

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 34

Pentecost

Pentecost

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective This lesson will show the students how the Church began and what the Church is through studying what happened on Pentecost in Acts 2.

Key Verses

Acts 2—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Acts 2:42

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, John 14:16-17a.

On the board, draw a church building, a tent, a house, and a school. Ask the students to identify the church. After they answer, tell them that actually, any one of these places can be a church because the Church is not actually a place. The Church is the name for the people who follow and believe the Lord.

Ask them if they know how the Church began. Today, we will discover the how the Church began and what it is.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

After describing the selection of a new apostle, Matthias, to replace Judas, Acts picks up in chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost, a Jewish feast when Jews from all over the world would gather in Jerusalem. The apostles were assembled together when suddenly the sound of a mighty wind came from heaven, and the Holy Spirit in the appearance of tongues of fire filled them, enabling them to speak in other languages. The Jewish people from all over the world were astonished that these men from Galilee were able to speak their native language and began to debate what this meant.

Then Peter arose and gave a sermon explaining that this miraculous event was part of God's promise to pour out His Holy Spirit one day. He also told them that Jesus, the One whom they crucified, was God's promised Messiah and Savior (this lesson will not go into detail about the contents of Peter's sermon). When the people heard this, they were convicted and asked Peter what they should do. Peter urged them to repent and be baptized, and 3000 people gave their lives to the Lord that day. Immediately, this group formed a community dedicated to the things Peter taught, as well as prayer, fellowship, and the breaking of bread (vs. 42). This community took care of one another financially and regularly met together both in the temple and at each other's houses. To finish, we are told that every day, the Lord was adding more people to the church.

LOOK

During Christ's earthly ministry, the disciples were able to follow Jesus quite literally. While He was often swarmed by crowds, His core group of followers, which included the twelve disciples and perhaps a few others, was quite small and would follow Him wherever He went. Last week, however, we saw that His earthly ministry had ended and He had returned to heaven. Naturally, the disciples had to figure out what was next. How do you follow Jesus when He isn't physically walking around anymore? They discovered their answer in today's story: the Church.

The Church is the community of people who follow Jesus. While we often think of the Church as a building, it actually refers to the people, no matter where they meet. The Church can meet in a fancy steeple or in a tent, or even outside, and it is still the Church. Today, the Church exists all over the world. This Sunday, billions of Christian will meet with other believers to be a part of the Church. In today's story, we find out that this worldwide Body began when Peter and the small group of apostles received the power of the Holy Spirit and saw 3000 people turn to Jesus.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

Today, there are many different kinds of churches in the world that do all kinds of different things. Some of these things are biblical, but others unfortunately are not. Verse 42 shows us some of the key things that a church should do. The early church learned, believed, and taught what the apostles taught. These teachings are found in the Bible. All churches should be committed to studying God's Word. They also were committed to fellowship, or developing relationships with one another that helped them grow in their walks with the Lord. The people we meet with at church should not just be people we see once a week. They should be a part of our lives. The early Church broke bread together, which may refer to communion. Finally, they emphasized prayer. Any Church that is pleasing to God will be spend lots of time in prayer.

The Church is more than just a good place for Christians to go. The Church is to be a central part of every Christian's life. Perhaps many of the kids don't like going to church and only attend because their parents make them go. They might think that church is boring. However, for the believer, going to church means going to meet the God of the universe and be with the family of God. What could be better than that? For kids, church can be a place where they get to learn more about God, make friends with other Christians their own age, and pray for and encourage other believers in their faith.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Acts 2:42.

Go over the description of the things that churches are supposed to do. Ask the class if we do these things in this church.

Pray: Thank Jesus for providing the Church for us. Ask Him to help us be a part of the Body of Christ.

Parent Question: How does the Church help us to grow in our walk with the Lord?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Acts 2 by David Guzik

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS POURED OUT ON THE CHURCH

A. The initial experience of the filling of the Holy Spirit.

1. ([Acts 2:1-4a](#)) The disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

