



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Acts 1:1-7, 2:1-13

Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy, Part VIII

Eschatology Doctrinal Studies

TRANSCRIPT

In early America many of the churches, as you no doubt know, were churches in which the pews became associated with certain people. So as a matter of fact even in some churches there was really pew rent. So you rented a certain place and it became your pew. In others it wasn't that the people sat in them so regularly that if a stranger came in and sat there you might think you were sitting at the wrong seat. So I've been looking around over the audience and noticing that some of you follow a pattern as if that's your pew. We want you to know that there is no charge. But at the same time someone else might sit in it, so don't get upset over it. But I notice that some of you sit almost in the same place each time. Jack Perry sits right over there on the aisle about sixty percent of the way back and you sure know he's here. [Laughter] And a number of others do the same thing including Martha and me when I'm there.

So its seven thirty lets begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we give Thee thanks again for the word of God and for the confidence we have in reading it that it is Thy word and that we have the presence of the Holy Spirit within us a believers to illumine our minds and hearts concerning divine truth.

And again, Lord, we pray that as we continue our study of the theme of Divine Purpose in History and Prophecy that Thou wilt guide us and direct us through the spirit into an understanding of the truth. And again, Lord, we ask that this truth may not be something simply in our minds though that is so important at the beginning, but may it lodge in our minds and hearts in such a way that it issues in a kind of Christian life that is pleasing to Thee and fruitful in this purpose that Thou art accomplishing through the ages. We thank Thee for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and ask, Lord, that Thou be with us in this meeting.

For His name's sake and we pray in Him. Amen.

[Message] Well this is the eighth of our series of studies in the Purpose of God in History and Prophecy. And we are turning to Acts chapter 1 for a Scripture reading though we will be turning to some other passages too, and I want to read Acts chapter 1, verse 4 and verse 5 and then chapter 2, verse 1 through verse 13. So we read in verse 4 of Acts chapter 1.

“And being assembled together with them he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father which he said, ‘You have heard from me. For John truly baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’”

And then in Acts chapter 2 in verse 13 where we will spend most of our time, we read.

“When the day of Pentecost had fully come they were all of one accord and one place and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty or a rushing mighty wind and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them

divided tongues as a 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 multitude came together and were 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 we hear each in our own language in which we were born, Parthians and Meads and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontos and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene visitors from Rome both Jews and Proselytes, Cretans and Arabs, we here them speaking in our own tongue 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.’”

Our subject tonight is the eighth, and it’s really a topic that had to do with the coming of the Holy Spirit because we are talking about the great events in the divine history of salvation and one could never talk about the great events in the history of divine salvation and pass over the coming of the Holy Spirit. The presence of spirit filled men and women in the church today is a cause for surprise. I think it’s a cause for surprise because we often hear people say, who are Christians who been in evangelical churches with reference to an individual, “He’s really filled with the spirit or he really walks by the spirit,” as if to single him out in front of other Christians. That would have been rather startling in the early church because it wouldn’t have been so strange, so different, for someone to be filled with the spirit. But today it’s different. The reason for this is as you and I both know is that the life of the church is very weak and very impotent. I’m speaking of the professing church but not simply of the unbelieving professing church but of the believing professing church, the evangelical church as we know it. The life of that church is very weak.

I have in my notes a story of a preacher who was about to deliver a carefully prepared message in his congregation. I always think of Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer because he liked to tell a story of how he went out to California once to give a series of messages and he couldn't seem to be assured that the particular messages that he was thinking about were the messages that he should deliver in this church which he was to speak in the morning and in the evening. He said it was quite a trial to him the days before he was come there he couldn't make up his mind what he was going to speak on, and, finally, Saturday night came and still no message from the Lord regarding the passage he should expound. He said the next morning I got up and still no message, and, finally, when the time came for the morning service, and I was sitting on the platform and still asking the Lord for the message. I still didn't know what I was going to talk on, but he said, “I walked over the pulpit with my Bible in my hand and my first words are ‘The subject that I am taking up this morning will be continued tonight.’” And then he went on to tell us that between sitting on the platform and reaching the pulpit the Lord had laid upon his heart a specific message and it was such an important and great message that he was going to have to have two times for exposition of it.

