



MONDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Acts 2:1-12 & Luke 3:15-23

Plug In...

The people are together in one place, a house. There the house is *filled* with the Holy Spirit. Accompanying this moment is a powerful sound like rushing wind, tongues of fire, and the phenomena of people speaking in different languages (languages they ordinarily didn't know – *cf.* vv.6-12).

Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit to baptise them. Since John the Baptist mentioned it, we've waited for a future baptism by fire and the Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of the impending judgement at the cross as a baptism of fire ([Luke 12:49-58](#)). Here we have a baptism of fire on the first Christians and they are not consumed.

Chew It Over...

The public ask, "What could this mean?" (v.12). How would you answer this?

Notice how God manifests Himself in the Old Testament: [Exodus 19:16-20](#); [Numbers 11:1-3](#); [2 Chronicles 7:1-3](#).

Consider the verbal activity that results from the Spirit being shared from the leader to his team [Numbers 11:16-24](#) (*cf.* [Acts 2:33](#)).

Where is God's Spirit located amongst Israel? What is happening to the first Christians? What did Jesus say was the purpose of the Holy Spirit coming?

Prayer Suggestion

Declare the mighty wonders of God. Praise Him that He has made the body of Christ the place of His dwelling on earth. May God grant the temple of His presence to spread to the ends of the earth.



TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Acts 2:12-21 & Joel 2

Plug In...

Peter explains what is going on for those baffled. In the full sermon ([2:15-40](#)) he links three things together: Jesus is resurrected and ascended so is Lord; Jesus is pouring out the Spirit; and those that call on the name of Jesus will be saved.

The first text Peter uses is from Joel. Here's a brief sketch of God's announcement in [Joel 2](#): the day of judgement is coming which involves fire that no one can withstand (Joel 2:1-2, 11); nevertheless, God will spare His people that repent, the ones who recognise that the small judgement they have experienced (i.e. enemies devouring them, like locusts) was a small but advanced example of the final day of the LORD (Joel 2:18-25); after this restoring of Israel and the beating back of the northern enemy, the Spirit will be poured out on all people (Joel 2:28-29); there is opportunity for anyone who calls on the Lord to be saved (Joel 2:32); then God will judge all nations, sparing only Israel (3:1-3).

Joel's message is that when the Spirit is poured out, a final, yet limited, window of opportunity exists for people to be saved before the final catastrophic *Day of the LORD*.

Chew It Over...

It is unlikely that Peter is splitting the quote in Joel into two times, the first half (re: the Spirit poured out) referring to the present; the second half (re: the cosmic signs) to the future. The final line hits home the whole prophecy of Joel is happening now, so call on the name of the Lord and be saved.

How then are we to understand the cosmic phenomena mentioned? Reflect on these points:

- Jesus' death and resurrection enacted signs and wonders in the heavens and earth ([Matthew 27:45-54](#)).
- The wonders are described as 'fire' and 'cloud' (like at Sinai – [Exodus 19](#)) so might refer to what is actually happening with the rushing wind and tongues of fire.
- The Old Testament has a number of passages that speak of the end-of-the-world, describing the cosmos dissolving, often expressed as the heavenly lights being turned off (e.g. [Isaiah 24:1-6](#); [Haggai 2:6-7](#)). Frequently, the literal picture of the end gets applied figuratively to the historical end of some nations (i.e. judgements that occur before the final big one) . As God judges them within history their lights go out (e.g. Babylon blacks out in [Isaiah 13](#)). Even the end of an individual's life gets illustrated as "lights out" ([Ecclesiastes 12:1-2](#)).

Pulling this all together. Joel 2 indicates the destruction of the world has started. The events that started have involved cosmic phenomena. The first moment was Jesus' death. This started the dissolution of the current world that will end with the whole cosmos wrapped up and everyone within judged. Simultaneously, with Jesus' resurrection the new world begins and is on a trajectory that will supplant totally the old world in some catastrophic final moment. The time between the new world growing into full existence, and the old world sliding away to extinguishment gives a limited window for people to decide which world they want to belong to. We don't know how long this overlap of worlds lasts.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that you live out life with this understanding of reality and the urgency it brings to those around you. By the Holy Spirit may we urge people to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved.



WEDNESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Acts 2:22-36 & Psalm 16, 110

Plug In...

After explaining we're in the prophesied last days and underscoring the urgency of such time, Peter declares that one man was not trapped by death. He quotes Psalm 16, highlighting the verse where David is confident God will not let him experience the destruction that comes after death. Peter is saying David declared, "the Lord will not let me remain dead once I've died".

Because David held on to the promise God had given him ([2 Samuel 7:11-16](#)) he could say this. Peter says this Psalm is fulfilled because one of David's descendants, Jesus, although killed has been raised. And raised, as promised, to be the King of the entire universe! Peter said, if so, then the implication for humankind everywhere is: "Repent and be baptised each one of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins" (v.38).

Chew It Over...

In the biblical picture, physical death is a micro judgement that foretastes the macro judgement of the Day of the Lord. Just like the prophets apply the end-of-world judgement dynamics figuratively to the end of a nation within history, an individual's death is a judgement within their historical life prior to the end of the world judgement they will face.

The only hope of not being abandoned to this destruction is to be found worthy for life with God at the resurrection. Something only possible if one trusts in Jesus' worth in their place, not their own.

It is somewhat easy to publicly talk about God. A bit harder to mention *Jesus*. Even harder to explicitly speak about His resurrection from the dead. We must speak like Peter about Jesus' resurrection and ascension to King of the universe. If someone wants to rise from the dead to eternal life, they need to know about the only one that has risen from death and been placed in the new world to come.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that you witness to the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.



THURSDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Acts 2:37-40

Plug In...

Wrapping up his sermon, Peter presses again on the big implication that stands if the last days have begun (see quote from Joel, [Acts 2:17-21](#)).

The promise of salvation is ready and available for the audience of Israel standing before Peter, and those far from Israel that the Lord will call.

Like when Moses called the second generation to covenant renewal, it is made clear that even people who are not born, not present at the day of Pentecost, have the same access. The event of Jesus dying and rising and pouring out His Spirit, is an event in history that brings effects for the future generations.

Chew It Over...

Review how urgently and strongly you go about pleading with the generation around you? Do you feel their lostness and impending doom?

Prayer Suggestion

Pray for a heart that sees people as they truly are. Ask God for empowerment of the Spirit to plead with those around us to repent and turn to Jesus.



FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Acts 2:41-47 & Galatians 5:13-26

Plug In...

The phenomena of the Holy Spirit has been poured out. With the initial 120 of the early church, the effect is visible, and the praising of God is heard. Peter preaches an explanation that this is the promise of the last days occurring right now – the new age has begun.

Luke indicates a further 3,000 people accepted the message and were baptised.

Chew It Over...

It is possible that the description “they were baptised” is denoting they were baptised in the Holy Spirit (i.e. received it) rather than describing they got water-baptised after believing (even though that clearly is something early believers did subsequent to becoming a Christian – e.g. [Acts 8:27-38](#)). Peter explains from Joel 2 that the Spirit has been given. The 3,000 new Christians, now with the Spirit, are described with new character-based behaviour. Read verses 41-47 again. What are the marks of a Spirit-filled church?

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that our church is Spirit-filled.



WEEKEND 11-12 NOVEMBER 2017

SERIES: ACTS – TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

Read: Psalm 16 (from Acts 2:25)

Plug In...

Psalm 16 expresses David's confidence that God will not leave him to endure the agony of death or be destroyed by death, even though he dies. David can say this because of the promises God gave him ([2 Samuel 7:11-16](#)). The Psalm speaks of an existence after death, one that is full of life, eternal pleasures, and being *filled* with God's presence.

Peter in Acts 2 states some facts. David is in his tomb. Jesus is not. Therefore, the fact of Jesus' resurrection means He is the Messiah. Peter doesn't use the Psalm to prove Jesus rose from the dead, that is a fact everyone can see. Peter uses the Psalm to prove Jesus is the Christ. The Christ therefore is in God's presence and receives the presence of God, the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:32-33).

Chew It Over...

Reflect on the joy and assurance David has because He is confident the Messiah will rise. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, has received the Spirit and he pours it out on us even before we die. Enjoy the confidence and assurance that we are found in Christ and likewise will not be abandoned to destruction, although we die.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray to live in awareness that we are alive!