

IS ACTS 2 FOR TODAY?

The Holy Spirit

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We'll share one more week on the ministry of the Spirit in charismatic experience. Today just the first four verses of Acts 2 and we'll continue to look at Acts 2, the entirety of the chapter. "When the day of Pentecost was filling up, when the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly the sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. It seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance [as the Spirit enabled them]."

As I've shared these past number of weeks on the ministry of the Spirit I've indicated that first understanding we must gain of the Spirit is that he is a person. Not an object, not a thing. This keeps us from perceiving the Spirit as something we get a hold of to get more energy or power and keeps us on the right perspective that the Spirit gets a hold of us to use us for his honor and his glory.

The Spirit comes upon us too in salvation. The Spirit's presence is made known to us. If we have the Spirit of Christ we have the Spirit of God. No one can confess that Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit.

I've indicated and I might set this forth now. I may not have developed this in its fullest impact. But it seems to me that when we talk about the receiving of the Spirit in the scripture we're talking about four distinct things. It's very easy if we're not careful to confuse our terminology.

We're talking about receiving the Spirit in salvation. Or regeneration. John 20, Jesus breathed on them and said, Receive the Spirit. That's before Acts 2. That is the regeneration experience in which the Spirit comes and enlivens us now to become sons and daughters of God. It is the bequeathal of eternal life to us. God bending over the form of our humanity and putting in us through his breath the resurrected presence of Jesus Christ. That breath, that air of Jesus, has been distributed into our spiritual lungs and we've been made new living people fit for a new age and a new kingdom.

That Samaritan in Acts 8 received the Spirit with the laying on of hands. That's come after their moment of regeneration. But the moment of regeneration, the receiving of the Spirit, is first. Therefore when we say all Christians have received the Spirit of God we speak a truth. Pentecostals if they truly understand their theology truly understand what the Bible teaches will all agree upon this that every born again believer has the Spirit of God. No born again believer can be absent of the Spirit. That's just the law of scripture.

The second thing though that we go on to say is that there is an experience modeled for us in scripture in Acts 2, 8, 10, 19, as well as 9. Which speak of a subsequent experience in the Spirit where Jesus as the baptizer ushers us into a dimension of the Spirit's life that involves for us the release of praise and the release of power and witness. This is called the charismatic experience of the Spirit or it's called the second blessing by some or it's called the baptism in the Spirit or it's called by other receiving the Spirit. There are various terms from the scripture that have been applied to it. But it is a distinct crisis event in our life where we feel that Jesus indeed has

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placed us in the life of the Spirit. In a way we have an encounter distinct from, different in kind than our experience in the Spirit when we were regenerated.

A third way though that we may speak of being filled with the Spirit and it occurs a number of times in Acts in moments when the disciples are under some stress. Like for example Stephen is facing the Sanhedrin. They are going after him. Or when the early Christians are being faced with persecution. Or when some untoward situation is happening that requires more of the grace of God that has been evident before in a person's life.

Frequently you'll find in the book of Acts, so and so *filled with the Spirit*. And this is subsequent to the Acts 2 experience. Like many times it is noted in the book of Acts, Peter filled with the Spirit said or did something. This appears to me to be a unique manifestation of the Spirit's presence on our lives in those moments when we are being stretched to a new level and a new capacity. Someone has said that in Acts 2 it is said, the disciples are filled with the Spirit that they were expansible, they were stretchable and the Spirit's gift was infinite. They were capable of receiving more and the Spirit was capable of giving more of himself.

There are moments I believe when we will find ourselves in situations stressful moments like Stephen, for example, an extreme case, facing anger and facing death. He'd never faced danger like that before and there was more fear in him, more vacancy in him if you will for the Spirit to fill than had ever been the case before. That is a way I think "filled with the Spirit" is used in the scriptures as well.

Fourth way the scriptures teach of being filled with the Spirit is in Ephesians 5. We're told "Be not drunk with new wine wherein is excess but be filled with the Spirit." How then are we filled with the Spirit? We're making melody in our hearts, we're addressing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. We're always for everything giving thanks to the Lord. This is a continuing filling of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit in daily life which ushers in both praise toward God and also out flows in terms of dynamic relationships with other believers in prayer and in worship, speaking to one another in hymns, psalms and spiritual songs.

