

Four Facts of Pentecost

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Let's take our Bibles and open to Acts chapter 2 for our study today. Acts chapter 2 I'm going to begin reading in verse 1 and read through verse 13. I remember when I was a kid hearing somebody say, this evangelist said, he was a Pentecostal evangelist speaking to a Pentecostal group of people and he said will you turn to Acts chapter 2, that's the dirty page in your Bible, and what he meant by that was that Pentecostals have often been forced so often to defend their position that that becomes a soiled page from the frequency of turning there. I've am not making a defense today; I want to make a proclamation. Number two, for the sake of visitors, its Pentecost Sunday and it's certainly an appropriate time to deal with the text. We don't ride hobby horses, I, in fact a meeting following this service a group of visitors from a given denomination, most of you don't know that we will often a nucleus of leaders from various denominations who will visit us and then we will have special meetings with them. This is, in fact, the fourth such group in about three weeks. This is the only one that we've enjoyed having had had in a worship service as an organized group. Usually it's in meetings during the week. Friday, for example, I spent about an hour and a half with about sixty of the top leadership of the Missouri Synod Lutheran church who came to ask questions and talk about things. And that's a very real honor and a joy to get to do that. But I said that to say, that to any who are visiting us today that the focus on a Pentecostal text is appropriate to the Sunday and doesn't indicate some single string harp that we play here and beat on all the time. So, Acts chapter 2 verse 1. "When the day of

Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. And it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And they were dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews devout men from every nation under heaven. And when the sound occurred, the multitude came together and was confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled saying to one another look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear each in our own language in which we were born Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia. Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs - we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God. So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, whatever could this mean? Others mocking said, they are full of new wine." Pentecost means fifty. It was the day that was celebrated fifty days following the primary preceding feast in the Jewish schedule of things, their spiritual calendar. There were three feast events on the Jewish calendar that everyone was expected to come to. Beside the Sabbath and beside the monthly new moon festivals as they occurred there were seven feasts but three of them everyone was to come to. Those three feasts were right following Passover was the feast of Unleavened Bread, lasted for a week. Several months later, in the seventh month, that would be approximately our September or early October was the Feast of Tabernacles and then in between it but closer to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread was the Feast of Weeks, it was called because

it was seven weeks and then following the Sabbath, they climaxed that week. Seven weeks then you came to the fiftieth day. And it was called the Feast of Weeks. And it was the celebration of the beginning of harvest. It took place as we're observing it now. This is the time, the end of May, this is about as early as it would usually get, closer to the first of June. And the celebration of Pentecost was something that was anticipated so much because it was a joyous time of saying, look the fruit of harvest is beginning. You know, what is really a very satisfying, if not exciting study in the Bible is to see the number of things that God established that have specific pictures that apply to our lifestyle. For example, all of us are fully aware that the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are a picture of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And that has to do with our salvation. Most people are aware of the fact that the Feast of Tabernacles was actually tabernacles not as we think of stone structures, but it was actually the Feast of Booths, little booths that were kind of thrown up made out of just ticky-tacky sticks being stuck up and brush being put across the top to make little shelters and the purpose for these little shelters was they would have kind of a camp meeting for a week, sort of a-a well it's like summer camp, except it was in early autumn. And everybody loved to celebrate it and to remember what it was about. Because what it had to do was by those little temporary booths, depicting the temporary dwelling of the sojourn of Israel through the wilderness. It was a commemoration of when they lived in tents, travelling through the wilderness. So it was a reminder that we are people on pilgrimage, people with a greater destiny than this one. It was harking to something in the past but anticipating something in the future. As the Bible says for us, that we don't simply live from day to day, we know that we are people with a larger

destiny than this life and that there is an anticipation of our home gathering unto the Lord Jesus when He comes again. How many looking forward to Jesus coming again? Amen (congregation responds) I like the idea of talking about Jesus coming again. It's not the topic of the message but there are all kinds of theology about Jesus coming again. There are people that talk about the pre-tribulation coming of the Lord, the mid-tribulation coming of the Lord, the post-tribulation. There are some people that speak of pre-millennial or post-millennial. There are people that are millennial. There are all different view points of view. But I'll tell you what my opinion is, and I've let the Lord know, it's this, Lord whenever you come, I'm going. And that's what's going to happen with everybody regardless of their theology, if they know the Lord, He's coming for those who love His appearing. And the feast that came, the third of those three feasts, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Booths was a forecast of that ultimate destiny, that great home gathering when we leave the temporary dwelling places of now and come into where the Lord has for us there. So really in those three Feasts, there is a picture of three primary points in the believer's life. There is the point of His entry, when he is born again, as Israel was delivered through the blood of the Lamb. And the resurrection of Jesus Christ ushers us into that new life. Then there's the climax, when we'll be gathered to Him. And as all Israel was bid to come to these feasts, all are summoned to come to life in Jesus Christ and to come to eternal into the eternal presence of God forever. But between that, there was a feast that celebrated the beginning of harvest. And that's a point that the Lord wants all of His people to be involved in, the harvest. And we know that this is more than poetry. When Peter is asked in the verse that, when Peter answers I should say the question that was asked in the

