

The Miracles Of Pentecost – Part 1

Acts 2:1-4

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I want to read Acts 2:1-4, follow with me beginning in verse 1. Luke says, “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 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. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The famous American evangelist, D.L. Moody once said, “Just as it is impossible to see without your eyes or to hear without your ears or to breathe without your lungs, so it is impossible to live the Christian life without the power of the Holy Spirit.” I believe that. The Christian life isn’t hard to live, it’s impossible to live; that is, apart from the Spirit of God coming in and taking up His residence in us—filling, empowering, controlling, flowing through us—as He uses us for the glory of God.

We come to the famous chapter of the book of Acts that deals with the day of Pentecost. Briefly stated, the day of Pentecost was the day that the Holy Spirit came in His fullness and formed the Church, the body of Christ, of which Jesus is the head. I believe that what happened (and this is one of the most important doctrines of Acts 2) was not so much that they were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues or there was the sound of a rushing mighty wind or there were these flaming tongues of fire over their heads or even Peter’s Pentecostal sermon and three thousand souls were saved (that’s a wonderful thing), but the whole truth is that the Church, the body of Christ—not a building, not a denomination, but all believers in Jesus Christ—are actually put together as one body. Jew and Gentile would all become one. This is the birthday of the Church. When I read Acts 2, I want to start singing “Happy Birthday.” This is the “Happy Birthday” song for the Church. Again, it’s not a denomination. It’s not a building. It’s called-out people who become the body of Christ, the bride of Christ. One day we’ll be caught up to be with Christ, but right now—being filled with the Holy Spirit—we go out and do the works of Christ.

I want you to just peek back with me to Acts 1 for just a moment to set the stage. In verse 4, “And, being assembled together with them,” Jesus together with His disciples on the Mount of Olives, “commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait...” please notice the statement here in verse 4, “for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.” The “promise of the Father” is fulfilled in Acts 2 with the coming of the Holy Spirit. When He says, “which...ye have heard of me,” in the upper room discourse (John 13-17), Jesus promised that He would send another Comforter. The word is parakletos. He is referring to the Holy Spirit—the One who comes alongside to strengthen and comfort you—and He will be with you. Jesus said He would abide with you forever, but notice Acts 1:5, “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with...” that Greek word “with” could be “with,”

“in,” or “by,” “...the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” This is going to be the fulfillment of what Jesus said there in verses 4-5. If you jump down to verse 8, He says, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Jesus had predicted that the Holy Spirit would come. Now, go back with me to Acts 2.

As I said, it's a challenge tonight to even get through these first thirteen verses because there are so many important doctrines that we need to look at, but what I basically want to do is take these 13 verses and point out the miracles of Pentecost. If you're wondering how many, there are five. There are a multitude of them, but I narrowed it down to five miracles of Pentecost. If we don't get through them tonight, we'll pick it up where we left off next Wednesday night.

The first miracle of Pentecost is in Acts 2:1. It's the miracle of the day itself, the actual day of Pentecost. The Spirit came on that day. I want you to go to verse 1 and look at it with me. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come,” or literally it would be when the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled. You say, “Well, what exactly do you mean by the day of Pentecost? What is the day of Pentecost? If you study the book of Leviticus 23 (and we won't turn there right now), you have what are called the feasts of the Lord. In the Old Testament, the Jews had different feasts that were required of them to go to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. Pentecost was one of those annual feasts. It was coupled together with three feasts. Let me mention them for you. The first was Passover. The second was called the feast of first fruits or the feast of barley loaves. The third was our feast of Pentecost, called the feast of weeks because it was seven groups of weeks after the feast of first fruits; which, by the way, was 50 days later. The word “Pentecost” means 50. It was 50 days (some say 50 days after Passover, I guess more strictly) after the feast of first fruits.

Each one of these Jewish feasts had a fulfillment in the life and ministry of Christ or in the New Testament. Let me quickly mention these three. The Passover was when Jesus died on the Cross. During the Passover, they would slay a lamb. It would be symbolic of the blood what was shed for them in Jesus. Jesus is our Passover Lamb. When Jesus died, He died at Passover; so He fulfilled that in dying on the Cross for our sins. That was one of the annual feasts that all the Jews had to come and gather together for in Jerusalem.

