

We revisit the Day of Pentecost, miracles and signs and see how they relate to us today.

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- [0 : 00] Good morning. I don't know whether you happen to have looked in the bulletin, but it says the day of Pentecost revisited for God's message this morning.
- And you probably know where we're going to the book of Acts. So please turn to Acts chapter 2.
- And this morning we'll be taking a look at Acts chapter 2, verses 1 through 6. Acts chapter 2.
- When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
- And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves. And they rested on each one of them.
- [1 : 28] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.
- Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together and were bewildered, because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.
- Thank you, Gary. Gary, last week we commenced what is intended to be a brief series of studies that will be recounting and reinforcing the basics of our position regarding certain aspects of dispensational truth.
- And from the outset, we have been a congregation that has paid particular attention to what we call dispensational distinctives in the Bible.
- That involves a particular approach to the Scriptures. It is really a hermeneutical problem. That's a fancy word for interpretation.
- [3 : 02] It is a matter of how the Scriptures are approached or the interpretation that is placed upon them. You have heard me say in time past, and you've probably heard others say too, that you can make the Bible say almost anything you want it to say.
- That's true. That doesn't mean that it says whatever you want it to mean. It means what it means. It says what it says. And what it means is what the original writers intended to convey.
- That's what it means. But in accordance with the interpretation or the approach that you make to the book or the grid, if you will, the lens through which you see all of Scripture, that will determine your conclusions.
- And they are considerable. There are numerous interpretations out there of the passage that we are going to be looking at this morning. And there is only one thing that all of these differences have in common.
- And that is, they all believe that theirs is true. So what do you expect me to say? Mine isn't. Mine is purely false.

[4 : 15] No, you wouldn't expect that. And no, I don't believe that. What I am going to teach you is, I believe with every fiber of my being to be true.

That doesn't guarantee that it is. A lot of things are taught by very sincere people, and they fully intend them to be true.

But we know that sometimes truth can be elusive. We know that we have built-in biases that we all come to the Scriptures with. It is a very natural tendency to want the Bible to say what you want it to say so that it agrees with what you already believe.

That produces a certain comfort level that is much more pleasant than seeing conflicts throughout the Scripture. So I would urge you, as we consider these things, to realize that Marv is just giving you his understanding of it, which at best is imperfect, but I am teaching it with the only conviction and the only sincerity that I have, with the full realization that God alone has the final word on this, and this is just my current best understanding of the issues that we are going to be discussing.

You've also heard me say this. There are two fears that every preacher has, or at least should have. One of them is that people will not believe what he says.

[5 : 52] The other is that people will believe what he says. The implications of both of those positions are considerable. I assure you it is not a responsibility that I take lightly, but it is one with which I come to this pulpit each and every time with a certain degree of emotional fear and trembling.

It is an awesome responsibility to stand before you with the word of God and say, Thus saith the Lord. I do not know, I do not understand why God has been pleased to use human vessels to convey a message that is so precious and so important, but he has.

And I consider myself privileged to be among them, but it is not a responsibility that I take lightly. And I suppose I preface our study with those remarks because this is a passage of Scripture that greatly divides believers.

One would expect, one would expect those who are in Christ to be at odds with those who are not in Christ. There is, for instance, a great tension that exists between believers and unbelievers when you are discussing the first few chapters of Genesis.

And we know that we have many of an atheistic and evolutionist persuasion that simply discount the first three chapters of Genesis altogether, regard them as mythological or fairy tale, unscientific, unworthy to be believed by anybody of any intellect at all, and they just reject it.

[7 : 35] Well, we can understand Christians being at odds with that kind of position because, after all, that is what the world represents. And we are predictably to be in conflict with the world.

But we're not talking about the world. We are talking about fellow believers in Christ. And I want to say at the outset that it doesn't make any difference. It doesn't make any difference in your eternal destiny what you believe about dispensational truth.

It doesn't make any difference if you are a covenant theologian, an amillennial, a premillennial, pre-trib, post-trib, mid-trib. None of those things matter insofar as your eternal destiny is concerned.

They are not part of the gospel. They are not part of the gospel. The gospel is Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

He was buried, raised again the third day according to our scriptures. That's the gospel. That's the good news. And whatever you believe about the day of Pentecost, whether you believe the miracle and sign gifts are still in force today or whether they are passé, whatever you believe about the apostleship of Paul, whether you think he should be added on to the 12 and be the 13th or be unique and separate, has absolutely no bearing on anybody's position in Christ.