What do we mean by this? I think it's Christians feeling relaxed enough in one's presence to look each other in the eye and just sing because of the joy of the Lord. Not feeling out of place.

Our pew-centered approach I think we lose the dynamic of what the Spirit intended in the seating arrangement in the body. We're all spilling out over coaches and chairs and sitting on the floor and the like. When we're sitting in pews we have to look forward and the best we can do is see out of the corner of our eye the person sitting at our side or see the back of the head that is in front of us. But it seems to me that there's a dynamic that the Spirit wants, that we're relaxed in one another's presence because of the joy of the Lord that we can open up and let the reserves drop and being deliriously filled with joy.

When we look at the term "filled with the Spirit" there are various ways of understanding that term. There is the filling of the Spirit, the receiving of the Spirit at conversions, there is the charismatic experience we'll talk about in Acts 2, 9, 10, 19. And there is the special moments when we need a special grace from God. And there is that daily walk in life.

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The New Testament interestingly enough never seeks to address the question of believers, Were you filled with the Spirit? As much as it's concerned with the issue, Are you filled with the Spirit? When we begin to stress the past tense then so easily our charismatic experience can become a kind of merit badge that we wear. The experience should be an initiatory experience, the beginning of a concourse with God in a language of praise. The beginning of witness to other persons. It's meant to continue throughout a lifetime of service to the Lord.

That's kind of a brief overview in terms of the work of the Spirit in our lives. As we approach the book of Acts I've indicated that those who are Christian brothers and sisters who are not Pentecostal, not charismatic basically raise two objections to the Pentecostal teaching to the baptism of the Spirit.

One objection is that we get our theology from the book of Acts rather than from the epistles. The objection is you cannot get teaching from Acts since it describes history, what took place. You must get your teaching from doctrine, what is sequential teaching in the New Testament. We've dealt with that in another service. I won't go back over that ground. I tried to answer that objection. Are we fracturing up the word of God saying only part of the word of God is profitable for doctrine, for teaching, for instruction, for training in righteousness. Or are we saying all of the scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching. Surely the book of Acts as well as the gospels are profitable for teaching and for doctrine.

Another objection we've indicated is there are those who are brothers and sisters in the Lord who look at us and say, Even if you could use Acts to develop the doctrine and teaching the text of Acts doesn't say what you say it says. We've tried to look at some detail to make sure that the text in the book of Acts, to try to establish what it does say.

As we look at Acts 2 this evening I want to indicate basically three things.

First of all there are facets to the Acts 2 experience, which are unique. That is to say, they happened on the day of Pentecost and they appear nor to reoccur. At least they don't reoccur in the Bible. Maybe there are accounts in certain parts of the world where certain things have occurred but they do not occur again in the scripture. Therefore we call them unique rather than normal.

Then there are some things in Acts 2, which are not necessarily unique, but they're not necessarily normal either. That is, they don't happen every time where the Spirit is outpoured in the fashion described in Acts 2.

Finally we'll look at those things in Acts 2 which appear to be a regular, ongoing part of every believer's experience and are therefore meant to be understood as normally happening for every believer.

First let's look at those elements in Acts 2 which are unique. One thing that is unique is that the whole church is gathered in a house. If you look for example at Acts 2:2 a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. I would like to submit that that as the last time the whole church was ever gathered in a house. Never did the church gather in a house again until the marriage supper of the Lamb when we all set down at the table at the same time. It just blows my mind to think of the proportions of the banquet hall of the banquet hall of

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the King of kings, Messiah and Lord, when the church of all ages sets down at one time. It's going to be an incredible event! I wouldn't miss it for the whole world!

But the church never gathered again in one house. If you look at Acts 4 you get a picture of this. Verse 31. The setting is by now 3000 persons have been added to the church on the day of Pentecost. Day by day persons have been added. After Peter preaches a sermon following the healing of a lame man at the gate beautiful another 5000 men are added to the church so there's been at least 8000 at least converted by direct count plus those being saved day to day. In Acts 8:31 says, "After they prayed the place where they were meeting was shaken." Notice the *place* was shaken. Not the word "house." It's a different word in the Greek. It's probably an open place, probably around the temple courtyard. The church had grown. I'd say that was unique.