verses we read, what does this mean? Beginning in the following verse, verse 14 down through verse 36 of this same chapter Peter answers with a sermon. Incidentally, I'd like to point out in the structure of this chapter that what most of the time that is spent on Pentecost in the Bible was spent on the sermon. Think about that. Hold that thought. As a matter of fact, when Peter got done with the sermon, the Bible says, and with many other words he exhorted them. And I want you to know by that criteria, I am as scriptural as any preacher in the world. In this passage of scripture there is not only the explanation of what was going on there, but Peter ties that explanation directly to the prophet who spoke about the worldwide harvest that would come with the rain of the Holy Spirit from heaven that would bring a harvest of souls. Joel talked about that and that's where Peter begins his sermon. He deals with the book of Joel that prophesies the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This Pentecost Sunday I want us to come looking at this very key Feast in the Jewish economy of things and see it as the day that God selected to pour out His Spirit and begin the global harvest in establishing the church. What Jesus had done through His church, through His death and resurrection now was going to be extended through the life of people who were filled with the Spirit. Jesus had said only days before, "You will receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Weeks before that, He said, when I, it's necessary that I go away or else the comforter won't come. But when He comes, and then Jesus enumerates one thing after another, that the Holy Spirit the comforter would do when He comes. The night following Jesus' resurrection, he met disciples in the upper room and He said, receive the Holy Spirit. As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. The book of Luke concludes with these words - tarry in Jerusalem until you receive power from on high. The book, the

gospel of Mark concludes with these words - Jesus said these signs shall follow them that believe and then he lists them. And we sang a hymn this morning that is built on those things. The whole focus of Jesus' ministry was not merely that people be forgiven of their sins and brought into a relationship God and then have the hope of an eternal destiny when we conclude the sojourn pilgrimage of this lifetime, but that in the meantime, they would be participants in an ongoing global harvest. And all of us that have received the Lord here this morning already have been garnered in that harvest. We have been brought in. We have been brought, I-I somehow seems to me as you think of wheat being gathered, it seems to me as though the loving arms of God have reached out and embraced all of us that have come to Him. Maybe, maybe you never have yet. Maybe this morning the presence of the love of God, just through people around you, or whatever you felt or that the Lord is drawing you to Himself this morning. And you, you need to come to Him. You need the Lord Jesus as your Savior, as your friend with you day by day, as the Lord of your life to guide and direct you so that, so that you no more than a-any of the rest of us would, so that you don't fowl things up because you manage life on your own terms rather than God's. You know the Lord and you know it. And He's reaching out to you and each time one of us are brought into life in Him, it's-it's more of the harvest because it's a harvest of eternal souls. Just as there is a harvest of wheat in a field. But that's the figure that's clearly here.

Now, the purpose this morning is to discuss four facts of Pentecost. I want to show four facts in this text. But to see those four facts, we need to get a handle on the story. And the story is the whole chapter. We've only read the first thirteen verses. Let me quickly say, I've already told you the second part and we've read the first part. We read the first part that

tells of the event itself. What happened when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the church? The second part I mentioned, that's Peter's sermon. The third part was the response to the sermon. What happened in the first part is wrapped up essentially in the response to an incredible phenomenon of signs that take place. There are three primary signs. First there was a sound; it was a very loud sound. The way the Bible puts it, is the sound of a mighty rushing wind.

Now it doesn't say it was a rushing wind, it says it was the sound of one. Had they been in a room as they were gathered in that upper room and there was drapery in the room, or curtains, there wouldn't have been any rustling of the drapes. No one's hair would have been messed. It was not, it was not wind; it was the sound. The only way they could describe it, I wonder if they might not have said, it sounded like a freight train or a tornado if they had access to those terms. But they said a rushing mighty wind. And that roar is the first sign. The second sign is that said that there were there were tongues that seemed to be interlocked as it came down into their midst and then parted and over the head of each person. Those tongues were of tongues of flame, like you see in the fireplace - a tongue of flame. But they were all interlocked and then they parted and were distributed over each person's head. They could visibly see that flame. The third sign was that people, all of them, began speaking languages they had not learned. And from the response of the people who come and see this, who witness it, and they didn't come because of the people speaking with tongues, they came because of the loud sound. We know that from verse 6. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together and were confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language. They'd heard - you wonder what that sound must have sounded like. They said something's going on over there. And there was a