[8 : 58] If you have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, that is the basis for your salvation. And may I also say that is the basis for believers having fellowship one with another.

We have that commonality. We ought not to divide or separate ourselves from believers who are in Christ simply because they do not see dispensational truth as we do.

And this is one of my major irritants with a lot of people of dispensational persuasion. They almost treat those who do not agree with them as lepers. You don't have anything to do with those people because they don't understand the mystery.

They don't understand the uniqueness of the apostle Paul. Well, there is a passage in Romans 14 that says, Who are we to reject one another if God has received them?

God receives people to himself who are trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ for their salvation and their eternal destiny.

[10 : 05] On that basis, God receives and accepts people. How can we do less? grace, we must accord everyone who is a believer in Christ grace, kindness, patience, understanding, toleration, even though we completely disagree with some of their conclusions about what we think is important and just to make that distinction at the outset and understand it, I think, is very, very valuable.

Now, I am not saying that dispensational truth, therefore, is not important. It is very important. I am saying it isn't part of the gospel.

It will not get you to heaven. only the finished work of Christ and trust in that will get you to heaven. But, where the importance of dispensational truth really comes in does not have to do so much with our eternal destiny as it has to do with how we function, operate, live, as believers in this present day.

And that makes it very important. Because the conclusions that you reach to this passage here before us and the way you implement your conclusions by how you live your life and what you believe and your values and priorities, they are very important.

And, to one degree or another, they do have some impact on eternity in so far as rewards are concerned. So, in our last session, we began with a brief discussion discussion that pertained to the uniqueness of the Apostle Paul and his gospel.

[12 : 08] It was received by direct revelation from the risen, glorified Christ, and it truly represented an update that God was giving to Paul that he had not given to the twelve apostles previously while he was here on earth.

You see, here is the issue. The revelations and information that Christ had to communicate to his followers did not end with what is commonly called the Great Commission.

Matthew 28, 19, and 20. Did not end with that. That was Christ's final word while he was on earth. It was not his final word.

His final word continued by additional revelation of which the Apostle called an abundance of revelations that were given to him from heaven.

Paul received this information by direct revelation from the risen Christ. It was information that Christ had not imparted to the twelve apostles while he was still here on earth.

[13 : 23] They had the latest information Christ wanted them to have for the program that they were to follow. But after the nation of Israel is set aside in their judicial unbelief over the rejection and their continued rejection of the Messiah, the program changed.

That meant the information that was given to the twelve when Christ was here on earth with a view to Israel and the kingdom situation, with that all being set aside, a whole new program is born.

A new apostle is raised up to administer the program and a new message is provided that consists of Jew, Gentile, bond, free, male, female, no distinction.

You are all one in Christ. There is commonality there. The barrier, the petition that separated Jew from Gentile is broken down.

the tabernacle is passé, the Sabbath is passé, kosher food is passé, circumcision is passé. All those things are laid aside.

[14 : 37] A whole new program has come on. And Paul is the one whom the risen Christ selected to spearhead and administer that program.

This is found in the Acts of the Apostles commencing with the stoning of Stephen, chapter 8, chapter 7, and then the conversion of Saul of Tarsus in chapter 9, and his getting his ministry underway.

And you've got to remember that Paul spent 15 years as a Christian receiving these revelations, this information from God, before he ever undertook his first missionary journey.

And wherever he went, he had all kinds of conflagration and difficulty with the Jew, because they were not aware that there had been a change in the program.

And as far as they were concerned, it was the law of Moses, business as usual. And now this guy comes along and begins preaching this nonsense about there's no distinction between Jew and Gentile?

[15 : 50] I can't believe it. And he was not well received at all. You know, he was persecuted, beaten, shipwrecked, went through a whole host of things, largely because of the opposition that he received from his own countrymen.

But he loved these people. He had a tremendous burden for them, and the reason he did was because he remembered how blind he was as a Jew regarding Jesus of Nazareth.

How he hated him and rejected him until he had that vision of the risen Christ on the road to Damascus completely revolutionized his life.

And now he is preaching the faith that he once sought to destroy. And if I had it to do over again, I would not have preached that message last week.

I would have saved it for next week because we're going to have to backtrack, but I don't know how else to do it. It's just part of my finiteness. It's built into me. You'll have to deal with it.

