

A summary of Acts 2:1-13

- 1. When was the last time that we were filled in Spirit? (Acts 2:4; Luke 4:1; Acts 11:24).** About 120 disciples on the day of Pentecost were filled with the Holy Spirit. However, Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit in Luke 4:1. Barnabas, in Acts 11:24, was a man full of the Holy Spirit. What is the difference between being a person filled with the Holy Spirit and being a person full of the Holy Spirit. A person who is full of the Spirit is able to turn more easily and quickly from the flesh to the Spirit. How? Through many experiences of being filled with the Spirit. Therefore, we also need to have many experiences of being filled. How can we be filled with the Spirit? We can open our mouth and praise and thank the Lord during the bread breaking meeting. Some believers may retort that they can praise the Lord silently. Certainly, we can praise the Lord with our heart, silently. We may even be in the Spirit, or have the Lord's presence when we do so. However, we may not be filled with the Spirit. When we exercise to audibly praise and thank the Lord, with a loud voice, we may release our spirit. What does that mean? It is not necessarily the words that we speak, or how well we speak, or how much knowledge of the Bible we can demonstrate in our prayer, but rather our spirit deep within us that echoes the Holy Spirit, also within us. That is why, at times, we may not even be aware of what we are saying, but we have the sense that we are filled with the Spirit, even if we only pray or praise for fifteen seconds. In addition, other brothers and sisters may also be affected by our praises, and may be inspired to praise the Lord. If we remain silent, we may not be able to affect others. The same holds true for our prayers. How can we be filled with the Spirit? Participate in the corporate prayers of the church. We need to seize every opportunity to praise and thank the Lord and pray with the saints for the specific needs of the brothers and sisters and the church.
- 2. We may also be filled with the Spirit by listening to others' prayers (Acts 2:5-11).** The disciples prayed for ten days together, obviously not continuously (they must have taken time to eat and sleep. To accommodate 120 people in the same place must also have been quite a challenge). Yet they were together and prayed together, and consequently were filled with the Holy Spirit in 2:4. Such prayers also can affect the listeners. The devout or pious Jews who had travelled to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost were privileged to hear their testifying of the mighty works of God. Therefore, not only do we need to pray ourselves, but we also need to dive into the prayers of others. Some brothers and sisters can testify that when they hear other brothers and sisters praying, they are immediately filled, and even lost in the Spirit. The release of the spirit by others may cause our spirits to also be released. We should never minimize or downplay the crucialness of the corporate prayers.

- 3. The mighty works of God are initiated by God Himself, but need our corporate prayers in one accord (Acts 2:41).** Only about 120 disciples were together to pray, in comparison with many more to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:6). In one sense, the degree of being filled can vary and fluctuate. For example, sometimes the attendance of the Lord's day gathering, as well as the number of saints who praise the Lord, may fluctuate, as well as the number of saints who gather together to pray. Not many praise the Lord or pray. Many saints do not attend the church gatherings. How often are we filled with the Spirit? Yet, in Acts 2:41, we see the Spirit operating in 3000 people. 3000 people got baptized. This is the mighty work of God. This is God's doing, something initiated by God. Yet it needed the corporate prayers in one accord of the disciples, and also Peter's speaking. This shows that if we pray, God will do something. If we preach the gospel, God will do something. It was God who prepared the pious Jews to come to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:5). But God very much needed His disciples to pray and He absolutely needed Peter's speaking. God's mighty works need our cooperation. Why do we praise the Lord? We praise the Lord, not just for meeting our own needs, but for His mighty works in the churches and amongst brothers and sisters.
- 4. We are people who doubt (Acts 2:12-13).** Some of the ones who were gathered together on the day of Pentecost, and heard the disciples speaking in different tongues (languages or dialects) were amazed and marvelled and recognized the mighty works of God (v.11). However, others doubted and suspected that the disciples were filled with new wine (vv.12-13). We should not criticize these ones. We may be just like them. Many of us have doubts. That is why we may not love the Lord that much. That is why the Lord's day attendance fluctuates. One week over 190 brothers and sisters attend. The following week, there are only about 160. What happened to the thirty who attended the previous week? Why were they not there? This is not to criticize anyone. We may very well be one of the thirty! We have doubts. Yes, one week we may have a little bit of faith, and we come and praise the Lord. The following week, we doubt if the Lord is real, if He really cares for us, and we may skip the corporate prayer gathering. We are just like the "doubters" in Acts 1:13. If we did not have doubts, we would love the Lord more, consecrate ourselves more to Him, preach the gospel with the saints on Sunday afternoon after the gathering, and participate in the corporate prayers. But we may not. That is why our growth of life may be so slow.
- 5. The corporate prayers bring in the filling of the Holy Spirit, and the filling of the Spirit is manifested or proven by the testifying of the mighty works of God (Acts 1:14-15; 2:11).** Without the corporate prayers, we may not have a strong experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Without the infilling of the Holy Spirit, we may not have the burden, utterance and anointing to speak concerning the mighty works of God. The corporate prayers bring in the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and the result of being filled is to testify concerning the mighty works of God. Peter was qualified to speak because he prayed for ten days with other brothers and sisters. We are not qualified to speak anything for the Lord if we do not engage in the prayers of the church. Any speaking in the church, any decision or enlightening by the Lord, is predicated on specific prayers offered up by brothers and sister concerning any particular matter related to other churches and brothers and sisters.