

The Advent of the Holy Spirit

by Peter Brandon

The sermon explores the significance of the Holy Spirit's advent on the day of Pentecost, highlighting the importance of unity, accord, and the characteristics of God's presence.

Duration: 43:17

Scripture: Acts 2:1

Topics: "Unity in Christ", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Peter Brandon discusses 'The Advent of the Holy Spirit,' emphasizing the significance of Pentecost as the beginning of the Holy Spirit's indwelling in all believers. He explains how the Holy Spirit's arrival marked a transformative moment in history, uniting Jews and Gentiles into one body through the power of God. Brandon highlights the conditions of unity and devotion among the early Christians, which facilitated the Spirit's outpouring, and he underscores the importance of recognizing the Holy Spirit's active role in the believer's life. He calls for a revival of joy, peace, and love among God's people, urging them to embrace the fullness of the Spirit's presence today.

Transcript

Welcome to Acts chapter 2. Acts 2 and read from verse 1. So many have asked us about this subject of the Holy Spirit. And because of the word that our brother gave us on Friday afternoon, I feel led of the Spirit to take up a series now on the Holy Spirit. This afternoon I want to speak about the glorious advent of the Holy Spirit.

On Tuesday, what do we mean by the fullness of the Spirit? Wednesday, the conflict of the Spirit and understanding that conflict. And then on Thursday, the last meeting as far as we know. The activity of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life.

Now shall we turn to Acts 2 and read just the first few verses. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as a fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how here we every man in his own tongue wherein we were born. Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, and Pontus, and Asia.

Phrygia, Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene. And strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians. We do hear them speak in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.

Now the Lord will bless that portion of his word to us. Ever since the day of Pentecost we have been living in the age of the Holy Spirit. If you were alive in the Old Testament and someone had received the Holy Spirit, he would be exceedingly special.

In fact you would say something like that. That man or that woman has the anointing of God upon them. But when we come to the New Testament, which is really the initial stages of this great day of the Holy Spirit, we find that the Holy Spirit indwells all believers.

And therefore each believer becomes a functional priest in the presence of God. Now what I want to do just for a few moments is to give you an outline on the glorious advent of the Holy Spirit. First of all I want you to look at the time of the advent.

Then I want you to look at the place of the advent, which is very instructive. And then I want you to look at the conditions that were relevant at the time of his advent. And then is this time, and I do trust we may be able to major on this, the glorious symbolism of the advent of the Holy Spirit.

The time. When the day of Pentecost was fully come. Quite frankly dear friends we cannot understand that little statement until we understand the Feast of Jehovah.

And in those seven great feasts in Leviticus 23, we have an outline of God's religious programme. The first feast that's mentioned is the Sabbath, and that will be fulfilled completely in the millennium, when man on creation has its glorious rest. So God begins where we would finish.

He always sees the thing complete. Before he gives us his programme. The second feast was the Feast of Passover, and according to the Apostle Paul when he writes to the Corinthians, that was fulfilled at the cross, Christ our Passover.

Following the Feast of Passover there was the Feast of Firstfruits, and that was fulfilled at the resurrection, when in Corinthians 15 he tells us Christ our Firstfruits. Then after the Feast of Firstfruits there was seven Sabbaths, that began on the day after their Sabbath. So that was Sunday.

And that approximately made 50 days. And after the seven Sabbaths, thus began the Feast of Pentecost. And the Feast of Pentecost undoubtedly speaks of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and thus the beginning of this great age, which we call the Church Age, or the Age of Grace.

Now in the Feast of Pentecost there were certain matters of importance. The most important thing were the two giant wavelets. I wish you could see them.

It would give you some idea of what the feast really meant. But there was something mystical and strange about those wavelets. All the cereal offerings that they offered were to be without leaven.

But those wavelets had incorporated in them leaven, that which puffed up like our yeast. Now why should the most significant thing be these two wavelets? The first company of people to receive the Holy Spirit would be the Jewish Christians. Then the second great company to receive the Holy Spirit would be the Gentile Christians, when the Holy Spirit fell upon them when Peter was preaching in Acts 10.

And so those two wavelets represent the Jew first and the Gentile, and they're all brought together through the Holy Spirit in one glorious body. Now with those two wavelets they offered seven lambs, and then they offered one bullock. Then the priest would offer two rams, and all these would be offered as burnt offerings with these two loaves.

