

**Acts: To the End of the Earth**

**Part 3-Acts 2:1-13, The Origin Story**

**10/11/2020**

I have loved reading about superheroes since I was a little kid, and one of the best parts of a superhero's story, is their origin story

My all-time favorite superhero origin story is the socially awkward, science nerd, Peter Parker, bitten by a radioactive spider and gaining superhuman powers

No other superhero captured my interest more than that one

Today, in our series, *To the End of the Earth*, we are going to see the origin story for a group of very ordinary people, who's supernaturally-enabled ministry changed the entire world

The event took place on a little-understood Jewish holiday called Pentecost, or the Feast of Weeks, when Jews from the world over gathered in Jerusalem for a week long festival  
**'Pentecost'** means *fiftieth*, occurring 50 days after the festival of firstfruits, which is the day Jesus rose from the dead

In Judaism, Pentecost had become a celebration of two things: the giving of the Law of Moses to Israel, and a celebration of thanksgiving for the grain harvest

It was heavily attended by Jews and converted Gentiles from all over the world

While the Jews were celebrating the giving of the law, the Christians would soon be celebrating the giving of the Holy Spirit, and that is what we are about to see

***"When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting." Acts 2:1-2***

**Acts 1:15** tells us about 120 believers were gathered together in this house just outside the Temple, when suddenly there came from heaven, a sound like a mighty wind

Not a literal, physical wind, but the sound of a mighty, rushing wind filled the house

In both Greek and Hebrew, the word for spirit was also used for wind or breath

What we have here is the Spirit of God, about to breath supernatural life into these believers

Then ***"divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them."*** 2:3

Not literal fire, but tongues ***as of fire*** came down onto all the believers in that house

Fire, a symbol of God's purifying presence, was about to set their hearts aflame with power and being in the form of tongues, give them the power to witness of Jesus

A terrible saying came into popularity that goes like this: *Preach the gospel at all times, and when necessary use words*

Yet using words is necessary, for **Romans 10:14, 17** says, ***"how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?...faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."***

Christian, the Holy Spirit provides us, just as Jesus said in **Acts 1:8**, the power to witness of Him

On that day the promise Jesus gave was fulfilled...they were baptized with the Holy Spirit

While Christians today experience this, it is markedly different than these early believers

This was a group of 120 old testament believers, who did not have the Spirit dwelling in them

They were saints under the old covenant, and the Spirit of God operated differently then

Many years ago I was ordained, which in the E Free is a rigorous process and one of the

questions asked of me by the panel was to explain the difference between how the Holy Spirit operated in the Old Testament and the New  
 I completely bombed that question, which made me study this a lot more closely  
 The Spirit of God came down on, or into old testaments saints, but did not stay  
 This is why David asked God in **Psalm 51**, ***“take not your Holy Spirit from me”*** (11)

But in the new covenant the Spirit of God baptizes a person at salvation, and dwells permanently in them, empowering them to victory over sin, Satan and worldly influence, to do the work of God by giving each believer supernatural abilities called spiritual gifts  
 The new covenant was ushered in on this day of pentecost, inaugurated by the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ

***“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.***  
**John 7:38-39**

Again Jesus said, ***“it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”*** **John 16:7**

These 1st century believers stood uniquely between the old and new covenants  
 For us today, there is no period of time between salvation and being baptized with the Spirit, it happens simultaneously, and permanently as the Spirit dwells within His people

Notice what happened to these Spirit-baptized believers: ***“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...”*** **Acts 2:4**

They were filled with the Spirit, something that is not a one-time event  
 Peter here was filled with the Spirit, but then **4:8** he was again filled with the Spirit and then again filled with the Spirit in **4:31**

All the Apostles were filled with the Spirit that day, but notice what happens in **Acts 4:31**, ***“And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”***

While the baptism with the Spirit is a one-time action that God does to us as we are born again, the filling with the Spirit is a command that requires continuous action

This is clear in **Ephesians 5:18**, ***“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”***

Paul tells believers who have already been baptized with the Holy Spirit, to be ***‘filled’***, a grammatical tense for continuous action...*continue to be filled with the Spirit*

We are filled with the Spirit as we day by day draw near to Jesus, obeying Him in even the smallest areas of our lives

If you are to be continuously filled with the Spirit, you must continue to empty yourself by confessing sin regularly, and dying to your selfishness and self-will

It is not like a glass that is full of water and cannot receive anymore liquid...it’s rather like a balloon full of air, but when more air is blown in, it expands to even greater size

More of the Spirit, more power for greater spiritual victory and for greater service

Look at the power of the Spirit seen in these early Spirit-filled believers: ***“and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”*** **2:4**

The ***‘other tongues’*** were earthly languages represented in the thousands gathered from all over the world in Jerusalem for this festival: ***“they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished” 6-7***

Just as interesting is the word in 2:4, ***‘utterance’***, which means loud and clear speech  
 Not only were these Spirit-filled believers suddenly empowered to speak other languages, they spoke them with confidence and clarity and eloquence  
 The multitude that gathered exclaimed, ***‘Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?’***  
 Israel was divided into two groups of Jews, those from up north in Galilee and those from Judea down south, who looked down at Galilean Jews as uneducated  
 But now, filled with the Holy Spirit, these Galileans were speaking multiple languages, a preview of what all Christians will hear in heaven  
***“And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,’” Revelation 5:9***

And what were they saying in these Spirit-enabled languages of the world?...***“We hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God” 2:11***

They were witnessing, testifying of the works of God and this is the primary aim of the Spirit, that we would be given the power to witness of Jesus Christ to the end of the earth

Christian, are you tired of lacking the power to witness well of Jesus Christ?  
 It is the aim of the Spirit to supply us with all we need to do all Jesus has asked us to do  
 We read in Luke’s gospel that after Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, ***“[He] returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee” Luke 4:14***

The same Holy Spirit that was in Jesus is in you Christian, so let that give you encouragement  
 If you lack the power of the Spirit to boldly and clearly testify of Jesus, then look inward as David did in **Psalm 139**, ***“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!” Psalm 139:23-24***

If God shows you sin, even the smallest sin, then confess that as David did in **Psalm 51**  
 Otherwise, you are like a balloon only partially inflated lacking the fullness of the Holy Spirit  
 Let me invite you to consider coming to the Elders of our church for prayer and to confess any sin that may be robbing you of the fullness of the Spirit

If you have never put your faith in Jesus Christ then friend, you have never been baptized with the Holy Spirit, and there is no possibility of being filled with Him

You are living by your own power, surely discovering how spiritually weak you really are  
 I am witnessing of Jesus right now to you...there is forgiveness and salvation and life that await you at the cross of Jesus Christ

He died that you would live, but you must come to Him in surrender and faith

Pray