crowd there because it was one of those three mandated feast times. Jerusalem was filled with a crowd. They had come from all parts of the Roman Empire. These various areas that are named and there are 16 areas that are named are basic divisions of the Roman Empire. And Jews from the Diaspora that were scattered all over had come. When it says they'd come from the whole world, it's making reference to the Roman Empire. It obviously wasn't the entire world, but it was all parts of the Roman Empire. And as they'd come, they'd come to celebrate the feast and they hear this sound, so the people gravitate. And when they get there, they see these people and we know what the people were doing. They were not just babbling some kind of gibberish in tongues. They were speaking, first they were speaking worship. We know that from verse 11. It says we hear them speaking in our own tongue the wonderful works of God. They were hearing people worship God. Sometimes you will hear people say, the tongues of Pentecost were for preaching the gospel to different languages. That is not so. That is simply not so. The tongues of Pentecost was a language of worship. When Peter preaches at Pentecost he preaches in what would have been the common denominator of them all. He doubtless preached in Hebrew. So tongues were not given for preaching. It clearly, though is involved in worship. Another thing people will often say, say well but the tongues were simply on that occasion for these 16 or 17 different people groups that they heard. But see, there are 120 people that are worshipping and these various ones that are there, all of them heard the languages they were familiar with but there's nothing that says that's all the languages that were spoken. That's only all that were recognized. Say well you can't prove there were more. No I can't but nor can you prove there were less; then perhaps as many as one for every 120. I'm not arguing that - simply saying that the issue here was there were people from a

wide enough spectrum of the Roman Empire, they recognized a phenomenon was taking place. They observed it and they said are not all these Galileans? And the reason for that observation is saying you see Galilee was if you'll allow for the expression kind of the hill country, the country bumpkins of Israel, the hillbillies lived, in Galilee. And it was hardly the academic center of the universe in Israel. So they know that these people, it says, these are mostly Galileans and boy they didn't learn this in some requirement for their Ph.D. Program. This is this is something really unusual. They were moved by it and some people say what does this mean? And there were other people who said, I'll tell you what it means, these people have been tipping the bottle early in the morning. You've got to look out for people like that, people that have to hit the bottle before nine have a serious problem. How were these people acting that some accused them of being drunk? Some people have suggested that there was some kind of a bizarre behavior. But I think there is nothing in the text that requires we think that. And I have seen enough of the working of the Holy Spirit in similar pattern in people's lives to tell you what it was they saw. They weren't used to seeing people this happy this early in the day. That's what it was. It wasn't saying these people are foaming at the mouth and rolling around on the floor like a bunch of drunks in their vomit. They were saying, what's happening is, these people are happier than you can explain for at this time of day on any other terms than drunkenness. They just have had a little extra, new wine. There are a whole lot of things that are wrapped up in this text. But the four facts I want us to see are these. Would you would you say them with me? The first one is they were filled completely, filled completely (congregation says). The second is faith was exercised (congregation says). The fourth fear was expressed (congregation says). Fourthly,

fruit began (congregation says). And those four things - they were filled completely, faith was exercised, fears expressed and fruits began. Those four things are the four facts of Pentecost. Looking at those facts for just these next few moments, I want us to determine our own response on this Pentecost Sunday, 1986 as we say Holy Spirit, what do you want to do in the church today.

Now I can tell you the answer to that question before we get any further. And He would say I want to keep on doing what I started then because I'm not done yet. How many would like to be available participants already. Say yes, I want to move with what you're doing, Spirit of God.

Now the first fact is that they were filled completely. Verse 4 tells us that, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. It goes on to say and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And it is on the basis of that flow of speech. They were all filled and began to speak with tongues that there is a sizeable number of Christians who will say that speaking with tongues is the proof a person has been filled with the Holy Spirit. And on that one statement alone, there's kind there's about as much debate goes on in the Body of Christ as almost any other single subject.

Now I-I want to say, without sacrificing anybody's idea about the fact that I do have some strong convictions that that I don't personally espouse that notion. The notion that the only way that you can prove a person has been filled with the Spirit is that they speak with tongues.

Now one thing that really is clear is that people who speak with tongues probably have been filled with the Spirit. Not just on the basis of this, but on the basis of other places. So there is a correlation. But it's a bit of a problem, and I first started facing it about 15 20 years ago when I'd run into more

and more people who they would with real genuineness, not argumentativeness they'd say, I know that Jesus filled me with the Holy Spirit. And you see Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Spirit. He's the one who overflows with the Spirit. You say, I know I have been filled with the Spirit and I would presume that they would tell me about how they spoke with tongues too because that's the way my experience was and is. And they'd say but I've never spoken with tongues. And I determined many years ago that if somebody tells me that they believe Jesus has filled them with the Holy Spirit and that they don't speak with tongues, especially when they're not being feisty or argumentative about it you know. Well, I'm going to be the last person to argue with them because I'm not Jesus. And what's going on between them and Jesus, they have a lot more to say about it, and He does, than I do and so I just let that go. I'm not going to sweat that one. One thing that I-I-I do believe is that there are so many positive things in the Bible. See the negative things you hear about tongues aren't in the Bible. The worst thing you can find about in the Bible about tongues is where Paul corrects the Corinthians. And he doesn't say anything bad. He just tells them how to shape it up so it can flow. And he gives them some very beautiful directives. And you got to really make a diligent effort to be angry with tongues to take what Paul said and turn it into a tool against it.