The very next day (Passover would be on a Saturday, sabbath), Sunday, there would be a week-long feast called the feast of first fruits. This was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was the ingathering of the harvest. They would take a stalk of wheat and harvest it. They would wave it before the Lord. In the New Testament, Jesus is called the first fruits of those who sleep. It was the first fruits of the harvest gathering, but it was fulfilled in the resurrection. So, we have Passover, the crucifixion; the feast of first fruits, the resurrection; and 50 days later, from the beginning of first fruits, we have Pentecost, the feast of weeks, seven weeks after the first fruits or 50 days—a week of weeks. The word “Pentecost” (as I said, meaning fiftieth) started on the day after the sabbath. It was actually on Sunday, which I think is interesting. When you read in verse 1, “...when the day of Pentecost was fully come,” a better translation would be when the day of Pentecost was being fulfilled. Passover was fulfilled in the crucifixion

of Jesus, then we see the feast of first fruits was fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus, and the feast of Pentecost was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit. What was the fulfillment of that? The birth of the Church. The formation of the body of Christ. Now, if this is a new idea or concept to you, you need to just grasp at whatever you can because in studying the Bible you'll be able to put the pieces all together in understanding the Church, its relationship to the Lord, and even the prophetic calendar of God. This was a fulfillment of a prophecy or a prophetic calendar of God's Word in the Old Testament.

It's interesting. During the feast of Pentecost, it wasn't just one sheaf that would be waved but actually two baked loaves of bread. Of the only baked offering of the Lord, this was an interesting one. It actually had included in it leaven, which was a form of yeast to make the bread rise. In Biblical symbolism, leaven is symbolic of evil or sin. What did the two loaves represent? It's believed, and I concur, that the two loaves represented the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church would be the inclusion of both Jew and Gentile. This concept did not exist in the Old Testament even though God spoke about the Gentile could be saved. They had no concept or understanding of the fact that there would be a body of Christ or the Church made up of Jew and Gentile. As you go through the book of Acts, you're going to see this unfold. The first Christians, being Jewish, had a little difficulty accepting that Gentiles could be saved and be a part of the Church. Many of them believed that to become a Christian you had to become a Jew. You had to proselyte into Judaism and follow Jewish laws—circumcision and the law of Moses—to be a Christian. Paul contends with them and says, "No. That's not the way it works. We are all saved by grace and all in the same standing before God in the Church." It's a picture of the Church—the two loaves coming together—and the leaven, representing sin, indicates that the Church is not perfect. Have you discovered that?

I meet people that say, "I wouldn't go to church. There are so many hypocrites there." I say, "Yeah, and there's always room for one more. Come on, join us." Listen, the Church is not perfect, but we are forgiven. Amen? We're growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We want to become more like Him, but it hasn't happened until the day that we go to be with the Lord.

Just as important as the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, so is this moment when Jesus actually sent the Holy Spirit. There's a passage in John 7:37-38 that sheds light on what is happening here. That is where Jesus said the Holy Spirit would come but isn't given yet because He hasn't yet been glorified. The fact that the Holy Spirit came indicates that Jesus is now glorified in heaven at the right hand of the Father. In other words, the coming of the Holy Spirit is an indication that He is safe in heaven. When they saw Him ascend and go into heaven, how do we know He made it there? Maybe He ran out of steam and went into the Pacific Ocean (or the Mediterranean I guess in that part of the world)? How do we know He actually got there? Because the Holy Spirit arrived.

I heard the story about an arctic explorer that was going to the North Pole. He had a system set up that he would actually take a homing pigeon with him. When he got to the North Pole he would write a note and attach it to the leg and release it. It would fly all those miles back home,

and his wife would receive it and get the message. When she got the pigeon back and received the message, it was indication My husband made it to the North Pole. He made it safely, because that pigeon arrived. The fact that the Holy Spirit came and arrived on this day indicates that Jesus is now glorified in heaven.

Let me give you the second miracle that took place on the day of Pentecost. It's the miracle of the wind and fire. A lot of people get all enamored with this, and they get all excited about this. I want to mention that it never happens again. It doesn't happen anywhere else in the book of Acts. Again, when you're studying Acts 2, you need to keep in mind that this is a one-time historical event that will never again be repeated. It's on par with the birth, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of Christ. It's never going to be repeated, so we're not going to hear the sound of wind or see the fire. This is not going to happen. The Church has already been born, and we won't go back and relive this day of Pentecost in the historical sense.