- a. **The Day of Pentecost:** This was a Jewish feast held 50 days after Passover. It celebrated the firstfruits of the wheat harvest.
- i. In the Jewish rituals of that time, the first sheaf reaped from the barley harvest was presented to God at Passover. But at Pentecost, the firstfruits of the wheat harvest were presented to God; therefore, Pentecost is called *the day of the firstfruits* ([Numbers 28:26](#)).
- ii. Jewish tradition also taught that **Pentecost** marked the day when the Law was given to Israel. The Jews sometimes called **Pentecost** *zman matan torah*, or “the season of the giving of the law.”
- iii. On the Old Testament **Day of Pentecost** Israel received the Law; on the New Testament **Day of Pentecost** the Church received the Spirit of Grace in fullness.
- iv. “It was the best-attended of the great feasts because traveling conditions were at their best. There was never a more cosmopolitan gathering in Jerusalem than this one.” (Hughes)
- v. [Leviticus 23:15-22](#) gives the original instructions for the celebration of Pentecost. It says that two loaves of *leavened* bread were to be waved before the Lord by the priest as part of the celebration. “Were there not two loaves? Not only shall Israel be saved, but the multitude of the Gentiles shall be turned unto the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Spurgeon)
- b. **When the Day of Pentecost had fully come:** It was now 10 days after the time Jesus ascended to heaven ([Acts 1:3](#)), and since Jesus commanded them to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- i. The disciples were not strangers to the person and work of the Holy Spirit.
- The disciples saw the Holy Spirit continually at work in the ministry of Jesus.
- The disciples experienced something of the power of the Spirit as they stepped out and served God ([Luke 10:1-20](#)).
- The disciples heard Jesus promise a new, coming work of the Holy Spirit ([John 14:15-18](#)).
- The disciples received the Holy Spirit in a new way after Jesus finished His work on the cross and instituted the New Covenant in His blood ([John 20:19-23](#)).
- The disciples heard Jesus command them to wait for a promised baptism of the Holy Spirit that would empower them to be witnesses ([Acts 1:4-5](#)).
- ii. They waited until **the Day of Pentecost had fully come**, but they didn’t know ahead of time how long

they would have to wait. It would be easy for them to think it would come the same afternoon Jesus ascended to heaven; or after 3 days, or 7 days. But they had to wait a full 10 days, until **the Day of Pentecost had fully come**.

iii. The only possible Scriptural precedent for this might be [Jeremiah 42:7](#): *Ten days later the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah*. But who would have suspected that? God used this time to break them down and then to build them up. We can imagine how their patience and kindness and compassion was tested during this time, yet they all stayed together.

iv. What this passage tells us about the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to us.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit is worth waiting for.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit comes as He wills, often not according to our expectation.

The gift of the Holy Spirit can come upon not only individuals, but also upon groups (see also [Acts 2:4](#), [4:31](#), [10:44](#)).

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is often given as God deals with the flesh and there is a dying to self.

v. What this passage does *not* tell us about the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is given according to formula.
- We earn the gift of the Holy Spirit by our seeking.

c. **They were all with one accord in one place**: They were gathered together sharing the same heart, the same love for God, the same trust in His promise, and the same geography.

i. Before we can be filled, we must recognize our emptiness; by gathering together for prayer, in obedience, these disciples did just that. They recognized they did not have the resources in themselves to do what they could do or should do; they had to instead rely on the work of God.

d. **Suddenly there came a sound from heaven**: The association of the sound of a **rushing mighty wind**, filling the **whole house**, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is unusual. But it probably has connection with the fact that in both the Hebrew and Greek languages, the word for *spirit* (as in *Holy Spirit*) is the same word for *breath* or **wind** (this also happens to be true in Latin). Here, the **sound from heaven** was the sound of the Holy Spirit being poured out on the disciples.

i. The **sound** of this fast, **mighty wind** would make any of these men and women who knew the Hebrew Scriptures think of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

In [Genesis 1:1-2](#), it is the Spirit of God as the breath/wind of God, blowing over the waters of the newly created earth.

In [Genesis 2:7](#), it is the Spirit of God as the breath/wind of God, blowing life into newly created man.

In [Ezekiel 37:9-10](#), it is the Spirit of God as the breath/wind of God, moving over the dry bones of Israel bringing them life and strength.

ii. This single line tells us much about how the Holy Spirit moves.

- Suddenly**: Sometimes God moves suddenly.
- Sound**: It was real, though it could not be touched; it came by the ears.
- From heaven**: It wasn't of earth; not created or manipulated or made here.
- Mighty**: Full of force, coming with great power.

e. **There appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and one sat upon each of them:** These **divided tongues, as of fire**, appearing over each one, were also unusual. It probably should be connected with John the Baptist's prophecy that Jesus would *baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire* ([Matthew 3:11](#)).

i. The idea behind the picture of **fire** is usually purification, as a refiner uses fire to make pure gold; or fire can burn away what is temporary, leaving only what will last. This is an excellent illustration of the principle that the filling of the Holy Spirit is not just for abstract power, but for *purity*.

ii. In certain places in the Old Testament, God showed His special pleasure with a sacrifice by lighting the fire for it Himself — that is, fire from heaven came down and consumed the sacrifice. The experience of the followers of Jesus on Pentecost is another example of God sending fire from heaven to show His pleasure and power, but this time, it descended upon *living sacrifices* ([Romans 12:1](#)).

iii. The Holy Spirit **sat upon each of them**. "The word 'sat' has a marked force in the New Testament. It carries the idea of a *completed preparation*, and a certain *permanence of position and condition*." (Pierson)

iv. Under the Old Covenant, the Holy Spirit rested on God's people more as a *nation*, that is, Israel. But under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit rests upon God's people as *individuals* — the tongues of fire **sat upon each of them**. This strange phenomenon had never happened before and would never happen again in the pages of the Bible, but was given to emphasize this point: that the Spirit of God was present with and in and upon *each individual*.

f. **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit:** Essentially, the **rushing mighty wind** and the **tongues, as of fire**, were only unusual, temporary phenomenon, which accompanied the true gift — being **filled with the Holy Spirit**.

i. While it would be wrong to expect a **rushing mighty wind** or **tongues, as of fire**, to be present today when the Holy Spirit is poured out, we can experience the true gift. We, just as they, can be **all filled with the Holy Spirit**.

ii. But we should do what the disciples did before and during their filling with the Holy Spirit.

