

The
Acts
of the Apostles



THE CHURCH IS BUILT
ON THE FINISHED WORK
OF JESUS AND FILLED BY
THE HOLY SPIRIT

ACTS 2:1-41

THE CHURCH

- In one of the most dramatic passages of the New Testament, we witness God gathering to Himself the very beginnings of His Church.
- The early Christ-followers demonstrated their obedience to Jesus' instructions as they waited after His ascent, and now Jesus does what He promised He would do.
- He sends the Spirit to be with His disciples as they bring the Gospel to all of the world.

THE CHURCH

- Jesus preached a Gospel of repentance and salvation while employing signs and wonders to confirm God's authority.
- The disciples are sent out to preach the same message while drawing on the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to strengthen and multiply their witness.

DIVERSE PEOPLE ARE
GATHERED BY THE
SPIRIT TO BE UNIFIED

ACTS 2:1-21

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (1-4)

- Luke describes an incredible movement of God that occurs as the followers of Jesus meet on the Jewish holiday of Pentecost (verse 1).
- Verse 2 - Luke speaks of a loud, rushing sound similar to that of a violent wind, and in verse 3 Luke describes an image like fire appearing over the heads of all the disciples.
- Verse 4 - the disciples also begin to speak in other languages.

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (1-4)

- Both Old Testament examples use similar imagery to describe the events.
- Notice that both of these examples demonstrate God's filling a place of worship with His presence.
- In John 4:24, however, Jesus speaks of God's desire to move worship directly into the hearts of His people rather than providing restricted access to Himself through a single building or location.

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (1-4)

- This moment is so spectacular because it demonstrates God's presence coming to dwell among His people in the presence of the nations.
- This is not the first time in Israel's history when God's presence came to dwell among His people, and Luke's choice of language is not accidental.
- There are two Old Testament examples that are similar to this:

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (1-4)

- Old Testament examples;
 - God “moved Himself” into the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34–38).
 - God “took residence” within Israel’s temple (2 Chronicles 7:1–3).

FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (1-4)

- Because of the victory Jesus gained over sin and death, God can now dwell directly within His people (through the Holy Spirit).
- We have become God's new temple of worship.
- In verse 4 Luke makes sure to point out that it is the new indwelling of the Holy Spirit that sparks this incredible event.

DIVERSE CROWD (5-13)

- Here, Luke describes the incredibly diverse crowd of people who witness the events.
- Not only has God moved in a supernaturally visible way, but the disciples' behavior is being displayed before a crowd of various languages from “every nation under heaven” (verse 5).
- Incredibly, the crowds are able to understand the gospel message in their own languages.

DIVERSE CROWD (5-13)

- Verses 12-13 show the two opposing reactions from the people:
 - In verse 12, many are amazed and seek further answers regarding these miraculous acts of God.
 - In verse 13 other members of the crowd ignore the supernatural events happening before their eyes and simply mock the disciples for drinking too much wine.



PETER'S SERMON (14-21)

- Luke describes the apostle Peter standing in front of the crowd and defending a careful explanation of the work God is accomplishing among His Church.
- In verses 16–21, Peter quotes from a specific prophecy by the prophet Joel.
- The idea of God's Spirit had long been a part of Israel's relationship with God, but it did not have the immediacy that was accomplished at Pentecost.

PETER'S SERMON (14-21)

- Israel's prophetic voices longed for the day when God would give Himself to His people in a new way that supernaturally empowered them to know Him, love Him, and walk in obedience to Him.
- This longing was a theme of many prophets, including Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.
- Peter is now testifying to the fact that God has accomplished what He promised.

PETER'S SERMON (14-21)

- In verses 16-21, the prophecy Peter quotes from provides information about all the people God's Spirit will impact, including both genders (sons and daughters, men and women), all stages of life (young and old), and the two standard economic statuses (servants and free).
- We might think that striving for equality in our churches is a modern movement, but God has long promised equal access to His presence by His Spirit.

PETER'S SERMON (14-21)

- There are no other events in the course of human history like those recorded in Acts 2:1–21.
- Yes, throughout the Bible God moved in tangible ways to demonstrate His presence with His people, but until the Day of Pentecost after Jesus' return to heaven, mankind is not given immediate and intimate access to the very being of God Himself.

PETER'S SERMON (14-21)

- This groundbreaking closeness is an essential mark of the Church, and as Christians, we should be mindful of our role as God's holy temple on earth.
- We only exist as the Church inasmuch as we are filled and united by His Spirit across all of our temporary, earthly divisions.

THE CHURCH EXISTS TO
CONFIRM AND
CONTINUE THE MISSION
OF JESUS

ACTS 2:22-41

MISSION OF THE CHURCH (22-24)

- As Peter continues to preach to the crowds, one can't help but be amazed by the fiery passion that burns in his words.
- Not only is Peter confident in the fulfilled promise of God's Spirit but he also is confident that God has revealed the full story of salvation in Jesus Christ.
- He does not hold back from confronting the consciences of those who have currently rejected Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah.

MISSION OF THE CHURCH (22-24)

- In these three verses, Peter offers a concise history of Jesus' mission on earth, summarizing all that he has personally witnessed over the past three years.
- With confidence, Peter attributes all of Jesus' life to the sovereign direction of God's will, even Jesus' suffering and death: (a) "which God did" (b) "by God's deliberate plan" (c) "God raised him from the dead".