The second thing that was unique about the Acts 2 experience, it's not repeated elsewhere in scripture. The sound of a rushing mighty wind. This sound is not repeated elsewhere. For a moment imagine the scene. A hundred twenty believers are gathered together in a room. The idea of sound is that is very striking to the ears. It's used elsewhere of the roaring of the sea. Kind of a distinct impression is made on the ears. It is rushing. It's a movement or drive. It's not the wind itself that fills the room. It's the sound of mighty rushing wind. That is, nothing is being blown out. You get the impression if they'd had a candle in the room there wouldn't have been any wind that blew out the candle. But it was the eerie phenomena of a tremendous wind, a violent wind. The text has it right when it calls it a violent wind.

If any of you can think back to a fall day in the Midwest when you've been out taking a walk when the leaves of the trees have been turning brown and falling. Suddenly as you're by yourself in a lonely spot there comes up a sound of a wind that picks up in intensity and ferocity. It's an experience all by itself. Something powerful about hearing wind and what it's calling you to.

I think that the Spirit here very deliberately employs the symbolism of wind to indicate to the disciples that the time is coming when like the wind the Spirit is going to be scattering them to the ends of the earth. I think the wind is a very strong symbol of scattering. And also a symbol of the awesome presence of God.

In addition to this tremendous sound of wind which is unique there is also the appearance of tongues as of fire which is separating and coming to rest on each of them. The King James has cloven tongues like as of fire. That probably expresses it well. It is flames coming down. Then distributing into individual flames or tongues. In Isaiah 5:25 the tongue is used as a symbol or image for flame – tongues of fire lick up the straw. Isn't there something about a flame that looks like a tongue? Sometimes because "speaking other tongues" is used here people get confused and try to think of verbal tongues and what's that got to do with tongues of fire. But it's simply a great fire comes into the room and suddenly breaks up and distributes in individual flames of fire resting and distributing upon the head of each disciple.

I get very upset with commentators, even evangelical commentators that sometime dismiss the miraculous. The leading commentary on the book of Acts, F. F. Bruce, a good Christian man, a great scholar, he just murders this text by saying perhaps as the sun was streaming through the room in the early morning hours it's rays broke up and was seen as resting upon the disciples. The tongues of fire speak of the consuming work of God upon these people. The purity also of

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their lives, the righteousness they have as they go through the world. I've indicated that these are unique.

An accusation of those that are not charismatic or Pentecostal in orientation If you're going to use Acts 2 as a normal experience and you say that utterance of tongues ought to go hand in hand with being filled with the Spirit then how come you don't put equal emphasis upon having a mighty rushing wind in the room as well. Also why don't you put equal emphasis upon tongues breaking up in flames of fire and setting on each one's head? Why don't you do that?

Three answers to that.

One answer is simply that the wind and the tongues of fire are never repeated again in the scripture whereas tongues is. That's a significant difference. Evidently the Holy Spirit chose in his wisdom and sovereignty not to repeat the one whereas he chose to repeat the other. That's at least basic answer number one.

Basic answer number two is the sound of wind and the mighty rushing flame occur before the experience they were filled with the Spirit. Whereas the other occurs subsequent to it. One is a predecessor the other is a follower of it.

The third thing is that the wind and the tongues of fire are occurring external to the believers. They're outside of them. Whereas the utterance in other tongues occurs within and with the participation of the person who is thus filled with the Spirit. It is the only one of the three signs in which the person himself is directly involved.

When you look at this there are at least these phenomena that can be noted. I tried to indicate some unique things. They're in a house. There are tongues of fire, the sound of a mighty rushing wind.

The fourth thing that is unique and the last thing that I'll note is the fact that the tongues which are spoken are recognized as falling into seventeen different language groups. Never again in the text of Acts or anywhere else do we read of persons receiving the baptism of the Spirit and speaking languages that are immediately recognized as the languages of other nations or other peoples.