Notice verses 1-3. It says, "...they were all with one accord in one place." This is not a Honda automobile. It means that they were all together, and we're not sure if it was in the temple or in the upper room by the temple. People spend hours debating where the upper room was. We really don't know, but they were all together in one place. "And suddenly," I love that in verse 2, "there came a sound from heaven," and you've got to make sure you notice these words, "as of a rushing mighty wind." It was "as of a rushing mighty wind." You say, "Well, what does that mean?" That means that it wasn't necessarily literally a wind blowing through the room. I actually believe (and this is just kind of amazing) that they couldn't really feel any wind. Their hair wasn't blowing. Nothing was moving. No curtains were blowing, but there was the sound. It was just the sound of WHOOOSSHH of this rushing mighty wind.

I've never been in a hurricane, but again, we listen to the stories of those that have experienced these recent hurricanes. They say it sounds like a freight train going through the building, right? So, wind can be a powerful thing. What does that represent? It represents the power of God. It represents the presence of God. It's interesting. When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus in John 3, He actually said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Bible actually likens the breath of God, the work of God, and the Spirit of God unto wind.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for "wind" is the same word that is used for "Spirit" as well as in the Greek New Testament, pneuma, where we get the word pneumonia. It's the same word for breath, the Spirit of God. It's like God was just breathing on them in that upper room. What an amazing thing, and it symbolizes the power of God.

Then there was the fire in verse 3. It says, "There appeared unto them cloven tongues," again, catch the phrase, "like as of fire," so nobody's hair was catching on fire. Can you imagine, "Whoah!" They're running out of there, "Where's the fire extinguisher?" There were these little flames that looked like tongues hanging right on the heads of each one of them, but it was as a fire, the sight as of fire, "and it sat upon each of them." First, there was the sound. Secondly,

there was the sight. Thirdly, we're going to see the strange speech, "...began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." What does the fire represent? Again, in the Bible many times fire represents the presence of God.

When Moses was called by God to go to Pharaoh and demand the release of the people of Israel, how did God speak to Moses? Through a burning bush, right? That's always tripped me out. That story where Moses is in the wilderness and sees a bush, I kind of imagine a large tumbleweed. (We California folks know what a tumbleweed is. I've got friends in Australia. It was weird. We started talking about tumbleweeds, and they didn't have a clue what I was talking about.) Moses sees this bush and it's burning. God starts speaking to him from the bush! He approached the bush because it was on fire but wasn't being consumed. He's looking for a little gas inlet somewhere, you know, where's the gas valve? When he got there, God spoke to him. He said, "Moses, take off your shoes. The place where you're walking is holy ground." Moses took his shoes off, and God began to speak to him from the fire.

When the children of Israel were in their wilderness journeys, during the day there was a pillar of cloud to shelter them from the hot sun. At night, when they were marching through the desert, what did God provide for them? This is awesome. A pillar of cloud by night! They didn't have flashlights. They didn't have street lights. They had this big cloud just flaming in the heavens! It just lit up the path, and God was in the cloud. It was the presence of the Lord. Again, when Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Ten Commandments, God was in the fire—an amazing picture of the presence of God. The wind could speak of power, and fire could speak of the purity as well as the power of God. There was this manifestation (again, never would be repeated), but it was a supernatural sensory experience. There is nothing wrong with a sensory experience—of feeling God's presence and being touched with His joy and experiencing the power of God—but all of our experiences must be based upon the Scriptures, the Word of God, and it would never happen again.

Here's the third miracle, miracle number 3. It's the miracle of the Spirit's baptism. This is where we get into what to many is kind of controversial and sometimes Christians divide over this doctrine—the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let me say this to begin. The coming of the Holy Spirit was never intended to divide us. It was intended to unite us. It's so sad and tragic that Christians would fight over their view or doctrine of the Holy Spirit and, here what is called, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and, then again in verse 4, of being filled with the Holy Spirit. I want you to notice there in verse 3, it says, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire," and during that time when the sound of the wind and the sight of the fire happened, I believe what is taking place is what we read back in Acts 1:5, "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Acts 2 is the fulfillment of this.

