



What a Difference a Day Makes

By Johnny Caruso on April 22, 2024

TODAY'S READING: Acts 2

Acts 2 is the end of the Mosaic Law and the beginning of the church age. Ever since the Israelites escaped slavery in Egypt, God had dealt with His creation primarily through the Law. As the Israelites abided by the law, God blessed them. When they broke the Law, God judged them. Hundreds of years of history proved the Israelites could not keep the Law. No one can be good enough to earn God's favor. God bridged the gap caused by sin so He could show His forgiveness.

Of course that is why He sent Jesus. With His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, Jesus was the perfect, sinless sacrifice that can stand in that gap caused by sin. His death fulfilled the requirement that sin always brings death and granted an "imputed" sinlessness on whoever believes in Him. The Mosaic Law has proven it cannot save, only Jesus can and will. Now it is time to spread that good news.

Jesus provided the way of salvation. Yet His incarnation and immediate presence—one individual in one geographical region with a three-year ministry—is not the best way to spread the news to the world. For that, God chooses to rely on Jesus' followers, but they would not be alone. The job is too big. He sent the Holy Spirit to dwell in each believer, equipping us for the job ahead. When Jesus ascended into heaven, He told His followers to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4–11).

About a week after Jesus' ascension, about 120 Jesus-followers waited together in Jerusalem. Apparently without warning, the Holy Spirit filled the house with a sound like a great wind and landed on each believer, giving them the ability to speak different languages. Jerusalem was filled with visitors celebrating Pentecost. They heard the different dialects and were astounded and shocked. They wondered how the Galileans got this ability? Some are curious; others are dismissive (Acts 2:1–13).

Peter, now enlightened by the Holy Spirit, addressed the crowd. The prophet Joel had prophesied this moment. These were the "last days" when God poured out His Spirit. This was the time of prophecies and visions and dreams. Jesus of Nazareth was revealed as the Jewish Messiah they had been waiting for. His miracles attest to the truth. He fits David's prophecies. And these men standing with Peter were witnesses that Jesus died and rose again (Acts 2:14–36).

When the crowd realized they were complicit in the murder of God's Messiah, their reaction was immediate. They repented of their sins, trusted Jesus to forgive them, and agreed to be baptized as a public admission of their new loyalty. In response to their faith, the Holy Spirit came upon them.

By nightfall, about three thousand had changed lives. The infant church provided what was needed: teaching about Jesus from the apostles, affirmation of the message through signs and wonders, community through joint meals, and a unity that extended even to personal property. In one day, the church was created.

PRAYER: May we stand firm on the certainty that You are ultimately in control of our lives and our world as You strengthen our faith and trust in You, during tough times.

TOMORROW'S READING: Acts 10

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