

THE BOOK OF ACTS

CHAPTER 2

THE CHALLENGE OF CHAPTER TWO

At salvation, every believer enters into the fruit of the Spirit. However, the gifts of the Holy Spirit operate in conjunction with the infilling. Since the day of Pentecost, the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues is still available to all believers who will receive. There is no age, gender, or racial distinction.

As Spirit-filled believers, we have the power to be witnesses before anyone who crosses our path. We may not preach to massive crowds as Peter did, but every day we can walk in the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit causing others to be drawn to the Lord Jesus Christ. As with the early church, the Word of God should be the number one priority in our lives. Prayer too, should be part of our daily walk with the Lord as well as fellowship with the saints. The supernatural power of the Holy Spirit in and through our lives should draw people into the church and away from religion.

A. THE DAY OF PENTECOST (1-4)

Act 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2:1 with one accord, *homothumadon* (hom-oth-oo-mad-on); Being unanimous, having mutual consent, being in agreement, having group unity, having one mind and purpose. The disciples had an intellectual unanimity, an emotional rapport, and volitional agreement in the newly founded church. In each of its occurrences, *homothumadon* shows a harmony leading to action.

After the day of Pentecost after the day of Pentecost, every believer in the upper room had become:

1. A born-again child of God
2. A member of the church
3. A part of the body of Christ
4. A full-time minister
5. A part of the bride of Christ
6. Indwelt by the Holy Spirit
7. Filled with the Holy Spirit
8. A vessel for spiritual gifts
9. An ambassador for God

There are two advents of the Holy Spirit, just as there are two advents of the Lord Jesus. The First Advent Of The Holy Spirit Is the subject of Acts 2. This occurred at the beginning of the church age. There are also prophecies that refer to the second advent which will begin the millennial kingdom.

In the Jewish tradition, Pentecost is an important feast day, which occurs 50 days after the Feast of Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:15-17). Pentecost always occurs on a Sunday. The Holy Spirit fulfills Pentecost, and Jesus Christ is our Firstfruits. 1 Corinthians 15:22-23 says, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

The 120 in the upper room were of one accord, one mind, and one purpose. They were in prayer, waiting for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit from the newly resurrected and ascended Lord Jesus.

A SOUND FROM HEAVEN

Act 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And suddenly there came a sound (*echos*: booming roar) from heaven as of a rushing mighty (violent) wind, and it (the sound, roar) filled all the house where they were sitting.

The work of the Holy Spirit is sometimes progressive in Christian growth, but when His work relates to the giving of a gift or calling, it is an instantaneous work (Acts 16:16-18). This is how the church age began and also how it will end (1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

The booming, echoing sound from heaven hit the atmosphere over Jerusalem and descended into the room where the disciples were sitting. Though they were sitting, the position of prayer is not important to the Lord. Prayer is heard whether we kneel or sit. While waiting a number of days for the promise of the Spirit, the disciples probably took on many postures including sitting.

Wind is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (John 3:8). The church began with a noise and it will end with one also --- the sound of a shout and trumpet! The church swept in like a wind and it will be swept out like one also.

C. THEY BEGAN TO SPEAK IN OTHER TONGUES

THEY BEGAN TO SPEAK IN OTHER TONGUES

Act 2:3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

The Holy Spirit and tongues of fire had already arrived, but the disciples could not see them with their physical eyes. Suddenly, what had already existed manifested as tongues like fire and the disciples could actually see this manifestation. This is the same way the angels suddenly appeared to the disciples on the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:10), and the way Peter's eyes will later be opened to an angel while he is in press (Acts 12:7).

The Holy Spirit is one person, but he decides to everyone (1 Corinthians 12:11). On this day, the disciples spoke many languages of men and angels (1 Corinthians 13:1), but all were given by the Holy Spirit. Each tongue over each head represented a language unique

to that person. No two from the upper room went into the streets speaking the same language (Acts 2:8-11).

Act 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And they were all filled (*pletho*) with the Holy Ghost (*pneuma*), and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (the words to speak).