Well the preacher I am talking about to deliver a message like that but the uncomfortable convictions stole over his spirit to the effect that the message he had in mind was not the one God really wanted him to give. And so reluctantly he abandoned his manuscript which he had and in dependence on the Holy Spirit he began to read John 13. And he said he read down John 14, until he came to the 7th verse and he found these words definitely speaking to him, “Ye know him” a reference to the father. He said he read off two more verses and a second sentence became luminous, “Hast thou not known me” and that was the reference to his son. And he went on and he read to the 17th verse of John chapter 14, and there he read these words, “And the spirits of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him but you know him the Holy Spirit.” He thought to himself as he reflected upon the fact that the text said

“Ye know him the father” “have you not known me the son” and that the Lord said with reference to the apostles “You know the spirit.” Do I really know the spirit in the same intimate that I know the father and the son? I know them and I know them intimately but do I really know the Holy Spirit in the same way in which I know the son? “But ye know him” the Lord Jesus said. I think those words are particularly a challenge to you and to me.

John Owen wrote a very significant treatise on the knowledge of the Trinity in which in sought to show how we can know the father and how we could know the son and how we could know the spirit. And he spelled it out in many, many paragraphs some of them very difficult to follow at least no easy to follow. And the question I think is really one that pertains to us too. Do we really know the spirit? Is the Holy Spirit someone with whom we have a first-hand knowledge?

I think that is one of the difficulties in the church today. We really have not given the spirit the attention that we should have. I speak for myself, I think, I speak for others as well. Another of the reasons that brings about this comment, “This person is filled with the spirit or she is filled with the spirit,” is because the church is largely today, again I’m speaking broadly of the evangelical church, is largely ignorant of the theology of the word of God. I know that is a very harsh thing to say but I fully believe it. I do believe that we do not know the doctrine of the word of God today as the church once did. We know human organizations and we know the machinery of the church, we are certainly acquainted with entertainment that takes place in the church and the tricks of carrying on a church ministry. But the knowledge of the truth of God that’s another matter. The hallmark of the reform churches has been their love affair with the doctrines of the Bible. To teach doctrine was the highest calling of the ministry according to them for the literally some centuries. Because it is when doctrine germinates and bears fruit that things happen in the lives of individuals. It is when you and I become convinced of truth and come to

enjoy truth and become enthralled in the truth that it affects our lives. That is why it is so important for us to know doctrine.

John Calvin equated doctrine with the word of God and taught that that was the primary means of grace. We know that the ordinances as a means of grace. We know the experiences of life as a means of grace, the trials of life. But the word of God is the primary means of grace, the means by which we grow as we are taught that work through the Holy Spirit.

An old mountaineer put it in more earthly fashion but with equal validity when he said “A man can no more talk about what he don’t know then he can come back from where he ain’t been.” There’s some real philosophy in that, and I’m afraid that a lot of us are talking about things that we don’t really know and, therefore, we are not really getting the blessing of the things that we should.

You know, if you take a hymn book and you look at the section that has do with the hymns on the Holy Spirit, you know one of the reasons why we don’t sing so many of them if we would know something about the word of God? About eighty percent of them, Dr. Chafer who was a musician and he used the Presbyterian hymnal which was the hymnal in the seminary when I went through it, Dr. Chafer made the statement in his theology that eighty percent of the hymns on the Holy Spirit begin with words “Come Holy Spirit.” Isn’t that striking? The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost. Now here is the church still calling upon the Holy Spirit to come. Now, I don’t want to be too critical I know that some of the hymns when we use the expression “Come Holy Spirit” are trying to speak of the experience of the communion that individual might have with the spirit. But look, my Christian friend, if you are a believer in Christ you don’t have to say “Come Holy Spirit.” As a matter of fact when the church meets on Sunday morning we don’t have to say “Now let’s go to the Lord in prayer.” The Lord is here with us you just talk to him, Lord. We’re talking about something that should be real in the

experience of all of us. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells every true believer. Let us believe that and let us walk accordingly. Remember that.

On the Day of Pentecost is the day of the coming of spirit. All of us that read the Bible know that. It is the day of the transformation of God's redeemed. It's the day that the new man was formed when the Jews and Gentiles who were there were formed into a unity by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It marks the church as a spirit imbued people. That's what the church is. It is a church that is spiritually in tune with the Holy Spirit, a spirit imbued people. Do we notice that in our meetings? That's what Pentecost tells us very specifically. If you look at the Bible very broadly, you will know that in the Old Testament the Father appears predominate in the things that are happening. The Son is there we know in the theophanies, but the Father is predominate. The Spirit is there, but there are not a whole lot of references to the third person of the Trinity in the Old Testament. But when the incarnation comes the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity takes human nature and the age from the incarnation to the day of Pentecost is specifically the age of the Son.

