

Turning the World Right-side Up: Study 2, Acts 2

Acts Studies for Teens by Mike Apodaca, MA



Begin with prayer for wisdom from God and for the presence of the Spirit.

Note: In a Bible Study, as much as possible ask the questions and let

the students answer. Where they cannot, you supply the answer and keep everything flowing.

Introduction: When kids are irresponsible and their grades fail because they are spending all their time playing video games or on their phones some parents will take the cords away. Does this seem like an effective response? Why or why not?

The Spirit Comes with a Bang Chapter 2: 1-13

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2** Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. **5** Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. **6** When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. **7** Utterly amazed, they asked:

"Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? **8** Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome **11** (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" **12** Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" **13** Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Can you imagine how this must have looked? There is great meaning to what is happening here.

In the Old Testament, there were two places where God came to dwell with His people. The first was in the Tabernacle. God had given Moses the blueprints. When it was constructed, the Scripture says in Exodus 40:34-35:

34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. **35** And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.



<http://www.alianzachicureo.cl/2013/07/07/july-07-and-the-glory-of-the-lord-filled-the-tabernacle-exodus-4035/>

A similar thing happened when the glory of the Lord filled the Temple that Solomon had built. 2 Chronicles 7:1-2 says:

¹Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the house.²The priests could not enter into the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD'S house.



The Glory of God fills the Temple
Photo Credit: www.jhkelly.wordpress.com

So, what was happening to the disciples in Jerusalem? What did it mean? God filled them and made them His new Temple. Look at the Scriptures which tell us that we are now God's temple:

1 Corinthians 3:16: Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

2 Corinthians 6:16: What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

"I will live with them
and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they will be my people."

Again, we see that God is introducing something new. Jesus had been the New Adam, with perfect obedience to the Father and filled with His Spirit. He was the Temple of God. Now, Jesus sends the Spirit to his followers so that they will be the Temple, the dwelling place of God.

A.W. Tozer wrote, "Jesus taught essentially that we are portable sanctuaries, and if we are worshipping in spirit and in truth, we can take our sanctuary around with us." *The Purpose of Man*, pg. 79.

Tongues

There are many various opinions about the gift of tongues. But notice what was happening in this instance. It does not say that the believers were speaking in different tongues, but that the crowd was hearing them in their own native tongues. It seems that the believers were speaking their own language, but that the hearers were hearing in their languages. Whatever it was, it was weird. The only thing that the crowd could think of to explain it was that the disciples were drunk.

Section 2: Peter Explains What's Going On Acts 2:14-41

14 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. **15** These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! **16** No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: **17** " '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. **18** Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. **19** I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. **20** The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. **21** And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' **22** "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles,

wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. **23** This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. **24** But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. **25** David said about him: " 'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. **26** Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, **27** because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. **28** You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.' **29** "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. **30** But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. **31** Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. **32** God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. **33** Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. **34** For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, " 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand **35** until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' **36** "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." **37** When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" **38** Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call." **40** With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." **41** Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

Digging Deeper: Look at verses 17-21 Peter begins with Bible Study. He shows them that their Scriptures foretold this very situation they are witnessing.
17 "In the last days, The Last Days is the period that spans Jesus's resurrection to His Second Coming.
God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Not just the leaders or Spiritual giants. Everyone will receive the Spirit. It is every Christian's birthright.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy, They will speak God's Words, supernaturally bringing His voice into situations.
your young men will see visions, They will receive insights from God about what is real in the Spiritual realm and of what is coming.
your old men will dream dreams. God will speak to them while they sleep. The ancient world believed strongly that dreams were often messages from God.
18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. Again, this gift is unrestricted with regards to gender.

19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, Just before Jesus returns, there will be signs in heaven and earth.
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. When Jesus returns.
21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' Again, a universal invitation for all men and women to accept the call of God and be saved.

Peter then ties in the manifestation of the Spirit and the Scriptures with Jesus. He makes these points:

1. Jesus was endorsed by God through the miracles God did through Him.
2. Jesus was crucified and resurrected according to God's plan.
3. David prophesied about Jesus not seeing decay. God raised Jesus and we are all witnesses.
4. Jesus is exalted to God's right hand, was given the Spirit which he poured out on the believers.
5. Jesus is now both Lord (the ruler of all) and Christ (God's anointed one, the hope of Israel)

How do the Jews react when Peter says this? Can you imagine finding out that you were complicit in the death of the Holy One of God, His Anointed? There would be no hope for you!

