

September 24/25, 2005

*The Unstoppable Church*

## **God In Us**

**Acts 2:14-36**

Pastor Bryan Clark

Imagine that you are part of an organization that's falling apart because of poor management. Everybody is discouraged. You're tired of going to work. It just seems like everything is going in the tanker. And then you hear this announcement that the person who is considered to be the best and brightest in whatever field this would be has agreed to come on and be the new leader of the organization. This person has a long track record of going into such organizations, breathing new life and turning them around, and is a dynamic leader. Wouldn't you say that if you knew that was true you would feel a certain sense of anticipation—that you would sense something is about to change and this organization may never be the same again?

Two thousand years ago an absolutely miraculous event took place where God Himself chose to come and inhabit and lead an organization called the Church, in a way the people of God had never known before. It was an event so spectacular that if you understand it and believe it, it should change the way you live your life every day.

If you have a Bible, turn with me to Acts chapter 2. One of the frustrations of trying to teach within time limits is sometimes you cannot take the full unit of thought in a text because it's just too much material to cover. It is really important to remember that Acts chapter 2 is a unit. What Mark talked about last week, what we need to talk about today and two weeks from now—all of that needs to be viewed together because it all flows together. It's one continuous unit. So we will just need to keep that in mind as we go through it.

Last week Mark did an excellent job of unpacking Acts chapter 2, verses 1 through 13 in talking about this magnificent event where God literally was poured out upon His people in a way His people had never known before—an event so spectacular that it amazed the onlookers.

Whenever I read a text like this, I'm reminded again how dramatic God is. God has a flair for special effects and drama. You saw that on Mount Sinai with Moses, and you see it in this particular text. It's His way of making a statement. It wasn't that the Holy Spirit kind of slipped in the back door and everybody was wondering, *Is He here? Is He here? I'm not sure*. Rather, it was this magnificent event where you had this rushing wind and fire and smoke. The place was rocking, and everybody knew something absolutely supernatural was happening. It was so magnificent that most of the people just stood back in wonder and didn't know what to think. They just knew something *different* had taken place.

In every group there are the skeptics that just dismiss everything, and that group explained it away by saying, "These people are just drunk." That's where we pick up the story in Acts 2:14.

**But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them:  
"Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel...**

(vs. 14-16, \*NASB)

Anytime there is chaos in the environment, it's the job of the leaders to lead. Jesus had poured Himself into His leadership team, and this was their moment to take a stand and declare what was happening. Peter immediately stands up and tells them, "Men, this couldn't be because

they're drunk; it's only 9 o'clock in the morning." In that culture nobody was drinking at that time of the day.

So Peter goes on and explains the events that Luke had just recorded. This is a common pattern for Luke. As a matter of fact, about one-third of the Book of Acts is really a record of sermons, and those sermons are used to explain the events that are recorded in the Book of Acts. So, first you have the record of the event. And now you have the explanation of what transpired.

It's interesting that Peter is going to use the prophet Joel and the Psalms in order to explain this. If you remember the end of the Gospel of Luke, when Jesus spent forty days basically teaching and training His leadership team, helping them understand what had taken place, it says that He taught them from the Law, from the Prophets, and from the Psalms. I would suggest to you that everything that Peter shares now with his Jewish audience in Jerusalem is what Jesus had just shared with him only a matter of days before.

**'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT and they shall prophesy.'** (vs. 17-18)

Peter now quotes from the prophet Joel. It's clear from the text that Peter is addressing a Jewish audience. A Jewish audience would have highly revered the Old Testament Scriptures, which is why Peter goes there. He says, "And in the last days God says..." We had this in chapter 1 as well. It is evident that the New Testament writers clearly affirm that the Old Testament was not just the mere writings of men, but consistently referred to it as the very words of God. Again, this goes to our doctrine of inspiration. Peter is quoting Joel, but in the process he is saying, "This is what God says."