Now that's been done. But we'll talk more about that in a little bit because fear is still expressed to this day. Shouldn't surprise us, it was then. But as pure a manifestation as you're going to get would be at the fountainhead occasion here at Pentecost and there were people then that were afraid and rose and resistance rose. So it-it shouldn't surprise us a whole lot if it still happens. But the point is that people were filled completely.

Now people say well then Pastor Jack what is the sign of a person's being filled with the Spirit. And I want to say that I don't think there is a single sign. I think there are two things. Two things that are very clear. The first one is that a person who is filled with the Spirit there will be an evidence of power in their lives because Jesus said you will receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Second thing, there will be evidence of love in their lives because the Bible says the love of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us: power and love. Acts 1:8, Romans 5:8, those two verses, say Acts 1:8, Romans 5:8. Say it again: Acts 1:8, Romans 5:8; so love and power.

Now people have a general idea of what you mean by love. It has to do with serving, caring, being sensitive to, and being understanding; and not being a quibbling, quarrelsome, argumentative person. What is this matter of power, you will receive power? Unfortunately, a lot of people's definition of the power of the Holy Spirit has to do with the personality style. Power has to do with something like Hallelujah. You know, and it's usually because of some kind of media model that a person has seen who really does have the power of the Spirit of God in their lives. But the power of the Holy Spirit has essentially to do with ability. The word power literally means ability.

Now the fact that the word dunamis is used in the Greek language and that's the word from which we derive our English word dynamite. The fact that dunamis is the word that's translated power has caused some people to say it's like dynamite. Well you know dynamite is like dynamite. And the fact they forget that when the Greeks used the word dunamis they were talking about ability and dynamite wasn't even in their mind because there wasn't such a thing. The issue was ability not

some kind of a dynamism. Dr. Bob Frost, Robert Frost who's a Ph.D. in Biology tells the story about his early entrance into the things of the Spirit. And he says he'd come across somebody that says. Dr. Bob you need to get filled with the Holy Spirit. Once you get filled with the Spirit, He's going to put a tiger in your tank.

Now if you don't know Robert Frost, he's a very quiet and reserved person. And he's extremely mild mannered and gentle and soft spoken and when Bob tells this on himself, I've heard him tell it. He says, I-I went to the Lord in prayer after that and he said, I said Lord, I Lord I really I don't want a tiger in my tank. He said Lord Do you have anything for us bunny rabbits? Well if you know Robert Frost you'll know that God answered that prayer and that I don't know that Robert Frost qualifies as a bunny rabbit. There is real ability in the power of the Spirit of God in His life as there would be in anyone's. Power has to do with ability. When dynamite was named after that word it's because it's ability to get things done - not its ability to be dynamic or make noise or explode and blow things all over the place. It's ability - you will receive ability. What ability Pastor? The ability to be what you were created to be in God's order. The ability to touch people with the love of Jesus. The ability to touch to reach out with the healing life of Christ. The ability to become by His grace and power what you could never become on your own. That He who redeems you and has forgiven your sins and released you unto life now takes and induces - that word literally means to clothe upon. He induces and he endows that means to give resource. So he clothes you with a capability and gives you a resource you would never have in yourself. The sign of being filled with the Holy Spirit is that new dimension of ability the Lord develops in your life and the love of God showing in your life.

Now if we're talking physical evidences, I suppose there is any number of signs that might be and there is no reason to ever hesitate for the sign of speaking with tongues because it happened at the beginning and that brings me to the exercise of faith. It says faith was exercised that day. You say, where does it say that? It says it in verse 4 when it says they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak. They began to speak. How did they begin to speak with other tongues? Well, let me let me read it again. And began, they understood, they go right in it, they were filled, they began to speak with other tongues. How did they begin to speak with other tongues? Well I can tell you how they didn't begin to speak with other tongues. Not of course, because I can bear an eyewitness report but because the whole Spirit of God's dealings in His word and the evidence from the hosts of people who experience the living out of this word do they say, what happens to people when they get saved? Say well I didn't see; I didn't see Matthew get saved. I know when Jesus called him, but I didn't see Matthew get saved in the Bible but I can tell you what I think probably happened, because I have seen people get saved. And the same thing, we see people get filled. God does not turn on a linguistic machine in their mouth. People who speak with tongues do not have a seizure. People who speak with tongues do not just all of a sudden lose control, go into a trance. People say, well its ecstatic utterance. You hear that word a lot. Do you know where they get that word? It's in this text, but it isn't got anything to do, it doesn't have anything to do with the people that spoke with tongues. Two times the Greek verb from which we derive our word ecstasy occurs in this text, chapter 7, or excuse me verse 7 and I think its verse 12 and it's translated amazed. And it's the people that saw. And they saw and they were they were amazed. And it's like there to use the word ecstasy in the sense