Notice Peter's instructions:

Repent: The Greek word here is metanoia, to change your mind, to turn around, to do a one-eighty.

Be baptized: Baptism represents our personal death and resurrection.

You will receive the Holy Spirit: Notice the connection between becoming a Christian and receiving the Holy Spirit. Peter sees these as one in the same. We could say that the Christian life is a Spirit-filled life. There is no Christian life without His presence and power. He is the engine of the Christian life (see Romans 8:9).

Ray Stedman, the great Bible teacher once wrote about the Christian life:

If, as a Christian, you are seeking to live by your own resources rather than by the life of Jesus within you, you are like a man who goes down to buy a car and doesn't know that it comes equipped with a motor. Naturally, a man buying a car on that basis would have to push it home. When he gets there, he might invite his family out for a ride, so the wife gets in behind the wheel, the kids in the back seat, and he starts pushing from behind. At that point you might come along and ask, "How do you like your car?"

"Oh, it is a tremendous car. Look at the upholstery, and get an eyeful of this color, and, oh yes, listen to the horn-what a great horn this car has. But, I do find it rather exhausting! It goes downhill beautifully, but if there is even the slightest rise in the pavement, I find myself panting and struggling and groaning. It is very difficult to

push it uphill."

"Well, my friend," you may say, "you do need help. You know, at our church we are having special meetings this week. Our speaker is speaking on the very subject you need to hear: 'How to Push a Car Successfully!' On Monday night he is going to show us how to push with the right shoulder. On Tuesday night he will illustrate the techniques of pushing with the left shoulder. On Wednesday night he has colored slides and an overhead projector to show us how to really get our back into the work and push. On Thursday night he has committees and workshops organized that will help us all push more effectively, and on Friday night there will be a great dedication service where we all come down in front to commit ourselves anew to the work of pushing cars. Come every night next week, and learn all there is to know about how to push a car successfully!"

That is exactly where much of Christianity is being lived today. We spend hours seeking to teach people how to mobilize all their human resources and try harder to get the job done for God. But all we are mobilizing is the flesh. We seek to build up their confidence in the power of numbers, the hidden resources of the human spirit, and the possibilities of a determined will.

But if we really wanted to help the man who is pushing his car, we would say something like this. "Look, come around here in front." We would lift up the hood and say to him, "Do you see this iron thing with all the wiggles coming out of it? Do you know what that is? It's a motor. A power plant. The maker of this car knew you would have the problem that you've been having and so he

designed a power plant that would enable you to go uphill as easily as downhill. When you learn several simple things about operating the motor, you will begin to experience the power. Just turn this key and the motor will start. Then you pull down that lever and step on the pedal on the floor and away you go. You do the steering, but the motor supplies all the power. You don't have to push at all. Just sit back and you can go up the highest hills with as much ease and relaxation as if you were going downhill. You don't need to worry for the motor is equal to whatever demand you make."

Now that is what authentic Christianity is all about. God knew that we human beings aren't adequate in ourselves to meet the demands life makes upon us so he supplied a power plant--the life of Jesus himself. It is perfectly adequate for the task. Our part is to learn to operate it correctly, then make the choices necessary to steering. When we do, we experience the restfulness of activity in the strength of Another. That is, indeed, a surpassing glory!

Authentic Christianity, by Ray Stedman

<http://www.raystedman.org/authentic-christianity/death-verse-life>

Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47** praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Luke now explains that from this experience, the pouring out of the Spirit on the believers, that the church was born. The church is a community of those who live by the Spirit. And what did they do?

1. They devoted themselves to the Apostle's teaching. They became ardent students of the New Testament. They grew in their understanding of this new life.
2. They fellowshiped. They spent time together every day, seeing each other as united by their new life. They ate and prayed together.
3. The Apostles did miracles.
4. The believers had everything in common. They did not claim their stuff to be theirs, but now understood that everything belonged to God and that everything was meant to be shared. After receiving the gift of salvation, they gave all to God and His people.