I want you to turn also to Acts 11:15-17 (we'll get there in several weeks). Peter had gone to a Gentile's house (chapter 10). His name was Cornelius. Cornelius and his household had received Christ and were filled with the Holy Spirit and were saved. Peter was there with them. I want you to notice verse 15, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us

at the beginning.” Notice that, “as I began to speak.” Peter is rehearsing what happened in chapter 10. He was called on the carpet by the spiritual leaders of Jerusalem as to why you would go and share the gospel with Gentiles. Peter said that he went to them as the Lord directed him, and as he was speaking (verse 15), “...the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.” Notice verse 16, “Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. 17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift,” that is, the gift of the Holy Spirit, “as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?” Peter (and this is really important) makes mention of what happened on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 and gives it a clear reference to the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise and the Lord’s words that they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. Peter says, “I went to these Gentiles. I shared with them. The Holy Spirit fell on them, and they were all filled. Who was I to withstand the Holy Spirit?” Who was I to resist the work of the Holy Spirit? It was just a divine intervention and a work of God.

Let me say this (and we could talk about this subject for several weeks), what is the baptism with the Holy Spirit? The word baptize is the word baptizo. What is missed a lot of times is that it does have both a literal and a figurative meaning. You could be literally immersed or submerged or dunked or it can have a symbolic meaning. In other words, a substantive spiritual meaning behind it so I’ll call it the literal or the figurative. The literal meaning of baptizo means to submerge or immerse. You would take a piece of cloth and put it into purple dye—you would baptize it. It would be immersed and would take on all the color of the dye. That’s the literal meaning of baptizo.

When we baptize people in water, we literally dunk you under. It’s not symbolic. We actually put you under the water; and don’t be afraid, we’ve never lost anybody. I’ve had people hold their nose. They get a snorkel, mask, and their fins on. They’ve got scuba tanks, you know, and they’re afraid of the water. “Are you sure you won’t drop me, Pastor?” “No. I won’t drop you. I haven’t lost anybody yet. We’ll get you back up. Don’t worry about that.” We literally immerse them under water. I want to just say this as it comes to mind. I have a ton I could say about this doctrine. It’s been one of my areas of study for many, many years for both theological and personal reasons. When you are baptized, it doesn’t save you. It doesn’t wash away your sins. We literally dunk you in water but it’s got a symbolic or a figurative meaning. Do you know what that symbolic or figurative meaning is? It comes into play in this story. It means that you were identified or placed into Jesus Christ. That’s what the word “figuratively” means. It doesn’t just mean literally to immerse but to be identified with.

The Bible referred to the children of Israel coming out of Egypt. It says they were baptized unto Moses in the Red Sea. They didn’t get wet. They weren’t literally immersed. They weren’t literally dunked. What does he mean by that? He means that they are separated from Egypt and identified with Moses. I believe that which is symbolic, the immersion, even though we do it literally, is symbolic of something that actually happens in the spiritual realm; that is, the moment you were born again you were taken out of Adam and placed into Christ, which is the body of Christ of which He’s the head. You become identified with Christ. That familiar

statement that Paul uses in the New Testament “in Christ,” “in Christ Jesus,” “in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” What happens is, the moment you are born again, the Holy Spirit takes you out of Adam, places you into Christ, and you become part of the Church, the body of Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, I believe the believers were identified with Christ—the exalted head, Jesus Christ—and formed into the body—one body, Christ’s body on earth. Historically, this took place at Pentecost. Today, it takes place whenever a sinner repents and believes in Jesus Christ and is born again. I actually believe that the moment you trust Jesus Christ as your Savior, the Holy Spirit is the One who takes you out of Adam and places you into Christ. That is what I believe the Bible is calling “the baptism of the Holy Spirit.” This is where Christians disagree, and we can disagree and still be part of the body of Christ and love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Some feel that after you’ve been born again time can lapse and you can later on then be baptized by the Holy Spirit, and you’re actually immersed by the Holy Spirit. As I’m going to point out in just a moment, I believe that is the filling of the Holy Spirit not the baptism of the Holy Spirit; therefore, I believe that all Christians have been baptized by the Holy Spirit. If you haven’t been baptized by the Holy Spirit, then you’re not a Christian. It happens the moment you are born again; you are placed into Christ. In John 14:20, Jesus said, “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” Water baptism is a symbol of spirit baptism. Water cannot save the sinner, but it’s a picture of being placed into Christ. It’s also a picture of you died, you resurrected with Christ, and you have new life in Jesus Christ. It’s so very important.

