Believers attribute their successes to the changes that took place in their lives once they surrendered to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Think about it this way: Would the following characteristics increase or decrease your relationships and productivity at work?

- SLIDE #: Hatred, Depression, Stress, Impatience, Rudeness, Insensitivity, Back Stabbing, Harshness, Out-of-Control Behavior

- SLIDE #: Which list would you rather have?

- SLIDE #: The best picture of a Spirit-filled person is Jesus Christ.

Tony Campolo: Mrs. Kirkpatrick, one of her mother's friends died. Mom thought it would be good show of respect if he went to the funeral.

Arrived at funeral home just at 2:00 in time for the funeral. Hurried inside funeral home and quickly took a seat. Suddenly realized that he was sitting two seats away from an elderly woman—and

they were the only people in the entire room.

Looked over into casket and saw not Mrs. Kirkpatrick but a man he had never seen in his life. He was at the wrong funeral. He was about to leave when she grabbed his arm and said in quiet desperation, "You *were* his friends, weren't you?"

I didn't know just what to do. She was reaching out for some connection with her husband and some consolation. What was I to say, "Sorry, I am at the wrong funeral." So I lied and said I knew him and that he had always been kind to me.

Sat with her through the funeral. Afterward got with her into the sole automobile that would go to the graveside. I was not about to leave that poor, old lady alone in her hour of deep sadness. Stood at the grave and said some prayers and threw some flowers on the casket after it was lowered into the ground.

Returned to the funeral home. "I have to tell you something. We are friends now and I can't be your friend if I don't tell you the truth. I did not know your husband. I came to the funeral by mistake." Waited for her response: "You'll never, ever know how much your being with me meant to me today."

- SLIDE #: The Fruit of the Spirit is the most effective evangelistic tool we have. Nothing is more attractive than a life characterized by the fruit of the spirit.

Are you enjoying the Pentecostal power? Are you willing to pay the price for it? Are you willing to surrender reputation, position, and even the favor of our immediate desires and wants, in order that the channel bed may be cleared for the river of God?

- SLIDE #: 1. I believe that there is a Pentecostal blessing to be received by the releasing of the Holy Spirit throughout my life.

- SLIDE #: 2. I desire to experience it at all cost; and I am prepared to surrender whatever sin or aspect of my self which may hinder the full expression of His life in mine.

- SLIDE #: 3. I will measure the fullness of the Spirit by the Christlikeness of my life as evidenced by the Fruit of the Spirit.

- SLIDE #: 4. I now humbly and thankfully open my heart to receive all that my Savior is waiting to release into my life. Amen.

CLOSING MEDITATION: As to steps, I trust that I may not be charged with egotism, if I reprint part of a tract by Dr. Chapman: "Two or three years ago Mr. Moody invited me to breakfast at his home in Northfield. I got to the house before the breakfast hour, and met Dr. Meyer beneath a great tree in the front of the house. I said to him, 'What is the matter with me? So many times I seem half empty, and so many times utterly powerless; what is the matter?' He put his hand on my shoulder, and said, 'Have you ever tried to breathe out three times without breathing in once?' I wondered if he was referring to some new breathing exercise, so I said, 'I do not think I have,' 'Well,' he said, 'try it.' So I breathed out once, and then I had to breathe in again. Then he said, 'You must always breathe in before you can breathe out, and your breathing out must always be in proportion to your breathing in.' Then he said, 'Good morning,'; and I went on into Mr. Moody's house. But I had had my lesson, and know that I had been trying to breathe out more than I had breathed in."

There must be a constant inhalation of the Spirit of Pentecost!