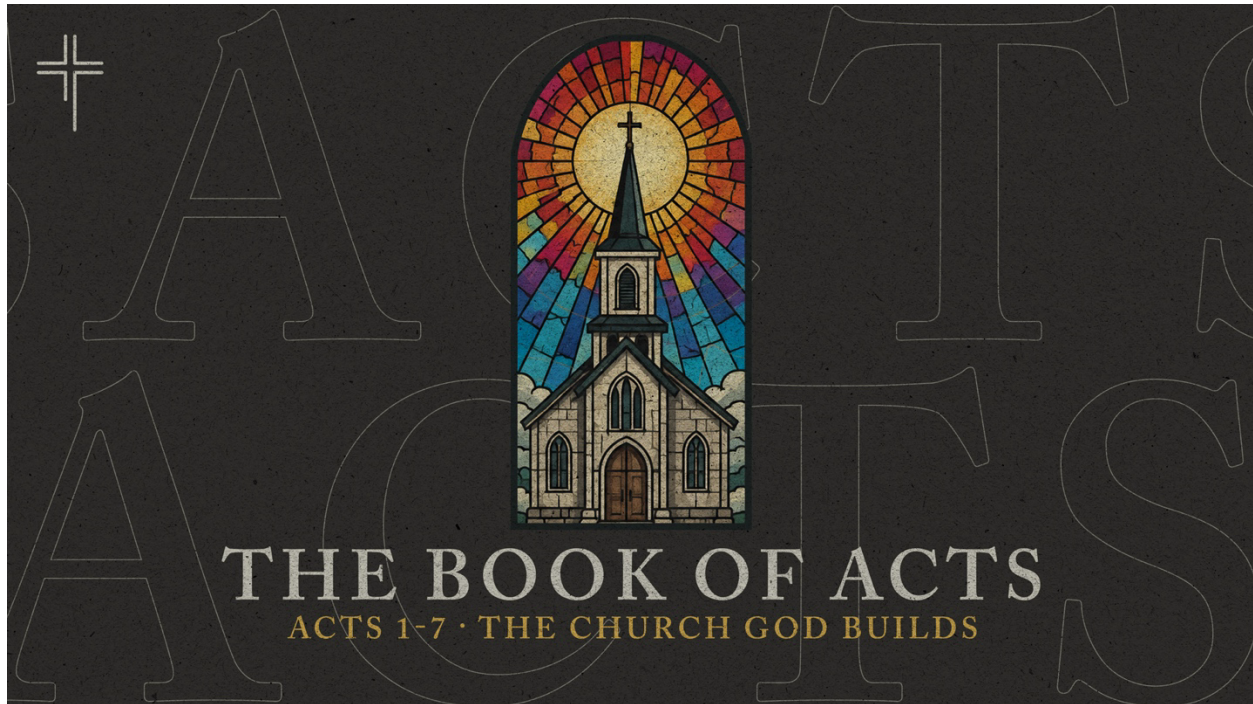




IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
SERIES: THE CHURCH GOD BUILDS
SCRIPTURE: ACTS 2:14-41
DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2026

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever find yourself with a different demeanor or personality depending on the situation? Perhaps you find yourself timid when speaking publicly to a group of twenty or more, but in a one-on-one setting, you can talk for hours. Or maybe you feel more outgoing and lively when you are participating in a sport or playing a musical instrument, but in other social contexts, you are more introverted. Or maybe there is a certain age group or demographic of people you feel more comfortable around than others.

It is clear from our text today that the Holy Spirit has emboldened Peter and the other apostles. They are noticeably different on multiple levels. For one, their ability to speak in different languages was supernatural. But furthermore, they are emboldened to bear witness for Christ. I mean... they are about to boldly tell a large group of Jews that they are guilty of crucifying Jesus and that they must repent and be saved! It is such a stark contrast from who they were when they denied or fled from even knowing Jesus.