Now it is interesting, in Peter's language he does not say that the prophet Joel's prophecy was fulfilled. It was interesting as I read through the commentaries how many of the writers kept referring to this as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, yet that terminology is never used. You may say, "Well, that's still what Peter meant." If you go to Acts 1, verse 16, when he was talking about Judas, he clearly used the term that Judas fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies related to Judas.

One of the common patterns in Old Testament prophecy is that there is an immediate fulfillment to the original audience, there is kind of a foreshadowing which is yet a greater fulfillment, and then there's the final complete fulfillment which is yet in the future. That is a common pattern, and that's what we have here. There was an immediate fulfillment of this in the day of Joel. There is a greater fulfillment, a kind of foreshadowing of the ultimate fulfillment here at Pentecost. And there are events of the fulfillment of this that are yet to take place, which will be obvious as we read through this.

He mentioned, "In the last days..." Oftentimes I hear people guessing whether or not we are in the last days. Well, let me exercise my gift of prophecy and tell you yes, absolutely we are in the last days. According to the New Testament Scriptures, the last days started with the coming of Jesus and they will culminate with the second coming of Jesus.

So yes, we have been in the last days for 2,000 years. It may be another ten years. It may be another 500 years. Nobody knows.

The importance of the concept of “last days” is to realize this is the last big chapter of this unfolding plan of God. For thousands and thousands and thousands of years, God has been unfolding His plan. Every generation up to the cross looked forward to God’s fulfillment of His promise for a Savior. But this generation from the cross to the present is the only generation that has lived in the fulfillment of that promise. And this is the last chapter of God’s unfolding plan. Therefore, it raises the urgency that we are the generation that has been called to such a time as this to proclaim the message in this final chapter before Jesus comes and there is final judgment and a new heaven and a new earth. That’s really what is captured in the concept of the “last days.”

**‘AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,’ God says, ‘THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND.’** (v. 17a)

He says “all mankind”—not meaning every person. He qualifies that in verse 21 and says “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord.” But it is talking about all mankind in the sense that this goes beyond the Jewish audience, beyond the Hebrew people, to every corner of the earth. This is a message that the Jewish people will struggle with—the reality that this is going beyond them and will reach all people of the earth. That was beautifully illustrated at Pentecost with the different languages representing the different groups of the world. It’s God’s heart to reach the world.

Also, the language “I will pour forth of My Spirit” is interesting. God did *not* say, “I will sprinkle My Spirit...I will drip My Spirit.” This word “poured” means to be saturated. The reason for that is because when the Holy Spirit comes, the Holy Spirit is a *person*, not just some sort of an energy force. Oftentimes I hear people say that they want more of the Spirit. I don’t know what that means. The moment you trust Jesus as Savior you have the indwelling Spirit, because the Spirit is a person. You have *all* of God.

Oftentimes people talk as if it’s just some sort of an energy force: “I have 110 volts, and I’d really like to have 220 volts.” But that’s not what it is. He is a *person*. If you were to ask me this morning, “Was Rick in church?” I wouldn’t say, “Well, part of him was. We’re really hoping to get the whole thing here some week.” Either he was here or he wasn’t. And that is the same thing with the Holy Spirit. Either He came in His entirety or He did not come. You have the full Spirit of God. You have everything you need. You have the God of the universe dwelling in you. You lack nothing—except maybe a willingness to surrender to the Spirit within you.

**‘...I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY.’** (v. 17b)

That word “prophecy” basically means to proclaim the message of God, to proclaim the message of the gospel. In the early church before the Scriptures were completed, there was a miraculous gift of prophecy because they did not have the New Testament Scriptures—where someone would stand up and through the power of the Spirit open up his or her mouth and out would come literally the revelation of God. But once the Scriptures were completed, the need for that ceased, and the idea of prophecy today is the forth telling, the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I do find it interesting there are two times in this text that Peter, in quoting Joel, emphasizes this will be both male and female—in this case, sons and daughters. Understand that in the first century culture, women were not really even supposed to speak in public. They were absolutely

forbidden to speak at any type of a public gathering. There were many things with the initiation of the New Covenant that were radically new and different. We talked about this a couple weeks ago. One of those was the tremendous value that Jesus put on women, and you'll see that through the Book of Acts—that women played a significant role in accomplishing the mission of the Church.

