



Famous
Chapter 2's
of
The New Testament

Acts 2

I had a conversation with my wife about certain denominations university teaching on “speaking in tongues.” They go further than most by teaching people to heal and prophesy. After reading Acts 2 for the millionth time, I still can’t see it. What makes people think that the Holy Ghost can be contained? That God gives us powers to be taught, transferred, and wielded like a sword? I just don’t get it. then, yet again, I do. At the human core we want significance. Isn’t that the essence of Genesis 3? People wanting to be more than just creation. We all wish we were more like God, but were not God.

In John 20:22 it says “*with that He (Jesus) breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."* Here in Acts 2, we have God the Father sending from heaven a rushing wind that had tongues like fire. I picture it like long fingers touching each man individually. All of a sudden, they receive, not only the Spirit of God, but an electric jolt from heaven. In several instances people have fallen down at the sight of angels. Even Jacob, while wrestling with God had his hip changed by the touch of the divine. We are never the same when God touches us. I would say in Acts 2 the world was never the same when God touched men.

We have a curious instance of these men speaking in tongues. What is tongues? In Biblical terms there are gifts (powers) from God that we are given when we become Christians. It’s not a whole lot different than Acts 2 (minus) the fire. The Holy Spirit comes into our body

and changes us from the inside out. That change is seen in our character, actions, and with enhanced talents. These talents are from God and for God. We are now in His service to minister to the world. Occasionally, God might speak through people in a Holy language called tongues. That is not what happens here in Acts 2.

I am positive that someone (many) will say I'm dead wrong. Ok, lets read the text. In verse 5 we find men are from every nation. In verse 6 they begin to speak in their native language. Yet, in verse 7 everyone could understand the other. Then we get this little nugget in Revelation 5:9-10.

“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, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth.”

Then Peter quotes Joel 2:28-29 *“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. 29 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”* My Bible reminds me of Psalm 68:18 *“When you ascended on high, you took many captives; you received gifts from people, even from the rebellious— that you, Lord God, might dwell there.”*

Men thought these crazy people in Acts 2 were drunk. What is left out in most sermons is Peter. This is the fisherman with a big heart and a big mouth. It was not all that long ago (40 days) since Peter had ran away deny his Lord at the crucifixion. Yet, here we find Peter giving a stirring speech and quoting Joel of the Bible. Where did that come from? I do believe that between John 5 and this event in Acts 2 Peter was electrified by the Spirit of God twice.

Tongues is a word from God. Too many people think it's a Spiritual gift to keep. A personal gift to use whenever you need. To make people seem special or important. God bestows gifts to make people look amazing in the name of God. Those acts, words, and knowledge make God look heavenly. It's all about God and what he chooses to do through people. It's stunning what Peter the fisherman all of a sudden could preach. It was stunning that men from all over the earth could understand each other. What happens when God comes down and touches people?

Why is Acts 2 famous? Think back to the tower of Babel in Genesis 11. God scattered people and confused their language. He separated human kind into cultures, language, and nations. This event in Acts 2 began with separated tongues of fire. The coming of the Holy Spirit entered men from different languages, culture and nations. What did that accomplish? It comes down to verse 37-38 of Acts 2 *"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Verse 38 "Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."* Not the gift of tongues.

The receiving of the Holy Spirit could that mean a heart would be energized, changed, and softened. Then the church was born. They disregarded wealth and status and began to care for God's creation. People worked together for the common good. Acts 2 is far more than being given a gift to speak in tongues. It was the reuniting of humans all over the world to tell of the good news of Jesus the Christ and his gift to us, the Gospel of forgiveness from God through the Spirit.

Mark 10:9 *"Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."* Jesus was talking about a union or marriage. Yet, The Bible is littered with separation from God right from the Garden of Eden. God separated people in Genesis 11. By the end of the Old Testament God's

children were scattered in slavery. Acts 2 (to me) is about God bringing people together with a unified voice and purpose. It's not about being like God anymore but being of God. Acts 2 is not about what people get from God. No, it's about what God will now do through His unified people. That is why it's an amazing chapter.