[16 : 57] So let's go back to Acts chapter 2. And this is where I probably should have begun, but I was engrossed with Paul referring to the gospel as his gospel, and I got really excited about it and couldn't wait to tell you about it, so that's how it came out.

So now, we are going to look at this passage in Acts chapter 2 because as Genesis, as the first few chapters of Genesis tend to divide believers from unbelievers perhaps more than anything else, as to whether that is still in vogue, in force, available, and ought to be practiced today as standard operating procedure.

And for anybody who says, well, who cares what difference does it make? It makes all the difference in the world with your modus operandi as a church, what a church is supposed to be doing.

are these healing miracles something that is supposed to be continued? And if not, why not? And if God who provided the ability for these healing miracles does not change, and Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, then how can you say that these things are no longer in force?

So you see, this really boils down to an interpretive problem, how we approach this passage. First thing I want to advise you about regarding not only Acts chapter 2, but the book of Acts in general, is that it is largely, not exclusively, but largely a Jewish oriented document.

[19 : 08] It says far more about Jews from Jews to Jews involving Jews than it does Gentiles. It is the logical bridge between the four Gospels and the book of Romans.

If you read the four Gospels and you skip Acts and you start in reading Romans, you will likely scratch your head and say, wait a minute, how did they get from here to here?

Something's missing. Yes, something is missing. The book of Acts would be missing. The book of Acts constitutes a bridge that joins the Gospels and Paul's epistles.

And it will tell you those 28 chapters that transpired over a period of about 30 years. It doesn't take long to read Acts.

I can read the book of Acts in, I don't know, probably half an hour, 45 minutes maybe, speed read it, a half an hour without any problem, and slow deliberate reading for an hour, an hour and a quarter.

[20 : 21] But you've got to recall that as you read those 28 chapters, it took 30 years for those things to happen. They are just gradually unfolding. And that needs to be built into the interpretive mode as well.

So, let us begin, if we may, with Acts chapter 2 and verse 1, and let me explain something about Pentecost.

First thing I want you to know is, the Holy Spirit coming and they're speaking in tongues on this particular day, or speaking in languages, it would be better if we got used to using that word languages instead of tongues, because that's what they were.

you need to understand that that is not what made this the day of Pentecost. This would have been the day of Pentecost if nothing unusual had never happened at all, because it was on the calendar and it was scheduled as the day of Pentecost.

There were hundreds of days of Pentecost before this, and there will be hundreds after this. Granted, this day of Pentecost was really unique, very different, but that isn't what made it the day of Pentecost.

[21 : 40] The word Pentecost is also rendered sometimes in the Bible as the feast of weeks, W-E-E-K-S, the feast of weeks.

More literally, it is this, the feast of sevens, because that's what the word in the Hebrew means for weeks. It's Shabuah, from which we also get the word Sabbath, and it literally means seven.

So, a feast of weeks means a feast of sevens. What sevens? Well, there were seven sevens. There were three major Jewish holidays that every Jew, 20 years of age and upward, was obligated to observe before the Lord in Jerusalem, if at all possible.

Sometimes they had to save if they were from miles away, or if they were across the Mediterranean Sea, they might have to save for a lifetime to be able to make this pilgrimage to Jerusalem to present themselves before the Lord.

And the first feast was the feast of Passover. That was the one that had its origin in Israel and the passing over of the death angel and so on.

[22 : 59] And it corresponds roughly to our Easter, which is, of course, within the same time frame. And if you're putting it on the calendar, the Jewish calendar does not coincide with our calendar.

So if we were going to plot it, we would say probably somewhere between the last half of March and the first half of April. So you can see why it is a tilter there.

It isn't all of March or all of April. It's actually the last half of March, the first half of April would be where that calendar Nisan fits in. And then the second is the Feast of Weeks.

And the Feast of Weeks got its name from there being seven sevens after, I don't want to get too technical here and I don't want to lose you, but this is important.

When they would have the, there would be the time of firstfruits and that's when the first crop came in and they would harvest the crop by waving the sheaf and that was called the sheaf of firstfruits.

[24 : 06] Christ was resurrected as the firstfruits of them that slept, so that implies of course there will be a great harvest to come. He is the firstfruits of those that slept. That means that Jesus Christ was the first one ever resurrected from the dead with a glorified body.

