

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The Dawning of The Church, Pt 1 **Acts 2: 1-13**

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PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: We come to the birth of the Church and in it we see some powerful and exciting events take place. But in this passage there are several ways we can go off into error because we are not careful to study and note what actually is occurring. In this multi-part series on the dawning of the Church, we will seek to let the passage say what is actually there. And in the process we will also be able to explore some doctrines that tend to create tension or confusion in churches.

I. Introduction.

- A. Open to Acts 2.
 - 1. Last time we were here we saw the apostles living in what I called the “in-between times.”
 - 2. Now the next great event promised is here.
- B. Read Acts 2:1-13 and give flow.
 - 1. Day of Pentecost.
 - 2. Two events, one seen and one unseen:
 - a. The baptism of the Spirit.
 - b. The filling with the Spirit (4).
 - 3. The consequence of this event is speaking in what we call “tongues.”
- C. We will take our time in this passage because it is a passage that is often misunderstood and misused. Those two events are separate events and but they are often combined in our minds and this causes a lot of problems within the church.
 - 1. I want to cover the idea of baptism and filling of the Spirit today and then the identity and role of what is called “tongues” in the next sermon.
 - 2. What I am asking of you is that you have your bible open and you faithfully follow along as I take you to various passages to develop this.
- D. Before getting into these points it is important to note that what is happening here is the birth of the Church.

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1. Not something to pass over casually as it affects many other things.
2. Does being part of the Church simply mean being saved from our sin and forgiven by God? If so, then all believers since time began are part of the Church.
3. The problem is that this is not how the bible describes the Church. Rather, it is described as something new and unique that takes place.
4. We have a podcast on this very subject so give it a listen. Right now just consider the things that the bible say are unique to the Church:
 - a. They will be indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) John 14-16 are filled with this point.
 - (2) “. . . you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.” (14:17)
 - (3) Note the future reality Jesus says to the Apostles. This event occurs in Acts 2, our passage.
 - (4) In the Old Testament this is simply not a reality—ever.
 - b. They are said to be “in Christ.”
 - (1) This is a unique relationship to Christ.
 - (2) No where else in the bible, either in the Old Testament, the gospels, or Revelation is this a reality.
 - (3) And the way you are “in Christ” is through the Holy Spirit, again a unique event and reality called being baptized in the Spirit.
 - c. The Church is the only entity given spiritual gifts.
 - (1) Described in places like 1 Corinthians 12-14.
 - (2) Never in the rest of the bible is this something taught or described for Israel, the believers prior to Israel or in Revelation.
 - (3) And again it is through the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. Jesus Christ is the “head” of the Church.

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- (1) This is important because it is connected to specific events in time and space. Ephesians 1:18-23 says this only occurred after His death, resurrection AND ascension. In other words, Acts 1.
 - (2) Prior to this the Son of God is never described as Head over Israel or anything else. The same for Revelation.
 - (3) If the Church existed prior to the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus then it existed without its head.
- e. Finally, the bible describes the Church as something utterly new.
- (1) Ephesians 2:11-13.
 - (2) Breaking down the barrier of the dividing wall. Gentiles and Jews in the Church are equal, unique to the Church.
 - (3) The creation of the “New Man.” That word “new” means something very specific in the Greek.
 - (a) (*καινος kainos*) Something different than before.
 - (b) (*νεος neos*) Updated, more recent than before.
 - (4) If the Church was something that has always existed and merely went through various changes then what we see in the New Testament is only an updated version. But that is NOT what Paul says.
- E. So today I want to show you the difference between the idea of being baptized with the Spirit and being filled with the Spirit. They are completely different things and until this is grasped there will be a consistent struggle.

II. Spirit Baptism. (Opening Slide)

- A. Why the confusion? Three reasons:
1. First, there is a problem where we assume if the word “baptise” is used it means water baptism.
 2. Second, the improper use within Pentecostalism and Charismatic churches.

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3. Three, we assume we know things better than we really do. So we use baptism with the Spirit in the same way we will talk about being filled with the Spirit.

B. An illustration: (First Slide)

Water baptism as a model for what occurs in Spirit baptism. Six basic points true in all water baptisms.

The baptizer: apostle, pastor, elder, etc.

The element: water.