What’s happening as well in Acts 2, as I said, is the birthday of the Church and it all links together. This is the historical narrative. The term “baptism of the Holy Spirit” appears in the gospels. It appears here in the book of Acts, for the last time, in chapter 1. Then, it doesn’t even appear in Acts 2, which is interesting—the phrase “filled with the Spirit” does. Then it appears in 1 Corinthians 12:13. You might remember that a couple of weeks ago I said in introducing the book of Acts that you have to understand the kind of material and the literature that you’re in when you’re studying the book of Acts. Sometimes it’s referred to the genre or type of material. It’s historic. You need to be careful when you are studying an historical narrative (which is what we’re doing tonight in Acts 2), that you interpret that through the doctrinal epistles or what is called the didactic epistles. You have to interpret the historical narrative through the lens of the epistles.

You can’t build a doctrine by simply taking the gospels and Acts and neglecting what the New Testament epistles teach on that subject. To have a doctrine, and to stand on a doctrine, it must summarize all of what the Bible teaches—Old and New Testament, gospels, and epistles. You have to put them all together. I believe that the birthday of the Church...the Church isn’t born again, it happened only once. From this time on, everyone that would be saved would be placed into the Church, the body of Christ, and that’s what would be normative for the believer today. This is the beginning of the Church Age. By the way, the Church Age will come to an

end at the rapture. That's why I said understanding this kind of helps you to fit the pieces of the puzzle together. When the Church is caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the Church Age will be over and then will begin the time of Jacob's trouble.

I have another place I want you to turn tonight, and (obviously in light of that) we're not going to get too far here. I want you to turn to 1 Corinthians 12:13, and I want you to see it. This is the doctrinal epistle that uses the phrase "baptized" in a reference to the Holy Spirit and the body of Christ. I believe that this is explanatory as to what is happening in Acts 2. Notice 1 Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all," take note of that phrase "all," "baptized," same word "baptizo," "into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." "For by," and again, it's the word "en" (by, with or in), "one Spirit are we all," Jew and Gentile, all believers, every Christian, everyone in the Church, "baptized into one body...and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." In Ephesians 4, there's another reference to the fact that in the body there is only one baptism. I believe there is one baptism—it happens the moment you are saved—but there are many fillings, many fillings, many fillings, and many fillings; and we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Let me say this about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and then I simply have to finish with one more miracle. I can't leave you hanging. We won't get the speaking in tongues, but maybe that will be my cliffhanger to get you back next Wednesday and we'll talk about speaking in tongues. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is limited to the Church Age. You say, "Well, the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, Pastor John, you mean to tell me the Holy Spirit wasn't in the Old Testament? He wasn't working in the gospels?" No. He was, but I believe this was the birth of a new dispensation, and by that, a different way God dealt with man.

In the Old Testament (a little information about the Holy Spirit), He would come upon people and empower them for special acts of service. There were people that were skilled in doing art and they were doing gold work in building the tabernacle. The Spirit would come upon them. They were craftsmen and artisans and would have the Holy Spirit's power and help to do that or a king would have the Spirit come upon him or a prophet would have the Spirit come upon them. There were even references to being filled with the Holy Spirit. Let me tell you something, though, that relationship that Old Testament people had with the Holy Spirit is altogether different than the relationship that you and I, as Christians, have right now in the Church Age with the Holy Spirit.

Since Acts 2, do you know what the Holy Spirit does now? He actually regenerates you—that means He comes inside and gives you spiritual life. He comes to live inside of you, and the Bible indicates never, ever, ever, ever to leave you. Even King David in the Old Testament, when he sinned, he said, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." I don't believe that's a prayer for the New Testament Christian. I don't believe that when you sin you have to say, "Don't take Your Holy Spirit away! Don't take Your Holy Spirit away!" You may grieve the Holy Spirit. You may quench the Holy Spirit. You may not be yielding to the Holy Spirit. You may lie to the Holy Spirit, but you can't grieve Him away. I believe that He comes to stay as a permanent resident.