He was not the first one brought back to life, but the first one resurrected from the dead with a glorified body. And seven sevens after that, 49 days, then on the 50th day, another feast was prescribed and that's called the Feast of Pentecost.

You can see even from the spelling that it is akin to a word with which we are familiar, the Pentagon, the military complex building in Washington, D.C.

is called the Pentagon because it has five sides. The Penteflex is a five-sided figure. For the Pentecost, it simply means the 50th or the 50th day.

Now, Jesus was resurrected and he lived among his disciples teaching them for 40 days after his resurrection.

[25 : 20] 40 days. And at the end of 40 days, he stood before them and told them, you are to tarry in Jerusalem until you are endued with power not many days hence.

They didn't know how long that was going to be. He didn't tell them. We know it turned out to be ten days. They were ten days waiting in Jerusalem, in and around, in and out this upper room.

And then on the 50th day, 40 days after his resurrection, plus an additional ten days, constituted the 50th day. And as they were gathered together, praying, not knowing what to expect, not anticipating anything like this, they weren't sitting around saying things like, well, obviously, we're waiting for the day of Pentecost and when it gets here, boy, it's really going to be something, this is going to be so incredible, they didn't have a clue.

And they didn't even know that it was going to be on the day of Pentecost. They were just told to tarry there, wait there until you are endued with power. They didn't have any idea how long it was going to be.

God obviously had in mind all along that it was going to be after ten days on the day of Pentecost. And we read that they were all together in one place and suddenly, I'm in verse two, there came from heaven a noise like a violent, this was not gentle, violent means a lot of turbulence, a lot of commotion, a lot of upheaval.

[27 : 05] This was stunning. This was something the likes of which everyone is sitting there saying to himself and to the person next to him, what is this?

Where is that coming from? What is happening? What is going on? And it was a violent, rushing wind. I have never had the experience of being near a hurricane or a tornado, but I have talked to people who have.

And there are a number of them who live right down the road from us in Zinga, who have vivid impressions ingrained in their memory about what it is like to survive a tornado.

And this was one of the worst ever recorded in history. And almost to a person, they said something like, you know, it sounded like, it sounded like you were standing about six inches away from a roaring freight train.

that just went right by you so close you could reach out and touch it. And that's the sound effect that most of them describe, like a roaring train just rushing right by you.

[28 : 23] Never forget that sound as long as I live. I wonder if this was something like that. It may well have been. Rushing wind filled the whole house where they were sitting, and there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributing themselves.

Now, it doesn't say they were tongues of fire. It says they were tongues as of fire, kind of like tongues of fire, distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues. tongues, and I really would prefer that this be translated, they began to speak with other languages.

These were discernible, understandable languages, but they were languages that they did not understand.

understand. If I stood here now, and you don't have to worry about it, and began speaking to you in fluent Chinese, or Japanese, or Russian, or something of that nature, it would be a legitimate actual language, but you wouldn't be able to understand it.

[29 : 46] Now, what I think we have involved here, and the text does not say this, and I'm not trying to make it say this, but it seems to me to be something akin to an actual reversal of the Tower of Babel.

When everyone was speaking one language, and God confounded their languages so that they could not communicate among themselves, and eventually they all began peeling off in different directions, and settled in different geographical areas throughout the Mediterranean world, this seems to be a reversal of that, because these people come here with one thing in common, and that is their religion.

That's why they're here. Someone says, well, how do you know these were all Jews? Well, I know they were all Jews because this was a Jewish feast day prescribed for Jews by the God of the Jews, held in Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, and at the temple complex, which is Jewish.

Voila! It isn't too hard to draw a conclusion, these were Jews. And not only that, but we are told in verse 5, there were Jews living in Jerusalem. And then when you come down to verse 9, we have Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, the districts around India, Libya, Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs.

What do they have in common? They're all Jews. They're all Jews. That's why they're there, because they're Jews, and they're celebrating a Jewish feast. This incredible event that is unfolding was completely unexpected, unanticipated, uninterpreted, undefined.

[31 : 46] They didn't have any idea what was happening, but it was prophesied. It was predicted. It was foretold.

Let us read on. May we begin with verse 6. When this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, absolutely perplexed.

just, what? What is this? Nobody here had any frame of reference for this completely new thing. Nobody could say, oh, I know what this is.

seven or eight years ago when I was up in Galilee, no, no, no, no, no. There is no future reference, no precedent at all. Everybody is completely befuddled. They were each hearing, each one hearing them speak in his own language.