Speaking in tongues began on the day of Pentecost and continued from that day on (Acts 4:31). But the personal experience of speaking in tongues is not one that continues on its own; we must choose to remain filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). The speaking comes from man, the words we speak come from the Holy Spirit. **The language we receive is supernatural, but the Holy Spirit uses our voice and will.**

The Holy Spirit came on the first disciples the same way He comes upon us today. When the Holy Spirit comes upon us, He must be received (Acts 8:15), and His words are spoken through us as we are filled (*pletho*) to overflowing.

The disciples had an experience with the Holy Spirit when the tongues like fire sat upon them, but they spoke with tongues when they were filled. When believers now are filled, they also speak with tongues. This has never changed since the day the Holy Spirit was given. There may be no initial outward evidence of the Spirit's indwelling (which is the new birth), but the infilling, the coming on and equipping with power, does have a manifestation: speaking in other tongues.

Through the new birth (the indwelling), we enter into the fruits of the Spirit. Through the infilling, we enter into the gifts of the Spirit. The gifts are manifestations of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7) and the initial entering of this area has a manifestation also.

For the disciples, speaking with tongues was a fulfillment of Isaiah 28:9-13. It was also a sign of the coming church age, not only to the believer but also to the Jews concerning their coming destruction and dispersion. This manifestation of the Spirit was heard by the Jews first (Acts 2) and then carried to the rest of the world. Isaiah foretold tongues would be heard by the Jew first as an opportunity to receive the Lord or be destroyed in the upcoming Roman invasion. Tongues was one of three signs given to the Jews in the book of Isaiah.

THREE SIGNS GIVEN TO THE JEWS IN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

1. The Virgin Birth (Isaiah 7:14)
2. Tongues (Isaiah 28:9-13)
3. The Crucifixion (Isaiah 53)

THE CROWD'S REACTION (VERSES 5-13)

Jews from all around the world are gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. The crowds hear the 120 speaking in other tongues and are amazed because they hear the disciples speaking their different languages, and even specific dialects. The disciples are speaking praise and worship to God in tongues unknown to them, but understood by certain Jews who had gathered for the Feast of Pentecost. Some of those who hear accuse the disciples of being drunk because they cannot explain what they are hearing.

THE MULTITUDE IS CONFOUNDED

Act 2:5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

These Jews dwelling in Jerusalem are religious Jews from all over the known world. The Jews had gone into all the world to spread the Jewish law and religion (Matthew 23:15) and had returned to Jerusalem to celebrate this feast day.

God chose this day not only as a fulfillment of Pentecost but also for this crowd of religious Jews to hear and receive. These men are bilingual and trilingual and probably speak Hebrew and Greek in addition to the language of the nation they are evangelized. Most of these men had not been born in Jerusalem, but in the nations in which they are presently living. Many all of these Jews receive the Lord on this day and take the gospel back into their own countries.

Act 2:6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

The Greek for the first part of this verse says, "When this noise was heard abroad." The "sound" from verse 2 is heard all over the city of Jerusalem and brings the crowd together. When the devout, religious Jews come together, they are shocked and speechless because they all hear these illiterate men speaking in the dialects of the nations in which they are living!

Act 2:7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

And they were all amazed (shocked) and marveled (wondered), saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

Galileans were usually illiterate, poorly educated, and spoke only Aramaic.

Act 2:8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

These Jews born in other countries are amazed because the disciples speak the language as if they are natives. They even speak the dialects of the parts of the countries the Jews are from.

Act 2:9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Act 2:10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Act 2:11 Cretes and Arabians, **we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.**

. . . Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues (glossa) the wonderful works of God.

Verses 9 through 11 list the countries the Jews are from and the languages they hear spoken. These Jews are from several different areas:

1. Parthia: The Parthians, now eastern Turkey
2. Media: Part of the Chaldean Empire, now Northeastern Iran
3. Judea: The southern kingdom of Israel
4. Cappadocia in Pontus: Part of Armenai

As the disciples speak in tongues, they are not preaching of the gospel, but praising and worshiping God (1 Corinthians 14:2, 17). On this day, no one receives Jesus as Savior until Peter quits speaking with tongues and preaches the gospel in a language they can all understand.

God's purpose for the disciples speaking with tongues this day is to edify and build them up while grabbing the attention of those listening (1 Corinthians 14:22).