We might simply note that there may be a good reason for this in the fact that the day of Pentecost provided a unique opportunity for pilgrims to come from all over the world and to be present on the day of Pentecost. Therefore recognize the languages which are spoken. I wonder how many times there have been languages on earth that have been spoken that have not been recognized simply because there was no one there in the meeting to recognize them. I think we also ought to recognize, 1 Corinthians 13, that in addition to other tongues being noticeably the languages spoken on earth there is in addition the language of angels. Paul says, "If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels." There appears to be this sense that tongues was looked upon by the apostle Paul or if not by him at least by members of the Corinthian church as being supernatural utterance. The Spirit though is able to translate that tongue to our heart. It is he that ministers to the Spirit as we give utterance.

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It's simply noted that never again in respect to tongues are there specific languages like that recognized. Albeit there have been times even in my own lifetime where an utterance in tongues has been given in a service and it has been recognized by someone in the service. Most frequently this occurs in regard to the gift of tongues where one person in the body will stand up, give an utterance in tongues and it will then be interpreted.

The second thing is in Acts 2 there are elements in Acts 2 which while not unique are not necessarily normal. Or normative. The case can be made either way. You can't say they only happen once and don't happen again nor can you say this must happen every time. For example in the Acts 2 experience there is a delay between regeneration and the Spirit baptism. The disciples had a period of 50 days since Christ was risen from the dead. He first appeared to them on the evening of his resurrection. He breathed into them to receive the Spirit. So there has been a delay between the moment of conversion and the moment of receiving the Spirit in the Pentecostal baptism sense. There is a delay – the persons repent and they're baptized in the water, they're full believers – fully justified, fully forgiven of their sins, good standing in the body of Christ, baptized. But they had not yet received the baptism in the Spirit.

There are times when there appears to be an interval of time. One of the mistakes in the background that I came from was assuming that the pattern of tarrying was always the pattern. You came to the Lord, was saved, and then waited an indefinite amount of time. Usually with tremendous soul searching which can be very good and wonderful. But a great deal of emphasis upon tarrying. We need to realize that's not the only pattern. There is the pattern in Acts 10 where in one moment – you hardly know which comes first. Were they saved or filled with the Spirit first. What happened? It was one moment of time. Saved, baptized and filled with the Spirit. The same thing appears to be the case in Acts 19. There appears to be a three-day delay in Paul's case. Where he meets the Lord on the road to Damascus and then three days later Ananias comes to him, lays hands on him and says, Receive the Spirit.

Sometimes there can be a period of delay. I really believe when we look at Acts 2 the normal thing is for this experience to be part of the initiatory experience in the Christian life. That is early up front in our Christian experience the Lord wants this for us. Not years and years down the road. If that's been our experience we want to be open to not having this delay.

Another thing which is not necessarily normal and not necessarily unique in Acts 2 is that in Acts 2 the entire community experiences this at once. That is everybody in the room has the same experience at the same time.

That happens again in Acts 19, perhaps in Acts 8. But with Paul he appears to be that singular unique person – it happens to him as an individual. Often in a meeting with persons who have already received an encounter in the Spirit in this dimension there are those who have and those who have not. As a general pattern it is not necessarily everyone at the same time. Though sometimes it can be the case.

There's also something not necessarily normal, not necessarily unique – the immediate succeeding opportunity after Acts 2 to proclaim the gospel to a public audience in a preaching context. Peter stands up, the unbelievers are all assembled and he preaches. This is not the case with Acts 8 nor Acts 10 or 19. Also in Acts 2 there is no laying on of hands. Although in Acts 8

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there is a laying on of hands. There are some things that aren't necessarily a pattern but on occasion.

What are the elements in Acts 2 that are normal? Or normative to be a part of every believer's experience?

The first thing is that the day of Pentecost itself is normal. The day of Pentecost is like the feast of Passover. It's like the feast of Unleavened Bread. It's like the Feast of Fruit Fruits. It's something we always celebrate. We're always celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We don't only celebrate once a year. We always according to 1 Corinthians celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread by purging out anger and malice from our lives.

So with the Feast of Pentecost. It's the feast that comes in the spring harvest. It's a thanksgiving to God for the harvest he is bringing and it's spiritually translated in the harvest he is bringing in the world. It's still filling up.