The baptized: a **professing** Christian.

The condition: having made a profession of faith in Christ.

The mode: immersion.

The result: entrance into the visible church.

The bible shows the same points with regard to Spirit baptism. Water baptism is an outward picture of what has occurred already by Christ using the Spirit.

C. An explanation: (Second Slide)

1. *The Baptizer*: Jesus Christ, **not** the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Matthew 3:11, “As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.**”
 - b. 1 Cor. 12:13.
 - (1) Note how it is translated “by” which gives the impression that it is the Spirit baptizing us. “By” is not a bad or wrong term to use, but it does cause too many to make the wrong conclusion in today’s church, primarily due to weak grammar.

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- (2) However, that is not the point. The preposition is ἐν which means that it is “in” the Spirit that we are baptized. “By” here means “with.”
 - (3) This also explains completely the next point.
2. *The Element:* the Holy Spirit
 3. *The Baptized:* the **genuine Christian** who is personally incorporated into the Body of Christ.
 - a. The Holy Spirit is the life and power of the Body of Christ.
 - b. How this affects theology and timing of this act.
 - (1) In the O.T. there is never a mention of any type of this sort of event.
 - (2) In the N.T. in the Gospels the same is true. Jesus spoke of it as a future, new activity.
 - (3) Even in Acts 1:5 it is still seen in the future. Listen to the words of Jesus just before ascending into heaven, “*John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*”
 - (4) In Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost the whole group of those waiting on the Lord’s promise were **both baptized and filled** with the Spirit.
 - (a) Note that the word “baptize” is not mentioned here, but “filled” is, this is what helps confusion along.
 - (b) So if we are not careful we assume that the baptism of the Spirit spoken in Acts 1:5 is the filling of the Spirit in Acts 2. They are not.
 4. *The Condition:* genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. From this point forward, all who believe are baptized in the Spirit into the Church when they believe in Christ.
 - b. Never is the bible telling us to seek, agonize, completely surrender, be fully committed, or even pray for this baptism.

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- c. We have looked at 1 Cor. 12:13 already, remember that it says, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”
 - d. Simply put, if a person is a believer in the person and work of Jesus Christ then he is saved. And if he is saved then he has been baptized with the Spirit into the Church.
 - e. Never is it described as a second blessing that Christians ought to seek.
5. *The Mode:* immersion in the Spirit.
- a. Simply put, “baptize” means to immerse.
 - b. Because Christ has immersed us in the Spirit we are utterly surrounded by the very essence, life, and power of the Holy Spirit!
 - c. In other words, we are “in the Spirit.” And remember that the bible also tells us that we are “in Christ” and “in God.”
 - d. The whole point of this is to show how utterly present God is with us individually and as a whole. We are never alone and we are intimately connected with the life and power of God Himself.
6. *The Result:* there are four results:
- a. First it brings us into the Body of Christ, which is the true, universal Church.
 - (1) 1 Cor. 12:13, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”
 - (2) Eph. 4:4, “There is one body and one Spirit”
 - b. Second, it brings us into Christ Himself.
 - (1) Gal. 3:27, “For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”
 - (2) BTW, this is a place where too often the assumption is made that this refers to water baptism. This is not the case. Only being baptized with the **Holy Spirit** place us into Christ.

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- (3) The idea of being “in Christ” is unique to the N.T. and is uniquely tied to the N.T. church.
- c. Third, it causes us to be identified/connected with Christ in His death and resurrection.
 - (1) Romans 6:2-4. “. . . all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death. . . .”
 - (2) Col. 2:12.
 - (3) These passages tells us the basis for a Christian’s victory over sin.
- d. Last, it brings us into a very real unity.
 - (1) Eph. 4:3-6. “preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism”
 - (2) Note that we are not merely united with the Lord (Head) but with one another as well.
- D. This is what occurred on that great day in Acts 2. A new entity was born. And a new level of relating to one another and to God began, one we still enjoy today.