2:11 wonderful works, *megaleios* (meg-al-eye-oss); Conspicuous, magnificent, splendid, majestic, sublime, grand, beautiful, excellent, favorable. Used here and in Luke 1:49. The amazed visitors At Pentecost heard the disciples in their own languages reciting the sublime greatness of God and His mighty deeds.

FROM SHOCK TO MOCKING

Act 2:12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

And they were all amazed (shocked), and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

Act 2:13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

New wine was sweet wine, and it took a lot to make a person drunk. The resulting drunkenness was not a great intoxication, but a looseness and joy.

The crowds do not think those filled with the Holy Spirit are drunk because they are falling down or reeling around, but because they are speaking loudly and joyfully in other tongues.

PETER PREACHES TO THE CROWD (VERSES 14-40)

Peter, now filled with the Holy Spirit, preaches his first sermon by explaining what has just happened to the 120 in the upper room. He quotes what was spoken by the prophet Joel concerning the Holy Spirit. Peter then ministers about salvation and the day of wrath that will one day come on the earth. He also quotes a prophecy given by David which has been fulfilled through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. As Peter preaches under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, many are convicted in their hearts.

2:4-13 The Miracle of Pentecost, HOLY SPIRIT FULLNESS. The miracle of Pentecost happened to everyone in the Upper Room: “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues” (verse 4). The 120 gathered in the Upper Room without an expectation of what would happen---only that they should stay there until it did. Some propose that the languages spoken on the Day of Pentecost were all known languages; however, there is no support for this in the text. First, those filled with the Spirit that day did not know the languages that they began speaking, though about a dozen of those languages understood were identified by visitors attending the feast in Jerusalem. Second, inasmuch as all 120 spoke with tongues, it is logical and likely that many other unidentified languages were spoken---all, doubtless, in the same spirit of worshiping God’s “wonderful works” (verse 11). The result: the church was birthed in the worshiping, ministering power of the Holy Spirit; and shortly, 3000 people received Christ. This enablement by the Spirit initiated the spread of the gospel in the hostile environment of persecution, idolatry, and political oppression, and it is still the answer for the spread of the gospel today.

NOT DRUNK AS YOU SUPPOSE

Act 2:14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

but Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea (visitors), and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem (home town people), be this known unto you, and hearken to my words (rhema):

The preaching of the gospel begins after Peter quits speaking with tongues and begins preaching in the language the people understand. Again, tongues was not given to preach the gospel, but to magnify God and edify those speaking with tongues.

Act 2:15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

In indignation against the work of the Holy Spirit, these religious men make a case against speaking with tongues. To say the disciples are drunk casts mockery and derision on the credibility of those who are obviously under the control of something supernatural. So Peter explains that these men and women are not drunk. It is only nine o’clock in the morning, and it would be difficult for such a large group to be drunk at this early hour.

Act 2:16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

Peter now quotes Joel 2:28-29. He turns the crowd's attention to something familiar, the Old Testament prophets. Although Joel was not necessarily prophesying about the coming church age, his prophecy is used by Peter to tell of a similar outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (after the second advent of Jesus). This portrays the dual kingdom, the church and the millennium. There is a former and a latter rain spoken of by Joel before he brings out this prophecy of the millennium (Joel 2:23). The former rain was given at Pentecost, and the latter rain will occur at the beginning of the millennium.

IN THE LAST DAYS

Act 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

And it shall come to pass (eimi: it shall be) in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

The "last days" is a reference to the time period of Jesus' absence from the earth (Hebrews 1:2). The "last days" began at Pentecost and will continue through the rapture of the church and for the duration of the Tribulation.

The church age is God's spiritual preview of the millennial reign of Jesus. During the church age, Jesus rules only over His body, the church; during the millennium, he will rule over the entire earth for 1000 years. Many scriptures dealing with the millennium have a double meaning in the New Testament because they are also speaking of the church age.

The outpouring of the the Spirit is for all believers, male and female, young and old. There is no gender or age distinction in the body of Christ (Galatians 3:29). Part of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is supernatural guidance. The Spirit's guidance is no longer confined to the inward voice. Dreams and visions are now available to all who trust in the Lord, young and old, male and female. In the Old Testament, this type of guidance was only given to those who fill spiritual offices. Now it is available to all.