- The disciples were filled *in fulfillment of a promise*.
- They were filled as they *received in faith*.
- They were filled *in God's timing*.
- They were filled *as they were together in unity*.
- They were filled *in unusual ways*.

iii. This coming and filling of the Holy Spirit was so good, so essential for the work of the community of early Christians, that Jesus actually said that it was *better* for Him to leave the earth bodily so He could send the Holy Spirit ([John 16:7](#)).

2. ([Acts 2:4b-13](#)) The phenomenon of speaking in tongues.

And began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God." So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?" Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

a. **And began to speak with other tongues:** In response to the filling of the Holy Spirit, those present (not only the twelve apostles) **began to speak with other tongues**. These were languages that they were never taught, and they spoke these languages, speaking **as the Spirit gave them utterance**.

b. **Devout men, from every nation under heaven:** The multitude from many nations gathered in Jerusalem because of the Feast of Pentecost. Many of these were the same people who gathered in Jerusalem at the last feast, Passover, when an angry mob demanded the execution of Jesus.

c. **And when this sound occurred:** A crowd quickly gathered, being attracted by **this sound**, which was either the sound of the *rushing mighty wind* or the sound of speaking in **other tongues**. When the crowd came, they heard the Christians speaking in their own foreign languages. Apparently, the Christians could be heard from the windows of the upper room, or they went out onto some kind of balcony or into the temple courts.

i. Not many homes of that day could hold 120 people. It is far more likely that this upper room was part of the temple courts, which was a huge structure, with porches and colonnades and rooms. The crowd came from people milling about the temple courts.

d. **We hear them speaking in our tongues the wonderful works of God:** This is what the crowd heard the Christians speak. From this remarkable event, **all** were **amazed and perplexed**, but **some** used it as a means of honest inquiry and asked, **"Whatever could this mean?"** **Others** used it as an excuse to dismiss the work of God and said, **"They are full of new wine."**

i. **Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?** People from Galilee (**Galileans**) were known to be uncultured and poor speakers. This was all the more reason to be impressed with their ability to speak eloquently in other languages. "Galileans had difficulty pronouncing gutturals and had the habit of swallowing syllables when speaking; so they were looked down upon by the people of Jerusalem as being provincial." (Longenecker)

ii. They all spoke in different tongues, yet there was a unity among the believers. "Ever since the early church fathers, commentators have seen the blessing of Pentecost as a deliberate and dramatic reversal of the curse of Babel." (Stott)

e. **Whatever could this mean?** What are we to make of the phenomenon of speaking in tongues? Speaking in tongues has been the focal point for significant controversy in the church. People still ask the same question these bystanders asked on the day of Pentecost.

i. There is no controversy that God, at least at one time, gave the church the gift of tongues. But much of the controversy centers on the question, "what is God's *purpose* for the gift of tongues?"

ii. Some think that the gift of tongues was given primarily as a sign to unbelievers ([1 Corinthians 14:21-22](#)) and as a means to miraculously communicate the gospel in diverse languages. They believe there is no longer the need for this sign, so they regard tongues as a gift no longer present in the church today.

iii. Others argue that the gift of tongues, while a sign to unbelievers as stated by [1 Corinthians 14:21-22](#), are *primarily* a gift of communication between the believer and God ([1 Corinthians 14:2, 13-15](#)), and is a gift still given by God today.

iv. Many mistakenly interpret this incident in [Acts 2](#), assuming that the disciples used tongues to preach to the gathered crowd. But a careful look shows this idea is wrong. Notice what the people heard the disciples say: **Speaking... the wonderful works of God**. The disciples declared the praises of God, thanking Him with all their might in unknown tongues. The gathered crowd merely *overheard* what the disciples exuberantly declared to God.

v. The idea that these disciples communicated to the diverse crowd in tongues is plainly wrong. The crowd *had* a common language (Greek), and Peter preached a sermon to them in that language! ([Acts 2:14-40](#))

f. **We hear them speaking in our tongues the wonderful works of God:** The gift of tongues *is* a personal language of prayer given by God, whereby the believer communicates with God beyond the limits of

knowledge and understanding ([1 Corinthians 14:14-15](#)).

i. The Gift of Tongues has an important place in the devotional life of the believer, but a small place in the corporate life of the church ([1 Corinthians 14:18-19](#)), especially in public meetings ([1 Corinthians 14:23](#)).

ii. When tongues *is* practiced in the corporate life of the church, it must be carefully controlled, and never without an interpretation given by the Holy Spirit ([1 Corinthians 14:27-28](#)).

iii. The ability to pray in an unknown tongue is not a gift given to every believer ([1 Corinthians 12:30](#)).