that - Ah, My! What they saw was overwhelming to them but it doesn't use that of the people it was happening to. And nonetheless, you will hear people say that all the time, well it's ecstatic utterance, which is kind of taunt, well it's not kind of its tantamount if not specifically saying that well. I was speaking in Australia several years ago and a man came forward following the teaching I gave on receiving the fullness of the Spirit and he said I want to receive. And he said I've been attending a church for 40 years, he was about 60, 65 years old himself. He said I've been going to church for 40 years where they taught this and it hasn't happened to me yet. I said then you mean you haven't received spiritual language yet. That's what he meant; I wasn't going to tell him one way or the other whether he was filled with the Spirit. He apparently didn't think he was but the church he went to probably told him that if he didn't speak with tongues he wasn't and maybe he wasn't. I'm not going to argue one way or the other on that. I told you I'm just simply not going to disqualify a person on the grounds of that alone, whether they spoke with tongues or not. But he said I want to be filled. I said, well brother, I'm going to pray for you.

Now, the primary thing that happened in the brief interchange I had with him was that I had to settle a question with him. And I've run into this so many times with people. Somehow there is fixed in people's minds that in fact they will put it in a very noble way; I want it to be all the Lord. And that sounds really good. What they're saying is, I don't want to conjure up something on my own and I certainly don't want something demonic to happen to me. Somehow or other people have the notion that if you get real close to Jesus to ask Him to fill you with the Spirit that demons are liable to slide in there somewhere, I'm going to tell you this, you, Jesus is who

fills people with the Holy Spirit. You get close to him and that's about as safe you're ever going to be in your life from a demon. No kidding. And Jesus said that too, in Luke chapter 11. He says, you ask for this, he said, you're not going to get any demon. So, there's not, people don't need it but well it's not it's not really the demons, you said I'm just afraid, I don't want it to be me. Hen, you've got a problem, 'cause God wants you to be in it. God is not creating religious robots today, or at Pentecost or at any time. He is not going to turn you into some kind of an automaton that's like what I know the guy must have thought when I was in Eastern Canada at a conference. And there's this young man down there praying to receive the fullness of the Spirit. I knew why he was there because he was coming to the same kind of an invitation I had given in that Australian meeting. And he had his hands like this and here's exactly how he looked. And he stayed that way for ten minutes. And I was praying with different people and I just watched him. Finally I went over, and I said son, we're going to be together for a week, it's lunchtime, why don't you go to lunch and I'm going to talk about tomorrow what I am teaching, something that I don't think you understand. Don't feel bad about it, you're hungry for Jesus and He's going to fill you but go get lunch for now, go get full of something else right now. The next day he came down and he was within three minutes, within three minutes, he was worshipping the Lord in a language like here in the text that that he had not learned. What had happened was that morning I brought the teaching talking about the various problems people have of presuppositions about how tongues are going to happen. That's really difficult to know how to relate and it almost takes an extended well it does an extended teaching in its own right. But let me try and summarize it in about two minutes. The difficulty is talking with people about how what you don't mean.

We're not talking about inventing language but it's responding to.

Now one way I guarantee you will never speak with tongues and that's don't move your tongue. I guarantee it. In fact, I'll tell you won't speak any language, you won't speak English, you won't speak Swahili, you won't speak nothing. Imagine people saying I want to witness for Jesus. How you do it? By the power of the Spirit, so they're standing there with someone, I feel I need to talk to this person, so they go. Mean, you make up your mind to talk. Say well. Jack that's easy to say that way, but see, this has to do with making up your mind to talk and it has to do with a language you never learned and I don't want to make one up and try and fake it. But you see, that very commitment to, there's not anybody in the room that wants to make up a language and say God gave me this language. Say well then how does it come. Well I found three ways it comes. I found one way that it comes is sometimes people get words that come to their mind. But inevitably they will do the same thing I did 'cause that's the way it happened to me. They will say, I think I must have made that up. Where did I get that? I must have heard somebody say that. Well it's possible you did. It's possible you heard the Lord, Well I don't want to say something you know I don't want I don't want to do anything wrong. Then tell the Lord. But the way you don't do anything wrong is not doing nothing. Another thing that happens to people sometime they feel physical sensations. I've had people say well, I kind of felt you know it was almost like I was feeling so full, and I wanted to say something but I didn't know what to say. Well, why don't you say Lord I feel so full, I don't know what to say but just and then start to say start to what say what. Well how did you begin when you started talking as a baby? There's not one of us that started reciting words perfectly. Not one. There was not

