GOD'S BIRTHDAY GIFT

TO THE CHURCH

ACTS 2:1-36

2-1-2026



WE NEED TO REALIZE WHY GOD SENT THE GIFT HE DID ON THE DAY THE CHURCH WAS BORN

God sent the gift of the Holy Spirit for 3 reasons:

I. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO BEGIN A NEW PROGRAM (2:1-21)

God proved that He was beginning a new program by sending 3 signs:

A. A LOUD SOUND (an audible sign) (v. 2)

B. AN AWESOME SIGHT (a visible sign) (v. 3)

C. A GIFTED SPEECH (speaking ability) (an unusual sign) (v. 4-21)

II. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO EMPOWER A NEW MESSAGE (2:22-40)

A. WHEN THE SPIRIT SPEAKS, THE MESSAGE IS CHRIST-CENTERED (V. 22-36)

1. Peter preached Christ's authority (v. 22)

2. Peter preached Christ's death (v. 23)

3. Peter preached Christ's resurrection (v. 24-32)

4. Peter preached Christ's ascension and exaltation (v. 33-35)

5. Peter preached Christ as Master and Messiah (v. 36)

B. WHEN THE SPIRIT SPEAKS, THE MESSAGE BRINGS CONVICTION (V. 37-40)

III. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO GATHER A NEW HARVEST (2:1a; 2:41-47)

A. GOD GATHERED A TIMELY HARVEST (2:1a)
God began His new harvest at exactly the right season)

B. GOD GATHERED AN ABUNDANT HARVEST (2:41-47)
God began His new harvest by pouring out a revival)

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2. Peter preached Christ's _____ (v. 23)
3. Peter preached Christ's _____ (v. 24-32)
4. Peter preached Christ's _____ (v. 33-35)
5. Peter preached Christ as _____ (v. 36)

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INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: birthday parties when people give gifts, you may wonder:
What is this?
What is this for?
Why did he give me this?

In Acts 2, we have the birthday of the church, and God begins it with a shocking, surprising, dramatic display as He sends from Heaven His gift.

WE NEED TO REALIZE WHY GOD SENT THE GIFT HE DID ON THE DAY THE CHURCH WAS BORN

God sent the gift of the Holy Spirit for 3 reasons:

I. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO BEGIN A NEW PROGRAM (2:1-21)

ILLUS: When people open up a new business, they have a Grand Opening Sale (they promote it with dramatic advertising)

On the day of Pentecost, God began something new - His church.

Jesus promised the disciples that He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

These signs had no other value than to be indications that God was beginning something new, something special, something powerful - there was nothing exactly like this in history, nor ever shall be.

A new day was dawning in the economy of God - Christ's church was beginning.

In the Bible, whenever God began a new program, whenever He gave new revelation - He proved that He was doing something new by sending signs.

God proved that He was beginning a new program by sending 3 signs:

A. A LOUD SOUND (an audible sign) (v. 2)

NOTE: It was the sound of wind, not wind itself.

The sound of wind symbolized the Spirit (cp. Jn. 3:7-8 - Jesus compared the Spirit with being like the wind)

The "rushing, mighty wind" showed the supernatural power of God's Spirit.

The disciples would be reminded of Christ's promise: "You shall receive power" (Acts 1:8)

The Spirit would be the very “breath” of Jesus Christ who predicted this special day. John 20:22 - And when he had said this, he **breathed on *them***, and saith unto them, **Receive ye the Holy Ghost**:

B. AN AWESOME SIGHT (a visible sign) (v. 3)

"Cloven" = distributed - the Spirit came upon everyone in the room.

"Tongues like as of fire" - not literal fire. God was now going to purify and empower the disciples' witnessing.

C. A GIFTED SPEECH (speaking ability) (an unusual sign) (v. 4-21)

"All filled" = on this day, the baptism (in fulfillment of 1:5) and the filling took place at the same time.

"Tongues" = languages;
---"glossa" from which we get our English word "glossary"
--- "dialectos" from which we get our English word "dialect"

READ V. 5-21. Comment along the way.

Paul gives the purpose of tongues in I Cor. 14:22:

In verse 20 he calls on the Corinthians to grow up (or mature) in their understanding of tongues.

In verse 21 Paul quotes Is. 28:11-12.

Because Israel wouldn't listen to Isaiah, he had to lecture them like little children - "precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little" (v. 10).

When they mocked this way of teaching, soon God would give them His

message in a language they would not understand (Assyrians, then Babylonians) (READ V. 11, 12)

In verse 22, Paul gives his conclusion based on what he just said in verse 21. Tongues are a sign of judgment to unbelieving Israel.

ILLUS: Our church is bilingual (in some cases trilingual) for the most part. How would it make you feel if you were in a group of people who knew your language fluently, but they spoke in their own language about something wonderful. You would feel left out (rejected) and curious. They would be wrong for doing it.

But suppose you were a person who just mocked, made fun of, and didn't believe what that same group always talked about. So then they said, "OK, this guy doesn't want what we have to say. Let's leave him out, by speaking in our second language that he doesn't know." They would be justified for doing this. You don't deserve to hear.

