

TEXT: Acts 2:1-21

THEME: FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

1. To Declare the Wonders of God
2. To Prepare People for the Day of the Lord
3. To Preach Repentance

Dear Children of God, filled with the Holy Spirit:

Who learns a new language fluently in a matter of seconds? How wonderful that would have been when Laurie and I began our foreign mission work in Brazil! If that were possible, it would take years off of training to become a pastor. Well, the disciples did just that by the power of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. And they did it with a purpose: **TO DECLARE THE WONDERS OF GOD.**

What wonders of God do you think they shared? Did they share how **“the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised” (Mt 11:5)?** Maybe. Those certainly are great wonders. They declare that Jesus is the Christ. But are those the greatest wonders?

Consider why Jesus was born in human flesh. Consider why Jesus subjected himself to ridicule and mockery. Consider why Jesus bled and died on a cross. Your God did all those things for sinners—even you! Now that’s the great wonder. Why would he do anything for sinners?

But that’s exactly for whom Christ came. He came to obey every commandment you broke. He came to suffer for every sin you committed. He came to die the death you deserve. He received your hell. He gives you heaven. All this was driven by his love. It compels us to sing with Moses, **“Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?” (Ex 15:11).**

These are the wonders that moved the disciples to say, **“We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Ac 4:20).** These are the wonders that heal sin-sick souls. These are the wonders that converted three thousand people on Pentecost. These are the wonders that reached out into the world so that you have the faith in Christ you cherish today.

Do you sense the urgency of declaring these wonders to others? The Holy Spirit gave the disciples the ability to speak other languages instantly for a reason. The Word needed to get out. The Word still needs to get out. The urgency is the same. About 250,000 to 300,000 people die every day. How many of those die not knowing the wonders of God, not knowing Christ their Savior. Please don’t wait to **DECLARE THE WONDERS OF GOD.** Share the wonders of God with your friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors. Think of someone right now with whom you can share the wonders of God. Pray about it. Then do it. You have a wonderful opportunity coming up in just a month—our Festival of Friendship and outdoor worship service at Roosevelt Park. But don’t just think about it; do it!

There is another reason for urgency in declaring the wonders of God and that is TO PREPARE PEOPLE FOR THE DAY OF THE LORD. When you went to bed last night, did you acknowledge the signs you saw during the day? When you woke this morning, did you say, “I am going to be more prepared today”? Chances are you didn’t think of those things, so let me ask you, how often are you really ready for the Last Day?

The Lord doesn’t want you or anyone unaware when he returns. He is very blunt: **“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea...The heavenly bodies will be shaken” (Lk 21:25-26).**

Most everything you see in the heavens and on the earth reminds you that you live in the last days and that the Lord’s return is right around the corner. With the 24/7 news networks, you can even see these reminders in HD: earthquakes, tsunamis, and tornados, wars and famines, terrorism and suicide bombings, cancer and the latest virus.

But what kind of talk are these signs stirring up around the water coolers? Is the talk about global warming? Is the talk world peace? Is the talk going green? Opinions can vary. But what can’t vary is what the signs in fact reveal: Christ is coming soon—either for each of us individually or for the end of this world. People need to know this.

Science is great when used to God’s glory. Peace in our world is a noble desire. Conservation is important. But none of these stops the inevitable. Judgment day is coming.

Some people don’t want to talk about the Last Day because they don’t believe. But I think more are just scared. They’re scared of meeting their Maker. But that’s no excuse to ignore the obvious and be unprepared.

Prepare people for the Last Day by proclaiming the Spirit’s message of repentance: **“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Ac 2:21).** Tell them that turning to the Lord promises they will meet their Savior, who loved, lived, and died for them. Assure them that meeting their Savior means forgiveness of all sin and a promised place in heaven. Point them to that heavenly home to keep them prepared each day for Christ’s return.

Remember that you are FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT TO PREACH REPENTANCE. We can get pretty good at pointing out other people’s sins. But preaching repentance is more than pointing out sin. It is also pointing to the Savior, Jesus Christ. It is a call to turn back to the only source of forgiveness, the one way of salvation, the certain promise of eternal life. Then the love is not so hard to see, especially at his cross. At his cross, you realize that **“while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Ro 5:8).** At his cross, you recognize that Jesus **“was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Is 53:5).**

This is precisely why Peter preached repentance on Pentecost and promised, **“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Ac 2:21)**. Filled with the same Spirit Peter had, don’t be afraid to preach the same message Peter preached. It is the one essential message that turns people back to where they need to be—to Christ. Amen.