Then a goat would be offered for a sin offering, and then last of all there would be two lambs offered for a peace offering. Now what is the Spirit of God saying to us through this? The Holy Spirit could not possibly be poured out until Jesus Christ suffered on the cross. And therefore when he died upon the cross, he furnished all the motives of the Father's love and brought glory to the throne of God.

That's the burnt offering. Then he dealt with our sins to the satisfaction of God so that God could be righteous and still forgive the sinner. That's the sin offering.

Then he brought together through the cross both Jew and Gentile by first of all breaking down the middle wall of partition and then through the glorious baptism of the Spirit joined the two companies together. So you can see we must never, never divorce the work of Calvary from the work of the Spirit. That's why when Paul speaks about the work of the Spirit in Romans 8, he says the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

You see you cannot separate his work from the work of the Lord Jesus. And so we have the day of Pentecost. Again if we look at the day of Pentecost very clearly, we shall find according to the Gospels that it was prophesied, it was fulfilled, and then it became an historical event.

For instance John the Baptist looked at the baptism of the Holy Spirit in prospect. In Acts chapter 2 we have it in aspect. And then in 1 Corinthians 12 we have it in retrospect.

Therefore John made it quite clear I baptise with or in water but the one that's coming after me shall baptise you in the Holy Spirit and with fire. Now that was a prophecy. In Acts chapter 2 the fulfilment of that prophecy was seen when the Holy Spirit came as of a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues of fire.

And then the Apostle Paul looks back to this great day of baptism and he says by one spirit will you all baptise into one body. So have you got that? Baptism by John the Baptist was a picture of the coming of the Holy Spirit in retrospect. Acts 2, the aspect, the fulfilment.

And then in 1 Corinthians 12 the retrospect. Looking back to the event. Now I believe that's clear.

Now please note the place and I think this is very important. The rushing mighty wind filled the house where they were sitting. You would never, never find that statement in the Old Testament.

If someone said that the glory of the Lord filled a little house in the Old Testament you would say something like this. You must be joking. You see the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was always

associated to a place and to a few people.

And therefore when the tabernacle was erected the glory of the Lord filled it and the symbol of his presence in the holiest of all was the Shekinah Glory. And that was the abiding place of the Spirit of God. Again you will remember when Solomon built that ornate temple probably the greatest building that's ever been constructed in human history.

The glory of the Lord filled it in the form of that cloud and the priests could not minister because of the glory. But you see it was confined to an ornate place. Now you find the blessed Holy Spirit missing all the confines of Herod's temple.

In fact this is surprising and it's true. The Lord Jesus never went into the holiest of all in Herod's temple. Never even recognised it.

But now you find in a house, probably an upper room, the presence of God. Why? No longer does God dwell in temples made with hands but he dwells among his people and he dwells among his people who are gathered together in his name. And therefore in a simple building like this we can claim the very presence of God and that should cause us all to worship.

Then I want you to note the conditions that were relevant at the time of his coming. They were all with one accord in one place. Now here is something that I believe is quite surprising.

We mustn't imagine that these first century Christians were supermen. They had all failed. They had failed theologically.

The Lord Jesus told them on five occasions, just ten days before he died that he was going to be killed, he was going to be buried and he was going to rise again, but they never cottoned on to it. And when it happened, they were badly shaken. Secondly, we find that they not only failed theologically but they failed devotionally.

On two occasions, perhaps three occasions, they were caught arguing who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Just a fortnight before the Lord Jesus died, on one occasion he stepped out of the midst to allow a little child to take his place and then on another occasion he laid aside his garment and took a towel and girded himself with that towel and washed their feet in the presence of this spirit of exhortation. And then they not only failed socially but they also failed devotionally.

When it came to the crunch, even Peter let down his Lord with an oath and with a curse. I don't think many of us would ever do that. And when the Lord turned round and looked at Peter, he wept bitterly.

So can you see by that little black background that these men were not supermen but they had all been broken. They had all given themselves afresh to the Lord. And they were all in the upper room.

Now here's another surprising thing. According to 1 Corinthians 15, there was an occasion when 500 brethren met the Lord at once. So that was a planned meeting.