iv. The ability to pray in an unknown tongue is *not* the primary or singularly true evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit. This emphasis leads many to seek the gift of tongues (and to counterfeit it) merely to prove to themselves and others that they really are filled with the Holy Spirit.

g. **Began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance:** Was this speaking in tongues in [Acts 2](#) the same *gift of tongues* described in [1 Corinthians 12](#) and [14](#)?

i. Some say we are dealing with two separate gifts. They argue that the 1 Corinthians gift must be regulated and restricted, while the [Acts 2](#) gift can be used any time without regulation. Those who believe they are two separate gifts emphasize that the speech of [Acts 2](#) was immediately recognized by foreign visitors to Jerusalem, while the speech of 1 Corinthians was unintelligible to those present except with a divinely granted gift of interpretation.

ii. However, this doesn't take into account that the differences have more to do with the *circumstances* in which the gifts were exercised than with the gifts *themselves*.

iii. In Jerusalem, the group spoken to was uniquely multi-national and multi-lingual; at feast time (Pentecost), Jews of the dispersion from all over the world were in the city. Therefore, the likelihood that foreign ears would hear a tongue spoken in their language was much greater. On the other hand, in Corinth (though a rather cosmopolitan city itself), the gift was exercised in a local church, with members all sharing a common language (Greek). If one had the same diversity of foreigners visiting the Corinthian church when all were speaking in tongues, it is likely that many would hear members of the Corinthian church **speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God**.

iv. As well, it should never be assumed that each person among the 120 who spoke in tongues on the Day of Pentecost spoke in a language immediately intelligible to human ears present that day. We read they *all... began to speak with other tongues*; therefore there were some 120 individuals speaking in tongues. Since the nations spoken of in [Acts 2:9-11](#) number only fifteen (with perhaps others present but not mentioned), it is likely that many (if not most) of the 120 spoke praises to God in a language that was not understood by someone immediately present. The text simply does not indicate that someone present could understand *each person* speaking in tongues.

v. However, we should not assume those who were not immediately understood by human ears spoke "gibberish," as the modern gift of tongues is sometimes called with derision. They may have praised God in a language completely unknown, yet completely human. After all, what would the language of the Aztecs sound like to Roman ears? Or some may have spoke in a completely unique language given by God and understood by Him and Him alone. After all, communication with God, not man, is the purpose of the gift of tongues ([1 Corinthians 14:2](#)). The repetition of simple phrases, unintelligible and perhaps nonsensical to human bystanders, does not mean someone speaks "gibberish." Praise to God may be simple and repetitive, and part of the whole dynamic of tongues is that it bypasses the understanding of the speaker ([1 Corinthians 14:14](#)), being understood by God and God alone.

vi. All in all, we should regard the gift of [Acts 2](#) and the gift of tongues in 1 Corinthians as the same, simply because the same term is used for both in the original language (*heterais glossais*). Also, the verb translated *gave them utterance* in [Acts 2:4](#) is frequently used in Greek literature in connection with spiritually prompted (ecstatic) speech, not mere translation into other languages.

B. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.

1. ([Acts 2:14-15](#)) Peter begins his sermon.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised 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. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is *only* the third hour of the day."

- a. **Peter, standing up with the eleven:** Peter stood and preached to the crowd as a representative of the whole group of apostles.
 - i. We should notice that the speaking in tongues stopped when Peter began to preach. The Holy Spirit now worked through Peter's preaching and would not work *against* Himself through tongues at the same time.
 - b. **Raised his voice:** There was a remarkable change in Peter. He had courage and boldness that was a complete contrast to his denials of Jesus before being filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - i. On the Day of Pentecost Peter didn't teach as the rabbis in his day usually did, who gathered disciples around them, sat down, and instructed them and any others who might listen. Instead, Peter proclaimed the truth like a herald.
 - ii. This remarkable sermon had no preparation behind it — it was spontaneously given. Peter didn't wake up that morning knowing he would preach to thousands, and that thousands would embrace Jesus in response. Yet we could say that this was a well-prepared sermon; it was prepared by Peter's prior life with God and relationship with Jesus. It flowed spontaneously out of that life, and out of a mind that thought and believed deeply.
 - iii. It is good to remember that what we have in [Acts 2](#) is a small portion of what Peter actually said. [Acts 2:40](#) tells us, *And with many other words he testified and exhorted them*. Like almost all the sermons recorded in the Bible, what we have is a Holy Spirit inspired abridgment of a longer message.
 - c. **For these are not drunk:** Peter deflected the mocking criticism that the disciples were drunk. In that day it was unthinkable that people would be so drunk so early in the day (about 9:00 in the morning).
 - i. Commentator Adam Clarke says that most Jews — pious or not — did not eat or drink until after the **third hour of the day**, because that was the time for prayer, and they would only eat after their business with God was accomplished.
 - d. **These are not drunk:** We shouldn't think that the Christians were acting as if they were drunk. The idea of "being drunk in the Spirit" has no foundation in Scripture; the comment from the mockers on the Day of Pentecost had no basis in reality.
 - i. "Nor, must we add, did the believers' experience of the Spirit's fullness *seem* to them or *look* to others like intoxication, because they had lost control of their normal mental and physical functions. No, the fruit of the Spirit is 'self-control,' not the loss of it." (Stott)

2. ([Acts 2:16-21](#)) Quoting [Joel 2](#), Peter explains the strange events at Pentecost.

