

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 7TH–8TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? (ACTS 2:14–21)

Since the ascension of Jesus, the Believers (120 of them) had been in the upper room in Jerusalem for about 10 days, praying and meeting together.

- They had finally arrived at the day of Pentecost (or the “feast of weeks”), a Jewish holy day that celebrated God giving the law at Mt. Sinai.
 - When God gave Israel the law, it was essentially their introduction to His presence and power.
- Now God's presence and power are given to His Church in a remarkable way—a violent rushing wind, tongues like flames of fire that rest on each one of them, and the ability to speak languages they otherwise wouldn't have known (vs. 1–4).
- Scholars estimate that there might have been over 200,000 Jews from all over the world present in Jerusalem that day.

THE CROWD ASKS, “WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?”

Some in the crowd were convinced that this bizarre behavior was the result of the followers of Jesus being drunk, but Peter clears this up: “it's only nine in the morning!” (vs. 14–15).

- Peter is the same guy, but he's clearly not the same. He now has a kind of boldness, wisdom, clarity, and power that looks quite different from the Peter we knew in the Gospels.
- If these strange sounds/sights can't be explained away by blaming alcohol, then what was happening?
- In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was given only to prophets, judges, and kings, but the prophets pointed to the day when the Spirit would be “poured out on all flesh” (Joel 2:28, ESV). The Father's promise was an internal and spiritual “baptism” of the Holy Spirit.

As Peter recites Joel 2:28–32, he's saying that this has been fulfilled, at least in part, on that very day (vs. 17–21).

- Men and women, young and old, who were gathered in Jerusalem after Jesus' ascension had just experienced the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and subsequently proclaimed and witnessed the mighty wonders and work of God.
- This miracle is that great promise!

“THEN EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED” (V. 21).

In the “last days” (the period between the Messiah's ascension and return), the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is for anyone and everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord.

- Young, old, men, women, and “all people” (every tribe and nation) can know God, be given the Holy Spirit, and be saved because of Jesus.

JESUS (ACTS 2:22–36)

JESUS: THE MAN ATTESTED BY GOD (V. 22)

Fifty days before Pentecost, Jesus had been crucified in this very city of Jerusalem. Many of the Jews present that day were probably part of the mob that called for His death.

- They were familiar with Jesus. His miracles weren't secret or mythical; they were public and “attested by God.” If Jesus was clearly from God, what does it all mean?

JESUS: THE MAN CRUCIFIED (V. 23)

Peter doesn't soften the blow: “you used lawless people to nail Him to a cross and kill him.”

- In Jesus' crucifixion, both Jews and Gentiles were involved. This is to show that we're ALL guilty of sin, and Jesus' death was to pay the penalty.
- Even though we were responsible for nailing Jesus to the cross, this was according to God's determined plan and foreknowledge.

JESUS: THE MAN RAISED TO LIFE BY GOD (VS. 24, 32)

The proof that Jesus was all He claimed to be is the resurrection. God raised Jesus, and the disciples were eyewitnesses to this amazing reality.

- Christianity rises and falls on this claim. The resurrection of Jesus proves His identity and His victory over sin and death.
- If He didn't rise from the dead, what happened?

“The resurrection story developed later.” Early Christian creeds within a few years of the crucifixion speak of this belief. Too many eyewitnesses would have been alive to correct the story, and Acts 2 shows resurrection preaching 50 days after Christ's death.

- “The disciples stole the body to invent a religion.” Roman guards were posted over a sealed tomb, and what did they have to gain?

JESUS: THE PROPHESED MESSIAH (VS. 25–31)

Peter quotes Psalm 16 and explains that this Psalm wasn't really about David. David died and was buried in a tomb.

- The “holy one” God wouldn't allow to see decay and would raise up is the Messiah, the son of David, Jesus!
- The resurrection of God's Messiah has been part of the plan of God for a long time.

JESUS: THE EXALTED LORD OF ALL (VS. 33–36)

Because of His resurrection and ascension into Heaven, we can have certainty that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah.

- The ascension is Jesus' exaltation, as He now rules at God's right hand.
- Pentecost (the Spirit being poured out) is proof of His reign. The fact that He's “Lord” demands a response of obedience and allegiance.

THE RESPONSE (ACTS 2:37–41)

CONVICTION (V. 37A)

Pre-Holy-Spirit Peter did some cutting of ears that changed nothing. Now, Holy-Spirit-filled Peter is able to pierce hearts and change the course of history through the gospel.

- The group that heard this was “pierced to the heart”—deeply disturbed and awakened to their sin and need for Jesus. This too is a work of the Holy Spirit!

WHAT SHOULD WE DO? (V. 37B)

The Holy Spirit convicts and pierces hearts, creating within human beings an awakening to their sin and need for Jesus.

