

Acts 2:1-15, 29-41

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[0 : 00] If you've got a Bible, turn to Acts chapter 2. If you want a church Bible, they're just as you come in by there. And it's on page 909. Page 909, Acts chapter 2.

And what we're going to do this morning is, it's like when you go on a website and there's a hyperlink. You know there's words which are in slightly darker font. And there's a link, isn't it? And you click on that and it takes you to another page. And often you find that you click on something else and it takes you to another page, another page. And what I want to do that with is I want to do that with the four words in verse 1.

And I hope that as we click on this hyperlink, it'll really crack open Acts chapter 2. The four words are the day of Pentecost. The day of Pentecost.

When the day of Pentecost arrived, verse 1, they were all together in one place. And suddenly they came from heaven, a sound like a mighty Russian wind and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

[1 : 03] What was Pentecost? What is the day of Pentecost? Well, it was a Jewish feast. It had been observed all down through the history of God's people.

It wasn't new. It wasn't novel. The word literally means 50th. It was the 50th day after the Passover. It was called by various names. And each of these names is important for you and I to understand. And what I want to do is I want us to kind of click on this link of the day of Pentecost and look at some of the connections that we find in the Bible and what lies behind it.

And as we do that, I think we'll see what acts to what God is doing and saying to us. The first great name that was given to the day of Pentecost was the Feast of Weeks.

It's from Leviticus in the Old Testament, chapter 23. The Feast of Weeks. A week of weeks is 49 days. And the next day after a week of weeks is the 50th day.

[2 : 09] The Pentecostal day. The 50th day from the Passover. And what its significance is that the Feast of Pentecost and the Feast of the Passover are both linked together.

You might be thinking, well, what on earth is the Passover? It's that moment where in Israel's history, they celebrated their redemption, their escape from Egypt.

If you know the story, there was the shed blood of a lamb. It was put on the doorpost of where every one of the people of Israel was. And the Passover celebrated that great event where the angel of death passed over them and they came out of the land of Egypt.

And so in Israel's history, every Jew, they got together to celebrate their redemption. And Pentecost came 50 days after this most notable day in the history of God's people.

But the day of Pentecost that we've just read in Acts 2 and verse 1 comes 50 days, doesn't it, after the most notable event in the history of the world.

[3 : 22] The offering up of not a lamb of God, but the lamb of God, the sacrificial lamb of God, who was the Lord Jesus Christ. And it's in his offering up of himself on the cross, dying in our place, and then rising from the dead, that the New Testament sees the fulfilment of the Passover.

And so Jesus is the Christ, our Passover lamb, sacrificed for us. Therefore we keep the feast, they say. 50 days after this celebration came this day of Pentecost.

And that's of great significance for you and I because you cannot celebrate Pentecost from the Passover. And you cannot understand the significance of Pentecost apart from the offering up of Jesus as our sacrifice for our sins in order that he might gain for us all the benefits and blessings of our salvation.

And so the day of Pentecost, what I'm saying to you, cannot be separated from the work of the Lord Jesus. It is in many ways the great climax.

where the coming of God's Holy Spirit is to accomplish in God's people what the death of Jesus has accomplished for them.

[4 : 48] The coming of the Holy Spirit was to accomplish in God's people what the death of Jesus has accomplished for them. And this is the great link, the great link between Christ offering himself as our Passover and the day of Pentecost where the Holy Spirit comes in power.

What Jesus had accomplished for us, the Holy Spirit comes to apply to us and accomplish in us. It is not sufficient, according to the teaching of the Bible, that Jesus, he accomplishes something for us by his death.

He comes to his disciples, do you remember, Reuben preached on it during the summertime. In that upper room discourse in John 14 to 16 and Jesus tells them there's something he has to accomplish not only for them by leaving and going to Calvary, but there's something that Jesus has to accomplish in them by sending his Holy Spirit.

So let me read to you from John 14 and 16. Jesus says, I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him.

You know him, for he dwells in you and will be in you. He says, Because I've said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart that I'm going away. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth.

[6 : 14] It's to your advantage that I go away. Because if I do not go away, Jesus says, the helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

And when he comes, he'll convict the world of sin, unrighteousness and judgment to come. So Jesus links together his going and the Spirit's coming.

Can you see that the day of Pentecost is as much a vital part of the saving work of God in our redemption as the death of Jesus is?