"But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

**'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.
And on My menservants and on My maidservants
I will pour out My Spirit in those days;
And they shall prophesy.
I will show wonders in heaven above**

**And signs in the earth beneath:
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
And it shall come to pass
That whoever calls on the name of the LORD
Shall be saved.'**

a. **But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:** In the midst of this great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, among signs and wonders and speaking in tongues, what did Peter do? Essentially, he said, "Let's have a Bible study. Let's look at what **the prophet Joel** wrote."

i. This introduces the first of three Old Testament passages Peter will quote: [Joel 2:28-32](#), [Psalm 16:8-11](#), and [Psalm 110:1](#).

ii. This focus on God's Word did not quench the moving of the Holy Spirit; it fulfilled what the Holy Spirit wanted to do. All the signs and wonders and speaking in tongues were preparing for this work of God's Word.

iii. Unfortunately, some people set the Word against the Spirit. They almost think it's more spiritual if there is no Bible study. Sadly, this is often due to the weak and unspiritual teaching of some who teach the Bible.

b. **The prophet Joel:** This quotation from [Joel 2:28-32](#) focuses on God's promise to pour out His Spirit on all flesh. What happened on the day of Pentecost was a *near* fulfillment of that promise, with the *final* fulfillment coming in the last days (which Peter had good reason to believe he was in).

i. Joel mostly prophesied about judgment that was coming to ancient Israel. Yet in the midst of the many warnings of judgment, God also gave several words of promise — promises of future blessing, like this one that announces an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

c. **It shall come to pass in the last days:** The idea of the **last days** is that they are the times of the Messiah, encompassing both His humble coming and His return in glory. Because Jesus had already come in humility, they were aware that His return in glory could be any time.

i. Though there would be some 2,000 years until Jesus returned, until this point, history had been running *towards* the point of the ultimate establishment of God's kingdom on earth. But from this time on, history runs *parallel* to that point, ready at any time for the consummation.

ii. It may also be helpful to see the **last days** as something like a season — a general period of time — more than a specific *period*, such as a week. In the whole span of God's plan for human history, we are in the season of the **last days**.

iii. "Peter did not say of that pentecostal enduement, 'Now *is fulfilled* that which was spoken by the prophet Joel,' but, more guardedly, '*This is that* which was spoken;' that is to say, Joel's words furnish the *explanation* of this first Pentecost, though this does not finish their *fulfillment*." (Pierson)

d. **I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh:** In using the quotation from Joel, Peter explained what these curious onlookers saw — the Holy Spirit poured forth upon the people. Before the Holy Spirit was given in drops, now He is *poured* forth — and **on all flesh**.

i. This was a glorious emphasis on Pentecost. Under the Old Covenant, certain people were filled with the Spirit at certain times for specific purposes. Now, under the New Covenant, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is for all who call upon the name of the LORD, even **menservants** and **maidservants**.

ii. "There had been no provision for, and no promise of, an abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of any Old Testament saint." (Hughes). This changes under the New Covenant.

e. **Whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved:** Peter also used this passage from Joel to an

evangelistic purpose. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit meant that God now offered salvation in a way previously unknown — to **whoever calls on the name of the LORD**, whether they are Jew or Gentile.

i. It would be many years until the gospel was offered to Gentiles, yet Peter’s sermon text announced the gospel invitation by saying, **whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved**.

ii. The idea is expressed in [Proverbs 18:10](#): The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

3. ([Acts 2:22-24](#)) Peter introduces the focus of the sermon: The resurrected Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.”

a. **Men of Israel, hear these words:** Many people would think it would be enough for Peter to stop after the quotation from Joel, considering all we have in it. Joel told us of:

- An outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- Miraculous dreams, visions, and prophecy.
- Signs and wonders regarding the Day of the Lord.
- An invitation to call on the name of the Lord.

i. But it wasn’t enough, because Peter had not yet spoken about the saving work of Jesus on our behalf. Everything until this point had been introduction, explaining the strange things they just saw. Now Peter would bring the essential message.

b. **Men of Israel, hear these words:** This was much as Peter had already said, *let this be known to you, and heed my words* ([Acts 2:14](#)). Peter wanted people to pay attention, and he spoke as if he had something important to say — something some teachers fail to do.

c. **As you yourselves also know:** Peter referred to what these people already knew about Jesus. They already knew of His life and miraculous works. Often in speaking to people about Jesus, we should start with what they *already* know about Him.

d. **Being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God:** Peter knew that Jesus’ death was in the plan of God. At the same time, those who rejected Him and called for His execution were responsible for the actions of their **lawless hands**.

