

Abounding Grace Christian Church

The Acts of the Holy Spirit through the Church – Part 7

I. Exposition of Chapter Two - (Continued).

A. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Verses 14-40).

1. Verses 14-15 - Peter begins his sermon.

- a. Verse 14 – **“But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raises his voice and said to them, ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.’”**

- 1) Peter begins to address the crowd and answer the question they asked, **“Whatever could this mean?” (verse 12).**
- 2) Again, like we saw in **1:15**, Peter takes the lead, representing the other eleven. Take note, this verse also confirms that Matthias was now counted as one of the eleven, taking Judas' place (cf. **1:24-26**).
- 3) It also seems obvious that the speaking in tongues stopped when Peter began to preach. It would have been out of order for the believers to keep praising God in tongues.

“With the confusion, it was time for the tongues to stop. They had blessed the believer, been a sign to the unbelieving crowd, but did not and could not do the Spirit's work of convincing the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Only the believers really received anything from the experience up to this point. They were filled. The Spirit who caused them to glorify God in other languages must also have revealed the same truths to their own hearts, so that their joy and emotion rose out of new appreciation of God and Christ.”¹

- 4) Notice also that Peter **“raised his voice”**. Unlike prior to receiving the Baptism with the Holy Spirit where he was afraid (cf. **Matthew 26:69-75**), Peter now speaks boldly, in the Temple! Surely he had received power to be a witness (**Acts 1:8**).
- 5) Dr. Stanley Horton makes a very interesting commentary on this message that Peter preaches here:

“The word used for this speaking is from the same verb used of the speaking in tongues in Acts 2:4. It suggests that Peter spoke in his own language (Aramaic) as the Spirit enabled him. In other words, what follows is not a sermon in the ordinary sense of the word. Certainly Peter did not sit down and figure out three points. Rather, this was a spontaneous manifestation of the gift of prophecy (I Cor.12:10; 14:3).”²

- a) The word **“prophecy”** means; **“the capacity or ability to utter inspired messages”³** Another definition states; **“a discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden; especially by foretelling future events.”⁴** (cf. I Corinthians 14:3).

- b. Verse 15 – **“For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.”** – First, Peter refutes the suggestion that they were drunk. It was **“...the third hour of the day.”** A Jewish day began at 6:00 a.m. so it was only 9:00 in the morning.

2. Verses 16-21 - Peter quotes the prophet Joel. (Joel 2:28-32).

- a. Verse 16 – **“But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:”** - In order to address this Jewish audience, Peter by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, appeals to the Scripture of which they would have been familiar with.
- b. This is an example of the need to have every subjective experience judged by the Word of God. This doesn't mean every single outward manifestation must be mentioned specifically in the Word of God but it does mean that it must never contradict Scripture or the nature of God which is revealed in Scripture.
- c. Sometimes Christians have the wrong notion that if the Holy Spirit is moving, we don't need the Word. That's not the case! It's the Word and Spirit working together in that order!

¹Stanley M. Horton, *What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1976), 144.

²Stanley M. Horton, *Acts: A Logion Press Commentary* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2001), 65.

³Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 440.

⁴Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House., 1977)

“Peter addresses the crowd beginning with the words, ‘This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel’ (KJV, Acts 2:16). ‘This’ is the phenomena of wind and fire and, more particularly, the disciples’ speaking ‘with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.’ ‘That’ is the ancient oracle of Joel predicting the outpouring of the Spirit in the age of restoration. Thus, the Pentecost event is the fulfillment of Joel’s promise.”⁵

- d. As Stronstad points out, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost is the fulfillment of what the prophet Joel prophesied. It is also noteworthy to mention, as Stronstad did, that Joel predicts this outpouring in the context of restoration. With this in mind, it can be easily seen that the birth of the Church was the beginning of an age of restoration. Jesus Christ came to restore humanity to a relationship with God and, of course, the power of the Holy Spirit would be essential to this plan being fulfilled.
- e. **Verse 17 – “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.”**

1) The phrase **“last days”** is usually understood as the entire period from the first coming to the second coming of Christ.⁶ Others say they started at the Ascension of Christ. **Either way, we are living in the last days (cf. Hebrews 1:2).**

“From this we can see that the Holy Spirit recognizes the entire Church Age as ‘last days’ to be characterized by His powerful working.”⁷

2) **“...says God...”** – Always keep in mind this is God speaking. We could say this too is the **“promise of the Father”** given through the prophet Joel.

3) **“...I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh...”** – This is in a nutshell the answer to the people’s question. The things they’re witnessing is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

“The first and main theme of the prophecy is that God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all people, i.e. upon all kinds of people and not just upon the prophets, kings and priests, as had been the case in Old Testament times.”⁸ (cf. I Peter 2:9; I Corinthians 14:1, 31, 39)

4) **“...your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.”**

a) Some may, understandably, wonder why **“tongues”** is not mentioned in this prophecy. I. Howard Marshall gives the following explanation:

“Since tongues could be broadly described as a kind of prophecy, this passage provided the nearest equivalent to tongues in Old Testament phraseology...”⁹

b) Dr. Horton adds:

“Evidently, Peter, through the Spirit, saw that tongues when understood are the equivalent of prophecy (1 Cor. 14:5-6). In the Bible, to prophecy means to speak for God as His spokesman, or ‘mouth’ (cf. Exod. 4:15-16; 7:1).”¹⁰

c) Also in this portion of the prophecy, the Spirit of God is showing that gender doesn’t make any difference and age doesn’t make any difference.

d) Regarding **“dreams”** and **“visions”**, some believe that these are different expressions of the same thing. Horton suggests, **“Old men dreaming (prophetic) dreams and young men seeing (prophetic) visions is a further emphasis on the removal of limitations The distinction between dreams and visions here is not significant, since the Old Testament often uses the two words interchangeably.”¹¹ (cf. 9:10-16; 10:1-6; 10:9-15; 16:9-10**

- f. **Verse 18 – “And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy.”** – This shows that there would also be no social distinctions. God doesn’t show partiality!

⁵Roger Stronstad, *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. 1984.), 55.

⁶Charles C. Ryrie, *Basic Theology: Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 536.

⁷Horton, *Acts*, 67.

⁸I. Howard Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 73.

⁹Ibid.1

¹⁰Horton, *Acts*, 67-68.

¹¹Horton, *What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit*, 56.