Now there are promises of the coming of the Spirit, we're going to look at those shortly. But on the day of Pentecost things dramatically changed and the writers of the New Testament constantly speak of the Holy Spirit's presence in the church and of his constant activity in the church and also of his activity in the lives of the believers who made up that early church. In fact John Owen once made the statement and I don't think he is overdoing it by saying it, “All the acting's of grace, all good duties are actually ascribed to the Holy Spirit of God.” In other words, the things that happen in the church that are good, the things that happen in your life that are good, that is God working in you life, those are things that are carried out by the mediation of the Holy Spirit who dwells within you. So we have great indebtedness to the Holy Spirit.

Now what I'd like to do is something very simple this evening. I want to look at the Old Testament promise of the Spirit. Look at a couple of texts and then look at a type

in the Old Testament that we ought not to pass by because it has to do with Acts chapter 2. Then I want to look at a few passages that have to do with the New Testament promise of the spirit before he came on the day of Pentecost. Then we'll look at the historical fulfillment in Acts chapter 2 again and talk about that. And, finally, I want to just conclude the message with the underlying of a few cardinal features of the day of Pentecost. One or two or three that I think are very important.

But now, the Old Testament promise of the spirit and I would like for you to turn now, now I know this may be a bit illegal, but turn to one of the minor prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah so if you would happen to hit on one of those books you know about where Joel is. So Joel chapter 2, is the passage we want to look at and it's the passage that cited in Acts chapter 2, as you know when Peter is preaching. And so it's rather important that we read it here. Joel chapter 2, verse 28, have you found it, Joel 2, verse 28. I'm sure you have because Jerry Doman has found it so the rest of you I know.

“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all of flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, and also on my men servants and my maid servants I will pour out my spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved: For in Mt. Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance as the Lord as said among the remnant whom the Lord calls.”

Now you can see the promise there it is very plain, it's the promise of the coming of the spirit. Now there is an Old Testament type in which this is set out, and this is really the thing that is even more important than that for me this evening. The passage I'd

like for you to turn to is Leviticus chapter 23. Now, while you are finding that passage, if you don't already know this, you should realize that Leviticus chapter 23 is the chapter in which the feasts of Jehovah are set out; Israel's feast calendar, and there are seven of the feasts that are set out. The first is the Passover that suggests to us our Lord's death because he is called Christ our Passover isn't he? And then there is the feast of unleavened bread which suggests the life of the believer, and Paul uses it in that sense to suggest that the unleavened bread is the bread without leaven which is often, most of the time, suggestive of sin. And so the feast of unleavened bread represents the believer and is an exhalation to him to live without the actions of sin that often characterize him. The third of the feasts is the feast of the first fruits which you know is associated with the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ because he is called the “first fruits” of those that are dead. So what we have here is a kind of picture of what is going to take place historically and the New Testament makes that plain. The fourth of these feasts is the feast of the wave loaves which is that which represents the church at Pentecost. I'd like to read these verses beginning at verse 15 of Leviticus 23.

“And you shall count yourselves from the day after the Sabbath from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days” that is the expression from which we get Pentecost fifty, “fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath then you shall you offer a new grain offering to the Lord. You shall bring home from your dwellings two wave loaves of two tenths of an ephah. They should be fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven they are the first fruits to the Lord. And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year without blemish, one young bull and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the Lord with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the Lord.” And so on until finally verse 22, “And when you reap the harvest of your land you shall not only reap the corners of your field when you reap nor shall you gather any gleanings

from your harvest, you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger. I am the Lord your God.”