Of course, the difference we see in them cannot be explained simply by being more comfortable with the people they were around or by some natural gifting for public speaking. Their boldness comes from their confidence in the truth of the resurrected and ascended Jesus and from the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had told His disciples in Acts 1:8 that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them and that they would be His witnesses. Now we see that promise beginning to be fulfilled.

Today, in our lesson, we are looking at the text that details Peter's sermon following the Spirit coming upon them. As we work through Peter's sermon, we will see how he uses Scripture to explain what has happened, points his hearers to Jesus, confronts them with their sin, and calls them to repent and be saved.

Text

Acts 2:14-41

¹⁴ But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.^[b] ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;

¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke;

²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

²² "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him

in your midst, as you yourselves know— ²³ this Jesus, ^[c] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. ²⁵ For David says concerning him,

“I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;
²⁶ therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
my flesh also will dwell in hope.
²⁷ For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One see corruption.
²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’

²⁹ “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

“The Lord said to my Lord,
“Sit at my right hand,
³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.”

³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

³⁷ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸ And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” ⁴⁰ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” ⁴¹ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Explanation

In our previous passage we read about the apostles being filled with the Holy Spirit. As a result, they supernaturally spoke in different language unknown to themselves. People from many different areas who had traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Weeks were able to hear the mighty works of God in their own language.

Yet, as amazing as this was, some were skeptical. While some were amazed that simple Galileans were able to speak in language they did not know, others mocked calling the apostles drunk.

This also gave Peter a powerful platform to preach the gospel.

PETER PREACHES

Peter stands to address the crowd and delivers an effective sermon. His speech is characterized by boldness, Scriptural exposition, clarity, and unity. Peter, who once denied Jesus, will now boldly bear witness. When the apostles once seemed confused about the timing of when Jesus would restore His kingdom (Acts 1:6–7), they now understand more clearly how God’s kingdom is coming. When they previously argued about who among them would become the greatest (Mark 9:33–37; 10:35–45), they now bear witness *standing together*.

Of course, the Spirit is now within them to enable these things. Jesus even promised that the disciples would not need to prepare what they would say when they stood before those who might persecute them (Matthew 10:19–20). Now, after being mocked because they were perceived to be drunk, Peter raises his voice.

His sermon is brief, and it is held together by three Old Testament texts. He quotes the prophet Joel to emphasize that the time of the Spirit has come and that He is available for all people. His second text is from the Psalms, and it stresses that God’s chosen servant would be raised from the dead. His third text is also from the Psalms, and it stresses that Jesus, after His resurrection, would ascend to heaven.

THE SPIRIT RESTS ON ALL FLESH

Peter first quotes the prophet Joel, which proves to be an ideal text to reference. Peter explains that with the coming of the Spirit, they have entered into “the last days.” This means that a new age in God’s salvation history has arrived. This is not the “last day,” referring to the singular day when Christ will return, which the angels previously referenced after Jesus ascended (Acts 1:11). Rather, these are the last *days*, meaning that we have entered the last stage in God’s plan of salvation history. We have entered the new covenant. The last major event in salvation history that remains is Christ’s return.

The kingdom of God that the apostles previously misunderstood has now been inaugurated with the coming of the Spirit. Prior to Jesus’ ascension, the apostles asked Him if He would establish His kingdom “at *this* time.” Now they understand that the kingdom is inaugurated with the Spirit and that a new era is beginning.

And the Spirit has come to be poured out on *all flesh*. Previously, in the Old Testament, there are examples of the Spirit resting on individuals but not on *all the people*. Many of the judges were described as receiving the Spirit for a specific moment to bring deliverance. King Saul and King David also had their moments when the Spirit rushed upon them. These examples in Scripture reference moments when the Spirit typically came upon one individual and, in many cases, did not remain but only came upon them for a specific task. One interesting example comes from Numbers 11, where seventy elders were tasked with assisting Moses. God told Moses: “And I will take some of the Spirit that is on you and put it on them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you may not bear it yourself alone” (Numbers 11:17). Yet two men who were not enlisted among the seventy also received the Spirit. When Joshua brought the matter to Moses with concern, Moses responded: “Are you jealous for my sake? *Would that all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!*” (Numbers 11:29). Moses’ desire to see all the Lord’s people with God’s Spirit is being fulfilled at Pentecost.