This is what God did by sending tongues.

God used language as an evidence of judgment:

1) At the Tower of Babel
   "The whole earth was of one language, and one speech" (Gen. 11:1).
   The people did not obey the command given to Noah to "replenish the earth" (Gen. 9:1) but became proud (Gen. 11:4) and united without God, so God confused their languages and established the parent languages of the earth (today over 3,000 languages and dialects).

2) Deut. 28 Blessings & Cursings - curses were to be a "sign" (v. 46)
   Deut. 28:49 - "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;"

3) Jeremiah the "weeping prophet" preached, and Israel would not repent from her backsliding, so God said He would send judgment.
   Jer. 5:14-15 - "Wherefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them. Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say."

4) In the NT (after Mt. 12 - unpardonable sin), Christ spoke in parables because of the hardness of the people's hearts. They would not listen to plain talk, so He veiled His speech by parables. (READ Mt. 13:10-15).

I Cor. 14:22 - Tongues were not for:

1) Self-edification but a sign of judgment
2) Entertainment or amusement but a sign of judgment

3) Spreading the Gospel to other nationalities but a sign of judgment
4) The benefit of the assembly of believers (church) but a sign of judgment
5) private use but for public as a sign of judgment
6) a sign that you finally had the Holy Spirit (Paul said not all spoke in tongues; but all had the Holy Spirit)

Because tongues is a sing of judgment for Israel - it is a sign of blessing for Gentiles.

God's judgment of Israel:

1) Rom. 11:13-24 - natural branch (Israel) broken off; wild olive tree (Gentiles) grafted in.
2) Mt. 21:28-22:14 - 3 parables describing God's judgment on Israel (Mt. 21:43 - "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

The sign of tongues was to show that God was going to accept Gentiles (people of a different tongue). This was a hard lesson for Peter and the apostles to learn.
--So when the Samaritans were saved, they spoke in tongues (Acts 8:17, 18)
--When the Gentiles were saved, they spoke in tongues (10:46)
--When the proselytes of John were saved, they spoke in tongues (19:6)

No longer would God confine Himself to one people as a channel; no longer would God operate His work of grace through one nation and speak one language.

Tongues ceased when their purpose was done. (it was a temporary sign gift).

ILLUS: If a store kept the signs up saying "Grand Opening Sale" 100 years after it began, we would say the manager was crazy!

The church has bene in existence now for about 2,000 years. Israel does not need God to still give the sign to them for 2,000 years. They got the message long ago!
Ill. Signs to NYC are not needed when you are in NYC.
ex. NYC 100 miles ahead, 75...,50...,25...

Tongues ceased because its specific purpose was fulfilled. In 70 A.D. Titus sacked Jerusalem, killing 1,100,000 Jews and scattering the rest all over the world.

God had begun a new program on the day of Pentecost.

--He would no longer work through a nation but through His church
--He would no longer work through Israel but through believers
--Gentiles who were aliens from God's promises are now brought close to God by the blood of Christ (Eph. 2:12)
--God has "broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (v. 14)

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentiles - "For by one Spirit we have all be baptized into one body . . ." (I Cor. 12:13).

Today there is "no difference between the Jew and the Greek" (Ro. 10:12)

APPLIC: We should bring the Gospel to every nationality (no prejudice).

II. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO <u>EMPOWER</u> A <u>NEW MESSAGE</u> (2:22-40)

On the day of Pentecost we have the first Christian message ever preached!

A. WHEN THE SPIRIT SPEAKS, THE MESSAGE IS <u>CHRIST-CENTERED</u> (V. 22-36)

The Apostles preached "Christ"! (Acts 5:42; 8:35; 9:20,22; 17:2,3) Not the "New Humanism", etc.

1. Peter preached Christ's <u>authority</u> (v. 22)

"miracles" - deeds of supernatural power.
"wonders" - Acts that cause amazment.
"Signs" - Deeds and words that point to God's direct intervention in History.

Jews sought after signs (I Cor.2)
and God gave them.

NOTE: Christ's miracles were <u>not</u> primarily for the purpose of benefitting the ones healed, etc.; nor were there to entertain the audience, but they were to "approve" (prove, or authenticate) that Jesus was sent by God. That He was not the typical "Joe" but was unique!

2. Peter preached Christ's <u>death</u> (v. 23)

The cross was no accident; the cross was no last minute idea when all else failed. It was part of the eternal plan of God (cp.3:18)

a. God had Christ put on the Cross.
b. The Jews had Christ put on the Cross. (these facts again show the mystery of Divine presestination and free will)
c. Also you put Jesus on the Cross. He died to pay for your sins.

Every man has had a hand in that crime.

Ill. Once a missionary told the story of Jesus in an Indian village.