i. Peter did not flinch at saying, “You crucified this Man who God sent.” His first concern was not to please his audience, but to tell them the truth. The Spirit-filled Peter was a different man than the Peter who, a few months before this, denied even knowing Jesus ([Matthew 26:69-75](#)).

e. **It was not possible:** Peter knew that Jesus could not remain bound by death, as explained by the following quotation from [Psalm 16](#). It was not possible that Jesus should remain a victim of the sin and hatred of man; He would certainly triumph over it.

i. **Having loosed the pains of death:** In the phrase **pains of death**, the word **pains** is actually the word for “birth pains.” In this sense, the *tomb* was a *womb* for Jesus.

ii. “It was not possible that the chosen one of God should remain in the grip of death; ‘the abyss can no more hold the Redeemer than a pregnant woman can hold the child in her body.’” (Bruce, quoting Bertram)

4. ([Acts 2:25-33](#)) Quoting [Psalm 16](#), Peter explains the resurrected Jesus.

“For David says concerning Him:

**‘I foresaw the LORD always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’**

“Men *and* brethren, let *me* speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

a. **For David says concerning Him:** Peter recognized that though this Psalm spoke of David, it spoke of someone greater than David — the Messiah, Jesus the Christ. Jesus may have taught Peter this when He instructed the disciples in the Scriptures ([Luke 24:44-45](#)).

b. **Your Holy One:** Jesus bore the full wrath of God on the cross, *as if* He were a guilty sinner, guilty of *all* our sin, even being made sin for us ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)). Yet, that work was an act of holy, giving love for us, so that Jesus Himself did not become a sinner, even though He bore the full *guilt* of our sin.

i. This is the gospel message; that Jesus took our punishment for sin on the cross and remained a perfect Savior through the whole ordeal — *proved* by His resurrection. Apart from the resurrection, we would have no *proof* that Jesus successfully, perfectly, paid for our sins.

c. **Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption:** Because Jesus bore our sin without becoming a sinner, He remained the **Holy One**, even in His death. Since it is incomprehensible that God’s Holy One should be bound by death, the resurrection was absolutely inevitable.

i. Instead of being punished for His glorious work on the cross, Jesus was rewarded, as prophetically described in the Psalm: **You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.**

d. **David... is both dead and buried:** Peter points out that this Psalm cannot be speaking of its human author, **David** — he is dead and remains buried. The Psalm must speak prophetically of the Messiah, Jesus.

e. **This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses:** Jesus of Nazareth, the man they all knew (*as you yourselves also know*, [Acts 2:22](#)), was the one who fulfilled this prophetic Psalm. How did Peter know this? He saw the resurrected Jesus! The basic *evidence* of the resurrection was simply the report of reliable eyewitnesses: **Of which we are all witnesses.**

f. **He poured out this which you now see and hear:** Peter affirms that what the crowd saw was the work of the risen and ascended Jesus, who has sent His Holy Spirit upon His church.

5. ([Acts 2:34-36](#)) Quoting [Psalm 110](#), Peter explains the Divine Messiah.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

**“The LORD said to my Lord,
“Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”**

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

a. **The LORD said to my Lord:** This begins the third Old Testament passage Peter used in his sermon, [Psalm 110:1](#). This verse of the Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament more than any other single verse; either quoted or referred to at least 25 times. In this Psalm, David understood and proclaimed the *deity* of the Messiah.

i. In this Psalm, King David — by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit — recorded that Yahweh, Israel’s covenant God (**The LORD**), spoke to David’s Lord (**my Lord**) as God. Peter used this to show that the Messiah, who is the focus of [Psalm 110](#), is in fact Divine — He is God.

b. **Therefore let all the house of Israel know:** The sermon concludes with a summary. Simply, all Israel should know that even though they crucified Jesus, God has declared Him **both Lord and Christ**.

i. It is as if Peter said, “You were all wrong about Jesus. You crucified Him as if He were a criminal, but by the resurrection, God proved that He is Lord and Messiah.”

ii. When Peter exhorted them *whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved* ([Acts 2:21](#)), there is little doubt who the **Lord** is that he spoke of: **Jesus**.

iii. “That the early Christians meant to give Jesus the title *Lord* in this highest sense of all is indicated by their not hesitating on occasion to apply to him passages of Old Testament scripture referring to Yahweh.” (Bruce)

C. The response to Peter’s preaching.

1. ([Acts 2:37](#)) They respond with a question: **What shall we do?**

Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

a. **Now when they heard this...“What shall we do?”** This was obviously a significant work of the Holy Spirit. The great crowd listening to Peter was deeply moved by Peter’s bold proclamation of the truth. *They* asked Peter how they should respond.

i. It is wrong to think that Peter offered no kind of invitation or challenge for his listeners to respond. [Acts 2:40](#) says, *And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”* Peter clearly did exhort them to respond, and invited his listeners to “*Be saved.*” Nevertheless, the multitude responded with remarkable initiative.

ii. The response of the crowd also helps us to put the events of that Day of Pentecost into perspective. The exercise of the gift of tongues produced nothing in the listeners except for astonishment and mocking. It wasn’t until the gospel was preached that conviction from the Holy Spirit came. This was the work God really wanted to accomplish.