Someone said, I'm not so sure that this is as much a miracle or a gift of hearing as it is a gift of speaking. I don't know. I don't know. But the word that is used as languages, and we get the impression that whatever it was they were saying, it was as if they were speaking the language of this one, of this one, of this one, and whatever they were hearing, they were hearing in their own language.

[33 : 12] Now, when they come to Jerusalem, they've got this tremendous language barrier because in Jerusalem, it's Hebrew and Aramaic that is spoken, and Greek is an additional language.

But these people are from places with foreign languages. They are scattered throughout all the Mediterranean world, and they are here on holiday. This is a really special time, big feast day, and you may be sure that on the Jewish feast days, there was a huge influx of people into Jerusalem, like we're not there all year long.

I have likened it to, and I think it is very equivalent, like you go to Indianapolis, Indiana, any other time of the year, and you'll find a normal population of people. But you go to Indianapolis, Indiana, starting around May the 24th and 25th and 26th, you can't get a motel room, hotel room, anywhere.

The place is flooded. There are people from California, and people from Wisconsin, and people from all over. They're there for the Indy 500. Well, that's the way it was in Jerusalem.

And do you know, it is no coincidence that God uses these kind of situations to inject His message when it is going to reach the greatest number of people, just like the crucifixion.

[34 : 29] You think it was a coincidence that that happened in connection with Passover? When the city was filled with tens of thousands of pilgrims that wouldn't ordinarily be there?

When Paul was testifying to Agrippa, he said, this thing was not done in a corner. Oh, very public, very out in the open. There is good reason to believe that there were thousands of people who actually saw Jesus crucified.

Thousands. We're only told of the few who interacted with the scene. But there were many, many more there. And it was right outside the city wall. Now it's Pentecost.

Another feast day, another huge surge, population. People are there from all over the world. And what do you think they are going to take home with them? The experiences they heard and saw in Jerusalem.

You will not believe what we saw and heard on the day of Pentecost. It was incredible. And all these people go back to where they came from. And they take that message with them.

[35 : 37] they are all in verse 12. They all continued in amazement and great perplexity saying to one another, what does this mean?

I'm sure there was a certain amount of fear too, trepidation because this was just a phenomenal thing that nobody could identify. Nobody could say, I know what this is.

They're just scared witless. And they just can't imagine what's going on. What's happening? What does this mean? Well, there was one crowd.

Verse 13. These are the people who have an answer no matter what. I know what's going on. These guys up there talking and babbling away. They just had too much to drink.

That's all. Blame everything on alcohol. You know, they're smashed. And they're full of sweet wine. And Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice.

[36 : 43] I'm sure he had to raise his voice to be heard above them because they are out there clamoring. They are asking one another, what is this? What's going on? What's taking place here? Some are saying, well, I think they've just got too much joy juice and they were celebrating too much and they're spouting off and it just sounds gibberish and everything.

And then Peter starts raising his voice to get above theirs. It says, men, Judea, these men are not drunken as you suppose. It's only the third hour of the day.

And as he elevates his voice and projects it, he begins speaking over them and they start quieting down and they begin listening to this singular voice who is speaking above the crowd.

And he goes on to say, let this be known unto you. Give heed to my words. These men are not drunk as you suppose.

It is only the third hour of the day. This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel. You remember Joel?

[37 : 53] Joel chapter 2. This is what he's talking about. And if you've got a new American standard, it will be in large type.

Verse 17. Here is what Joel said. It shall be in the last days. When did Joel write this? Hundreds of years earlier.

Hundreds of years earlier to this event that is transpiring. And Joel is talking about the last day. What are the last days? They are the days after the coming of the Messiah.

Time in the Bible is divided into two segments. The former days and the last days. The former days are all of the days that existed in history prior to the arrival of Jesus of Nazareth on the scene.

Everything belongs to those former days. Everything after Jesus of Nazareth ministry on earth is the last days.

[39 : 03] We are living in the last days. Paul the apostle lived in the last days. The apostle John lived in the last days. Martin Luther lived in the last days. We live in the last days.

There is that one division between the former days and the latter days. And what Joel is saying is in the last days God says, I will pour forth of my spirit upon all mankind and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams.

even upon my bond slaves both men and women I will in those days those last days pour forth my spirit and they shall prophesy.