But according to Acts chapter 1, when they were gathered together there were just 120. Where were the 380? Where were they? But this is the glorious fact. Although there were some absentees, the Holy Spirit came and the 120 were there to welcome and receive the glorious Holy Spirit.

But you will notice now they were all in one place and they were of one accord. That meant the 120 were in absolute unity. Now if we wait for our 500 or to get right with the Lord, we shall never see revival.

But isn't it wonderful that sometimes God can work with the 120. And if he can find a remnant of us that will go the whole way, God will bless us. Now I must hurry on.

Let's look at the glorious advent. First of all, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. Now my dear friends, this is totally unique.

The wind is always a picture of the external evidence of the presence, the precedence and the power of God. Now let's consider that. Immediately that wind filled the room, the presence of God was with his people.

Note, not in an ornate temple, but in a simple room, in a simple house. To me that's exquisitely beautiful. You see all the signs and symbols had been fulfilled.

All the Old Testament sacrifices found their amen in the death of the Lord Jesus. And therefore the days of symbolism were all over. Now the church was going to come right out of Judaism.

And it was coming right into the glorious liberty of Christianity. And so they meet in a common house. And there was the presence of God.

Now with the experimental presence of God, what are the characteristics? First of all, when God's presence is manifested in a building, every heart is us. The glory of Jehovah is among us. Our hearts will beat highly when we sense God.

Every person in the Old Testament and the New Testament that came into contact with the living God was struck with awe. And when our hearts are taken up with that rushing mighty wind and the presence of God begins to fill the room, we shan't reverence the building because that's idolatry. We shall reverence the Lord with awe.

We need that revived today. Secondly, with the presence of God there's peace. I'm not thinking so much the legal peace, peace with God that comes through the blood.

That's essential, but it's more than that. I'm not speaking of that experimental peace that comes to us when we cast all our cares upon him. Then he protects our minds from any enmity that would come in from outside.

And we have peace of God. But this is something deeper. This is the God of peace dwelling with us.

Now the word peace in the Hebrew is brilliant. It means binding together. Have you noticed that sin disintegrates? It breaks up society.

It breaks up lives and personalities. It destroys nations. It leaves thousands in bits and pieces.

But God's peace binds together. He brings your spirit, soul and body together and you begin to function as a human being with dignity when you're saved. Then he brings families together.

He brings God's people together. For the God of peace binds us. Out there in that dark world, there's no peace.

That's why thousands are living on tranquilizers. Unsafe people should be able to come among God's gathered people and say, here's the very peace of God, his presence. With God's presence there's joy, joy.

You see in the Old Testament we read, in thy presence is the fullness of joy, at thy right hand pleasures forevermore. You remember when David was bringing back the ark the Levitical way? What did he do? He danced with all his might before the Lord. The joy of the Lord's presence.

Now of course I have to be careful when I say that. I'm not advocating dancing, but I am advocating dancing in the heart. Mind you there's two kinds of Christians.

There's the charismatics and the rheumatics. And we have to discover who we are. But you know dear friends I must say this, with God's presence there's joy.

When the Lord Jesus was born there was great joy in heaven. When the prodigal son came back to the father, there was music, dancing and joy. When Jesus Christ came among his gathered disciples in that resurrection room on that resurrection evening, when they saw the Lord they were glad.

In fact when we read through the book of the Acts, one of the hallmarks is this, they were praising God, having favour with the people. When you read through the Philippians and the man who wrote it was in prison, 18 times he uses the word joy and rejoicing. And when you come to the book of the Revelation, what a book, you will see this, alternate scenes.

Every scene in heaven is full of joy. Every scene on earth is full of sorrow. And therefore you can see there's joy among God's people.

May I say this dear friends from my heart, we must recapture that joy. The reason why so many of our brothers and sisters have gone among our charismatic friends is this, because they find that we are miserable worshippers. The hallelujah has gone.

And all we have are ignorant grunts. It would be lovely if we could see the joy of the Lord restored to his people. And then with the presence of God there is love.

Why? God is love. Love is not an attribute. All God's nature is characterized by love.

And therefore when the glory of God is manifested in a building, there's awe, peace, joy, love. May God restore that to us. Then you will notice another interesting thing.

The rushing mighty wind filled the house. Now it's the same word that we have in verse 4, filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore it means that the rushing mighty wind was totally preeminent in the room.