b. **Cut to the heart:** This is a good way of describing the conviction of the Holy Spirit. They now knew that they were responsible for the death of Jesus (as each of us are), and that they had to *do* something in response to this responsibility.

i. Peter had some previous experience with cutting. When Jesus was arrested, Peter cut off the right ear of one of the men who came to arrest Jesus ([John 18:10](#)). All this was an embarrassing mess that Jesus had to clean up. That showed Peter in the flesh, doing the best *he* could with a literal sword of human power.

ii. When the resurrected Jesus changed Peter’s life and when the power of the Holy Spirit had come upon him, he did some much more effective cutting; cutting hearts, opening them to Jesus. This is what Peter could do in the power of the Spirit, doing God’s *best* with the sword of the Spirit, God’s Word. Which sword was more powerful?

c. **Men and brethren, what shall we do?** When God is working on someone’s heart, they *want* to come to

Him; they will act to come to God.

i. It has been said that in normal seasons of Christian work the evangelist seeks the sinner. Yet in times of revival or awakening, things change: the sinner seeks the evangelist. This Day of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#) was one of those great seasons of God's work.

2. ([Acts 2:38-40](#)) Peter invites the multitude to come to Jesus.

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

a. **Then Peter said to them:** This was in response to the question, "*What shall we do?*" Peter must have been pleasantly amazed to see what God had done in this situation. Instead of people wanting to crucify him because of Jesus, thousands of people wanted to trust in Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

b. **Repent, and let every one of you be baptized:** Responding to the question, "*What shall we do?*" Peter gave them something to *do*. This means that we must *do* something to be saved, we must *do* something to follow Jesus; it doesn't just "happen."

i. Peter *did not* say, "There's nothing you can do. If God saves you, you're saved. If God doesn't save you, you'll never be saved." Though it was true that only God could do the saving, the people had to receive through repentance and faith, faith leading to action such as baptism.

c. **Repent:** The first thing Peter told them to *do* is **repent**. To repent does not mean to feel sorry, but it means to change one's mind or direction. They had thought a certain way about Jesus before, considering Him worthy of crucifixion. Now they must turn their thinking around, embracing Jesus as Lord and Messiah.

i. **Repent** sounds like such a harsh word in the mouths of many preachers and in the ears of many listeners, but it is an essential aspect of the gospel. **Repent** has been rightly called "the first word of the gospel."

ii. When John the Baptist preached he said, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!*" ([Matthew 3:2](#)). When Jesus began to preach He said, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" ([Matthew 4:17](#)). Now when Peter began to preach, he started with **repent**.

iii. Repentance must never be thought of as something we must do *before* we can come back to God. Repentance describes what coming to God is. You can't turn *towards* God without turning *from* the things He is against.

iv. In this sense, **repent** is a word of great hope. It says, "You don't have to continue the way you've been going, you can turn to God."

v. "The old-fashioned grace of repentance is not to be dispensed with; there must be sorrow for sin; there must be 'a broken and a contrite heart.' This, God will not despise; but a 'conversion' which does not produce this result, God will not accept as genuine." (Spurgeon)

d. **Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ:** This was the second thing Peter said they must do. For them to **be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** was an expression of their belief and complete trust in Him.

i. Baptism made a clear statement. In that day, Jews were not commonly baptized, only Gentiles who wanted to become Jews. For these Jewish men and women to be baptized showed just how strongly they felt they needed Jesus.

ii. "While baptism with water was the expected symbol for conversion, it was not an indispensable criterion for salvation." (Longenecker)

e. **The promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off:** As they repented and demonstrated faith and obedience by baptism, the gift of the Holy Spirit would be given to them as it was given to the

original group of disciples. Peter also specifically promised that the **promise** of the Holy Spirit would be given to those who believe in all succeeding generations (**all who are afar off**).

i. They saw the glorious work of the Holy Spirit among the disciples, and Peter told them that it was something that these people could take part in; they didn't only have to be observers. And since the promise is for **all who are afar off**, it includes all people up to the present time.

ii. It is also important to note that Peter did not say that the unbelieving, unaware **children** of his listeners should be baptized. He simply said that the promise of **the remission of sins** and the **gift of the Holy Spirit** were for *all* who would repent and believe with active faith, even to coming generations and **all who are afar off, as many as the Lord God will call**.

iii. "That is to say, that great covenant promise, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved,' is meant for you, is meant for your children, is meant for Hottentots, is meant for Hindoos, is meant for Greenlanders, is meant for everybody to whom the Lord's call is addressed." (Spurgeon)

f. **And with many other words he testified and exhorted them:** Peter's sermon didn't end there. He continued to urge the crowd to come to Jesus in repentant surrender.

g. **Be saved from this perverse generation:** Any generation that is responsible for putting Jesus to death is a **perverse generation**. But since *every* generation is responsible for Jesus' death, every generation needs salvation.

3. ([Acts 2:41](#)) The response to Peter's sermon.