That's what this is. This is the fulfillment of a promise that God gave through Joel. It is being fulfilled right before our very eyes.

And this wasn't the first time that something like this took place. When Jesus stood in the synagogue in Luke chapter 4 and read from the prophet Isaiah and said that the Lord has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and he closed the book and sat down and he didn't quote the rest of it and the day of vengeance of our God.

[40 : 32] He'd quote that part but to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and he put down the scroll and then he said something that was so incredible it just electrified that whole crowd.

He said this day this day is this scripture fulfilled in your hearing.

Wow. I mean how many people have ever lived to actually experience the fulfillment of what was prophesied?

And here it is again. Peter is saying this is that of which Joel was speaking. We are experiencing it.

This is nothing more than God making good on his promise. We didn't know when this was going to happen but we knew it had to happen because God promised that it was going to happen.

[41 : 38] And now that's what it is. But do you know something? As Jesus did not finish that prophecy and did not go on and quote from Isaiah and the day of vengeance of our God because that had not come and would not yet come is still future.

we have the same division here. In the passage right before us between verses 18 and 19 there is a huge gap.

It's at least 2,000 years old right now. It is a parenthesis. We are living in this gap because the last portion of Joel's prophecy is apocalyptic.

it refers to the last last days. It refers to that which is spoken of in the Revelation. These are cataclysmic events that are going to take place in the heavens as reinforced by the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25 when he says I will grant wonders in the sky above and signs on the earth beneath blood and fire and vapor of smoke the sun shall be turned into darkness the moon into blood before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come that didn't happen on the day of Pentecost.

None of those things took place then. These are all external events yet to be fulfilled. They are part of the 70th week of Daniel. Sandwiched in there in a way that you cannot see between verses 18 and 19 is this incredible parenthetical stage in which we now function as the body of Christ.

[43 : 15] The mystery. It looks like there is continuity all the way through, but there isn't any more than there is in the prophecy that Jesus said he was speaking of from Isaiah back in Luke chapter 4.

Notice again in verse 22, the audience, men of Israel, listen to these words. And then he went on and described who Jesus of Nazareth really was, the son of God, the son of David.

David, David wasn't speaking of himself when he quoted this from the Psalms here, that he was speaking of the Messiah. And in verse 32, this Jesus God raised up again to which we are all witnesses.

And you know the rest of the story, how the 3,000 of them were penetrated. It was just like driving the truth. They really got it. They really got it.

They saw the light and they believed Peter's message and they came in line with it. Now the question is, is this supposed to be happening today?

[44 : 34] Is this supposed to be the method of operation for the church today? And even though it isn't here in Acts chapter 2, it's coming up in Acts chapter 3, and it's certainly part of the same motif, and that is the miraculous healing of the man born lame from his mother's womb in Acts chapter 3.

And Peter and John say, silver and gold have we none, but such as we have in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, get up on your feet. And the man rose to his feet and he's jumping and walking around and praising God.

Here is a man who was born lame, never stood on his two feet in his entire life, and now he is miraculously healed and walked.

Is that supposed to be our method of operation today? Our Pentecostal friends tell us, yes, this is supposed to be the norm.

This is supposed to be standard operating procedure for all churches today and for all believers today. And if it isn't, it is only because you are disobedient and lacking in faith.

[45 : 52] If your faith is where it was supposed to be and as strong as it's supposed to be, we would be raising the dead, healing the lame, giving sight to the blind, speaking in tongues, and all the rest of it.

Because this is designed to equip and outfit the church for her task of evangelism. And that's the position they hold.

And they hold it with great sincerity. I would not question their sincerity or their motives one bit. I just don't agree with their conclusion.

This is not to be our modus operandi. This is not for the church. church. And get a good firm hold on your seat now. This is not the church at all.

These are Jews. The promise that was given, was given through a Jewish prophet, Joel.

[46 : 55] And it was for the Jewish people, the people of Israel. It was to manifest the presence of God and to provide them with the endowment of power that he talked about their needing for the task that they had.

But that whole task is going to be disrupted, dismantled, and set aside in favor of another. And what that will be, will be the church.

And some say, well, you mean you're saying this is not the birthday of the church? That's exactly what I'm saying. This is not the birthday of the church. This is the fulfillment of a prophecy.

This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. That's what the text says. Peter did not say, Peter did not say, well, this of course is the birthday of the church.