We also ought to recognize that the promise that is made on the day of Pentecost is normal. It's meant to be experienced by every believer. Acts 1:4 Jesus speaking, "Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you heard me speak about." Then 2:33. The gift of the Spirit has been poured out and Peter declares what is happened to the listening audience. "Exalted to the right hand of God Jesus has received from the Father the promised Spirit that is poured out which you now see and hear."

So the Father has made a promise which Jesus has fulfilled. This promise has certain qualities that are recognizable. It is a promise (verse 33) which "you now see and hear." In other words the promise wasn't some mystical inner experience that an observer simply looked at and wouldn't have a clue as to what went on. It was something that had auditory or ear quality and had visual quality to. You could see what was happening.

In fact 2:5-6 "There was staying in Jerusalem God fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound a crowd came together in bewilderment." The sound which they heard is different in the Greek from 2:2. The sound in chapter 2 is a strong blast type of sound. There's a different word used in verse 6 for "sound." The sound there is not the blast of the mighty wind but the sound is evidently in reference to the spoken tongue. The mass of people do not hear the rushing mighty wind. They're not in the house. What gathers the crowd is the disciples the 120 of them who are so full of the Spirit of God and so full in giving praise to the Lord that they fan out in the temple area and they're speaking joyfully, practically out of their mind with praises toward God. It is this sound that collects the audience. Then Peter goes on to say, "This is the promise which you see and hear." In other words the only time the promise is defined in Acts as to what constitutes it other than you receive the Spirit, the only time it's specifically defined it is defined as something you see and hear. Therefore there is that quality to the receiving of the Spirit in the Pentecost experience which is visible and audible. You hear it and you can see what is happening.

Is this promise then for all believers? 2:39 "The promise is for you and your children and all who are far off for all whom the Lord our God will call." This promise is not a promise of conversion. It's promise of the reception of the Spirit in Pentecost empowerment.

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So the promise is normal.

I would also like to put before you something for consideration, for prayer, and do it in a non-argumentative sense. This is debated among believers but I feel the text from Acts would sustain the position that speaking in tongues is a normal part of the baptism in the Spirit. For one thing we know that the phenomenon is repeated in Acts. It's repeated in Acts 10 and Acts 19. There are two instances where it is not repeated – Acts 8 and Acts 9. But there are some though who have looked at that and said, in the book of Acts when it says they are filled with the Spirit there are basically five instances in Acts. Three out of the 5 the text notes that they spoke with other tongues. Two they do not.

I'd like to show you something very significant for a moment as to a parallel. Look at 2:41. Notice the first conversions after the day of Pentecost. "Those who accepted Peter's message were baptized and about 3000 were added to their number that day." In other words these people repented and believed and the text says they were baptized. The next large group that was saved the account of their salvation is found in Acts 4. "Many who heard the message believed and the number of men grew to about 5000."

Compare again Acts 2:41 – they were baptized and about 3000 were added to their number that day – and then 4:4 – many who heard the message believed and the number of men grew to about 5000. What is missing in Acts 4:4 that was in Acts 2:41? Baptism. Baptism is mentioned. Some have built the case and said, Acts 2 says they were filled with the Spirit and spoke in other tongues. But the next time it is mentioned, Acts 8, it simply says they were filled with the Spirit and nothing said about tongues. Therefore the inference is 50% of the time tongues occurs and 50% it doesn't. Or some such ratio.

Would you use that same line of argumentation thinking through the text if it were shown that in the first instance of a mass conversion 3000 were added, they were baptized in water. The next conversion account says 5000 men believed and not one word is every said about them being baptized in water. Would you on that basis say that baptism in water is for 50% of the believers, or happens about half the time? I don't think anybody would make that conclusion. In fact there are 31 occasions in the book of Acts where either an individual, a family, or a whole group is saved. Out of those 31 occasions there are only 8 times that water baptism is mentioned as applying to the situation. Why isn't water baptism mentioned? Because it's understood that every believer who repents and believes is going to be baptized in water. So only 8 times out of 32 – one fourth, 25% of the occasion of salvation in the book of Acts have water baptism attend them. Where as the 5 instances that especially note the coming of the Spirit in Pentecostal power empower 3 of the 5 mention tongues specifically and the two others we'll look at next week.