And this shows to us that when God's presence is really restored experimentally, there is a wonderful sense of his predominance and preeminence. You know, we must get back to this, beloved, because unfortunately, and you certainly know I'm not saying this critically, we have moved from the organic back to the mechanical. And the reason why monotony has come in is because the flesh has come in.

And what we need is not monotony, we need variety. And when the Lord is totally preeminent and Lord among his people, he will give the gifts. And then he will control those who are gifted and all the activity of the local church.

And we shall see in a few moments, he will empower those who are gifted so that the one who is in control is the Sovereign Lord. Now we need to get back to that. Then I want you to note, it's a rushing mighty wind.

Now this afternoon I was going through my Bible as carefully as I could and I discovered there's such a thing in the Old Testament as a mighty wind. There's such a thing in the Old Testament as a rushing wind. But you will never find in the Old Testament a rushing mighty wind.

What does it speak of? It speaks of the exclusive power of God. Therefore when God comes among his people, we have not only his presence, we have not only his presidency, but we have his power. You see this is not a separate breeze.

This is a rushing mighty wind. And if you read through the book of the Acts, you will find in the first ten chapters this wind blowing with great force in those chapters. For instance, Peter stands up to preach and when he had finished preaching they were pricked in their heart.

They cried out, men and brethren what shall we do? And three thousand men were convicted, converted and then baptized on one day. What a wind. What a wind.

Then in the next chapter we find Peter and John going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour and they are introduced to a man that has never walked in his life. We would call him a spastic. And he cries out for arms and one saucy theologian said he got more than arms, he got legs.

I loved that when I heard that. And Peter fastened his eyes upon him with John said, silver and gold have I none but such as I have give I thee in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And then he took his right hand and he just gives that right hand of his a grip and then the shock came.

He let up. Now I want you to see the miracle and the wonder of it. When you go home tonight some of you young men and women I'm not asking the older ones.

Get on the carpet in a sitting position like this man would be and cross your legs and you try and leap up. If you can you're exceedingly fit. This man had never walked in his life.

And he leapt up, stood up and walked leaping and praising God. Shall I say it again? What a wind. Then when you come to the fourth chapter you read the churches together in prayer after Peter and John had been released and when they had prayed the place was shaken.

What a wind. Wouldn't you love to have been in that prayer meeting? Then when you turn over to the fifth chapter Ananias and Sapphira were basically singing I surrender all and they were keeping half back. You see in the previous chapter there was a man called Barnabas and he sold his land and gave everything to the Lord.

But they had sold their land and they were keeping half back. And they come into the presence of God and they are judged. Can I say it again? What a wind.

What a wind. Then you move into the seventh chapter and Stephen stands up to preach and his face lights up as an angel. Why? Because God always visited Israel with angelic manifestation.

So the face became like an angel. And he preached the greatest sermon in the book of the Acts. And they were spilled out.

But they were not only tricked they were cut to the heart and they rejected him. And as the stones were falling on Stephen he gave them a replica of Calvary. He left the world with this legacy.

Lord lay not this sin to their charge. What a wind. And then Philip went down to Samaria and he preached the gospel to them and the whole city believed.

The whole city. And there was great joy. What a wind.

If someone said to you if you were alive in the first century who's the last person you would ever imagine to become a Christian? You would say without thinking Saul of Tarsus. On the Damascus road he saw a light. Heard a voice.

And he was gloriously saved. What a wind. Then reluctantly Peter goes to the household of Cornelius and he preaches the gospel.

And while he's preaching the gospel something supernatural took place. The Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard not those that believed, those heard. And therefore he connected that movement of the Spirit with the same movement that took place in Axta.

And the whole family was converted. Now you might say ah but brother Peter we're not living in the first century we're living in the twentieth century. May I throw back the question to you? Has the Holy Spirit changed? Has he lost his power? Is he not the Spirit of God? My dear friends because that glorious Holy Spirit is still with us we can still see manifestations of his power.

But you say what's the secret? The cloven tongues of fire. Now my dear friends I must rush through this but first of all I want you to note they were purifying tongues. You see the wind was the public manifestation of the Spirit of God.

The cloven tongues of fire set upon each of them therefore this was the individual manifestation of the Spirit of God. But they were tongues of fire. What does that mean? When the Holy Spirit came upon the Lord Jesus he did not come upon him as a cloven tongue of fire.