Peter announces the fulfillment that the Spirit is for all who believe, including young and old, male and female. Peter’s reference to Joel also includes mention of signs and wonders. In particular, the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood. This prophecy may be understood in connection with the events surrounding Jesus’ crucifixion, when darkness came over the earth. The Jews who attended Jerusalem could have easily remembered that day.

Because the Spirit may rest on all people, it implies as well that all people can receive an invitation to be saved. Peter's last quote from Joel declares, "that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

JESUS WAS RAISED

Peter's next section of his sermon begins with him summarizing what many Jews were already aware of. No doubt, the people had heard about Jesus and His death. His fame as a miracle worker and teacher is evidenced throughout the Gospel accounts. Jesus' last week was marked by intense conflict with the chief priests, scribes, and elders.

Peter calls the crowd guilty for Jesus' death. One may recall that when Pilate asked the crowd whether they would rather have Jesus or Barabbas released, the crowd declared their desire to crucify Jesus (Luke 23:18–21).

This, of course, does not mean that God was not working providentially. Peter recognizes that Jesus' death was ultimately part of God's sovereign plan. And just as God "delivered" Jesus into the hands of men to crucify Him, the Father also raised Jesus from the dead.

Peter and the apostles are bearing witness to Jesus' resurrection. Peter also acknowledges that the Old Testament bears witness. He quotes Psalm 16:8–11. The key verse is Acts 2:27, where it reads: "For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption." Peter applies simple logic to show that this Psalm prophesied that Jesus would rise again. His reasoning is that David died and was buried. Anyone who wanted to visit his tomb could do so as evidence. Therefore, in order for Scripture to remain true, the Psalm must refer to someone else besides David. Jesus, as the Son of David, experienced death, but His soul was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Jesus was raised! Peter and the apostles are confident witnesses to Jesus' resurrection. Indeed, Jesus provided them with "many proofs" (Acts 1:3).

JESUS HAS ASCENDED

After preaching that Jesus was raised, Peter references Jesus' ascension to the right hand of God. This event, too, is something that the apostles witnessed. In

fact, Luke stresses their seeing the event in Acts 1:9–11, referencing them looking or gazing four times as Jesus was taken up.

Clearly, since David remained buried, it was not King David who ascended. Rather, it was Jesus who ascended. Again, Peter references a Psalm that pointed toward Jesus' ascending to the right hand of God. Peter quotes Psalm 110:1, which is the most quoted Old Testament text in the New Testament. The verse reads: "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'"

David, as the speaker, recognizes two "Lords" in the text. The first "Lord" is a reference to God the Father. The second "Lord" is interesting because David refers to Him as "my" Lord. Again, applying simple logic to the verse, David, as king, did not have another earthly lord to whom he answered. Thus, David is recognizing a Lord who must come after him and who must be of greater authority than himself.

Furthermore, the text references sitting at God's right hand. Since God dwells in heaven above, the right hand must not be a place on earth but in heaven above. Peter's point is that David prophesied about his Lord who would ascend to heaven to sit at God's right hand. Peter declares that he and the other apostles witnessed Jesus fulfilling David's prophecy. They saw Jesus ascend before their very eyes.

RESPONSE

In response to Peter (or better yet, in response to the Holy Spirit) the crowd was cut to the heart. The Spirit did what Jesus foretold that He would do: the Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). The crowd asked with surrendered hearts, "What shall we do?"

Peter responded: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Repent is a loaded word in Peter's response. In his sermon, he identified the crowd as guilty for crucifying Jesus. Amazingly, despite their guilt, Peter recognizes that they can repent from their sin of crucifying Jesus. They must recognize their sin, turn from it, and believe in Jesus. If they do so, they can be

forgiven. This means being forgiven even of putting Jesus to death! This is amazing grace extended!

