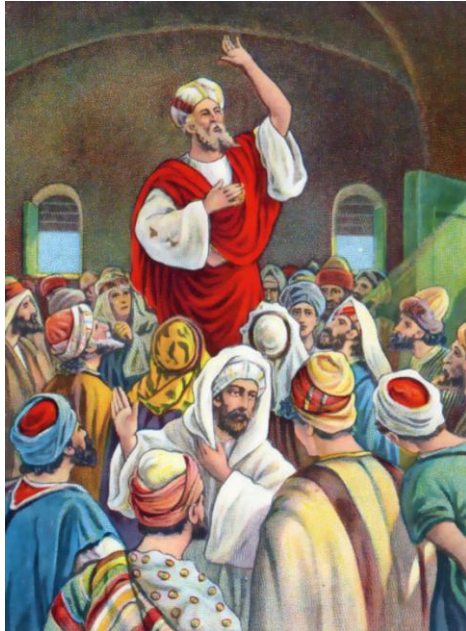


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 3



THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

Scripture Text: Acts 2:1-18

After a number of days of prayer by the disciples, the Day of Pentecost arrived. Jesus had said the Holy Spirit would be sent **not many days hence**. The disciples were redeemed from sin. They believed Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit. They yielded fully to Him. Great change was about to take place concerning the relationship of God and His people. The Day of Pentecost was a type. Christ's coming, His death, burial, and resurrection fulfilled the type, and the *day* would no more have significance.

The annual Day of Pentecost was held fifty days after the Passover (**Leviticus 23:15-16**). It was a type. It was a feast of the first fruits, a freewill offering to God (**Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:10**). They were to bring two loaves made of first wheat, a wave offering to God (**Leviticus 23:16-17**). Christ brought the fulfillment—baptism of the Holy Spirit fifty days after the Crucifixion. The fruit of the Spirit, spoken of in **Galatians 5:22-23**, is produced when our lives are offered fully to God for His use and enjoyment (**Romans 12:1; John 15:8**). The fruit of the Spirit nourishes lives of saints who are kings and priests (**2 Peter 1:5-8; 1 Peter 2:5 and 9**).

MEMORY VERSE: *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.*

—*Acts 2:16*

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Leviticus 23:1-8** The Passover.
- Tue.—**Leviticus 23:9-14** The feast of first fruits.
- Wed.—**Leviticus 23:15-25** Pentecost and feast of trumpets.
- Thu.—**Leviticus 23:26-32** The day of atonement.
- Fri.—**Leviticus 23:33-44** The feast of tabernacles.

Devotional Reading: **Joel 2:27-32** Pentecost fulfills type.

Pentecost a Type

Acts 2:1-3 When the day of Pentecost was fully come. God had set this day for sending the Holy Spirit. **They were all with one accord**—in unity, praying for the same thing, loving one another, all looking for Jesus' promise. **In one place**. God is a God of unity. His kingdom is one unified whole. The unity of the church is its strength. When one spirit binds the church together in love, the church is strong. Then God works through the church and great things are accomplished. **Suddenly . . . a sound from heaven**—from where the Holy Spirit was coming—**as of a rushing mighty wind . . . there appeared**—could be seen—**cloven tongues**—split—**like as of fire . . . upon each**. At this outstanding occasion, He overflowed the usual bounds of the spirit realm into the physical. He showed Himself through sound and sight. Sound of wind indicates His unseen power. Tongues of fire indicate His life and light and warmth, His visual power.

As the Passover was a type of Christ's death, so Pentecost was a type of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in a person causes one to produce the fruit of the Spirit (**John 15:2-8**). See **Galatians 5:22-23**. His coming fulfilled the type, and the *day* ceased to have significance.

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LESSON 3

They Spoke With Other Languages

Acts 2:4-11 They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. These people were ready. They were already saved from sin. The Holy Spirit enters only saved people. They **began to speak with other tongues**—other languages they had not learned. **The Spirit gave them utterance**—a miraculous gift. **Devout men** of many nations were gathered in Jerusalem to worship at Pentecost. Fifteen nations are named. They gathered and each heard in his own language. The disciples told God's **wonderful works**.

Anything God does is right. We need fear nothing that He does if we are His. We can and should fully yield and abandon ourselves to God's will, whatever that may be. These principles, put fully into action, will settle the tongues question. Speaking in tongues—other languages—is a gift of the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:10**). All do not receive the same gifts. When God gives a gift to one, it is to be used to God's glory. God is not responsible for many of the things people say He does.

All Amazed

Acts 2:12-13 They were all amazed . . . What meaneth this? This work of the Holy Spirit was not a small thing. **The multitude came together.** It was the biggest thing in town that day. It is still the biggest thing when God favors a people with His presence. There were two kinds of people there— some ready to believe, some closing their ears and minds in unbelief. The latter, **mocking said, These men are full of new wine.** They could not deny the miraculous work of God, so ridiculed it. Many do this today.

What Changed Peter?

Acts 2:14-18 Peter . . . lifted up his voice. Strong, sure, and unafraid, Peter faced the crowd. **This is that ... spoken by the prophet Joel.** Joel prophesied in Judah around 800 B.C. Peter quoted **Joel 2:28-29. In the last days**—in the last dispensation, from Christ's First Coming to His Second Coming—**I will pour out of my Spirit.** God had now begun to fulfill this promise. Upon whom will He pour the Spirit? **All flesh**—every person who will receive Him. It will have an excellent effect. **Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy**—preach, give God's message to the people. **Young men shall see visions.** Stephen saw into Heaven, **Acts 7:55**; Cornelius saw an angel, **Acts 10:3**; Peter, a sheet full of creatures, **Acts 10:9-16**. Paul's night visions were possibly dreams, **Acts 16:9**; **Acts 23:11**; **Acts 27:23-24**.

Fifty days earlier Peter denied Jesus. He had used his sword. Before that, he had rebuked Jesus for speaking of His death. None of the disciples understood Jesus' Words of how He would die and rise again. When Jesus was taken, they all forsook him and fled. When He died, they mourned and wept. They believed not that He had risen. They locked their doors for fear of the Jews. They went fishing instead of spreading the Gospel. They held the worldly hope that Jesus came to free Israel from Roman rule. Now, on this day, Peter stood fearless before thousands and proclaimed Jesus as Lord to those who had crucified Him. He now understood the meaning of His death and resurrection and could confidently tell how to be saved. He was strong in the Lord. What had changed him? He was filled with the Holy Ghost.

Jesus' death and resurrection gave life to the church. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit gave it working power, the final requirement for a fully equipped church. With His coming on Pentecost, A.D. 33, the church was completely established and would grow.

JUST A THOUGHT

We cannot be both popular with the world and pleasing to God.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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