Act 2:18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

"Menservants" and "maidservants" refer to gender and social distinctions. The Holy Spirit not only cares deeply for men and women, He makes no distinction in whether a person is rich or poor or of high- or low-class standing.

Prophecy does not mean everyone will operate as a prophet, but it does mean they will receive spiritual revelation and utter words of edification to other believers (1 Corinthians 14:4).

Act 2:19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

Act 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

All these signs and wonders listed in verses 19 and 20 occur after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. In Joel 2, these occurrences precede the second advent of the Lord (Matthew 24:29-30); the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will occur “afterward” (Joel 2:28).

Act 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter uses the last verse of Joel 2 to begin his sermon on salvation from the day of wrath coming on the earth. The Jews listening to the sermon will not face that day but will face the great white throne judgment of the Lord Jesus.

Act 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth (humanity), a man (double emphasis on His humanity) approved of God among you by (dia: through) miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Peter begins his sermon to the Jew first (Isaiah 28:11; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16). As deity, Jesus did not have to be approved among men, but as humanity He did. Miracles, signs, and wonders are God’s stamp of approval on a ministry (Hebrews 2:3-4). Peter tells these men of the signs and wonders Jesus did, but he also reminds them that they already have knowledge of these things.

Act 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel (fixed purpose) and foreknowledge (prognosis) of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Jesus’ primary purpose in coming to earth was not to heal or perform signs and wonders. He came into the earth to die (Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 13:8). This was the determined, fixed will of God from eternity past. Peter informs the Jews that it was not the Romans who crucified Jesus, but them, the religious Jews.

Religion has and always will be the greatest hindrance to the gospel and the greatest persecutor of the church and the believer.

Act 2:24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Whom God hath raised up, having (already) loosed the pains (birth pangs) of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of (held by) it.

God always turns cursing into a blessing. This is also His plan for Jesus and for us. Men took the gift of God and crucified Him, but God raised Him up from the dead again. In resurrection, Jesus has greater power than He ever did in His earthly humanity. Through death, He had the right to give this power over to the church, which had just begun.

Here Peter compares the resurrection to a miscarriage. Jesus was in the heart of the earth suffering for our sins and was about to be “born” into death when God raised Him from the dead. Hell had a miscarriage and instead, Jesus was delivered out of the womb of spiritual death and eternal separation from God!

The following passage from verses 25 through 28 is a quote from Psalms 16:8 through 11. This is the second time Peter quotes the Old Testament to document what the Jews have seen.

Act 2:25 For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:

David foresaw the Lord being delivered from hell. David also foresaw the time when he would be in paradise observing this spectacle happening in the regions of the dead. (He wrote this passage 1000 years before the resurrection.)

Act 2:26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

Therefore (as a result) did my heart rejoice (give glory), and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

You can only rejoice and give glory when you are stable, unshaken in your faith and trust in the Lord. Our tongue is present with us in eternity and words of praise can be formed. David’s tongue rejoiced because his heart was glad At what it saw. This caused his flesh to rest in the grave with a newfound hope. The hope was his future resurrection based on the resurrection of Jesus.

Act 2:27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Because thou (God) wilt not leave my soul in hell (Hades), neither wilt thou suffer (allow) thine Holy One (Jesus) to see corruption.

David was in the region of the righteous dead, Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). He looked across the impassible gulf (Luke 16:26) and saw Jesus in the regions of the damned, suffering for the sins of all mankind.

He also saw Jesus finish the penalty and receive the power of God to raise Him from the dead. David's courage and stability came from seeing Jesus raised from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus gave David the assurance that he to be raised on the day of the great resurrection.

Act 2:28 Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.

DAVID THE "SEER"

Act 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

Men and brethren, let me freely (boldly) speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us and to this day.

David was loved by all Israel. Next to Moses, he was the favorite of the people of God. David had lived in Jerusalem, and the site of his grave was known to the people Peter was preaching to.

Act 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

because David was a prophet, he was a seer. He could see future events and accurately record these events through revelation of Holy Spirit. David saw Jesus, the one prophesied of who would come from his loins and who would be the future and Eternal King over Israel.

