

# Book of Acts Series - Part 2 | for Everyone

by Jim Cymbala

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*Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit available to all believers in the last days, as demonstrated in the early church at Pentecost.*

**Duration:** 23:45

**Scripture:** Joel 2:28, Acts 2:4-41, 1 Corinthians 2:14

**Topics:** "Book Of Acts"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a powerful event that took place during a youth meeting before an evening service. A 14-year-old girl stood up and gave a two-sentence testimony that was so full of God's presence that it moved everyone in the room to tears and worship. The speaker emphasizes the importance of God's ability to grab people's attention and bring about transformative experiences. The sermon then shifts to the story of Peter addressing a crowd after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, highlighting the significance of studying how Christian ministers in the New Testament age spoke.

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## Transcript

You know on Sunday, we're talking from the book of Acts, written by Luke. And what was Luke's profession? A doctor. A doctor.

And you remember the introduction I gave, that this is the early history of the Christian church. It either is the Acts of the Apostles, the Acts of the Holy Spirit working through the Apostles, the Acts of Jesus Christ, what he did through his people, through the power of the Holy Spirit. It's the biography of the early days of the church.

And it's very selective. In other words, we don't know what happened to Matthew. Where did Matthew end up? Where did Thomas, the doubting one, end up? Most church history tells us probably India.

And Thomas evangelized in India and met his end there. This is very selective. It picks up Jerusalem for a while, and then as we're going to learn as we go through it, it follows the conversion of the Apostle Paul, who was called Saul of what? Tarsus.

Right. But it all began, we read, when the Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is not a word, a biblical word to use.

It's a Jewish feast. Pentecostal has no meaning to God or to the Bible. Spirit-filled, New Testament believer, those Christian, that has meaning.

Other words do not have any meaning, so it's best for us not to use it probably. What happened? They were all together in one place, and they saw what seemed on the day of Pentecost. They were all together in one place.

Suddenly a sound, like the blowing of a violent wind, came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. I'll get to our verse in a second.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. In other words, came under the control in a new way of the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. The technical word for that is glossolalia, speaking in languages you don't know by the Spirit, not making up words, not monosyllables.

But as the Spirit inspired them in an ecstasy of some kind, the word denotes, they were having an ecstatic utterance of worshiping God in other languages as the Spirit enabled them. Now, because it was the Feast of Pentecost, Jerusalem was filled with people from all over the world. And the sound drew a crowd.

And then the next verses tell us that the people came from these different countries like we just had from the Caribbean. And they were utterly amazed. And they were saying, wait a minute, aren't these guys all Galileans from the northern part of Israel? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? So they came from all over the world, and they were hearing their native tongue spoken by people who didn't even know it.

So that was a double miracle. It was not only God inspiring them to speak another language, but God made it so that some of the people understood what was being said. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Residences, Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene.

Visitors from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs. We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongue, our own tongues. Now basically, with these people who were filled with the Spirit, as they spoke, as the Spirit gave utterance, they spoke to Jews.

Jews came and heard them because of the noise, the racket, the noise. And they were basically from the Middle East up into Turkey, what we call today Turkey, some into Europe, but especially northern Africa and over into what we call now Iraq and Iran. That's where these people came from.

And now they were hearing these people in this ecstasy speaking words that the Spirit seemed to be prompting somehow. What were they saying in these languages? They were praising God. They were praising God in languages they didn't know.

So when a person sometimes is inspired to speak in tongues, they can not only be praying, as the Bible indicates elsewhere, but sometimes they can just be praising in another language. Why would God want to do that? Because it's God's business, because God is sovereign. And what a humiliating beginning for the early church to be thought that they were drunk.

Because the Bible says, amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, what does this mean? Some, however, made fun of them and said they've had too much wine. So God made it so that when the church

was born, some of the intelligentsia looked at them and said, these guys are drunk. Why would God permit that? Because what the world calls stupid is wise with God.

And what is wise with God, the world calls stupid. And what the world calls so great is foolishness to God. So you don't go by the world's judgment.

You don't try to fit in with the world. You'll never fit in with the world. For the natural man doesn't receive spiritual things.

The natural guy, the people in the media, ABC, Fox News, all of that stuff, CBS, NBC, the New York Times, they don't understand spiritual things. The Bible tells us that. To them, the message is the gospel.