He came upon him as a dove. You see there was nothing inconsistent with his life. He was all fair within and perfect without Jesus Christ the Lord.

But when he came upon the disciples they had the leaven in them that's why the loaf was bacon with leaven. They had the flesh. And therefore when he came into them he came into them to cause the conflict.

And that was to expose within them the presence of the flesh and to give them power to crucify it. And that's the secret of a spirit filled life. It's not improving the flesh it's mortifying it.

Now we've got to learn that next week. So thank God for the tongues of fire they purified. But then they were practical tongues.

As far as I can tell there are 13 nations and probably 9 languages. Now these were not psychic manifestations. You see within the realm of your soul you have psychic propensities and that can do sometimes miraculous things.

But that's not of the spirit. For instance hypnotism is a psychic manifestation but that's not of the spirit. You see there is a book called Puritive Hypnosis.

I know it was written by an unbeliever but there's a lot of truth in that book that sometimes our mind and psychic power causes some form of evil. But you will notice here they spoke with tongues that people could understand. Now you will note they said these are Galileans.

Now why? At the time when he gives us a brilliant background of the Galilean race said one thing that upset me a little he called them the Cockneys of the East. I didn't like that. But you know the Cockneys are not good speakers.

We find it hard to say the TH's. We prefer to say the 3's instead of 3's. And therefore he calls them the Cockneys of the East and you know what was said of Peter his speech bereath him.

In other words you could tell a Galilean a mile off and Peter was a guttural speaker. You mustn't imagine that Peter had a dark brown cultured voice. When he stood up and spoke he was a typical Galilean but he was filled with the spirit.

And therefore these people who were not linguists were standing up speaking fluent languages. Now why? Isaiah 28 verse 11 says very clearly that he was going to speak to his people in other tongues and therefore it was a sign to Israel. Now how were they speaking? They were speaking in the language that the people could understand.

You see there at Babel's Tower God confused them by the multiplicity of languages but now he's going to unite them together through redemption. But they were practical languages. Now please do bear that in mind for that is the main gift of tongues in the word of God to speak a language that people down on earth can understand.

But then I want you to note that they were praising tongues in these other languages they were speaking out the wonderful works of God. Now for some of us it's hard to understand but if you were there you would see a Galilean filled with the spirit and he would be speaking perhaps in fluent Latin and he would be saying something like this I want to talk to you about the creatorial glories of God and that person would be giving a wonderful manifestation of the creatorial glory of God. Another Galilean would be speaking about the glory of the Lord in the giving of the law.

The wonderful doings of God through the miracles that were seen through Moses. Another Galilean would be speaking out the wonderful works of God in the incarnation. The work of the cross and the glory of the resurrection.

And they were all spellbound. They were speaking out the wonderful works of God. You see, it wasn't superficial.

It wasn't gibberish. They were speaking out the wonderful works of God. And beloved, when we are filled with the spirit we shall come together around the Lord's table and you will hear young and old speaking out the wonderful works of God.

And then lastly, they were preaching tongues. You see, immediately they were filled with the spirit. Peter stood up and preached after the praising and three thousand were pricked in their heart.

I love that. That's the strongest word for pain in the New Testament outside of hell's fire. And it's the idea of a red hot needle going through the sensitive part of a person's flesh so that when he feels the prick he says, Oh! Oh! You've all seen naughty boys doing something that they shouldn't.

And if you've got that picture you've got the meaning. And when Peter preached they were pricked in the heart. They cried out, Oh! But they put it like this, Men of Bethlehem, what shall we do? Wouldn't you like to see a repeat of that? And then he says, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins for the promises unto you and to your children and to all that are far off.

And three thousand were saved. Three thousand were baptized and added to the chapel. Beloved, every revival in history has been the means of inducing people back to the upper room.

Not, my dear friends, to have another Pentecost. There never will be another Pentecost. But recapturing the power and the glory of Pentecost a little group of men and women in lacquer got together and God cleansed them and purged them.

They were filled with the Spirit of God and thus began the great Welsh revival. Wouldn't it be lovely if God gathered companies together and we got back to the upper room and we rediscovered the presence and the power of God the Lord granted for his name's sake. Amen.

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