But here is this declaration that's hundreds of years old, that when this happens both men and women will proclaim the message of Jesus: they will prophesy.

**'...AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.'** (v. 17c)

Again, before the Scriptures were completed God communicated in a variety of ways, including visions and dreams, and we'll see that in the Book of Acts. But once the Scriptures were completed, there was no longer a need to communicate that way; we have the completed Scripture. It is just a way of saying that God, through His Spirit, would communicate His message in dramatic and miraculous ways.

**'...EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT, and they shall prophesy.'** (v. 18)

We know from 1 Corinthians 11 that women in the first century church were allowed to pray and to prophesy in public worship. I would say the closest equivalent to prophesying today would just be the reading of Scripture. It is the declaration: "thus saith the Lord." This was radical thinking in the first century.

It is very important to connect up what is said here with what Jesus said in Acts 1:8. When Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit, He did not leave it vague as to why the Spirit was coming. He did *not* say, "In a few days the Spirit of God will come upon you, and then you have to figure it out from there what to do." He didn't say that. He said, "He will come upon you that you might be My witnesses to every corner of the earth."

People have the strangest ideas about how they are supposed to respond to the coming of the Holy Spirit. But the text is not vague. The primary reason why the very power and presence of God has come upon believers in these last days, in this New Covenant of the Church, is in order that we might proclaim the life-changing message of the gospel. That is exactly what he quotes in this text: that we might be equipped to declare the message to a dying world.

**'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME.'** (vs. 19-20)

Now these are very apocalyptic words that describe what is yet to come. There may have been some sense of this at the crucifixion, but it still falls far short of the fulfillment of this terminology. If you read in the Gospel of Matthew and in Revelation you find there is language that refers to a day yet to come that is almost identical to this. So this is the sense in which this is not completely fulfilled yet. The language is basically referring to the coming judgment of God.

“The day of the Lord” is a reference basically to the reality that God will ultimately judge people. “The day of the Lord” has a general meaning and it has a very technical meaning. In general, it is just a reference to the coming judgment of God. Joel talked about the terrible day of the Lord, which actually transpired in his lifetime as the Hebrew people suffered the judgment of God because of their disobedience. But there is also a technical sense that it refers to the second coming of Jesus and the final judgment—where God will call people to account, Jesus will ultimately be the victor, and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

The importance to us is the realization that there is coming a final judgment. And those who have not called upon the name of Jesus will be eternally lost. Our assignment, empowered and equipped by the Spirit of God, is to proclaim that message to the world. He reminds us of that in verse 21:

**‘AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.’**

Now, people in our culture today don’t like that terminology “saved.” They find that offensive because they think, *Saved from what? I’m not lost; I don’t need to be saved.* Just because they do not believe, that doesn’t make it go away. Just because they do not believe in the ultimate judgment of God doesn’t somehow make it go away. We as the people of God understand it is true. We may not be able to convince them of that, but our assignment is still to proclaim the message.

When you put this quote from Joel together, basically what Peter is saying is there will come a final chapter and that chapter is now. It will be for all eternity. It’s the only generation that will have lived in the fulfillment of the coming Savior. And with the realization that there is coming a final judgment that will determine people’s eternal destiny, if powered and filled with the very presence of God Himself, it is our mission to proclaim the message that whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

You can imagine this Jewish audience not being completely convinced that Peter is accurate here. So Peter goes on to make his case:

**“Men of Israel [again, notice specifically a Jewish audience, which is why so many quotes from the Old Testament], listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene [you remember that’s what they called Him. That wasn’t a term of endearment; that was a term of derision, a putdown], a man attested to you [proved to you] by God with miracles and wonders and signs... (v. 22a)**