But we who are spiritual, who are Christians, we can understand subtleties of things the spirit is doing that's unknown to the guy on the street, even though he's making two million a year and he has a PhD. These things are not understood by intelligence. They're understood by spiritual discernment.

Everybody in favor say amen. That's what the Bible teaches. So now here comes the point as this is all happening.

Now we get the first sermon. So let's just look at it. Just a couple of verses of it because I don't want to give you the sermon.

I just want to get to one place. So now I have this noise. People are saying, what does this mean? Other people are saying, yo, these people are drunk.

Well, what are we doing here? Then Peter stood up with the eleven, eleven other disciples. He raised his voice. That's interesting.

He got loud because he wanted them to hear him. And he addressed the crowd, fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem. Let me explain this to you.

Listen carefully to what I say. So now we have the first sermon that we know about that we can study. We're not supposed to study what Moses said so much.

We're not supposed to study how Elijah spoke so much. We're supposed to study how Christian ministers in the New Covenant age, the New Testament age spoke. He lifted his voice and he told them, now listen to me so I can explain this to you.

He grabbed their attention. Sometimes when you have speak to a group or even to one person, you can say in love. Now listen to me.

I want to explain this to you. Listen carefully. These people are not drunk.

As you suppose, it's only nine in the morning. Who in the world is drunk at nine in the morning? He says to them, it's nine in the morning. They're not drunk.

So now we know this happened in the morning. All right. No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.

Now where's Joel found? Old Testament or New Testament? Old Testament. He's one of the prophets. And now Peter is saying what Joel spoke hundreds of years before is now being fulfilled now.

Between Malachi and the beginning of the gospel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, there is what is called by the Christian historians and theologians, the 400 silent years. From Malachi, the end of Malachi, the last prophet to when John the Baptist appeared, there's 400 years of history where no prophet, no Bible book, no writings, no prophetic scrolls, nothing. We have nothing for 400 years.

But now he's going back to the era of the prophets. And he says, no, this is what Joel spoke about what happened one day in the last days. So that tells us this.

The last days began then. We are living in the last days. We've been living in the last days for the last 2000 years.

Because Joel said in the last days, God is going to pour out his spirit. And he poured out it then. So when you hear people say, no, I believe we're living in the last days.

We've been living in the last days for a long time. Now, other people say, then there's the last last days right before Jesus returns. How many believe Jesus is coming back again? Lift your hand according to scripture.

But notice there in the last days, this will happen. And now it's happening. So the last days began then.

And it doesn't seem clear to most people from scripture that apostles like Peter, James, John, Paul, they understood everything about how God was gonna work out a prophetic calendar. It seems like they just had bits and pieces. So when you try to put it into a chart and make it this is the way it was, it doesn't seem that.

Paul seemed to be expecting the Lord to come in his own time. He didn't. Jesus said only the Father knows that time when the Lord will return.

It's something that we're not to focus on. Here's what we're to focus on. Look what we're to focus on.

In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy or they will speak with inspired speech. So in the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people.

The significance of that is this. The Jewish people only had the context of the Old Testament. They knew nothing of what we're aware of.

The people that he was speaking to, they didn't know anything about church history. They didn't hear the message of the gospel yet. Peter's about to give it to them.

So you got to remember in the Old Testament, the spirit only came on certain people. Let's just speak about the prophetic time. The spirit came on Isaiah and helped him prophesy.

The spirit would come on Elijah and he could do certain things. Extreme example, the spirit could come on Samson and he would do certain things. The spirit would come on Ezekiel, but there were just a handful of people that the spirit would come on who would do exploits for God.

It was very rare for the spirit to come on someone. It wasn't the Christian era that we live in where we have access all of us to the Holy Spirit, which is the point here. So when they heard in the last days, I'll pour out my spirit on all people, that was like, are you kidding? Like everyone's going to be in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

Yeah, God says in the last days, there won't be just a select few, a David, a Moses, a Joshua, an Elijah, Elisha, a Daniel. No, no, in the last days, I'm going to pour out of my spirit on everybody. Everybody's going to have it.

All nations will have it. Not just Jewish people, not just Gentiles, not just white people, black people, every person, I'm going to pour out my spirit on those who belong to me. That's the promise.