III. Spirit Filling.

- A. Two different kinds of filling..... In the English we translate two different Greek words with the same English word, “filled” or “full.”
- B. πίμπλημι (*pimplemi*) This words speaks of a **special empowerment** of the Spirit.
 - 1. One of the common results of this is some great work of God occurring.
 - 2. Luke 1:15.
 - 3. Luke 1:41, Elizabeth does a prophetic blessing over Mary and the baby.
 - 4. Luke 1:67, Zacharias prophesied.
 - 5. Acts 2:4, they speak in languages they did not know.
 - 6. Acts 4:8.
 - 7. They are special fillings. **Not normative for the believer.**

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- a. They are not only for the Church. In the O.T. we see this very frequently as well.
 - (1) Numbers 24:2 And Balaam had the Spirit of God come upon him. (He did not believe nor follow God!)
 - (2) Judges 3:10 And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. (Othniel)
 - (3) Judges 14:6 And the Spirit of the LORD came upon Samson mightily”
 - b. In the bible this filling is undefined as to its duration. It can be for a moment or for a lifetime. Depends upon what the purpose is.
8. What is interesting is that this is under the sovereign control of God. He determines if and when this occurs.
- C. πλήρης (*pleres*) This word speaks of being under the **control**, or of an **abiding relationship** with the Holy Spirit.
1. Luke 4:1.
 2. Acts 6:3, 5, notice here that it was indicative of those who were godly and mature men, prepared spiritually to minister to the Body.
 3. Acts 13:52, they were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.
 4. One last passage that has given people problems—Ephesians 5:18.
 - a. “Filled” here is the verb form of πλήρης, πληρόω. It is present, passive imperative.
 - (1) Present tense is speaking of a consistent controlling of the Spirit.
 - (2) Passive means that it is done to you, not something you do yourself.
 - (3) It is a command.
 - b. This is a parallel form making a distinction between drunkenness and filling.
 - c. It is not telling us to have that special power of God come upon us. It is not telling us to be baptized with the Spirit.

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- d. Application: one of the spiritual priorities that every Christian must have is that of being under the Spirit's control.
 - (1) There is a close connection between this command and the command in Galatians 5, where we are called to walk, be in step, by the Spirit.
 - (2) In Col. 3:16 is the passage that is in parallel with Eph. 5. It says, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you" Which is important because the means by which you obey this filling is to be a person of the Word of God.
 - (3) Notice in vss. 19-21 we then see the results/evidences of being filled.
 - (a) A horizontal aspect (19a).
 - (b) A vertical act of worship (19b "to the Lord).
 - (c) A vertical expression of thanksgiving (20).
 - (d) A horizontal subordination (21). This sets up Paul's next section on how believers live out their worldly relationships with one another.

IV. Conclusion.

- A. A lot of time is wasted in people's lives pursuing an experience that is not their's to pursue. And the result is lost opportunity to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ in the basic, simple aspects of life.
- B. **(Final Slide)** There are five events that are related to the Holy Spirit but which are different and must be kept separate in our minds...but too often we don't.
 - 1. Baptism in The Spirit.
 - 2. Indwelling of The Spirit.
 - 3. Empowerment by The Spirit.
 - 4. Submission to The Spirit.
 - 5. Regeneration by The Spirit.
- C. What can we learn from all of this?
 - 1. Rejoice in the nearness of God.

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2. Rejoice in the power of God.
3. Seek to live by the control of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Become men and women who have the Word of God richly dwelling in you.
 - b. Stay in close fellowship with the body of Christ.
- D. Embrace the mundaneness of the Christian life. It is a good life that is full of simple adventure. Become a person conformed to the commands of the Word of God. Rather than one pursuing some special experience that may or may not ever happen.
 1. As you do this then you show to all those around you that there is something unique about you.
 2. You will show a contentment that this age cannot produce. You will model a hope that draws people to ask about it.
 3. And in those moments you can speak of the Savior and His gospel that brought you life, forgiveness of sin, and a new perspective.

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Small Group Questions

- This is a very full sermon so go around and find out what might not be understood or missed by those present. Find out what challenged them or helped them.
- I would recommend you looking at the many passages together. This would be a good time to practice making notes in their bibles to help them remember these 5 years from now.
- Which of the three events described in this sermon was most encouraging for them? Spirit baptism, Spirit filling (empowerment supernaturally), or Spirit filling (under the control/in relationship with).

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- This might sound weird, but have any of them think perhaps they experienced that filling that empowers them for some unique situation? This can get strange but it is worth exploring.