Now, there are three more feasts. And they are the feasts of the Day of Atonement. I should say the Feast of Trumpets. The Feast of Trumpets suggests the calling which, ultimately, will lead to the Lord's return. The Day of Atonement suggesting Israel's final, as a nation, entrance into the blessings of the Lord. And then the last feast, the Feast of Tabernacles which represents the age of the kingdom. So what we have in the feasts of the Lord is a kind of historical progression of the things that are to happen. Now, of course, we don't know the precise periods of times between some of these, but you'll notice it begins with Passover and then unleavened bread, first fruits, resurrection, then fifty days later Pentecost. And then a long period of time in Israel's calendar and the Feast of Trumpets, the re-gathering of the nation of Israel, the Day of Atonement when Israel looks upon him who they pierced and mourns for over what has been accomplished by them. And, finally, the Feast of Tabernacles, the kingdom that is to come. So the feasts represent historical events in the history of men, what we would call the history of salvation.

Now, it is very important for you and me to recognize that Pentecost is not something that happened accidentally. Pentecost was determined in the eternal counsel of God and is reflected in Leviticus chapter 23, and if you had been there and if you had been a student of the Bible, you would have known when the Passover lamb was sacrificed that we're going to have the things that correspond to the feasts that we have been celebrating through the years and fifty days from the resurrection of the Lord they could have said “We're waiting for Passover” the Lord Jesus for the coming of the spirit Pentecost. The Lord actually didn't have to tell the individuals who were student of Scripture but, evidently, not many of them were because he kept having to tell them of the things that were going to happen. If they studied the Bible they would have come to

know. So it's important to remember then that Pentecost is an event within the history of the salvation that the Scriptures set forth. It was a redemptive event that flows naturally out of the cross and the resurrection. Do we understand that? It must take place as a redemptive event in the plan and purpose of God.

Now, let's turn to some of the passages in the New Testament which set forth our Lord's promises with regard to the coming of the spirit because he wished, evidently, for them to not be surprised by the things that were to come. I'm sure they were confused anyway, but how confused they would be if they had not had these intimations from the Lord.

Many more important texts occur with reference to the Spirit as the Day of Pentecost draws near but John 7:37-39 is important. And the apostle writes on in verse 37 of John 7, “On the last day that great day of the feast Jesus stood and cried out saying if anyone thirst let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me as the Scripture has said out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” Now John writes, mind you, after this has all taken place so he understands more fully what this all means. And so he adds his interpretation in verse 39, “But this spoke he” or “he spoke” my text says. That is, John is going to interpret what is meant when, “He who believes in me,” as the Scripture said, “Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” This he spoke concerning the spirit that those believing in him would receive for the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Now, of course, the Holy Spirit had been active in the Old Testament. He's mentioned rarely relatively, but, nevertheless, the specific day of Pentecost has loomed as a special redemptive day when he begins this special ministry, significant ministry, that he has throughout the age in which you and I live.

Now, John has said that but that may have been, see when Jesus said what he said there was no John there with this knowledge to interpret it. So we know that there must have been more to excite the apostles about this. So in John chapter 14 in the upper

room discourse when he was getting ready to leave the disciples, he gave a promise of the spirit again, John chapter 14, verse 16-17, and these are very important verses. Listen to what our Lord says, “And I will pray the Father and he will give you another helper.” Later on, John writes, of course, 1 John and he speaks about the Lord Jesus as our advocate or helper, the same word. In other words we have two advocates, we have two helpers. We have the Son of God in heaven. Now he’s our helper our advocate and when we fall into sin he advocates for us. And then we have now, an advocate on earth in our hearts. That is what he means by another advocate. He says “He will give you another helper that he may abide with you forever.”

Now isn’t that striking? We think of the eternal security of the believer. That’s one way of looking at the perseverance of the saints who persevere in faith. When they come to faith in the Lord Jesus they never fall. Their lives are up and down and an experience, of course, but once having come to him they never apostatized from the faith. That’s what scriptures mean when they talk about the perseverance of the saints. When we talk about eternal security, we’re talking about it from the standpoint of our experience. But when we talk about the perseverance of the saints we realize it is God really preservers in saving the saints, well, we can thank him for the assurance of our perseverance or our security. Notice that he said that he would dwell with you forever. So in other words, the promise of the spirit is given to them and he will be in them forever.

Notice that last line of verse 17 too, “For he dwells with you and will be in you.” Now that is a significant change because the sense in which the spirit is with believers today is different from the sense in which he was with believers in the past. Now, he permanently indwells all believers. In the Old Testament you will find statements like the Holy Spirit indwells someone for a particular purpose always enduement with power for some particular task. That is, the sense in the Old Testament. But now for the first time the Holy Spirit is to indwell a person forever. So characteristic of every true believing man is the indwelling, permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. That marks you out from

all others who do not know our Lord, marks me out from that. It identifies us, who are, of course, believers as having as possessing this same one.

