

# The Spirit Creates a People: Acts 2:1-13

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Sunday, June 4, 2023  
Covenant Church  
Pastor Zack Phillips

## Acts 2:1-13

**1** When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. **2** And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. **3** Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

**5** Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. **6** And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. **7** Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? **8** And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? **9** Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, **10** Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, **11** Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." **12** All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" **13** But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

### A. (Re-reading) Acts 2; Other New Testament Passages

- "The Spirit said": Acts 8:29 (Ethiopian eunuch); Acts 10:19 (gentile Cornelius); Acts 13:2 (mission to the Gentiles)
- The Spirit as evidence (of inclusion)

**Acts 15:8-9** **8** And God, who knows the human heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as he did to us; **9** and in cleansing their hearts by faith he has made no distinction between them and us.

- Unity in the Spirit (and spiritual gifts)

**1 Cor 12:7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

**1 Cor 12:11-13** **11** All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. **12** ¶ For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. **13** For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

**1 Cor 14:18-19** **18** I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you; **19** nevertheless, in church I would rather speak five words with my mind, in order to instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

**Eph 2:17-18** **17** So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; **18** for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.

**Eph 4:1-6** 1 ¶ I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

## B. Early Pentecostalism

“It is noticeable how free all nationalities feel. If a Mexican or German cannot speak English, he gets up and speaks in his own tongue, and the Spirit interprets through the face, and people say amen . . . God recognizes no flesh, no color, no names . . . [but] is uniting His people ... by one Spirit in one body.” —A “sympathetic observer” to the 1906 Asuza Street revivals<sup>1</sup>

What seemed to impress—or disgust—visitors most, however, was not the interracial leadership but the fact that blacks and whites, men and women, embraced each other at the tiny altar as they wept and prayed. A southern white preacher later jotted in his diary that he was first offended and startled, then inspired, by the fact that, as he put it, “the color line was washed away by the blood.” —Harvey Cox

Finding that some people could speak in tongues and continue to abhor their black fellow Christians convinced (Seymour) that it was not tongue speaking but the dissolution of racial barriers that was the surest sign of the Spirit’s pentecostal presence and the approaching New Jerusalem... Stung by the hurts inflicted on him by former friends he began to teach that tongue speaking was only one of the gifts of the Spirit, and might not, in some cases, be a gift at all. He may have had his detractors in mind when he told his people, “If you get angry, or speak evil, or backbite, I care not how many tongues you may have, you have not the baptism with the Holy Spirit.” The genuine fruits of the Spirit, he now taught, were “love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance.” Seymour had come to believe that the breaking of the color line was a much surer sign than tongue speaking of God’s blessing and of the Spirit’s healing presence. —Harvey Cox

## C. Two Pictures

Singing in Kazakhstan; The film *Joyeous Noel* (2005)

*Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?*

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<sup>1</sup> Harvey Cox: *Fire From Heaven: The Rise Of Pentecostal Spirituality And The Reshaping Of Religion In The Twenty-first Century* (Boston: De Capo Press, 1995).