MISSION OF THE CHURCH (22-24)

- It is this belief that gives Peter confidence in the victorious Resurrection and reign of Jesus as king.
- It is amazing to consider the personal transformation Peter has undergone since he was rebuked by Jesus (Matthew 16:23) or denied his relationship with him.
- Peter has witnessed the glorious confirmation of all Jesus did and taught, and now he is filled with the Holy Spirit, fueling him to begin sharing his testimony of the Gospel of Jesus.

PSALM 16 (25-28)

- Peter continues to quote from Hebrew scripture, referencing Psalm 16 (vv. 25-28) and Psalm 110 (vv. 34-35).
- He digs deep into Israel's collection of inspired writings, inspired himself by the indwelling Spirit of God, and continues teaching with great clarity how the death and resurrection of Jesus confirms his true nature of Savior and Messiah.

PSALM 16 (25-28)

- The identity of Jesus was often a subject of speculation among those who followed him.
- People were in awe of His authority and His miraculous healings, but rarely did their admiration penetrate into their hearts to stir repentance.
- With these Psalms, Peter drives home the message that they have all just borne witness to the fulfillment of God on earth.

DAVID'S WORDS (29-33)

- As Peter concludes in verses 29-33, if David himself was confirmed to have died and been buried in a grave, how could his writings claim so confidently a miraculous ascension from the grave to the authoritative right hand of God?
- No person in history had ever demonstrated this sovereign power until Jesus, whom Peter passionately argues to be the fulfillment of these prophecies.

PSALM 110 (34-36)

- Peter purposefully includes his audience in the story, reminding them earlier that they were the ones who ultimately rejected Jesus and sent Him to be nailed to a cross (v. 22-23).
- As he nears the conclusion of his sermon, he makes it very clear how great God's kindness was toward the people who rejected Him.
- God sent a Savior to be crucified by the very ones He came to save (v. 36).

CROWD'S RESPONSE (37-41)

- The diverse crowd displays similar responses to Peter's sermon that they gave to the initial events of Pentecost (vv. 12–13), which are also very similar to previous responses to Jesus' sermons.
- In verse 37, many experience conviction, while verse 41 reveals that others do not respond with repentance.
- Some are moved to a state of awe or repentance, while others react with disdain and scorn.

CROWD'S RESPONSE (37-41)

- In verses 38-40, Peter reminds them that the forgiveness of sins is for “all who are far off” and walks them through a response of repentance, baptism, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.
- Peter extends a loving invitation to the crowds to come believe in the Messiah who can save them and bring them into the family of God.
- Luke records the results: three thousand more people join God’s fledgling, Spirit-filled Church.

CROWD'S RESPONSE (37-41)

- The message of the Gospel, of mankind's great need to be rescued from a life of sin and rebellion, can either be offensive or offer relief, depending on the state of one's heart.
- As we continue today to join Peter and the disciples' mission to share the Gospel, we must press on no matter what reactions we receive.
- We must trust that God is already working in peoples' hearts to clarify their position before Him.

APPLICATION:

FIVE MARKS OF A TRUE CHURCH

PENTECOST

- Pentecost means “fifty” and took place 50 days after the feast of First Fruits.
- First Fruits was the beginning of the barley harvest, and Pentecost was the celebration of the beginning of the wheat harvest.
- Since 50 equals seven weeks, it was also known as a “week of weeks” and therefore was sometimes called the Feast of Weeks.

PENTECOST

- Pentecost was a pilgrimage festival - that meant that according to Jewish law, all the adult Jewish men would come to Jerusalem during this celebration.
- Pentecost was also a holiday - that meant that no significant work was to be done, school was out, shops were closed.
- Pentecost was a time of sacrifices - the High Priest would take two loaves of freshly baked wheat bread and offer them before the Lord.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

- A true church is a united church - Acts 2:1 - on the day of Pentecost, they were all together. Some translations say “they were with one accord.”
- They even held all things in common (Acts 2:44-46) because of their love for each other.
- Luke records that they also ate together and cooked their meals together (Acts 2:46).
- God was adding to their number daily.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

- A true church is a praying church - Acts 1:14 - “they all joined together constantly in prayer.”
- Who is the “they” in this verse? It included the disciples and apostles as well as the women (such as Mary, the mother of Jesus) and the brothers of Jesus.
- How long did they pray? It appears from the passage that they prayed together for ten days. Out of that prayer time came unity.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

- A true church is a Spirit-filled church - Acts 2:4 - “all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.”
- What is the secret to the power of the early church? the secret is that they were filled with the Spirit.
- Peter tells his audience that this was the fulfillment of what was spoken by the prophet Joel - “God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.”

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

- A true church is a gospel-preaching church - We read in Acts 2:22 what a gospel message looks like as Peter preaches the first evangelistic sermon.
- What is the response? We read that 3,000 were saved.
- Why was the message so effective? Acts 4:31 says they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

- A true church is an international church - Acts 2:9-11 provides a list of those who were in Jerusalem that day.
- Luke makes a circular list (east, north, west, then southwest, then southeast). These Jewish men are from most of the known world at that time.
- After they were saved and baptized, they went back to Crete, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Rome.