In 2 Samuel 7: 12-16 God gave David an oath:

2Sa 7:12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

2Sa 7:13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

2Sa 7:14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

2Sa 7:15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

2Sa 7:16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

David now sees how this prophecy will be manifested through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus would be raised up to sit on David's throne.

Act 2:31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

David saw this event centuries before it occurred. He knew Jesus' body and soul would not be left in the earth to see corruption or eternal separation from God.

Act 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Peter is saying, "We have seen the fulfillment of David's prophecy before our very eyes. We are witnesses of the Word of God given today. The Spirit spoke of Jesus."

Act 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

The humanity of Jesus was lifted up by the power of God the Father and the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11). He sat down at the right hand of God in heaven. Once Jesus was seated, He gave the Holy Spirit. Jesus first received the promise of the Spirit at the Jordan River and has now given that promise to the church. The promise of the Holy Spirit is not the new birth but the infilling, "which ye now see and hear."

Act 2:34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

for David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself (Psalm 110:1), the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand,

The Father is called the Lord, and Jesus is called my Lord. Jesus is "my Lord" because He is our personal savior, our link to God, the Lord.

Act 2:35 Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

Until I make thy foes (Satan and demons) thy footstool.

Jesus will be seated in heaven throughout the church age and its resurrection. At the end of the tribulation, He will leave His throne in heaven and take His throne on earth for the thousand-year reign, the millennium. During this time, Satan and demons will be removed from Earth and banished to the bottomless pit, awaiting the great white throne judgment.

Act 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

The first church sermon preached is about the resurrection of Jesus. Peter puts the blame for the crucifixion on the shoulders of the religious Jews. He puts the resurrection on the shoulders of God. God took the curse men had created and turned it into a blessing.

HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTION

Act 2:37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Now when they heard this, they were pricked (cut, pierced --- Hebrews 4:12) in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

The convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, with the preaching of the gospel, especially the resurrection of Jesus. Peter's life was greatly changed, and now the evidence is before him proving it. Religious Jews are asking him how to be saved.

Act 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Then Peter said unto them, Repent (metanoeo: to change the mind), and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (ei: because of) the remission (pardoning) of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Repenting is the other side of believing (Acts 16:31). To repent means to change the mind not about sin, but about Jesus. In the Greek, the word for "repent" is in the active voice, and "be baptized" is in the passive voice. We do not become baptized for the forgiveness of sins, but because of forgiveness. Once we have been saved, we show the outward act, the declaration of forgiveness by being water baptized. This is an outward act signifying a finished inward salvation. Then we are ready to receive the promise of the Father, the infilling of the Holy Spirit. This verse teaches the infilling of the Holy Spirit is received after the new birth --- after the remission of sins --- and water baptism is an act that follows repentance.

Act 2:39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

For the promise (of the Spirit --- Acts 1:4; 2:33) is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call (invite).

Repenting is the other side of believing (Acts 16:31). To repent means to change the mind not about sin, but about Jesus. In the Greek, the word for "repent" is in the active voice and "be baptized" is in the passive voice.

Act 2:40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

And many other words (typical of Peter) did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward (crooked, perverted) generation.

Peter has done everything he can by preaching the gospel to those present. The Holy Spirit has done everything he can by “pricking” or convicting them of their sins. Now it is time for them to do something. There is only one decision that will save the people from the evil generation they belong to and eternal damnation after death. No one can force a person to be saved. Their decision belongs to each person alone.

THE CHURCH IS BORN (VERSES 41-47)

After Peter’s sermon, approximately 3000 are added to God’s kingdom and the first local church begins. The Word, prayer, and fellowship are all established in the church. Many of the early believers will go on to voluntarily sell their possessions and goods to dispense as needed to various members of the newly formed church. The Lord added to the church daily.

THE SUCCESS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Act 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Then they that gladly received (apodechomai: welcomed) his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about 3000 souls.

These people receive the gospel, are born again, baptized in water, and filled with the Holy Spirit. The first local church is formed around these 3000 who had been born again. The leadership from the 120 will form the first church government and disciple the new converts.