Now in chapter 16, verse 7 through verse 15, we read, “Nevertheless,” our Lord is still speaking to them in the upper room, “Nevertheless I tell you the truth it is to your advantage that I go away for if I do not go away the helper, the advocate, will not come to you. But if I depart, I will send him to you.” Now, I think, it would be nicer to have the Lord here rather than have him go away. But, of course, if he were here in the sense in which was incarnate, he was not with everybody everywhere all the time. He was with the apostles in Nazareth but those who happened not to be in Nazareth, of course, he was not with them. Now, I’m not suggesting that if they looked to the Lord they didn’t have support in the sense of God’s presence but our Lord was different. So he said, “It’s going to be expedient that I go away.” What he, ultimately, means is that the Holy Spirit is going to come and dwell in every one of you so that through the spirit I’m going to be with every one of you wherever every one of you may be. What a marvelous thing to realize that he is universally present among the believers. I rather like that.

Now, he goes on and says, “When he has come he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment of sin because they do not believe in me. Of righteousness because I go to my father and you see me no more see me no more, of judgment because the ruler of this is judged. I still have many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. However, when he the spirit of truth has come, he will guide you in all truth for he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he hears he will speak and he will tell you things to come.”

Now who is giving information to the spirit which the spirit hears and brings to us? Why it’s the Lord. In other words, our Lord carries on his ministry of teaching through the Holy Spirit. “He will glorify me for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All things that the father has are mine. Therefore, I say he will take of mine and declare it to you.”

Now for the sake of time I'm going to ask you to turn back to Luke chapter 24, and just read one more passage, Luke chapter 24 in verse 49. The death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus has taken place and now in the light of the promises that had been given he says, verse 49, Luke chapter 24, “Behold I send the promise of my father upon you but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” This is the final promise that our Lord has given and he asks them to stay there the Spirit is coming. They are going to be clothed or endued with the Spirit.

I know you have heard this old story that Dr. Ironside used to tell about an individual who came to him and said to him “I've just come from a great tarrying meeting. Hundreds have been tarrying for many days at San Jose, California waiting for the Holy Ghost.” Dr. Ironside said, “Yes what authority did you have there?” He said, “Well Jesus said tarry in Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high.” “Well my friend,” Dr. Ironside said, “are you not confounding locations and times? You are over ten thousand miles too far away, over eighteen hundred years too late.” Then he went on to say “If some of the disciples had tarried at Nazareth, they would missed the experience of Pentecost. If some had stayed in Bethlehem, if some had been in Bethany would the Holy Spirit have fallen up on them? No, because the coming of the Holy Spirit is a redemptive act, a special redemptive act in the program and plan of God part of the history of salvation destined to be at Jerusalem.” As our Lord said, “Tarry at Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high.”

Now in Acts chapter 1, the passage that we read you will note the historian adds one little phrase to it which we will talk about later on, next week perhaps. But in verse 5 of Acts chapter 1, we read “For John truly baptized with water but you should be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” So they were given a temporal expectation, “not many days from now.”

But looking now at the historical fulfillment of Acts chapter 2, verse 1 through verse 13, “The expectation of being clothed with power reaches its' consummation now”

and the Day of Pentecost having fully come, the fifty days from the Resurrection, the fifty days that special time and now the accomplishment of the feast of Pentecost antitype the Lord Jesus Christ gift of the Holy Spirit. This is the time in which they entered into experientially the fullness of the possession of the third person of the blessed Trinity

Campbell Morgan has a little book on the birth of the church and he comments in one of the pages of it to the effect that there was a Cole Porter of the British and Foreign Bible Society, an agent who became quite famous because of some books that he wrote. George Borrow was his name. He wrote a very well-known book that Christians read and profited from called, *The Bible in Spain*. And then he wrote a book called, *Wild Wales*. And Dr. Morgan said, “You refer to the book because it tells that when he climbed Plynlimon mountain in Wales he came to a place where there were bubbling springs and from those bubbling springs, I guess as anyone who has been to Wales at that point knows, those spring become the sources of three of the important rivers of Wales, the Severn, the Wyre, and the Rheidol rivers all flow from those springs on the top of Plynlimon mountain. Well he was there with a guide, Mr. Borrow, and when he was there he looked and saw what he saw and reflected on it and he said to his guide, “Bring me some water to drink so that in the days to come when I harangue about my visit here and may do it with authority having drank of the waters of the fountainhead.” And then Campbell Morgan said, “I pray that as we study this wonderful chapter we may not only watch the place where the waters rise but drink of the waters ourselves.”