“Miracle” is the word that means the powerful act, the miraculous act. The word “wonders” is the word that means to be stunned, to be startled. When people today talk about doing miracles, they do their miracles, and everybody stands back and says, “I’m not sure what happened right there.” But that wasn’t the way it happened in Jesus’ day. When Jesus performed a miracle, it was so powerful, so evident, so indisputable that they were stunned; they were startled. They didn’t even know what to do with it. The word “signs” really refers to the purpose of the miracle—that the miracle was done in order to validate or prove that Jesus was God in the flesh.

**‘...miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know...’ (v. 22b)**

That’s a great statement. Remember, this is an audience that is just 50 days beyond the resurrection. Most of these people were very aware and probably eyewitnesses to the miracles of

Jesus. What Peter is saying to them is: “You know for a fact; you were there. You saw with your own eyes that Jesus did miracles, wonders, and signs.” I think one of the reasons why in these early chapters of Acts there were thousands and thousands and thousands of people that came to Christ is because Peter pressed them on the reality: “You have seen this for yourself; you cannot deny this is true.” And they recognized that as true: *We’ve seen it with our own eyes; we cannot deny it.* That brought forth this huge harvest of souls in the early chapters of Acts.

**“...this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.”** (v. 23)

One of the biggest stumbling blocks for the Jewish audience was this thought that their Messiah was put to death. Not only did He die, but He died this criminal’s death that was so offensive, so insulting to them, that there was no way that this could be their Messiah.

So Peter is going out of his way to say, “You people had this image that the Messiah would come and sit on a throne and deliver our nation, but that is not what the Old Testament teaches. If you really knew the Old Testament Scriptures, you should have known that the Messiah would come, the Messiah would be executed a criminal’s death, He would be buried and would rise again.” The crucifixion of Jesus was not a good plan gone bad, but rather the fulfillment of the plan of God unfolded over thousands of years. And he goes on to make his case to them:

**“But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.”** (v. 24)

That’s a great statement there. That word “agony” is the Greek word used to describe a woman in agony in childbirth. Basically the imagery is you have as much chance keeping Jesus in the grave as you have stopping a woman from delivering that child. It *is* going to happen. There was no way to keep Jesus in the grave.

And then he goes on and quotes from Psalm 16. Again, remember Jesus taught them from the Law, from the Prophets, from the Psalms. So I’m suggesting that, again, what Peter says here is what Jesus taught him. Basically Jesus said, “Peter, you should have known this because it was written in the Old Testament Scriptures.”

**“For David says of Him, ‘I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN. THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN HOPE; BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF YOUR GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.’**

**Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES [or the grave], NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.** (vs. 25-31)

Peter is quoting David’s psalm in Psalm 16, and he is really asking them the question: “Who did you think David was talking about? Did you think David was talking about himself? I mean, we

know that David died, that he was buried. We know where his tomb is; if you want to go dig it up, we know his bones are there.” So he is challenging them, “Who did you think he was talking about? Obviously he was talking about someone in the line of David that would ultimately be put to death, would be buried, would be raised to life and would reign forever.” And of course, that would be the exact prophecy that Jesus fulfilled. It’s Peter’s way of saying again, “Why are you people surprised at this? The Old Testament Scripture said this is exactly the way it would happen.”

Now again, with this being a Jewish audience, that would have carried a significant amount of weight in their thinking. He goes on:

**“This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.”** (v. 32)

Again, this is just 50 days post-resurrection. They are within walking distance of the tomb. They’re in Jerusalem. What Peter is saying is: “We all know for a fact Jesus raised from the dead. There are hundreds and hundreds of witnesses who saw Him. You can go check out the tomb for yourself.” If there was ever a moment for the skeptics to step up and say, “That’s not true,” it was now. But Peter pins them to the wall by saying, “We all know this is true, don’t we?” And there was no way to refute that.