Jesus says, It's to your advantage. It's for your good that I go away. Because when I go, I will send the Holy Spirit and he will be in you. The New Testament describes the saving work of Jesus in a series of events.

If you want to know what the New Testament teaches about Christianity, about the Lord Jesus Christ, let me give it to you. It's all centred on Jesus and they're mighty things that God has done.

[7 : 22] The first thing that the preaching in Acts tells us is that Jesus left heaven's glory. He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. And in order to come down, he was born.

He was born as a baby. His birth. And then his perfect life. And then his atoning death.

And then his resurrection. And then his ascension into heaven. And then his sending down the Holy Spirit. And now his present intercession. He is in heaven speaking to the Father on our behalf.

At the right hand of God. And then he will return again in glory to the end of the world. When he will raise the dead. And he will finish the work of salvation.

He will give to his people new bodies. In order that we might live for God and worship him. That is salvation in the New Testament. It is a mighty sweep of what God has done.

[8 : 26] That God has planned in eternity. And it will find its conclusion and consummation in the glory of the world that is to come. And within that mighty sweep of God's plan, the saving work of Jesus, the day of Pentecost, has a vital part.

because it is the application of our redemption to us by the Holy Spirit. Let me show you these elements in Peter 7.

I'm looking at Acts 2 in verse 22. If you look there, it says, verse 22, Men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst as you yourselves know.

Can you see there, Peter's speaking of Jesus' manhood. His leaving heaven's glory, his incarnation as a true man. His God-attested life.

Here is a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders which God did through him.

And then his death, verse 23. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and you killed by the hands of lawless men so that the death of Jesus was planned by God and accomplished by sinners.

[9 : 49] And then verse 24, you've got his resurrection. God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death because it was not possible for him to be held by it. And his exaltation, look at verse 33.

Being therefore exalted to the right hand of God, having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he's poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

So there it is, isn't it? The exalting of the Lord Jesus and the sending of the Holy Spirit. That is the way that the apostles preached the good news of Christianity.

not just a reference for Jesus dying for our sins, but this Jesus left heaven's glory. He came and he humbled himself to be a man.

He took our nature. He lived a perfect life here on earth. He offered himself as the perfect sacrifice. And he was crucified, died and was buried. And then he was raised again and now he is ascended to the right hand of God.

And from there he sent down the Holy Spirit and one day this King Jesus will come again. That is the message of the early church.

[11 : 04] And integral to the message of the early church was the coming of the Holy Spirit. So can you see in this sense the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost Pentecost was a once for all event.

It's no more to be repeated no more to be repeated than the cross is to be repeated or the resurrection is to be repeated or the return of Jesus will be repeated.

It is a once for all event in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit subsequent to the death of Jesus. And it was a necessary event.

because at the coming of the Holy Spirit all that Jesus accomplished is applied to Christians by the Holy Spirit.

So these men are described as full. The cynical Bible bystanders say they are well they're full of wine they mistake what they're full of they think that they're drunk but they recognise don't they these bystanders that these people are full of something.

[12 : 14] The Apostle Peter he tells them what it is. He tells them it is the Holy Spirit who has come and he's taken the saving grace of God bought for us by Jesus and he's applied it to the lives of these men.

And it's because he is in them that they are so full. So I can say this Pentecost is a once for all event unrepeatable.

but let me say this the gift of the Holy Spirit is not once for all. For this was the first fruit of what was to be the experience of every believer.

Can you notice how the Apostle preaches it in Acts 2 verse 38 the Holy Spirit is given to every believer who repents and confesses Jesus as saviour and they receive the forgiveness of sins. Verse 37 brothers what shall we do? That's what the crowd say what shall we do? And Peter said to them repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[13 : 29] So repentance and faith and confessing Christ and receiving the Holy Spirit are of the essence of experiencing salvation of what it means to be a Christian.

And so it means this every true believer has a personal Pentecost. when the Holy Spirit comes to you and you repent and you believe he comes to indwell you and he applies to you the benefits of what the Lord Jesus has done.

In his death and in his resurrection he gives to you an assurance of faith of being a child of God and he raises you into newness of life with him.

so that Jesus Christ may live out his life through you. That is your personal Pentecost. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in you according to the promise that the Apostle Peter makes here and that's why Christianity is the power of God under salvation.

I think that's really important to us you might be hearing you're somebody who's not a Christian and you think what are these people wanting me to believe?