Peter also calls them to baptism. To be clear, Peter is not telling the Jewish crowd that baptism is essential for salvation. Rather, baptism is a response to one receiving forgiveness of sin. This aligns with the clear teaching throughout Scripture about receiving salvation by faith alone and not by works. It further aligns with other examples in Acts where people believe in Jesus without any indication that baptism is a requirement for receiving salvation (Acts 3:19; 4:12, 32; 5:14). It also aligns with the examples of people who appear to first believe and then respond in their belief with baptism (Acts 8:4-13; 9:1-19).

Nevertheless, we should not diminish the importance of baptism. In Matthew's account of Jesus' ascension, He commanded the disciples to "Go and make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). Peter is abiding by the teaching of Jesus. Baptism is an act of obedience that symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and our union with Him by faith (Romans 6:3-5).

The crowd received Peter's words through their belief. And they furthermore demonstrated their belief through baptism. In total, that day, three thousand souls were added to the original 120 who had gathered together before Pentecost.

God was building His church.

Discussion Questions

- What differences do you see among the apostles now that the Spirit has come?
- What stands out to you from Peter's sermon?
- In your estimation what made Peter's sermon effective?
- Why do you think the timing of the Spirit's coming mattered? How was it helpful for building the church?
- What words might you use to describe Peter's witness?
- What attributes of God are on display in the text?
- Does this text tell us anything about how the Trinity is at work together?
- Many Jews were "cut to the heart." Has anyone else experienced that same conviction when they were saved? What was that like for you?
- What does this text teach us about repentance?
- How can you summarize the relationship between salvation and baptism?

IMITATING THE APOSTLES WITNESS, NOT THE RESULTS

When we think about what occurred at Pentecost, it is easy to desire a similar outcome in our own ministry. It seems ideal to imagine another great outpouring of effective ministry. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a sermon were preached and three thousand souls were saved again in a single day?

While it may be unrealistic to expect everyday ministry to result in another "Pentecost" response, what can we practically learn from the example of Peter and the other apostles?

First, *the message is the same*. Peter's message centers on Jesus Christ. Jesus died, was raised from the dead, and ascended into heaven. He has acted on our behalf and accomplished victory over sin and death. We are all guilty before God, and if we desire to be reconciled to Him, we must repent and believe in Jesus Christ. The gospel message has not changed.

Second, *we must be bold*. When the crowd gathered and asked what had happened among the apostles, Peter boldly spoke. He did not shy away from the truth of the gospel. He did not shy away from confronting the crowd with their guilt in the death of Jesus, nor did he shy away from proclaiming that salvation is found in Jesus alone. And he did not shy away from calling people to respond to the gospel. We too are called to be faithful witnesses, even when the message we proclaim may be difficult to hear.

Third, *we must rely on the Holy Spirit*. Certainly, what the apostles experienced at Pentecost was unique. They saw divided tongues as of fire, and they were enabled to speak in other languages. The New Testament does not record another group of believers experiencing Pentecost in exactly the same way. But while the experience was unique, the broader principle remains the same: the same Holy Spirit who empowered the apostles to be witnesses also empowers us to bear witness for Christ.

And finally, *we must leave the results to God*. At Pentecost, three thousand souls were saved. But the emphasis of Acts is not ultimately on what Peter accomplished. It is on what God was doing. Luke tells us in Acts 2:47 that "the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." We see a similar emphasis throughout Acts (see Acts 5:14; 11:21; 13:49; 14:27). The

apostles faithfully proclaimed the gospel, but the Lord was the One who saved people and built His Church.

So, we may not see three thousand people saved in a single day. We may never experience another Pentecost in the same way the apostles did. But we can proclaim the same gospel, boldly bear witness to Christ, depend upon the Holy Spirit, and trust God with the results.

And that is ultimately what we see throughout the book of Acts: the apostles were faithful witnesses, but the Lord was the One building His Church. We don't have to manufacture Pentecost. We simply need to be faithful to the mission Christ has given us and trust that the Lord will continue to build His Church.