What is the birthday of the church? I don't know. I don't know. My guess is, somewhere around, somewhere around the middle of the book of Acts, but I can't pinpoint it, and I seriously question anybody who says they can because it just isn't that clear.

[48 : 31] But we know the church, which is his body, does exist, has come into being, and that is the basis upon which Paul wrote his church epistles for the church, to the church, by the church, of the church.

That is our *modus operandi*. The Jews have a reputation, one well deserved, and one to which they are entitled to look for miraculous manifestations, and to demand signs, because that's been their bailiwick from time immemorial.

But if you look at 2 Corinthians, chapter 5, there is a little phrase that is given here that I think is just quite remarkable in verse 7, and it is to be that which characterizes the church, which is the body of Christ.

And by the way, probably the principal dynamic that makes the church the church more than anything else, is that it consists of Jews and Gentiles, men and women, slave and free, all on the same footing.

Everybody is somebody in the body of Christ, and there is no superiority. The one thing that makes us in common is our faith in Christ.

[50 : 12] And Paul explains this in Ephesians chapter 3, which will not take time to go to now. But there he lays it out very carefully, how that God was in Christ, and that the church, which is his body, has come into being as a result of an amalgamation of Jew with Gentile.

That's what makes the church the church. It is Jew and Gentile, no longer distinction. The barriers are broken down. This was dynamite material.

I mean, it hit like a thunderbolt, and Paul paid a dear price for it just about everywhere he preached it. Not from the Gentiles, but from the Jews, who did not see that equality issue at all.

They still saw themselves as the singular chosen of God, and the Gentiles are the outsiders. So, this is absolutely critical.

And what is to be our *modus operandi*? How are we to conduct our business? Are we to go about with the signs and miracles and miraculous healings and raising the Gentiles?

[51 : 21] And please don't get me wrong. I am not for a moment suggesting that there is no such thing as miraculous healings today. I am not saying that at all. God can heal anybody of anything He wants to, anytime He wants to.

And we are grateful when He does. But I'll say this. It is very, very rare very rare. It's so rare that we call it a miracle.

And if they were commonplace they wouldn't be miracles, would they? Our *modus operandi* is very simple, powerful. But to a lot of believers, it's not very appealing because there's not a whole lot of excitement here.

Not a lot of drama. Not a lot of pizzazz. Not a lot of hey, look at this. You know what it is? It's 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 7.

Just a simple little statement that Paul made. We walk by faith, not by sight. what does that mean?

[52 : 26] Just what it says. What is our walk? What is he talking about? Walk is the word that the Bible often uses for your manner of life, your lifestyle, how you conduct your life, your day in, day out activities.

That's your walk. And we all have our own walk. We walk, we conduct our life, we live out our lifestyle, we function on the basis of faith, not sight.

What does that mean? Well, let's think about it. What does it mean to walk by sight? It means you walk on the basis of what you see. You walk on the basis of experience.

You walk on the basis of emotion, feeling, what you see, what you witness, what you hear. You gear everything to that. That's walking by sight.

What sign show us thou us that we may believe? Pull some rabbits out of a hat or do something to convince us.

[53 : 38] Give us something to look at. Something we can see with our, because after all, isn't seeing believing? You want us to believe?

Okay. Give us something to look at. Give us something to see. That will prove. If thou be the Christ, come down from the cross, and then we will believe.

That's walking by sight. Manna in the wilderness rained down from heaven. Do you believe God did that?

Sure do. Why do you believe? Well, I'm eating the bread. I'm picking it up. I'm gathering it. Boy, there's no doubt about this. The quail, parting of the Red Sea, all miracles are something that you can see.

but we walk by faith, not by sight. What does that mean? It means just this.

[54 : 48] You don't see any miracles. You don't demand any miracles. You don't look for any miracles. If God is pleased to send one along, you're grateful, but you don't have it coming.

when we walk by faith, we just walk on the basis of what God has told us in His Word.

That's it. Nothing else. God said it. You believe it. That ends it. That's it. Isn't that exciting?

That's really dramatic, isn't it? Doesn't that really give you something to put on display? A lot of pizzazz that you can show your friends, hey, everybody, look at me. I'm walking by faith.

Well, golly, he is walking by faith. No. All it means is we live our life, we establish our value system, we set our priorities on the basis of what God has revealed in His Word.