**“Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says [now he quotes Psalm 110]: ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, ‘SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.’”** (vs. 33-35)

This is the same text that Jesus used to talk about, “Who is David referring to there?” In the Hebrew it would read, “The Lord Yahweh said to my Adonai.” In other words, “God said to God”—which is a reverent way of saying that Jesus was referred to as God. He was both Savior and God, both Messiah and God. That’s exactly how he summarizes it:

**“Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord [meaning God] and Christ [meaning Messiah]—this Jesus whom you crucified.”** (v. 36)

Now, can you imagine being in that audience and coming to grips with the reality of that message? What Peter has just told you is that Jesus from Nazareth, whom you crucified, was actually God in the flesh and the Messiah of the world. You have executed your Messiah. And the people responded with absolute horror. They believed that was true. Peter had convinced them, and they responded and said, “What must we do?” And the answer to that... we’ll see in two weeks.

But for now, what do we do with this text? What do we do with this magnificent reality of what happened two thousand years ago at Pentecost? If this is true, then the church should be the most radically different organization on planet earth—not a little different, but *radically* different. If it’s true that we have the very Spirit of God, the God of the universe dwelling within us, running our organization, then there ought to be a supernatural dimension to the church that is different from any other organization.

When people walk through these doors, there ought to be a sense that *God* is here—because He is. We as Christians need to understand we do not just merely operate on the level of mankind,

of the natural. We operate on the level of the supernatural. We are constantly dancing on the edge of this mysterious, unimaginable, unpredictable presence of God, where we understand on any given day the most amazing, miraculous things may happen. Every day there is a sense of anticipation that this will be a “God day” and things that cannot be planned, strategized, understood or explained may happen before our very eyes. That’s what God wants from us.

If Pentecost is true, why are 70 percent of the churches in America stagnant or declining? How do we even process that? How do you process 20 people sitting in a dead service in a dead church, if Pentecost is true? That just can’t be; it’s unacceptable. How could that be? If this is true, then the life of the Spirit ought to be evident and obvious in the life of the church. But this will never happen corporately until it first happens individually.

Let me ask you a question: Was there a day this week when you crawled out of bed with an overwhelming sense of anticipation that this may be a day of unexplainable, unimaginable, supernatural happenings? Do you get out of bed every day with the anticipation that this may be an amazing “God day”? Do you recognize that every day we live in the realm of the supernatural? This isn’t just a bunch of people trying our hardest to get the job done. There is a mysterious presence of God in our lives that causes us to live life at a completely different level.

Because we are non-charismatic in our theology and we understand the extremes of *some* of those in the charismatic movement, I think oftentimes the pendulum has swung way too far to the other side among us non-charismatic churches. I believe a lot of the charismatics could say to us, “You people act like Pentecost never happened.” And I think that is an accurate charge. If Pentecost is true, there is a supernatural element to our lives that is absolutely *radical* that sets us apart.

Why did God give us His Spirit? That we might proclaim the message of the gospel and reach a lost and dying world in these last days. Do you recognize that because of the power and presence of the Spirit of God, you are adequately equipped for the assignment? Oftentimes we don’t share the gospel because we feel like we’re just not adequately trained. Let me encourage you: You are 100% adequately equipped and trained because you have the very power and presence of the Spirit of God within you. You have *all* you need. All you need is the faith to believe that and to imagine that God could do the most unimaginable, unexpected things through you.

Most of you are aware of the fact that we are in the midst of a building campaign. In the last year and a half to two years it has been absolutely magnificent as we have watched how God has provided through you, His people. Do you know what excites me most about that? There is only one reason why God would provide the resources for an auditorium like that. It is because He plans to fill every seat with people that need to know Jesus. Thousands and thousands and thousands of people in our community that today are lost and dying in their sins in the next two years will know Jesus and have hope forever.