The New Community: Acts 2:42-47

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43** Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45**

What have we learned?

Christianity is a Spirit life. It began when Jesus poured out the Spirit. Receiving the Spirit is being a Christian. There is no Christianity without Him. In the next weeks we will see what it means to walk in the Spirit, to allow the Spirit to express Himself through us. Buckle your seatbelts. The Spirit-filled life is never dull. God wants to manifest Himself in a very dark world. He wants to use us to turn the world upside down and to show the world Jesus.

What this Means for Us

The Holy Spirit is the best kept secret of the church. Many churches have things so well organized, so well structured, that there is really no place for the Holy Spirit. He is rarely—if ever—mentioned.

As a result, individual Christians come to see their faith as a religion, a set of beliefs or doctrine. Their Christian life becomes a series of meetings, friendships, etc. It becomes a routine. This is a far cry from what Jesus died for and sent his Spirit to earth for. Jesus died to connect us to God. He sent His Spirit so that we would walk moment by moment in worship and prayer. The Spirit is to be our constant companion, in the same way Jesus was to the Apostles. Our lives are to be in Christ by the Spirit. When we come together at Christian meetings, this is when all our individual fires glow brightly in a blaze of glory.

We need to claim our birthright in Christ, give ourselves over completely to the Spirit each moment of each day. Walking in the presence of God through the Spirit will infuse our lives with a new holiness. We will be able to overcome ungodly habits. We will begin to see the fruits and gifts of the Spirit in our lives. Lastly, we will begin to hear more clearly from God and may see His power manifested through us for healing or even miracles. Remember, Christianity is walking in the Spirit.

Lastly, notice Peter's competence with the Old Testament. If we are going to reach our generation, we have to know the gospel and what God has done to bring His Christ. We need to know the story.

Acts 2: Section 1: Read Acts 2:1-13

This chapter is where the disciples get plugged in, where they receive the Spirit of God who is the force behind life in Christ. They were told by Jesus to stay in Jerusalem and to wait for the coming of the Spirit.

In the Old Testament the presence of God came down into the tabernacle and temple. The fire comes down from heaven and then distributes itself over the believers. They are the new temple of God. Whereas before people had to go to the temple to worship, now they have God's presence with them 24/7.

In the Spirit the believers speak in the tongues of all the different nations assembled there. It is the reversal of the Tower of Babel. Everyone hears of the acts of God in their own tongue.

1. Why does the fire come onto the disciples? When has this happened before in the Bible? How does this connect with what Jesus told the Apostles in the last chapter?
2. What is your experience with the Holy Spirit? Have you ever experienced the Spirit in a powerful way? Describe it.
3. What comes from experiencing the Spirit? How does He affect our relationship with God? How does He affect our Worship? How does He impact our daily lives? What can we do to experience the presence of God through the Holy Spirit at all times? If there are times we do not experience the Spirit, what are we doing to push Him away?

Section 2: Read Acts 2: 14-26

Peter explains what the people are witnessing using the Scriptures. He shows that the Spirit being poured out was foretold by Joel. He shows that David spoke of the Lord who would not see decay. He drives the point home by explaining that this Jesus, who they had just crucified has been made both Lord and Christ.

The people, the same who were calling for Jesus' crucifixion, now are cut to the heart. They ask the Apostles what they can do. Peter explains that they must repent and be baptized and that God will give to them the gift of the Holy Spirit. The people respond to the message, 3000 of them being added to the disciples.

1. Notice Peter's command of the Old Testament and his keen ability to explain what the people are seeing from Scripture. What are you doing in your daily life to prepare you for encounters you might have where members of your oikos were curious about your Christian life? What could you do?
2. Peter's message centers on the Death and Resurrection of Jesus and His exalted position at the right hand of God. What do these things mean to you? How would your life be different if these things were not there?
3. Peter declares that Jesus is both Lord and Christ. What do these titles mean to you?
4. The Jews repent and turn to Christ. How did you come to Christ? Share your testimony.