[15 : 00] Are they just wanting me to understand certain facts about Jesus' life and death and his resurrection and his ascension? Is that what we think the Christian gospel is?

No, all of us need to understand that the Christian gospel presents you and I with the promise that God himself comes to make his dwelling in the heart of believers.

It is God's purpose to inhabit you within with himself. So the temple of God is we don't go to Jerusalem we don't have to go on some sort of pilgrimage the temple of God is your body says the apostle and Pentecost means that God the Holy Spirit comes to every believer and indwells him and inhabits him and so if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ he's not his that's what Romans 8 says and that indwelling if you like is the personal Pentecost when somebody repents and trusts in the Lord Jesus and they are given the power of the Holy Spirit to help them live and it's got a profoundly important connection with what the Passover pointed to the death of Jesus and the

coming and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the believing is taking the blessings and the benefits of what Jesus has accomplished and applying them to you and so can I ask you do you know that?

Do you know the personal application of the powerful death of the Lord Jesus that he has come to save you from your rebellion and your guilt to raise you into newness of life to experience the living God that is biblical Christianity it's not taking a form on the passport that is New Testament Christianity but experiencing personally the coming of God into your life by his Holy Spirit the second thing when you click on the day of Pentecost is you will find that it was a celebration of the giving of the law seems a strange thing doesn't it to have a day celebrating the giving of a law but that is the giving of the law that Reuben read to us in Exodus chapter 19 and 20 on Mount Sinai 50 days after the original

Passover and the association between the giving of the law and Pentecost is of great significance the giving of the law 50 days after the day of Pentecost after the Passover was designed wasn't it the law to be a revelation of who God is but also a standard for living a standard of life I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt out of the household of slavery therefore because of that you shall have no other gods before me you shall not make for yourself an idol you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy it was to mould the people of God into the likeness of God it was an external standard and the people of God were to keep God's law and God came to Israel at Sinai and he gave them his Lord to show them who he was and to show them how he intended them to live and he came down didn't he in mighty power in thunder and lightning and fire the loud blast of a trumpet which is very significant when you look at what happened in Acts 2 and so let me read this to some of you on the morning of the third day from Exodus there were thunders and lightnings and a cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast and it went up like the smoke of a kiln and the whole mountain trembled greatly and as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder

[19:25] Moses spoke and God answered him in thunder and the Lord came down Mount Sinai in order to give the law in order to shape the lives of his people who had been redeemed that's what the law of God was intended for God came down spoke to his people and his people were to be changed but if you know your Bible you'll know that isn't what happened that God's ultimate purpose was not merely to leave his people with an external law but God's purpose was to write his law on our hearts to put his spirit within them let me read to you from Exodus 36 where the prophet says this it's a promise of God I will give you a new heart and a new spirit and I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you that will cause you to walk in my statutes and my laws think of what that promise meant to the people of Israel they'd listened to the law being read week by week like we do and they knew that they didn't keep it they'd broken it they knew that despite resolving to try better and to try better they knew that they couldn't do it and that they needed a new heart and God says

I will come and I will sprinkle you with clean water and you should be clean it was their cleansing and I'll give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will take away that old stony heart and I will give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you so that you might walk in my laws now where was that fulfilled where was that fulfilled it's Acts chapter 2 in the outpouring of the spirit of God because this is the day when God sends his spirit and he transforms the character of his people and so if you want to see the apostle Paul's reference to this you need to flick over to 2 Corinthians 3 and there the apostle Paul he contrasts what it's like to live by religious law to the time of the spirit this is what he says such is the confidence that we have through Christ towards God not that we're sufficient in ourselves to claim anything that's coming from us but our sufficiency is from God who's made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant here's the point not of the letter but of the spirit for the letter kills but the spirit of gives life and now if the ministry of death carved in letters on stone came with such glory that the

Israelites couldn't even gaze at Moses face because of its glory which has been brought to an end will not the ministry of the spirit have even more glory for if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation the ministry of righteousness must far exceed it in glory what does it all amount to it amounts to this now the Lord is the spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is there is freedom and we all with unveiled faces behold the glory of the Lord and we're being transformed into the same image from one glory to another for this comes from the Lord who is the Holy Spirit listen to this

what is the Holy Spirit given to you given to do the Holy Spirit is given to us as we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ to write God's law on our hearts and to take our character the least likely of us the weakest of us those who this morning may be on the verge of giving up the struggle and they feel absolutely hopeless and the