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

a. **About three thousand souls were added to them:** This day of Pentecost saw an amazing harvest of souls. The church went from about 120 people to 3,120 people in one day.

i. Think of how this touched lives beyond that one day. Many of the 3,000 were undoubtedly pilgrims who came to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. They expected something special from God, but not anything like this. Many in this crowd went back home, traveling far from Jerusalem, taking the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

b. **Those who gladly received his word were baptized:** Those who believed on Jesus that day did so **gladly**, even making a dramatic statement in baptism. They would not have submitted to baptism unless they were fully convinced of who Jesus was and their great need for Him as a Savior.

i. How could you baptize 3,000 people? There were huge resources of water available on the temple mount, and pools and reservoirs nearby, so it was not difficult to find a place where the baptisms could take place.

ii. God continues to do such great things. After the 1990 Summer Harvest Crusade, there was a mass baptism at Corona del Mar. They couldn't count how many were baptized, but more than 5,000 people attended the event. It was reported as the largest baptism service in American history.

D. The life of these first believers.

1. ([Acts 2:42](#)) The foundation of their Christian life.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

a. **And they continued steadfastly:** On the day of Pentecost the sound of the rushing wind, the tongues of fire, and the conversion of 3,000 were all remarkable events. But the things described in [Acts 2:42](#) were the abiding legacy of God's work.

b. **They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine:** They relied on the apostles to communicate to them who Jesus was and what He had done. They just trusted in Jesus; now they wanted to know more.

i. **Continued steadfastly** uses a Greek verb communicating “a steadfast and single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action.” (Longenecker) There was to be no departure from the **apostles’ doctrine**, because it was the truth of God.

ii. Thankfully, God allows us to sit under the **apostles’ doctrine** — the New Testament record. Every pastor should seek to be unoriginal in the sense that we don’t have our own doctrine, but the **apostles’ doctrine**.

c. **They continued steadfastly in... fellowship**: The ancient Greek word *koinonia* (translated here as **fellowship**) has the idea of association, communion, fellowship, and participation; it means to *share* in something.

i. The Christian life is meant to be full of **fellowship**, of sharing one with another.

- We share the same Lord Jesus.
- We share the same guide for life.
- We share the same love for God
- We share the same desire to worship Him.
- We share the same struggles.
- We share the same victories
- We share the same job of living for Him.
- We share the same joy of communicating the gospel.

d. **They continued steadfastly... in the breaking of bread**: Even living so close to the time when Jesus was crucified, they still never wanted to forget what He did on the cross. How much more important is it for us to never forget?

e. **They continued steadfastly... in prayers**. Whenever God’s work is done, God’s people gather for prayer and worship.

i. “In the Greek the definite article occurs before the word ‘prayer.’ The text actually says, ‘to the prayers.’ They devoted themselves ‘to *the* breaking of bread and to *the* prayers.’ Obviously, that is a reference to something formal — to worship in which the people got together and praised God.” (Boice)

f. **The apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers**: Everything else we read about the power and glory of the early church flows from this foundation of the word, fellowship, remembrance of Jesus’ work on the cross, and prayer.

i. From Luke’s description of the early Christian community, “The educated reader would have got the impression here that the Greek ideal of society had been realized.” (Dictionary of New Testament Theology)

ii. “It is presented as a model church, but this does not mean that it was perfect. A few chapters further on, we are going to find that it was far from perfect.” (Boice)

2. **(Acts 2:43) The presence of the power of God.**

Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

a. **Then fear came upon every soul**: This was evidence of the power of God. One of the greatest, most powerful works God can do is to change the human heart towards a reverent honor of the Lord.

b. **Many signs and wonders were done**: This was evidence of the power of God. Where God is at work, lives will be touched in miraculous ways.

3. **(Acts 2:44-45) Their close hearts and sharing in the common life of Jesus.**

Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

a. **Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common:** With the influx of more than 3,000 believers, most of whom stayed in Jerusalem and didn't have jobs, the family of Christians *had* to share if they were to survive.

i. We shouldn't regard this as an early experiment in communism because it was *voluntary, temporary,* and *flawed* to the extent that the church in Jerusalem was in continual need of financial support from other churches. Also, we don't have any evidence this continued very long.

b. **All who believed were together:** The Jews had a tremendous custom of hospitality during any major feast like Pentecost. Visitors were received into private homes, and no one could charge for giving a bed or a room to a visitor or for supplying their basic needs. The Christians took this tremendous feast-time hospitality and made it an everyday thing.

c. **Sold their possessions and their goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need:** The power of God is evident here because Jesus became much more important to them than their possessions.

4. ([Acts 2:46-47](#)) **The Christian family lived together and grew.**

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

a. **So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house:** The church is meant to worship God and learn His Word together. Yet it is meant to do more; God wants us to share our *lives* with one another.

b. **Praising God and having favor with all the people:** Their Christian experience was daily, joyful and simple — good examples for us to follow.

c. **And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved:** This is God's prescription for church growth. If we take care to follow the example of [Acts 2:42-47a](#), God will take care of growing the church Himself.