You don't have to be a king, you don't have to be a prophet, you don't have to have some special task, everyone who believes in Jesus Christ has the Holy Spirit living inside of them. Amen? From the humblest Christian to the mightiest servant of the Lord, you have just as much of the Holy Spirit as anyone else does. The question is: How much does the Holy Spirit have you? Have you yielded to His control completely and fully? But, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is for the Church Age, it's for all believers, and there's no command in the New Testament to pray for, ask, or seek it—there is the filling of the Holy Spirit, but not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

I know this will freak some people out, and you're going to go home tonight with the wheels kind of turning. I wish it was a classroom setting where you could ask me questions. I will hang out afterwards. I'll try my best to stick around. It's non-experiential, and the evidence of it is not speaking in tongues. You don't ask the Holy Spirit to seal you when you were born again but guess what He did? He sealed you unto the day of redemption. You don't ask the Holy Spirit to come live inside of you. Maybe you might pray a prayer of repentance and ask, "Give me Your Holy Spirit," but when He comes, He comes to live permanently in you. It happens only once. You can't be baptized in the Holy Spirit more than once. It's your position in Christ. It's actually you in Christ.

Let me share with you, and I'm going to touch on it and have to come back to it next week, the fourth miracle because it ties in with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and then we'll get to the fifth—speaking in tongues—the speech. It's in verse 4. Look at verse 4. It's the filling of the Spirit. It says, "And they," that is, the 120—everyone in the upper room that day. It means that Jesus' mother, Mary, was there. Mary was a pentecostal—she got filled with the Holy Spirit. They were all there together, all of the believers in the upper room, "were all filled with the Holy Ghost," it doesn't use the expression "baptized" in the Spirit. It says, "filled with the Holy Ghost," "and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Now, I'll talk about the "tongues" next week, but I want to talk about the filling of the Holy Spirit before we close.

The filling of the Holy Spirit is not the same as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is different than the filling of the Holy Spirit. Now, some people will say (and I understand), "Well, does it really matter what you call it?" Yes. If you're going to go to a doctor to have an organ removed, maybe you're going to have your gallbladder removed, you don't want him to call it your lung or something like that. The doctors don't go, "It doesn't matter what we call it, let's just take it out whatever it is." I want to make sure the doctor is precise and knows what he's doing here. So, we need to call it what God calls it. I believe that if we understand what it is and call it what God calls it that everything starts to make sense, and all the pieces of the puzzle fit together. I believe that the moment you are born again you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, and that is a picture of what the Spirit has done by placing you into Christ and into the body, the Church. That's the work of the Holy Spirit. He places you in Christ, and you can't take yourself out of Christ. Not all Christians have the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is experiential and brings fullness of joy, peace, power, the ability to live a holy and godly life, and to be able to speak the Word of God with boldness. It's just the work of controlling, empowering, and filling your life.

What I want to do really quickly (I wish I had this on the screen. I'll put it up next week) is contrast the difference between the baptism and the filling. Listen carefully, or if you can write them down quickly, you can. There are eleven contrasts. First, baptism, I believe, is for the Church Age only. It didn't happen in the Old Testament. The filling happened in the Old Testament and happens right now. There were people in the Old Testament who were filled; there are people in the New Testament now filled.