I'd also like to note too from Acts that no other phenomenon displaces tongues as an immediate sign of the Spirit's presence. There are some today who look at 1 Corinthians 12:7-12 and say the gifts of the Spirit – some have wisdom, knowledge, discernment, others have faith and miracles and power, others have tongues, interpretation, prophecy. The inference being that when you're baptized in the Spirit you'll at least somewhere along the line receive one these 9 evidences of the Spirit's work.

If you look at the day of Pentecost, the 120 baptized in the Spirit was the evidence of the Spirit's in filling. The immediate evidence, which followed – some prophesied. Some exercised the gift

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of knowledge. Some exercised the gift of miracles. Some spoke in tongues. Some prophesied. No. That's not. All of them together.

What about Acts 10 at Cornelius' house. Did some exercise wisdom, some exercise knowledge, some exercise power, some exercise faith? No again. Acts 19. Was there a distribution of the evidence in various kinds of manifestations of the Spirit in terms of gifts? No it was universal witness. All had that experience.

In regard to the gifts of the Spirit, you cannot tell immediately whether a person has the gift of the Spirit. It's not immediately recognizable. This is perhaps one of the reasons why the Spirit did not use them as evidences of this Pentecostal experience.

For example I cannot immediately tell if you have gained the gift of wisdom, can I? How do you demonstrate the gift of wisdom? By going through tough situations where there is practically an impasse. You don't know what to do or how to work through that. It's at that point then that the gift of wisdom is needed and you begin to learn that there are people in the body that are especially gifted with insight who know what the Spirit is saying to do in a very complex situation. I've seen it and I covet this gift of wisdom in my own life.

There are some gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12 that are developmental in nature. Some that are immediate in terms of crisis experience.

I would submit that in regard to the experience of speaking with tongues that all the apostles experienced this. All of Cornelius' household. All the Ephesian 12.

You might say, Why then would God ordain that every believer as part of the experience of baptism in the Spirit should have this experience which issues forth in utterance of tongues? One of the difficult dilemmas any one is put through answering that question is the immediate impression that tongues is being made synonymous with the work of the Spirit or that tongues is being elevated in a position that is higher than it deserves. It's like the difficult question When you were baptized in water, did you get wet? It is ugly to answer that question because obviously a person got wet when he was baptized in water. But it isn't the water that does it. It's the inward attitude of faith and heart that has born that person in the baptismal waters.

Why would the Spirit want this for every believer? I think there's some simple answers from the scripture. One is it's the Spirit's mission to exalt Jesus and glorify God. That's what he's preeminently interested in. So in Acts 2:11 what is happening. These believers are giving forth in praise to God in other tongues. It says We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongue. What is speaking in tongues anyway? It's declaring the wonders of God. The word "wonders" here is a word, which means magnificent, splendid, grand, great, sublime, beautiful. It is praising God in a sublime, magnificent, splendid, grand and great way. It's as the Spirit gives utterance. The word "utterance" has the idea of strong and forceful speech that is giving praise to the Lord. The Spirit is pleased when we praise him in this way.

I was one of those believers who had this great delay between my conversion and this experience of "They were all filled with the Spirit and began to speak with other tongues." Various advice was given me in regard to receiving the charismatic empowerment of the Spirit. I tried to talk myself into a state of nirvana where I would pass into an unseen world – ecstasy, out of one's

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being, out of one's head. It was so neat that one night I began quietly to worship the Lord by speaking in the language that the Spirit was giving me to utter. As I began to give over I had several impressions – God was not knocking me over. I wasn't rolling over. Second, I'm conscious. I know where I'm at. That was going along with great joy and liberation in my spirit. The third thing I recognized was in my heart I had this language all the time. I just never give utterance to it.

I have a sneaking suspicion and I could be wrong and I would not lay this out as a doctrine, but I have a suspicion that every believer has experienced this. That every believer has experienced those moments in their heart when they have wanted to praise God – I'm talking about truly regenerated people – when they've wanted to praise God and it seemed like words had failed. In their heart of heart there has been some language to God, some expression, that couldn't be put in the syntax of a sentence, couldn't be put in English vocabulary. Just wanted to praise God. So often nothing ever happened to it because there was a dimension that was lacking. They were all filled with the Spirit and began to speak as the Spirit gave utterance.