I'm going to pour out my spirit on all people. Won't be just a select few. Everybody's going to partake of my presence, my grace, my power.

Your sons and your daughters, there'll be no more sex division. There'll be no more men just use and women kind of in the Old Testament in the background. Although there was a Deborah and there were other great women of God in the Old Testament.

No, I'm going to pour out my spirit on men and women. The same spirit that comes on a man will come on a woman. A woman will be used by God.

A man will be used by God in different ways as the Lord sees fit. But no one's going to just say, oh, I'm a woman. I can't have the spirit.

No one will say, I'm a man. It's only for the women. No.

How many are happy God is pouring out his spirit on men and women of all races, all people? Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams.

Notice what it says right here. That's important for us. There's no age distinction now.

God's not just using young people. Someone says, you know, today's the day of the youth. Nonsense.

The Bible says otherwise. No, today's the day of just God is using the people with gray hair and all of that. That's silly too.

God will use children. God will use a 10-year-old. God will use a 20-year-old, 15-year-old.

God will use an 80-year-old. And that's why it's never right to target people in a church and have a church based on a certain age group. That deeply offends me.

They have target group churches in America now. It's one of the reasons Christianity is declining. If you're over 25, you don't exist to them.

They just want young yuppies or teens and every service, you know, is just geared toward young people. That's not right because God loves older people too. God loves people in their 30s and 40s and 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s.

Come on, do we say amen to that? It's wrong to just say a church is for older people. That's wrong. Churches for young people, churches for children because God is pouring out his spirit on all ages.

You can't say, no, God can only use an older person. No, look what he says. Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams. Notice the other thing. It's all universal.

It has nothing to do with male or female, gender, gender inclusive. And notice it's no age distinctions, but notice they're all going to be used and they all have available them the ability to be used supernaturally. They're going to get dreams that come from God.

They're going to see visions that come from God. They're going to be able to speak way beyond themselves. They're going to prophesy.

They can prophesy. They can speak sentences that will just be what God is saying. It's what God said.

I didn't make this up. This is in the Bible. Most Christians, most of the Christian church has been bound by what the Roman Catholic system brought in.

People out there, the priest up here, they listen to what he does and he ministers everything and then they go home and they come back next week. That is not the way God planned his church to be. Everybody can drink of the spirit.

Everybody can be used by God. Everybody can witness. Everybody can write a song if they're open and that's their gifting.

Everyone has access to be used by God in a supernatural way, not just gifting. Not just gifting a supernatural way. He's right now courting the piano, which he has the gift to do.

And we've got Jeremy over there who's super gifted in classical jazz and whatever. But that won't build a church. It has to be that skill anointed by the Holy Spirit so that there's a supernatural something that produces a song, ability to move people toward God.

This is what God said he would do in the last days. Male, female, all nations. Male, female, all ages.

It's all available. Even on my service, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy. And prophesy means not just foretelling something that's gonna happen, the ability to foretell, which we see in the book of Acts.

They foretold famines that would come to the land. But it's also foretelling. It's speaking something from God's heart to a person or a group of people.

And you don't have to say, thus sayeth the Lord. When you say it, the people know, whoa, that's from God. And it's available to, well, not everyone in the world.

It's available to his people who are his servants, even upon my servants. The only qualification I can see to receive the Holy Spirit is just to say yes to God and present yourself and say, here I am. And then God can use anybody in ways we could never even imagine.

Church history is made up of phenomenal stories of God using insignificant people in phenomenal ways. One of the greatest revivals that ever hit Earth in the last 2,000 years is called the Welsh Revival. It happened over in Wales, which is part of Great Britain, the British Isles.

And when they pinpointed, it began on a Sunday evening, the fire began, the revival that went on. It spread, it was invisible, it brought in music like they had never heard sung. People got converted who before were laughing at Christ and Christians, and now they were converted.

It did phenomenal things. And when they trace it all the way down, it probably began in a youth meeting before the evening service when a 14-year-old girl stood up and gave a two-sentence testimony. She said two sentences.

But it was so full of God that it melted everybody in the room. And they began to weep. Next thing, they began to worship God.