the day that you rose and you said Mother. See I've had people say well I felt like my tongue was tingling. The problem with saying things people say, they got words, felt their tongue tingle, something like that is that for the person that listens, that becomes normative in their mind. Well, you know it may be need to wait till that happens. No what you need to do is come to Jesus Christ and say Lord Jesus I want to worship you and I just want to love you and I want you to fill me with your Spirit. And I learned in my first pastorate over 30 years ago that if you can get people to come to Jesus and be free of their fears and say Jesus fill me with the Spirit and free of the notion that it's wrong if they become participants in that language exercise, that they will not only be filled with the Spirit, they will probably have a free release of worshipping Him with a new tongue just as surely as it happened at Pentecost. They began to speak. That was an exercise of faith. It was an exercise of faith. There is another thing here though beside faith there was also fear there. These are drunk. People say the same things today. They don't necessarily say they're drunk. You know what they usually say today. By saying they perhaps we ought to get that in perspective. There is a small segment, and by the way it is a relatively small segment of the body of Christ that is antagonistic toward speaking with tongues. There are lots of people who don't speak with tongues who are very devoted Christians and they don't participate in that for whatever reason but are not antagonistic. That would represent the larger part of the Body of Christ. They don't have any ax to grind. They don't know what they think, some of them are uncertain, maybe some reticent but at least they are not antagonistic. How many people do? Well, grab your hat. Do you know that by actual statistics there are presently on the face of this planet in excess of 150 million Christians who speak

with tongues as a part of their worship expression with the Lord so that's been a part of their experience? That's a tabulatable statistic. It's not just something that's a piece of guesswork. The charismatic movement of the last twenty years has had profound influence in every group. But there is a small group, very vocal but a small group of people say this is not for today. And they have a very systematic way of approaching that and they become very antagonistic at times. And I feel badly about this and I don't want to seem retaliative but I want to say what they say. They say, that is not for today and we read we read the passage scripture this morning earlier in I Corinthians 13 where they say that. They say it says tongues shall cease. The same passage also says knowledge shall pass away. But they have a way of explaining why knowledge can still be but not tongues. And-and-and they they've got I mean it's really a diligent you really got to work at it but if you want to prove something, you can, you know you can come up with some system of but its philosophy, you can't really make good case in the Bible. But here is the real issue. You say to them, well if it's not for today, I got I got to ask a question. I speak with tongues and I live today. What about that? Well they say well we understand that you do. Ah-but you see that's just an experience. That isn't Biblical. So I say well, ah-it's-it's here in the Bible. Yes, but that was before it said it's going to cease. Well when did it cease? Well, it ceased when the Bible was completed. But why? Well because we didn't need those kinds of crutches that were signs any more you know. You don't need those signs and wonders like that anymore because now we have the Bible. By the way have you noticed the way the whole world has rushed into faith now that the Bible is complete? Everybody is just aching to get saved because the Bible is complete now and they don't need any evidence of the power of God in the

world. Have you noticed that? I mean there they're beating on the walls outside right now saying I understand you have a complete Bible in there and where Jesus did not teach a ministry orientation that He intended to stop at some given point in the future. He said I'm going to give these signs will follow them that believe. And He cites the same things that characterized His ministry. And He said, that's what's these signs will follow you. It goes hand in hand with the word. You don't separate it from the word. It confirms the word. This book, this word is extremely important. But it isn't the sign that it's all over.

Now, so they say, well, that's your experience. Say well, you said that it was all over how do you know it's all over. Well, the evidence of church history proves it. I mean there is a whole period of time where almost no one spoke in tongues. I said well, I can't deny that. So that's your proof that it's true. Well, isn't the proof that you just gave me, wasn't that the experience of some people? I mean people who didn't experience the fullness of the spirit and tongues, and other gifts. Yeah, that's what happened to them. Say, well, wait a minute. You said my experience doesn't count in spite of the fact I'm saying it verifies the Bible. You're telling me what you say the Bible says that tongues aren't for today is because of the experience of some other people. Sounds to me like you're using the same argument. You can't argue against me with an argument you say of mine that is invalid. You're saying my experience doesn't prove it's Biblical and you're citing as the proof that your position is Biblical the experience of people that don't speak with tongues. All of a sudden, I am reminded a lot of D. L. Moody. You know, somebody came to him and says we don't like the way you evangelize. And he said, well I admit its imperfect. How do you evangelize? They said, well, we don't. And Moody says, well, he said, I like the way I evangelize better

than the way you don't evangelize, you know I-I got I got to just settle this one thing about people that have fears, the fears that are expressed. I want to I want to ask you; don't you think that God was kind of fouled up if He was deciding I'm going to start the church today. And He starts it speaking with tongues.

Now that's that is a really bizarre way to start if you don't have that in mind as a part of the equipment on down the line. It it's like I'm really going to put on a show here today, but, you know, that's only fireworks for today. The rest of the people just, they can just come and have the complete Bible.