Of course, he is talking about the rivers of living water representing the Holy Spirit. And to my mind, as I think about it, I think that when I was by my bed praying this afternoon, that that’s something that I before I leave this flesh which is wasting away I want to experience some of that that the apostles talked about in times like this. This is Pentecost, the phenomena, well I don’t know that they are particularly important. The wind, the fire appeal to the eye and the ear they portray the spiritual. The field expresses the spiritual as well, the wind a violent blast a kind of downdraft from above evidently

speaks of the power of the Holy Spirit, and the fire another symbol of the presence of God, go through the Bible and you will find the fire and the wind are symbols of the presence of God, Moses at the burning bush, the pillar of fire, Solomon in the temple, Elijah of course and the wind and the fire. And then we read that they were filled with other tongues and spoke so that all who came from the various places came to understand them. The gift met the need of this polyglot multitude and we can say this surely that the apostles were never the same after this remarkable day.

Notice too, we don't have time to do that in this series but you'll notice that the Holy Spirit gives the gift of tongues individuals understood what was being said in their own language. Not ecstatic speech, not the kind of speech that no one understands but language that is understood, various people understanding, people speaking in their own tongue. The gift of tongues is the gift of languages. Not the gift of ecstatic speech. That should be plain as you read through the New Testament.

Now, let me say in the remaining fifteen minutes a few things about the cardinal features of the day. What does Pentecost mean in the program of God? Well first of all, it means the vindication of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to Peter's preaching as he says in verse 32, "This Jesus God has raised up out of which we are all witnesses, therefore, being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this which you know see and hear." You can see incidentally the execution of this when the Son is resurrected ascends to the right hand of the Father, the promise was the promise to him, of course, first. So the Father conveys to the Son, the mediator, he's acting as mediator, for those whom he represents, the Father conveys to him the Spirit and the Lord pours out the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost for the disciples to indwell them permanently. So the transaction that takes place in heaven is as important as what happens upon the earth. We go on a read "For David did not ascend into the heavens but he says himself the Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Therefore, let all the house

of Israel knows assuredly that God has made this same Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.” So this remarkable, physical event that takes place and Peter then preaches this remarkable sermon.

You know, of course, that the sermon winds up in verse 36, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this same Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.” In other words, the first apostolic preaching done by the Apostle Peter leads up to the first apostolic creed, and what is it? Jesus is Lord. Jesus is Lord. So we say this is the vindication of the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus the coming of the Holy Spirit. His claim to be the eternal God affirmed at his baptism, affirmed at his temptation, affirmed at his transfiguration, affirmed at his death in the sense that the darkness fell over the land that supernatural darkness given by God so that men might recognize the darkness of their own sin is causing this death that is taking place, at the Resurrection and at the Ascension. The priestly work finished, the Lord is at the right hand, the priestly work of sacrifice finished, and now he is at the right hand of the Father in heaven experiencing the joy that was set before him as the writer of the Epistles to the Hebrews puts it, “He is there in infinite majesty, adored by the angels, obeyed by the seraphs, worshipped by just men made perfect who have preceded the apostles in heaven, and there in the power of the second person of the Trinity, he reigns in the realms of nature, providence and grace and will come at his second coming to judge this world.”

Herman Bavinck was a great Dutch theologian, and Mr. Bavinck has some interesting words about Christianity and I would like to read them to you. I think I’ve put my finger on them here because they especially point things that it is important for us to remember when we talk to others about the Christian faith. Herman Bavinck was one of the greatest theologians of the twentieth century. It is too bad that his theology has not been translated into English, but Dan of course can read it of course because he’s got a

translator at home and Jeanette reads it to him like a little baby. He wants to read Bavinck's four volumes of Systematic Theology.