Holy Spirit takes our character and he moulds us and he changes us from one degree of glory to another until we bear the image of the Lord Jesus and that is what salvation is about it is not a little thing it is not being religious it is not trying your best it is the changing of our character which we cannot do on our own until it reflects the glory and the beauty of the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit comes to us and that is what his job is and so at Pentecost he comes down in the sound of a mighty rushing wind and tongues of flaming fire it's what the promise is for that the wonderful works of God the life of God might be seen in the souls and lives of men and women and boys and girls it's why isn't it when the New Testament goes on to speak about the effects of the Holy Spirit in someone it speaks about fruit the fruit of the

Spirit is love joy peace gentleness goodness self control and so on what are those things those things are this they are the law of God being written on the hearts of men and women and on the day of Pentecost that is what God is doing the third thing that the day of Pentecost was associated with again was again from Leviticus 23 and it's the feast of first fruits in other words the day of Pentecost was a harvest celebration and Jews came to it from every corner of the world as they did at the Passover the first years of ripe corn were offered up to God and the first fruits were part of the harvest the first fruits were part of the harvest but they were the promise of the rest of it they were like a deposit and so do you see how perfectly

[25 : 33] God chooses his times and his season how beautifully this helps us to understand what is the great significance of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 the great significance of it is this that we were to see the first fruits of God's harvest on that day there were 3,000 who were added to the church and day by day God kept adding to the church those who were being saved the first fruits of the harvest were here and that harvest is still being gathered even this morning all over the world and the end of that harvest will not be until Jesus comes again now what does this tell about Pentecost it tells us that Pentecost perhaps above everything else is a missionary event and the spirit filled church was born on the day of Pentecost the tongues of fire verse 3 seem to have significance particularly don't they verse 3 divided tongues as a fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them and they were all filled with the Holy

Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance so can you see that the speaking of tongues here in Acts 2 is closely associated with the preaching and praising of God in the presence of these people who've come from every corner of the world look at verse 5 they were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews devout men from every nation under heaven and as the sound of the multitude came together they were bewildered because each one hearing them speak in his own language and they were amazed and astonished saying aren't these who are speaking Galilean and at the end of verse 11 we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God the significance of tongues is important why is it so important it's saying isn't it because right from the beginning this will be a missionary church that will go out into the ends of the earth to speak in the language of these people who've come from if you check where the details are they've come from the north the south the east and the west from every corner of the world and God came down in tongues to enable them to speak clearly the wonderful works of

God to every creature you might say Paul you've missed the most obvious thing of all about the day of Pentecost what's the most obvious thing of all about Pentecost well if you go back to Genesis in Genesis chapter 11 everyone spoke the same language do you remember the Tower of Babel everyone spoke the same language and they used that language common language they used that to defy God they wanted to not fulfil God's purposes they wanted to build a tower to heaven and make a name for themselves and God scatters them and he confuses their language so they cannot understand one another and so suddenly different languages are born in Genesis 11 and yet Christ comes and the Holy Spirit comes and what happens in Acts 2 it is the reversal of Babel it is the reversal of the curse and so Acts 2 is not saying you all start off to babble in a different language in an unknown language in fact it's saying the exact opposite is saying that because of Christ and because of the work of the Holy

Spirit the curse of Babel is being removed and the first fruits of the harvest are coming in and so this should enormously encourage us shouldn't it this should be wonderfully wonderfully encouraging

look around you just look around you and see where the people are from they are not all from Wales they are not all from England God by his Holy Spirit is calling the nations to himself the missionary expansion of the church and God has come down and God's people are being filled with the Spirit can you just see with me as we finish what is the result of people understanding the gospel in their language can you see verse 37 verse 37 when they heard this here is the authentic response to hearing the message of the

Lord Jesus Christ that he is Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified they were cut to the heart and they cried what shall we do and Peter said to them repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins when you repent what happens you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and this promise this promise of the Holy Spirit is for you and it's for your children and it's for those who are far off everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself so it may be this morning that you've recognized actually I don't know the Lord Jesus Christ I don't know the Lord Jesus Christ and I want to ask you this morning

[31 : 34] I want to plead with you to call on him to ask him to forgive your sins to thank you for that incredible salvation of event of him leaving the glory of heaven and becoming a human being and living a perfect life and dying a death that you deserve and then being buried and raised and ascended and today he is pouring out his Holy Spirit and so believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved let's pray and so thank you for your time and so for time!