Notice the divine cooperation. The Spirit gave utterance but they began to speak. It's not a case of making things up. That's nonsense. If we have to talk like a monkey to get people to receive the baptism of the Spirit it's not worth having. That's not what receiving the baptism of the Spirit is about. But to set forth that in this experience God in his wisdom has chosen a union of the Spirit's impressing us to praise God in ways that our mind does not functionally understand. Yet in ways that liberates our Spirit in praise.

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 14:14 that we glorify God not only with our understanding but with our Spirit. This leads us to another mission of the Spirit as to why tongues would be employed. The Spirit's mission is to edify us, to build us up.

I read a fascinating article written by a neurosurgeon who's been doing research on right/left brain capacities. There are two control centers in the brain that operate independently of one another that are wed together by nerves that tie them together. The right side of the brain is one that controls analytical, rational speech and rational thinking. The left side is more the artist, the creative kind of thing, which cannot always be reduced to analytical rational sorts of things.

In expressing love there are verbal expressions of love and non-verbal expressions of love. Sometimes you say more to a person by hugging them than you say by spinning out a whole lot of words defining love. Sometimes you say more by a kiss than you can ever say in sentences. A kiss is non-verbal. It may very well be that God who knows our personality, maybe we haven't even begun to discover what all he's up to, it seems to me that one of the things God has done in giving us the baptism in the Spirit with this praising God in unknown language is that he brings our consciousness and our non rational side together and says both are meant to praise him and worship him. So give forth to both. Paul says, "I will pray with my mind, with my rational understanding." And he says, "I will pray with my Spirit." As you know who have prayed to the Lord in this language of intercession, tongues do edify the person. They build up. They're a great healing stream of praise and intercession.

Tongues to the unbeliever only bring amazement, Acts 2:7, bring bewilderment, verse 12, and even on occasion bring ridicule. They mock them. It's the preaching of the gospel that to the unbelievers carries the day. When people in Acts 2 get done hearing all the believers, the 120,

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speaking in tongues, they're laughing saying, these people are drunk at 9:00 in the morning. They're drunk some new wine. But when they're done hearing Peter preach they're wanting to repent and get saved. And by and large the reaction of the world to this charismatic experience is "Isn't that interesting....that's kind of different... isn't that stupid!" a mocking kind of a way. That's not the method that the Lord has chosen us to communicate the gospel to other people. It is something that he has chosen to help us praise God in ways that we would not praise him. The Spirit knows the things in our heart that respond to the heart of God and the Spirit is at work to edify us and build us up.

One other thing. It's the Spirit's mission to expand us. Perhaps with the 120 the speaking with other tongues is the beginning of their losing self-consciousness so much afraid of what they're doing and begins to expand the personality. Shortly they'll be called upon to shepherd, to nurture 3000 persons who are in one moment of time brought into the kingdom of God. Who is going to spiritually care for these people? The spiritual care is going to pass to people who have the confidence in the Lord that they are filled with his Spirit, they know the risen Christ and it's going to as well fall to people who are willing to be outgoing, willing to lose some of their inhibitions, their reserve, their shyness. Come out and make these 3000 people coming in feel immediately a vital part of Christ's body.

I recognize more and more what a stupendous event this is. If 3000 persons were placed on our church body in one week's time we have no way of handling that kind of growth in this church fellowship. Maybe that's why the Spirit has not in one day or one week placed 3000 upon us. We maybe get too used to what is comfortable and we get used to being in a small group. A lot of times people do get lost in the crowd. What the Holy Spirit wanted to do in the early church was make 120 people, leaders. Make them outgoing. Make them hosts and examples to others and therefore the Spirit comes back again to square one. The whole purpose of the Spirit is not just to lead us in glory and praise toward God baptism is meant to lead us in a way of power and authority in our witness in the world. Even though it may be said for you as well as for me that at one time we received the baptism in the Spirit there is yet more of the Spirit to experience. More of us for the Spirit to possess as well as more of the Spirit for us to experience.

[end of tape]