But he said this, he said, “The peculiarity of the Christian then as has been so often shown and acknowledged even by opponents lies in the person of Christ. All other religions are independent to a certain degree of their founder. That's an important point, underline that, because those founders were nothing more than their first confessors. But Jesus was not the first Christian. He was and is the Christ. He is not the subject but the object of religion. Christianity is not the religion of Jesus, still less Jesus worship, but Christ's religion.” That is all Christians worship him as the Christ. Christianity is now as dependent on him from moment to moment as when we trod this earth. For he is not a person who lived and worked only in the past, he lives and works still, is still prophet, priest, and king and himself upholds the church which he established. So when we talk about Christianity we are talking about something that is distinct from all the religions about us. We worship the eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who lives and moves and still lives and moves in the same way. We don't look back, we look up.

A second thing that took place then was the inauguration of a new administration. The Spirit is given at a certain time as well have pointed, a certain place as the Old Testament and the New Testament say, the body of the redeemed are now universalized and Jew and Gentile formed into one harmonious unity by the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit. Paul says that “one new man has been brought into being” and that new man is what we know from the New Testament as the church of Jesus Christ.

The third thing that happened then was the inauguration of the reversal of Babylon. You know the story of Babylon. Moses gives the list of the nations, the table of the nations, in Genesis chapter 10 and then he tells the story of Babylon how as a result of the sin that existed and the rebellion against God that existed there, the Babylonians sought to erect a tower that reach to God. Rebelling against him and in so doing the

result God confused the languages of the earth and they have been confused to the present time.

So the Day of Pentecost with people from all over the face of globe gathered there and the ministry of the Holy Spirit giving the gift of tongues whereby they were able to communicate with each other though coming from various nations was simply in anticipation of what will, ultimately, come in the future. And so the presence of the nations, every nation under heaven according to some interpreters, and tongues of fire intended to show the means for the fulfillment of Acts chapter 1 in verse 8, that they would go forth and preach the gospel to the four corners of the earth. In other words, the church is to be a speaking church from the beginning telling the story of the Lord Jesus Christ. What can we say then about Pentecost. Well Pentecost is a rebuke of modern evangelism. It's a rebuke in the sense that the thing that is prominent in the New Testament is the preaching of the word of God, the ministry of the Scriptures, and also secondly that the individuals who are preached that word were individuals who were imbued with the Holy Spirit and had the sense of carrying on their ministry with the Spirit present.

A. M. Hunter in one of his books citing someone else that he doesn't cite says, “No apostle ever remembered Christ.” What did he mean by that? Well the apostles were still living with our Lord. He was no longer visible to them, but they didn't remember him they had constant experience with him every moment of the day. That's precisely what I'm sure that we ourselves are expected to have. We don't remember Christ, oh we have the Lord's Supper, and we remember what he did but Calvary's cross but, nevertheless, we don't remember him. He is alive. We have daily experience with him. We recognize that he through the Spirit dwells within us. So our relationship with him is the relationship of a living person all the time. When I'm by myself there is not one person there but there are two persons there. There are always two, and so I have him always to turn to. And as I read and ponder his words, he speaks to me and I want to speak to him

as I speak to him in prayer when I am sitting at my desk or whether I am in the backyard looking at some of my flowers that are dying or whether I am on my knees by the side of my bed or wherever the fellowship I enjoy with the Lord is a constant fellowship because through the Spirit he is always there and carrying on ministry like this.

Reformation, the reformation is great but if you look at the church of the reformation, you will see that the church of the reformation was a church that followed these simple patterns. They preached the word of God. They were not interested in entertainment, they weren't interested in all of the kinds of things that individuals are interested in today doing all of the kinds of things to make up for the fact that they don't possess the power of the Holy Spirit. They preached Christ and they preached it in the fervor of the present ministry of the Holy Spirit. As Luther said, “We begin and the church has begun at the wounds of Christ.” An individual who understands what the cross of Christ means will understand it and by God's marvelous grace calls upon the Spirit to work in his life and make him a testimony. You'll find what the reformers and others have found that God is with them and that fruit will come to pass in that individual's life.

We thank you for being here. Next week we are going look at the church and specifically talk about what the church is as it is set forth in the word of God.

Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to Thee for these passages from Holy Scripture which remind us of the great blessing of divine power that belongs to all of us. O God, enable us to be faithful, enable us to believe and act in accordance with the Scriptures that we read. And, O Lord, we pray that through the Holy Spirit Thou wilt give fruit for the glory of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And we pray with thanksgiving. In His name. Amen.