Secondly, the baptism happens at the moment of salvation. The filling can happen after you are saved, and it can happen again, and again, and again after you've been born again. Thirdly, the baptism happens only once, but the filling happens many times. In Acts 4:8, Acts 4:31, Acts 9:17, Acts 13:9 are examples that those who were in that upper room, later on in the book of Acts were filled again with the Holy Spirit, and a little later on they were filled again with the Holy Spirit, and a little later on they were filled again with the Holy Spirit. It's something that can happen many times. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is my position, me in Christ. The filling of the Holy Spirit is Christ in me. The baptism of the Holy Spirit cannot be lost. The filling of the Holy Spirit can be lost. The baptism of the Holy Spirit, there is no guarantee that you are spiritual. The filling of the Holy Spirit guarantees and is synonymous with spirituality. This again, is what some people...it doesn't really register with them.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, we just read it in chapter 12, verse 13. He said, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Was there any other church more carnal than the Corinthians? The answer is no, by the way. You're kind of looking at me like, "I don't know. You asked the question, you answer it." The answer is no. They were the carnal Corinthians, but they were all baptized in the Holy Spirit. We get this idea that to be baptized in the Holy Spirit is synonymous with being spiritual. It's not. Let me tell you something, and I'm absolutely convinced. I won't fight with anyone over it. I won't argue with anyone over it, but when I get a chance to preach on it, I'm going to preach what I believe to be true—being filled with the Holy Spirit is synonymous with spirituality. You can't be Spirit-filled and carnal. You can't be Spirit-filled and worldly. The fruit of the Spirit will be manifested in your life when you're filled with the Holy Spirit. You can be baptized in the Holy Spirit and be a carnal Christian, but you can't be filled with the Holy Spirit and be a carnal Christian. The evidence of being filled is fruit, not even gifts.

You can be baptized in the Holy Spirit and lack power. The contrast is, you can be filled with the Holy Spirit and it will bring power. All believers are baptized in the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), not all believers are filled with the Holy Spirit. You say, "How do you know all believers aren't filled with the Holy Spirit?" Listen to me very, very, very, very carefully. Ephesians 5:18, "...be filled with the Spirit." You guys know the verse? You should. You hear it quoted all the time. Do you know that is a command in the Greek? It's a command. God would not command us to be filled if we were already filled, and when they picked out seven elders or leaders of the Church in the book of Acts 6, one of the qualifications was that they be men full of the Holy Spirit. If all Christians were full of the Holy Spirit that would not be a qualification for leadership. It would be a given that every Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit, so I believe that we are all baptized with the Holy Spirit but what we need to do is be filled with the Holy Spirit.

You're saying, "Okay, okay. I get it. I get it. How do I get filled with the Holy Spirit?" Again, you've gotta come back next week. This is an important subject, and I knew this would happen to me tonight. Please trust me. Some of you might have been bored all night. I don't know, but please trust me. This is so very important. I'm not done yet. I have some more contrasts.

I mentioned that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is non-experiential, but let me tell you something. When you're filled with the Holy Spirit, you'll have an experience. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not commanded. There is no imperative to seek, ask, or pray for it; but being filled with the Holy Spirit is a command. You can seek it, ask God for it, and you can surrender your life to the Spirit's power. Simply stated, what is the filling of the Holy Spirit? It's the Holy Spirit controlling your life. Do you know that when the Bible uses the word "filled," it's conveying the idea to be controlled by. Even unbelievers were referred to in the book of Acts as being "filled with wrath," "filled with anger." Did you ever know anybody that is full of anger and they lose their control? They just go off? Yeah. We know that when it happens, so to be full of the Holy Spirit means that He controls you and you surrender to Him. It doesn't mean that you lose self-control. It means you gain self-control, but He fills and empowers you.

In Ephesians 5:18, again, going from the historic to the doctrinal, "...be filled with the Spirit," is a command. It's in the present tense, so be continually, ongoingly filled with the Holy Spirit. It's in what's called the passive voice which means let the Spirit fill you. You surrender to the power of the Holy Spirit and, believe it or not, in the Greek it's all inclusive. It's telling all believers to let the Holy Spirit ongoingly, continually fill them. Why does He fill us? To sanctify us, to make us more like Jesus Christ, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh," and for service or for power. As I opened with that D.L. Moody quote, you can't live the Christian life without the power and the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Do you want more of the Spirit in your life? Then surrender more of yourself to Him. It's not enough just to be born again. You must yield and surrender to the Holy Spirit. When you do, he says in Ephesians that you will have joy, you'll speak to one another with songs and hymns and spiritual songs, and sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord. You always know you're not filled when you're bummed out, mad and you're sad, and you're gloomy and down—it's done drained out of your life! You need another dose of the Ghost. Not only will there be joy but there will be thankfulness, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father." You'll be joyful. You'll be thankful. Let me give you one more, (there's a whole long list, but let me give you one more in the context of Ephesians) you will be humbled—joyful, thankful and humble. Isn't that good stuff? That's the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.

Now, there's one more miracle—they spoke in tongues. We'll pick it up right where we left off next Wednesday. Let's pray.