

Lesson 2 – The Church Established

Text: Acts 2

Main Characters: God, the Holy Spirit, Peter, the apostles, the Jewish multitudes

Key Passages:

- Acts 2:1-4 – On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and gave them miraculous power.
- Acts 2:36-39 – Jesus is the Christ; in order to be saved, one needs to repent and be baptized.

Main Storyline:

The apostles were waiting in Jerusalem, just as Jesus had commanded them. On the day of Pentecost (which is celebrated 50 days after the Passover – it would have been on a Sunday, the first day of the week), they were all together in one place, when suddenly the sound of a powerful wind (perhaps like a tornado) filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then, fiery tongues appeared, and one tongue sat on each of the apostles. The apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak about the wonderful works of God in different languages as the Holy Spirit guided them.

There were many other Jews in Jerusalem at the time, including those from many different nations in different parts of the world. When they all heard the sound of the wind, they came together and began to hear the apostles speaking. They amazed and confused because these men (all Galileans) were able to speak in the native languages of all of those who were listening. They did not understand what the meaning of this miracle was, though. Some of the people were mocking the apostles, however, saying that they were drunk.

Peter stood up with the other apostles and began to speak. He explained that they were not drunk, as some people had thought, but that what they had witnessed was actually the fulfillment of prophecy. Peter referenced part of Joel 2, where God had said that the Holy Spirit would be poured out on different people, resulting in those people being able to see visions and prophecy. Further, in prophetic language God warned that the Jewish nation was going to be judged. Only those that called on the name of the Lord would be saved.

Peter went on to explain to the people that there had been a man among them, Jesus of Nazareth. God performed miracles, wonders, and signs through Jesus in order to prove to the people that Jesus truly had been sent from Heaven. God had (by design) delivered him into their lawless hands to be crucified and murdered. However, after his death and burial, God had resurrected Jesus. David had prophesied about this, particularly that Jesus would not be allowed to remain in Hades (the place of the dead). Peter made the point that David was not speaking about himself in his prophecy (for everyone knew that David's body was still in its tomb), but rather about Christ. Peter reminded everyone that many of them had been witnesses to the fact that Jesus had truly been raised from the dead.

Peter concluded his sermon by explaining to the people that this Jesus, whom they had crucified, had been made Lord and Christ (Messiah) by God. The people were shocked and ashamed when they heard this. They began to ask Peter and the others what they should do about it. Peter told them that they should repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins. This would apply to them, their children, and to everyone else in the world. That day, three thousand people gladly received his words and were baptized.

Those who were baptized continued to listen to the apostles diligently as they engaged in prayer and in the breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper). They were struck with awe by the wonders and signs that were performed by the apostles. Those who believed stayed together (as many had come far from their homes for the Jewish feast of Pentecost) and took care of one another, selling what they had and giving to any as they had need. They continued to pray daily in the temple, eating with one another, and praising God. God was adding daily to the church as people were being saved by following the apostles' teachings.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God's plans are fulfilled just as God promises that they will be; the history of Jesus is proof of this.
- 2.) In order to be saved from one's sins and be added to the church, one needs to repent and be baptized.
- 3.) We need to be ready and willing to help others who are in need, sacrificing of our own if necessary.