Act 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and **fellowship**, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Four areas of successful discipleship are listed in this verse by order of importance. First, a commitment by the disciple to hear the Word of God taught in the local church by those anointed to minister. Notice the Word comes before the fellowship of saints, eating together, or praying together in the early church. Discipleship does not begin with one-on-one relationships but with that dedication to the Word.

Next, fellowship which begins with the Father is established among the individuals within the congregation (1 John 1:3). This fellowship is not necessarily times of prayer but is worship to God and spiritual communion with one another.

The third area mentioned is breaking of bread or covenant meals. In this early church, there are specific times the congregation meets for meals either as a large group or together as small groups of friends.

Finally, these new believers learn to pray individually and in groups (Acts 12:5). The word “prayers” is plural in this verse, and refers to different types of prayer.

2:42 fellowship, *koinonia* (koy-nohn-ee-ah); Sharing, unity, close association, partnership, participation, a society, a communion, a fellowship, contributory help, the brotherhood. (Compare “coenobite,” “cenobite,” “epicene.”) *Koinonia* is a unity brought about by the Holy Spirit. In *koinonia* the individual shares in common an intimate bond of fellowship with the rest of the Christian society. *Koinonia* cements the believers to the Lord Jesus and to each other.

2:42 Fellowship (*koinonia*), POWER OF UNITY. This first detailed description of the early Christians is wonderfully revealing. The followers of Jesus, who had been baptized by the Holy Spirit, literally devoted themselves to communication and unity with God and with each other. In relationship to God, they “continued steadfastly” in the apostles’ doctrine (the Word of God) and in prayer. In relationship to one another, they devoted themselves to fellowship and to breaking bread with one another. The word *koinonia* literally denotes a deep sense of spiritual unity---of spiritual communion with the Lord and with each other. With the coming of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the priorities of the followers of Christ focused upon spiritual unity with their Lord and with our brothers and sisters in Christ---within the church---the spiritual body of Christ. Every true Christian is a member of the body of Christ and is related to Christ and to other believers as a member of that body. This is the essence of true spiritual unity---the unity of the Spirit.

Act 2:43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by (*dia*: through) the apostles.

“Fear” describes great reverence for the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This is the setting for signs and wonders to be performed in the congregation. Miracles began in the early church through the leadership and later moved to the streets and operate through the congregational members.

ALL THINGS IN COMMON

Act 2:44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

New believers are now facing a time of catastrophic persecution and are united in helping one another. In no way does this verse promote communism or communal living. Because they are being threatened by the Romans and Jews, these new converts pool most of their possessions to protect them from being taken or destroyed if their lives are not spared by those who oppose them.

Act 2:45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

No one coerces these believers into selling their possessions and goods; they do so voluntarily, putting everything together to dispense as needed.

This verse does not say they sold all their possessions and goods. Funds were distributed from a “common pot.” Chapter 6 deals with the selection of deacons to administer funds because of the inequalities that exist in the distribution.

Act 2:46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Church is a daily activity; believers meet in the church to study the Word and to worship the Lord. They also meet in homes to eat together. They discuss scriptures and their new lives as children of God in the church age. Unity in the local church is the focus of this verse. The early believers are united both in the church and outside of it. Unity provides the power and refreshment of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 133:1-3).

Act 2:47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

The church begins with great power, demonstrations of the Holy Spirit, and favor among the people of Jerusalem. This will change as the religious leaders plot to destroy and dismantle the church. Like the ministry of Jesus, this occurs as the supernatural pulls people into the church and away from religion.

2:42-47 Growing as a Person of the Spirit, GOD’S POWER MINISTRY. We grow in the Spirit by engaging in the same kinds of activities as those of the early church, so that we, too, may become the kind of people who can consistently announce, embody, and demonstrate the kingdom of God. The early church leaders described their walk with God in terms of athletic endeavor (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Philippians 3:12-14). Professional athletes build muscle by doing thousands of repetitions appropriate to their sport. While we can never earn or merit anything from God, we can exert the effort necessary to build spiritual muscle and maximize God’s investment in us. Here are the basics: study in the Word, fellowship, and prayer (Acts 2:42, 46); sharing together, giving, and caring for others (verses 44-45); praise, worship, and evangelism (verse 47).