They couldn't stop them from worshipping God. So when the adults came in for the evening service, they couldn't get in to the building as usual because the young people weren't moving because they were weeping, praying, praising, worshipping, thanking God, kneeling, standing, sitting. As they came in and heard the young people, they got caught up, and the fire spread, and they began to praise God.

And the meeting went on and on, and then it had no end. When they gathered the next time for a meeting, that same spirit of fervency, that sense of God, then it went from that church. They went and visited another church, some of the young people.

Then that church got on fire. Next thing you know, all of Wales was on fire. Meetings were going on till midnight.

People, minors who would curse all day, were weeping, and the tears were going through the black soot that was on their faces. God raised up men like Evan Roberts and others who were mightily used, who really were never trained to be ministers. The most famous preachers from England would travel to Wales to try to get in the buildings because what they had heard was said, and what they were stymied by was there was no orator, there was no fancy preacher.

In fact, there was sometimes no preaching, just exhortations, just people, common people getting up and saying a few sentences, and then just the rest was singing and prayer and worship and praise. It's amazing. It had an effect on people who were seeking God here in America, who were in California at a place called, ended up being Azusa Street.

And when they traced it all down, a 13 or 14-year-old girl got up and said something so full of God that it set off a chain of events that it went around the world. Do you believe God can do that again? He won't do it exactly like that because he never does anything the same way twice. If you put him in a box, you miss him.

All you have to do is say, I'm open. We praise you, Lord. Can we all just lift our hands up and begin to praise him? As you praise him, just tell him, God, I'm available, here I am.

God, I'm available, I want you to use me. Forgive us our sins today. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

We plead the blood of Jesus Christ over every life in this room, Lord. You said if we confess our sins, you'd be faithful and just to forgive us. And as we open ourselves up to a visitation of your spirit, we want no condemnation, no lingering guilt, Lord.

We want your blood to cleanse our hearts, Lord. Cleanse our minds. Every eye closed.

If you're here tonight and whether you went on a mission trip with Pastor Park, you don't know how it happened, but you have this like deep desire, I want to be used by God. I want to have power from God so that I can touch lives, win souls, strengthen Christians. But I'm not content just to sit the way I am in church and wherever, however you serve.

I feel like Pastor Simbala, God has something more for me. I can't define it, but I want to say here I am to God. Just like they did back then, sitting in that upper room for 10 days.

If you feel that way, just get out of your seat and come up here to the front. And we're just going to linger, pray. You can sit for a while.

You can leave. You could do whatever you want. Don't talk in the building though.

Jesus, as we go forward this week, if you should tarry, as we continue to read your word, especially the book of Acts, would you teach us how to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit like never before? Would you come Holy Spirit in new ways in our church, upon the preaching of the church, the giving of the church, the mission work of the church, the deacons of the church, the children of the church, the youth of the church, the transitions, the seniors. Would you do as you said? Would you fulfill your word that you would pour out your spirit upon all flesh, sons and daughters, young and old? Would you bring us into another dimension of living for you, Lord? Would you take away fear and grant us the boldness that comes from your Holy Spirit? Would you take away walls and complexes and ethnic racial pride and help us to just overflow with the love that comes from the Holy Spirit? All we can say is here we are. Work in us.

Work in us tonight while we're laying in the bed. Work in us on the way home. Speak to us as we open your word.

Would you bless the youth meeting on Friday, transitions? Everything we're doing, Lord, here, just breathe on it. Let it, let the fire just come down wherever you want it to come down, but let it come down. Help us to not be filled with wine-wearing as excess, but be filled with the Spirit speaking to one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our heart to God.

Keep us joyful and happy. Spirit of God, blow away depression and gloominess from us so that the joy of the Lord will be our strength. Thank you for placing myself and the pastors and the deacons among the nicest people in the whole world, Lord, this congregation.

If I boast in anything, Lord, I boast in the beautiful people that you've brought into this building. I thank you for them. Help us now to love each other and serve one another.

Take away all haughtiness, all pride, and help us to esteem one another better than ourselves so that we can take a right position, Lord. And help us to help someone this week, to talk to someone, to invite someone, to bless someone. We pray this all in Jesus' name.

And everyone said, Amen. Let's put our hands together. Turn around, hug a bunch of people.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-cymbala/book-of-acts-series-part-2-for-everyone/>

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