Imagine in your mind that person in your world that you think is absolutely the least likely person to ever come to Jesus. If this was merely a human endeavor, that might be hopeless. But this is a God thing, and the reality is some of those people over the next couple of years will be sitting in those seats worshipping Jesus. And do you know who is going to reach them? *You* are. You are equipped with the power and presence of the Spirit of God to do the unimaginable, if you just believe that.

Why couldn't God use you to completely change your school, to cause a revival that the school next year would be radically different because of the power and presence of God? Why wouldn't God be pleased to use you to radically change your organization, your office, the marketplace, your neighborhood, your home, your family, your marriage? Why wouldn't we believe that? If Pentecost is true, then every day is a day of the supernatural, the mysterious, the unimaginable, the unexpected. The problem is we just don't believe that and so we don't live our lives that way. God could radically change this community in ways we could have never imagined if we just believe that by faith.

I am convinced of this: You will never *live* this truth until you first *believe* this truth. If you believe Pentecost really happened, it should radically change the way you live your life every day. Your life will never be the same again.

*Our Father, we are thankful that You sent Your Spirit to indwell every believer, to empower, to equip each of us to accomplish the mission to be proclaimers of the gospel. Lord, there are hundreds of different ways to present and proclaim the gospel through many personalities and gifts. Lord, give us creative minds to understand that—in essence, to realize every day is a day of the supernatural. Every day is a day of the unimaginable. Every day we dance on the edge of mystery of what You want to do through us to change the world. Lord, help us to believe this—to believe it to the point where every day is lived with a sense of anticipation, that today You may do the most unimaginable things both in us and through us for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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## **Study Questions**

*The Unstoppable Church*

### **God In Us**

**Acts 2:14-36**

Pastor Bryan Clark

#### **Opening Discussion**

1. How big is God? What are some ways to describe or understand the vastness of God and His power?
2. Imagine that same God pouring His presence and power into an organization to accomplish the mission statement of that organization. What words might you use to describe that organization?

Would anyone notice a difference now that God is running the organization? Why or why not?

3. Are those the same words people use to describe the Church today? Are people clearly aware that the Church is empowered by the person and presence of God? Why or why not?

#### **Bible Study**

1. Review the events of Acts 2:1-13. What are the reactions of the people observing the scene? Why?

2. Read Acts 2:14-21. How do we define the “last days” according to this text?

See also I Peter 1:20 and Hebrews 1:2. Are we in the “last days”? How might this affect our understanding of the urgency of our mission?

3. Peter quotes from Joel 2:28-32 to explain the events of Pentecost as recorded by Luke. Compare what Joel prophesied with what Jesus said in Acts 1:8. What happened at Pentecost, and why did it happen?
4. What does Peter confront His audience with in Acts 2:22-36? Outline Peter’s case that is summarized in verse 36.
5. What transpired at Pentecost was not merely the beginning of a religious movement. It was not a reorganization of Judaism. It was the miraculous fulfillment of Jesus’ promise to literally indwell His people and empower them to accomplish the mission. The Church is literally a God-empowered organism assigned to the task of changing the world through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus. Is that how you view the Church? Why or why not?

6. The Church of Jesus Christ is made up of individual followers of Jesus who are indwelt with the presence and power of Jesus. There is no way the Church corporate is going to reflect the power and presence of Jesus if each follower of Jesus doesn't first reflect that power and presence individually. In what ways do you see that power and presence in effect in your own daily life?

Why do you think we sometimes fail to live out the reality of God in us?

Do people ever look at you in amazement and wonder, as they did the believers at Pentecost? Why or why not? Do we have any less of the power and presence of the Spirit of Jesus than they had?

## **Application**

1. What will be necessary for you to experience more of the power and presence of Jesus in your life?
2. What should that power and presence of God in your life look like on a daily basis?

What should be the result according to Acts 1:8?

3. Are there people in your life that model the power and presence of God in their lives? In what way?

What can you learn from them?