

## **“Pentecost: First Fruits (Part 2)”**

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Text: Acts 2:14-24

Series: Acts: Kingdom Vision 20/20

**Introduction:** At Pentecost, the season of celebrating First Fruits, God has poured out His Spirit upon the Apostles who descended into the crowds gathered to bear witness of all that God is doing. His Kingdom is coming, His will is being done on earth as it is in Heaven...

**What is Happening:** “*Peter’s Valley of Humiliation*”

Turn to Acts 2:14-15. While all who gathered to Jerusalem in observance of the Feast of First Fruits were marveling at the Apostles speaking to them in their own language, Peter stands and addresses everyone. Luke, the author of Acts, is focusing on Peter who is rising in a sense as a leading voice in the movement of Jesus. In Acts 1:15 we find Peter addressing the other Apostles in the selection of a replacement to Judas; now we find him stepping up to address the crowds who were looking for an explanation of what was going on (remember the strong winds from last week). Peter was stepping into His Divine Appointment to feed His sheep (See: John 21:15-17)

***He who denied Jesus 3 times now stands as witness of Him before an audience of thousands!***

***Never stop believing and praying God’s Will for anyone in your life!***

The Inaugural sermon of this new season which Peter was about to deliver would become the model of preaching the Apostles would follow; flowing into how preaching is done today. *Helping people navigate all Scripture into the Person and Work of Jesus Christ!*

Think about this for a minute. *Did Peter know when the Spirit would be poured out upon him and the others? No.* Further, *Did Peter know that he would be standing and preaching to a crowd of thousands before it happened? No.*

Let this reality settle into our thinking for a moment.

Peter stood up and quoted the Scripture at the Spirit’s leading because God’s Word was in his heart. Let us shape this out a bit more.

We are not filled with wine but the Spirit!

- ❖ Matthew 10:16-20. Jesus told them to be ready; not in the sense of what will be said but what they would be filled with.
- ❖ Ephesians 5:18-19. We are to be filled with the Spirit; not wine (as the crowd thought).
- ❖ Colossians 3:16. We are to have the Word of Christ within us richly (full).

*When we fill ourselves with God's Word and yield to it, we find ourselves **emptied** of self and **filled** with the Spirit- available to be used by Him in any given moment as was Peter!*

**Peter's Sermon: "Connecting the Dots"**

Continuing in **Acts 2:16-36** we find Peter bringing two texts from the Old Testament as bridges into what God is doing right now. Remember, these were people who grew up with these Scriptures and would be familiar with these texts. However, they only knew them on the surface of their immediate context. As Peter was shown and will show them, they are but a shadow of a greater satisfaction found in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ!

**The Prophet Joel: "Rend your hearts and not your garments"**

**Acts 2:16-21.** This prophet came to the Southern portion of the Divided Kingdom proclaiming a message against the indifference the people had toward God and each other. While no particular sin or idolatry is named in the Book of Joel, we find the immediate audience one that had been repeatedly ravished by outside invasions, drought and locusts. For these people drought was a clear sign from God that something in not right in their relationship with Him. It was an attention getter (See -> **Deuteronomy 11:16-17**).

Turn to **Joel 2:1-32**. Here we find the prophet Joel presenting us with a God who:

- Is ready to forgive and bless (**2:12-14**).
- Interrupts daily life to redirect our attention (**2:15-16**)
- Has never left His people (**2:17**)
- Is jealous for and has pity on His People (**2:18-19**)
- Cares and fights for His creation (**2:20-22**)
- Will pour out His blessing upon His people (**2:23-27**)

While this is really great news, the questions remain from that moment with Joel to the present moment with Peter. *When?*

*This is great news God, but when and how are you going to do this?*

*Will you at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?*

Peter then quotes **Joel 2:28-32**.

**When** was this going to happen? Right Now! Pentecost was the first fruits of this fulfillment.

**How** was this going to happen?

By bringing His presence deeper than being amidst His people. God will abide within His people- *transforming them from the inside out!*

*Call upon the Name of the Lord for Salvation!*

**Despair to Hope: “This was always God’s Plan”**

Peter continues in **Acts 2:22-24** that God affirmed Jesus was indeed the Messiah! While there was uncertainty at times in Jesus’ earthly ministry (Matthew 11:1-6) of His Messiahship, the Resurrection drives out any doubt.

Peter presents Jesus who was in complete submission to the Will of the Father. Jesus (the Son) became a man and through Him God (the Father) worked many incredible works, wonders and signs which those people in the crowd had seen and heard leading up into His Resurrection by God (the Spirit) -> **Romans 8:11**.

God had to provide atonement; He alone could provide atonement.

Jesus Himself attested to this in **Luke 24:25-27**. God’s Word will come to pass. *Always*.

Jesus was the name they were to call upon.

Wow- *that is awesome!* Wait- oh yea. **We crucified Him.**

The Person we were to call upon for Salvation is dead by our own hands.

Imagine the silent crash inward as this realization penetrated their hearts. (**Acts 2:23;36-37**)

**Application Time. “Our own Valley of Humiliation”**

What does this mean for us today?

This ongoing time of Quarantine is proving to be a time when we are confronting many of our own personal demons. We are battling personal sin struggles, questioning God’s presence and love- many of us are becoming apathetic to the work of Gospel ministry.

How can we be renewed in our relationship with God?

In **Acts 2:38** Peter provides us with the answer.

In the days of Acts people did not go around asking, “Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior”? There were no T-shirts and bumper stickers declaring “I’m Born Again”.

The question was, “Have you *received / been baptized with / in* the Holy Spirit”?

This is why we went into such detail last week regarding the **Baptism** and **Filling** of the Holy Spirit.

Coming to God through repentance of sin, accepting Jesus’ work of Atonement for forgiveness is a *Baptism* of His Spirit- *God’s forever abiding presence within us*.

However, as life continues the *filling* of the Spirit has seasons of when we know this filling strongly or it is so minimal, we question His presence at all.

Visit your *Valley of Humiliation* regularly. The longer we are away from it the more we get filled with the things of this world.

This Valley is a place of self-emptying. It is here we hear God the loudest, see Him the clearest and know His fullness the greatest. It is here our joy in Him is refreshed and restored.

As we emerge from this Valley our lives are the fruit of this renewed heart in Him.

See -> **Colossians 3:12-17**

Like Peter, may we be feeding on God's Word so much that it is written on our hearts. May we be living it, submitting to it and celebrating it in every part of who we are- individually and collectively.

May our lives be ready and willing in any moment to be used of God through His Spirit to declare that "All who call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved"!

...everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

-Acts 2:21