Now they can have the whole complete Bible but they can't have ha you know everything that's in it. I mean they can just read about it. Tongues, I'm going to tell you, tongues must have infinite more significance really in God's purpose than I think probably we'll ever understand in this life. Or else He wouldn't have birthed the church with that language on its lips. I can't imagine, can you imagine God couple angels sidling up to the throne sometime in the last few decades or centuries and saying ah Father forgive our arrogance, we don't want this to come through bad but ah-you know why did you do that tongues thing anyway? I mean, look from the beginning people were saying they were drunk. And that certainly is hardly a credit to you and your people and there are arguments over it to this day and why do you do it. They say, what-what is that all about God? And for the Lord to say, ha-you got me I don't know, I just did it. Imagine God saying, you know, it's just one of those things. Some things slip by you some days what I want to say folks are that there is no reason in the world for any of the Lord's dear children to be fearful. People say, well, I don't I just don't want it to become so important. Nobody's trying to argue for it transcending the say so important as compared to what? As

important as compared to well, the worth of eternal souls. The worth, the values of the fruit of the Spirit. I mean fruit is more important than the gifts and ah- well O.K. First I want to ask on what grounds is fruit more important than the gifts?

Well I just I guess because I, and if they'd be honest and go all the way, they'd say because I don't like some of the things that the gifts are going to do in me. They will humble me. They will force me to a place of dependency that I have never been before. See, when the when you finally draw the bottom line, the whole situation summons us to a place of opening to God by the power of the Spirit for ability, to be all the Lord wants us to do. And what more could there be to make it desirable than the fruit that was manifest that day? Three thousand then, right then that day. A hundred and fifty million on the face of the planet, I'm not talking about the whole church. In the Body of Christ about a fourth to a third of the world's population are nominal Christians. Let's take five billion people on the face of the planet put up against that a hundred and fifty million, that is a really remarkable, do you know that that's about three out of every hundred people on the planet speak with tongues. This is not something going on in a corner.

Now, it is still though, the smaller portion of the whole church. But I'll tell you another remarkable thing - fruit. Fourth fact of Pentecost was fruit. Whenever people do studies on the growth of the church and where the cutting edge of what is happening of evangelism today is, nine times out of ten, they're studying those people that that aren't afraid of this tongue talking business. And I think what you'll find about most of them, and I represent them, I'm one, is that we're not we're not nervous or uneasy about the fact we speak with tongues. And

try not to be belligerent or feisty about it. Only when people say you can't do that, it's not Biblical, it's not for today, then something in you wants to say wait a minute, wait a minute. I, you, you know listen to this, a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. But the arguments go on. If you want the counter argument from my part, the counter argument isn't I speak with tongues any way, the counter argument is look at the fruit. Because when they make their analyses, their assessments of where is it that the ingathering of souls is taking place in this generation, nine times out of ten, and it's not that no people are won in large numbers in any of the other places, the few places where people are resistant, but by enlarge, it's where people are open to the power of the Holy Spirit with signs following. And among those signs is speaking with tongues. And its relationship to the believer is that there is a language of loving worship to the Father. There is a humbling of oneself. I remember hearing Dave Wilkerson one time saying, well, there's people that say, well, I want the power of God, but I want it without tongues. He says, it reminds me of somebody walking, they say, they want the power of the Lord and the authority. Reminds me he says of somebody going into the shoe store and saying you know I want a new pair of shoes but I want the kind without tongues. And he says, don't dictate, don't dictate to God. Well, you say that's just the thing that bothers me about some of you people say; it seems to me you are dictating to God that you must have tongues. No, I'm not dictating anything like that at all. I'm saying, Lord, you have said in your word, this is the way it started and I can't imagine any place I'd like to get closer to than how it started. How about you? This morning, as we conclude, there are two things. The first thing is I'm more concerned than anything else about anyone who may be here that has never come to know Jesus

as Savior. But I want to save something to say to you, just before I conclude. Give me thirty seconds first with anyone who says, I know Jesus is my Savior, Pastor, but I've never been filled with the Spirit. I'm not telling you to wait till Wednesday, but the whole focus of the Wednesday evening service is going to be on the baptism of the spirit; this Wednesday night, being filled with the Spirit. You don't have to wait till then. In this room, right here, following the service, there will be people that will pray with you if you've not received the fullness of the Spirit and would like to. Just like at Pentecost and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. So, that's available to you. But for any that are here, that have never asked Jesus Christ into your life, we're going to pray in just one minute and when we do I'm going to ask you the answer to this question - quite aside from what I've talked about, this teaching today has been on the way the church was born. It's a phenomenal thing, it was a glorious thing. It is to this day. That's not a day of my life that I don't exercise that spiritual language. It's not anything that grabs me like a seizure and throws me into a tizzy. It's an action of will where you allow yourself to worship the Lord in a resource He's given you. It's an ongoing miracle he's put within your grasp, for worshipping Him, for communicating with Him. You can speak your own language, but have you ever felt I wish I could praise Him better, or I wish I could pray more on target. And that's one among the reasons he's given us that resource. But that isn't the purpose of this morning's for you. The purpose this morning for you if you've never received Jesus Christ is that you would come into the embrace of the love of God reaching out to you. And I'll tell you though the teaching has been on a subject that may be very impractical for you today. I suggest that you have felt the love of God here today, when people prayed with you,

