

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 7: Empty Vessels

Acts 2:1-12; 40-41

- **Gen. 11:1-9**
- One of the best companion texts to the story of Pentecost is not in the N.T. but in the very old O.T.
- There are some unmistakable similarities between these two stories:
 - --All gathered in one place.
 - --God coming down.
 - --Resulted in people speaking different tongues.
 - --From there people were scattered
- The circumstances were similar, but the results were vastly different.
 - Babel resulted in confusion, but Pentecost was an eye-opening experience.
 - Babel tongues separated people but in Pentecost it drew them in.
 - Babel they started off in power and went away in weakness, but in Pentecost, they started off weakness and went away in power.
- What made the difference? It all had to do with what they were filled with.
 - On the one hand, they were filled with themselves.
 - On the other they were filled with God.

<<Every day we make a decision between Babel and Pentecost>>

1. Let's jump back to our passage in Acts 2:1

- Their journey over the past 3 years had brought them from a position of strength to weakness from a place of being full of themselves to being empty.

2. Peter is a good example of this since his progress is pretty easy to track.

1. We are introduced to him as a businessman of sorts - self-supporting, independent fisherman.
2. He's self-made and self-confident – full of himself.

3. The place we find them is at a place where the process of God has stripped them of all the Babel in them.

- They watched Jesus die – they saw Him face to face after the resurrection many times – they watched Him ascend.
- To say they were humble would be an understatement.
 - They were empty of the themselves
 - They had a keen sense of their own inadequacy.

<<As a direct result of being empty – They were filled>>

- Peter who couldn't confess Jesus before a servant girl not only confesses Him but proclaims Him before all of Israel and 3,000 are saved.

<<Why? Because it's all about what your filled with>>

4. The power of being filled begins with the process of being emptied.

- Being empty of yourself is a good thing
- But our world pushes us back to Babel
- Self-confidence and a sense of one's own adequacy is the rule of the day

5. Here's something you may not know – God is in a continual process of emptying you so He can fill you with Himself.

- You may not like the process: it may be embarrassing – it may even be painful, but it's the best thing for you.
- We ask God to change our circumstances, but God may be using our circumstances to change us.

An illustration from the O.T. -- **II Kings 4:1-5**

We have a shortage of full vessels today in the church because we have a shortage of empty ones!!