- When the Spirit shows up in power to convict, this demands a response of unconditional, wholehearted surrender—not excuses, arguing, bargaining, or blame shifting.
- Absolute surrender to Jesus as Lord.

REPENT, BE BAPTIZED, RECEIVE (V. 38)

- Repentance: Not just regret or feeling bad but a complete change of mind and direction.

- Public profession: Baptism is a public declaration of faith and allegiance to Jesus as Lord.
- Receiving:
 - A. Forgiveness of sins: God removes our guilt through the blood of Jesus.
 - B. The gift of the Holy Spirit.

THE PROMISE IS FOR YOU (V. 39)

Who is this for? “You and your children” (believing Jews) but also “all who are far off” (Gentiles).

- This is a promise for those who are familiar with religion and the idea of Jesus but have never surrendered to Him, and this is also a promise for those who aren't religious at all.
- No one is too far gone, too sinful, or too unlikely. It's for anyone who responds to God's call.

THE RESPONSE (VS. 40–41)

With many other words, Peter pleaded with his audience to respond decisively to the gospel and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

- So, about 3,000 people accepted the message and were baptized that day.
- This wasn't because Peter pulled on the crowd's heartstrings; it was the evidence of the Spirit's work to convict and draw people to Christ.

WHERE DID THEY BAPTIZE? WHO DID THE BAPTIZING?

Archaeology tells us that there were dozens of *mikva'ot* (ritual immersion pools) around the Temple Mount (especially on the southern steps). These pools were designed for large crowds and frequent immersions.

- Baptizing 3,000 would require many hands, so it's unlikely that Peter did all of them. Baptism isn't restricted to a special priestly class.

The gospel of Jesus Christ isn't primarily information to be learned intellectually; it's God's truth that convicts, confronts, and calls.

- The response to the gospel is repentance, obedience, public allegiance, and total surrender to Jesus as Lord—not privately admiring Jesus from the sidelines or bargaining with God about which parts of your life you don't have to change and surrender.

ALL THINGS IN COMMON (ACTS 2:42–47)

OK...NOW WHAT?

After the Holy Spirit is poured out in a dramatic fashion and 3,000 people are added to the Church in Jerusalem, something amazing happens.

- A Spirit-filled community of Jesus followers takes shape.
 - Many people claim to want a Church experience like this one...
- But the problem is many of us aren't willing to completely surrender to the Holy Spirit and live with whole-hearted commitment and sacrifice to Jesus.
- Therefore, too many of us are willing to settle for a cheap substitute for “church” that we made up.
 - Church becomes a product to attend and consume—an optional, supplemental weekend activity or a box to check.

In this little section of scripture, we get to see God's original design for the Church and what it should really look like.

- What would it have been like to be part of it?
- A covenantal commitment.
- “...devoted themselves...”
- Habits of study, prayer, and community.
- “...to the apostle's teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.”
- A radical generosity.
- “...sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need...”
- Corporate worship and intimate fellowship.
- “...meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house.”
- An attitude of worship, joy, and generosity.
- “...joyful and sincere hearts...”
- They had good community standing.
- “...enjoying the favor of all the people.”
- They grew.
- “Every day the Lord added to their number...”
- People were getting saved.
- “...those who were being saved.”
- Why does this kind of lifestyle seem so unusual and elusive to us in the American Church?

Western individualism and algorithmic consumerism have been shaping and disciplining us for years, leading us to believe everything in our lives must personally advance our agendas to make us more comfortable and at ease.

- An Acts 2 lifestyle will reorder your time, money, social boundaries, privacy, and priorities. This kind of life costs you something.
- But it's actually what we want more than anything.

Sociologists are concerned with what they call the “loneliness epidemic.” Our obsession with personal comfort and hyper-individualism has led people to be more isolated and alone than ever before (and it's killing us).

- We also lack and deeply long for transcendent meaning. We want a life that is about far more than the newest iPhone, latest Marvel movie, or next big football game.

THE MESSAGE OF ACTS 2 IS FOR US TODAY.

- Jesus is still Lord. The invitation is for our lives to be reordered around His kingship.
- The Holy Spirit still pierces hearts. The Spirit's conviction demands a response.
- We're still called to repent and be baptized. The gospel requires public surrender, not private spirituality that costs nothing.
- We're still invited to a Holy-Spirit-filled lifestyle.

THE RESPONSE

- Turn from our self-rule and idolatry of our own personal agendas, and surrender fully to Jesus as Lord and His version of life.
- Receive God's forgiveness and a new identity.
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Trade in our comfort for transcendent meaning and our isolation for genuine belonging.
- Step into a reordered life with God's Church.