when someone touched you. Aside from any of that, you felt, these people love and I need God's love and forgiveness and I've never received it. And if you never have, you know you haven't and I want to invite you to open your heart to Jesus Christ right now. In the next hundred and twenty seconds I'm going to scan this congregation and ask how many people there are who would look this way and with their heads upraised, our eyes would meet and we would agree. Say, Jack I want to receive Christ today, if two agree, concerning anything they ask, God will do it, Jesus said that and I want you to agree this is the day of your entry into the Kingdom. To give you the privilege of privacy, I'm going to ask everybody to bow their heads. Let's all do that. And I'm asking just you, if you're opening your heart to Jesus Christ today, as your Savior, I'm not talking about speaking with tongues now, I'm not talking about being filled with the Spirit. I'm talking about letting Jesus Christ come into your life and the love of God fills your soul. How many are there right now while our heads are bowed that will lift your head and look this way and with your eyes looking this way, you're saying not with words, but with your eyes, Jack, I want to receive the Lord. So I can see wherever you are, just lift your hand and keep looking this way. Hold your hand up all over the room lift your hand up and hold it there. There are quite a few. Just keep them there. Others, I'm waiting till everybody that's going to lift their hand does it right now. There are several people in every part of the room there's people that have their hand up right now and you're saying I want to receive the Lord.

Now hold it there until I agree with you, O.K. keep it there. Son, I agree with you now whisper to the person next to you, I'm receiving Jesus today. Good that's right. Yes, ma'am, I agree with you go on tell the person beside you, I'm receiving

Jesus. Yes, sir, I agree with you, as you receive Jesus Christ today, right? Tell the person next to you, someone in front of you, go ahead, that's right.

Now there are others now, right over here, I agree with you ma'am and with you too.

Now tell the person beside you, I'm receiving Jesus Christ as my Savior.

Now there's one right in here, O.K. right over here I saw a hand and ah-you put it down, put it back up where did I miss you? I agree with you as you open your heart to the Lord today and with you back there son, good.

Now whisper to the person next to you and you too go ahead tell them, I'm receiving Jesus today, go ahead. Tell the person next to you as I agree with you. You didn't tell them - good, that's good. There's another person over here, hand upraised as you open your heart to the Lord, good, I agree with you - did you tell the person next to you? Great. Is there anyone else, I'm receiving the love of God in Jesus Christ. Say Pastor, I need the Lord, I can't see you good, there you are. Good, praise the Lord. I'm happy for you son. I praise God for that, tell somebody next to you, I'm receiving Jesus as my Savior today. We want to thank you Lord for these who opened their heart to Christ today, these who receive Him right now are saying yes to the Lord. Walk up and point more clearly, I can't see who you are pointing, O.K. thank you, one of the ushers is helping me - there's a little boy there. Son are you with your mama? Wave at me if you are with your Mom or Dad, wave at me. They there? Tell whoever you're with you're receiving the Lord Jesus. O.K. All of you who just acknowledged the Lord as your Savior, would you look this way one more time? When we dismiss, as we're going to in one minute, when we dismiss, Ken Miller who is one of our pastoral staff, come around here Ken, where they can see you

better, is going to be here and I'm going to ask whoever you tapped to offer to come with you. I'm going to ask you, when we stand and sing, start right out and come then - nobody is going to embarrass you, just come. And come and I want you to meet Ken. We're not recruiting members, we want to give you material to help you follow through on the decision you made and you meant. And there's no way I can tell you how important your follow through is at this moment. So please come. If you didn't signal a response and you need to come to Jesus Christ today, you come with these that are coming. Let's all stand together, shall we? While we stand let's sing once again, All Hail the Power of Jesus Name. And lift your voice and praise God with me while that takes place for these who are coming now and they are opening their heart to the Lord. You come now, those that signaled, come now. Right, let's sing church shall we? "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name, Let angels prostrate fall, Bring forth the Royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of All. Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of All!" Praise the Lord, come ahead, come right this way, you're doing great. Praise the Lord! Hallelujah! Well I think the organ wanted to applaud these people that are coming to the Lord, let's help it. As we leave today, let's go walking and rejoicing. We're a little later than usual, hurry where you have children to go pick up and let's love one another in Jesus' Name.