[55 : 51] That's it. Nothing more. Nothing less. And God said, it'll be adequate. It'll be all you need.

Just trust me. Just believe me. When the rug's pulled out from under me, yeah, just keep right on believing me.

When you lose your job, yeah, just keep right on believing me and trusting me. When you say goodbye to your dearest on earth, yeah, just keep right on believing me and trusting me.

I know what I'm doing. And when you're walking by faith, you're just putting trust, confidence, reliance, dependability in your Heavenly Father and what He's doing and He does all things well.

And you just relax. and you move on through life believing Him day by day by day by day. That's walking by faith.

[57 : 04] And that's first class. Can't improve on that. That's God's provision for now. What about the miracles and the signs and everything? They were fine.

They did what they were intended to do for the people to whom they were intended at the time when they were intended. But now there is a whole different program underway that is not dependent upon miracles and signs and miraculous manifestations and speaking in tongues and all the rest.

Those things were great for the time they were intended, but they're not intended for now. Now I know our dear Pentecostal brethren do not believe that. And they insist that these things are for today.

And sometimes they can find themselves in rather embarrassing situations when they tried to manufacture them and it doesn't always turn out very well. It can be an embarrassment. But that's their cross to bear, not ours.

At least it shouldn't be ours. Have you a question or comment? There are probably a couple dozen, but I'll tell you what. If you do have questions, feel free to write them out.

[58 : 05] You don't have to sign your name. I don't care. And if you've got something that completely contradicts what I say, you owe it to me. because we're looking for truth here.

We're not looking for Mars' position. You can't afford that. I can't either. But if you want to write out questions, feel free to write them out, drop them in the box back there, and I'll do my best to answer them.

Anyone? Anyone? And I know part of the problem is I took all the time. Roger? Peter. When Peter raised his voice and spoke to everybody, would they have listened in their own language then?

I think so. I think when Peter spoke, I think they were all able to hear them, to hear what he said in their own language. And that, of course, is the miracle of the whole thing.

And I can just see Peter doing that, standing. You know, here's a big fisherman, okay? Big fisherman. He spent a lot of time out on the Sea of Galilee.

[59 : 08] And I'm sure he probably spent a lot of time yelling at those guys in the boats over there, you know, back and forth like these fishermen do all the time. And he probably had a pretty good pair of pipes, and I imagine that he projected rather well and everybody was able to hear it.

And there were no doubt many, many thousands of people there. A whole lot more than the 3,000 that were believers. Someone else? Well, this is just a brief primer, a kind of revisiting of some of our dispensational truths that we feel are very, very critical, very important.

And when it comes to subjects of dispensationalism, you'll find believers from clear over here to clear over here. I know there are people who think that you are not a dispensational church if you don't preach dispensational truth every time you are together.

And they just can't get enough of it. And then there are others who think that I am too dispensational and they wish that I wouldn't be as dispensational as I am. So let me ask you this.

How am I supposed to decide how dispensational I'm supposed to be? According to whom? Because whatever you think, the person sitting next to you wouldn't agree with that.

[60 : 27] So whose call is it? It's my call. I make it. Thank you. It doesn't mean it isn't subject to criticism, but it does mean it's my call and I take full responsibility.

So if you don't think I'm dispensational enough, talk to the Lord about it. Tell him to get a big two before and show me the benefits. And if you think I'm too dispensational, you talk to the Lord about it and tell him to get, I'm liable to be pretty well beaten up by the time this thing is over.

I'm going to quit while I'm ahead. If I'm ahead, may we stand feet, we'll be dismissed. Father, how grateful we are that our eternal destiny in Jesus Christ is not based upon how well we understand the intricacies of dispensational truth or even that we understand it, but that we know that Jesus Christ loved us and gave himself for us and calls us and calls us unto him in faith, in confidence, in trust, in reliance in him, who he is, and what he's done.

And that once we make that decision, you place us into union with Jesus Christ and we become bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. His destiny becomes our destiny.

his love and joy and forgiveness becomes ours. Oh, how we bless you and thank you for that. And we pray that those of us who appreciate and love these dispensational truths will not allow them to ever become part of the gospel because they're really not.

[62 : 11] Yet they're important and we want to give them their due importance because it affects how we live and function as believers today. Thank you for this time to share together and for your goodness to us in every way.

And thank you for the privilege being able to walk by faith. We bless you for it. In Christ's name, amen.