Afterwards he showed the life of Christ in lantern slides thrown against the white-washed wall of a house. When the Cross appeared on the wall, one man rose from the audience and ran forward. "Come down from that Cross, Son of God,: he cried. "I, not you, should be hanging there." (Barclay p.28)

"I" said Jesus "when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men (from all parts of the world) to myself" (Jn.12:32)

3. Peter preached Christ's <u>resurrection</u> (v. 24-32)

It is a tragedy in churches today, that so often the preaching of the resurrection is confined to Easter time when the resurrection was the cornerstone for the Apostles.

After the cross the disciples were bewildered, broken men, with their dream gone and their lives (seemingly) shattered. It was the <u>resurrection</u> which changed all that and turned them from cowards into heroes. (Barclay p.27)

Note: v.25 "lord" = YAHWEH (Jehovah) in Psalm 16:8

4. Peter preached Christ's <u>ascension and exaltation</u> (v. 33-35)

NOTE: Throughout passage, Peter's authority is the <u>Scriptures</u> (Peter quotes Ps. 16:8-11 [in v. 25-31] and Ps. 110:1 in v. 34).

His authority was not:
1) Reader's Digest
2) Tradition of men
3) decrees of the pope
4) His own experience of the resurrection and ascension

But it was the Word of God!

5. Peter preached Christ as <u>Master and Messiah</u> (v. 36)

Our message today is Christ!

Paul said to the Corinthians, I did not know anything among you but "<u>Christ</u> and Him crucified!"

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit when He came would "not speak of himself" (Jn. 16:13) but he would "testify of me" (Jn. 15:26); "he shall glorify me" (Jn. 16:14).

Any preaching that does not <u>uplift Christ</u> is not empowered by the Holy Spirit. We are not to center our witnessing, preaching, teaching, etc., on anything or anyone other than Christ.

B. WHEN THE SPIRIT SPEAKS, THE MESSAGE BRINGS CONVICTION (V. 37-40)

When you hear a message and feel uncomfortable, this is the convicting of the Holy Spirit. Don't rebel against it; yield!

NOTE: In order for our preaching, witnessing, teaching, etc. to bring conviction, it must have the power of the Spirit.

"Pricked in their heart" = cut to the heart. The phrase "cut to the heart" is in Acts 5:33 (Peter's preaching) and Acts 7:54 (Stephen).

The Holy Spirit who was sent into the world to reprove it of sin, righteousness and judgment was doing His job of convicting men of sin and of their need for Christ.

He uses the sword of the Spirit - the Word of God (Heb.4:12; Eph. 5)

Note: v.38 It is the repentance (change of mind about Christ), **not** the baptism that brings forgivenss of sins (See Acts 3:19; Acts 10:43)

III. HE GAVE HIS SPIRIT TO GATHER A NEW HARVEST (2:1a; 2:41-47)

A. GOD GATHERED A TIMELY HARVEST (2:1a)

God began His new harvest at exactly the right season)

"Pentecost" - one of the annual feasts of Israel.
At 3 festivals every male Jew within 20 miles of Jersusalem was legally bound to come. (Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles)
Pentecost was the celebration of the wheat harvest (Ex. 23:16).

God's timing is perfect! (cp. Lev.23 for order of Feasts)

Jesus died on Passover (middle of April)
Was buried during Unleavened Bread
Arose in fulfillment of First Fruits (I Cor. 15:23)
And now God begins His church on Pentecost (early June)

1. Passover - Christ is our passover Lamb.

John 1:29: "Behold the Lamb of God..."
I Cor. 5:7: "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us"

2. Unleavened Bread - Symbol of corruption. Jesus did not see corruption. (v.27)
3. First Fruits - Took place on **the day afte**r the Sabbath following Passover, which means it was always on the first day of the week (the Sabbath is the 7th. day) Jesus arose from the dead on the first day of the week and "became the firstfruits of them that slept"(I Cor.15:20) (sp. Wiersbe, p.24)

4. Pentecost - 7 weeks plus 1 day (50 days) after first fruits initiates God's harvest. "On the feast of firstfruits, the priest waved a sheaf of grain before the Lord; but on Pentecost, he presented two loaves of bread. Why? Because at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit baptized the believers and united thme into one body." (Weirsbe, P.24)

"We being many are one bread" (I Cor.10:17)

B. GOD GATHERED AN ABUNDANT HARVEST (2:41-47)

God began His new harvest by pouring out a revival)

--On this day, 3,000 souls were saved
--In Acts 44, 5,000 were saved
--In Acts 6:7 - "The number of the disciples multiplied"

Today is our day of harvesting!

"The fields are white already to harvest" (Jn. 4:35)
"white" = ripe and ready to rot if not harvested.

Everytime you take a breath someone in the world goes into eternity.

Jesus said: "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few . . ." (Lk. 10:2)

Today is our harvest day!

If we (by the power of the Holy Spirit) don't reap men for God, Death will reap them for hell!

CONCLUSION:

We need to realize why God sent the gift He did on the day the Church was born!

1. He gave His Spirit to begin a new program
2. He gave His Spirit to empower a new message
3. He gave His Spirit to gather a new harvest

God has given to us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Are you letting Him use you in His church?

Are you letting Him empower you as you serve Christ?

Is He using you to bring a harvest of souls into His kingdom?