

The Pure Speech of Pentecost

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Preacher: Paul Dirks

[0 : 00] Sister Church, and where I have been now for 15 years, my wife Rachel and I, we have three of our children with us here this morning. Two of them are serving in our church, which is always a wonderful thing to see.

And it is such a great thing to worship together with you and to sing a song like Christ, our living hope, when things are difficult, that we have a risen Savior who is seated at the right hand of God, who lives to intercede for us in the difficult times and in the blessed times, just even as we were considering and praying this morning.

It is Pentecost Sunday, and so our passage this morning is Acts chapter 2. I'll ask you to turn there with me. But we're also going to consider some other passages as well in light of this glorious account of the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower the church, to empower the disciples and the apostles for witness.

It's always interesting as a preacher to speak on a passage that is about speaking. And the passage that we have before us is certainly that, but to speak the nature of our speech, the content of our speech, the motives for our speech is of great interest to our Lord.

In one of the harder-hitting passages about our speech, in James chapter 3, verses 5 to 6, James, the half-brother of our Lord, he says, So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

[1 : 46] How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire, and the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.

There is a fittingness to our speech that matches us being witnesses for the Christ who saved us. He who is the living word, who came down from the Father, to speak to us that we might be saved. He preached to those who are far off and to those who are near, bringing us together. And now he has ascended and sent out his spirit that we might speak. And that speech is to be in a fitting, godly, pure, and holy way.

This is foreshadowed for us in Zephaniah chapter 3, verses 8 to 9. There we read that the Lord says, A passage that has significant parallels to Acts chapter 2.

In the day of Pentecost. Or consider Zechariah 13, verse 9, which says, And I will put this third into the fire, and refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested.

[3 : 30] They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say they are my people, and they will say, The Lord is my God. You may have sensed as I read these three passages, and there are others like them, that there is a thread running through scripture, a theme that connects here in the book of Pentecost, around the idea of fire and speech.

The idea of fire in scriptures, often we think of the idea of punishment, and of judgment, the idea of hell. And certainly that is prevalent in scripture. That is a truth that we cannot do without.

And yet, there is also this idea in scripture of refinement that comes through fire. For instance, in Psalm 12, verse 6, it says, The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.

As we come to Acts chapter 2, we see fire and the resulting speech that comes from it, all wrapped up in the work of the Holy Spirit as he has sent.

It's a passage that was prophesied by John, the last great prophet prior to Christ. You may recall that when the Pharisees and the Sadducees came out to his baptism, I'm reading from Matthew chapter 3, that he said to them, You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come.

[5 : 05] Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, We have Abraham as our father. For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.

Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I baptize you with water for repentance.

But he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn.

But the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. So here this morning, as we consider the fruition of this passage, as we see wind and fire and the resulting speech of a witness for Christ, the ascended Lord, my hope is that we consider how God is at work in all of this, not only upon the apostles for the bold proclamation of the gospel, but also how the Lord has granted us, who are his people, an indwelling work of the Holy Spirit, first and foremost, a work that begins in the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

But really what is seen in this passage is not a kind of a symbolic connection with regeneration, but more that of purification, or you might say consecration.

[6 : 39] How the Spirit works to purify, to set us on a course for bearing witness for Jesus Christ, for he is worthy.

He is worthy of a witness in this world. He is worthy of you bearing boldly the message, both of repentance and belief.

So let's consider this from chapter 2. First, we want to see this morning how this speech that is granted, I'll call it this pure speech, is granted from God the Father.

Secondly, it is speech in or by the Holy Spirit. And then lastly, it is speech about Jesus Christ. So first, let's consider how this pure and we'll see restored speech is from God the Father.

So the opening of our passage says, when the day of Pentecost arrived, or literally, when the day of Pentecost was fulfilled. And both these words, although I perhaps like the word fulfilled slightly more, it serves to communicate anticipation.

[7 : 55] And this anticipation was firstly built into the festival of Pentecost, which was 50 days after Passover. It was one of three pilgrim festivals, and it was a commemoration of the beginning of the wheat harvest.

And so as such, it was a time of great joy and thanksgiving. In those days, Jerusalem would swell with Jews from every corner of the earth, as well as Gentile proselytes.

And historians point out that because of its position in the calendar and the favorable weather at that time of year, that it was the best attended of all the Jewish festivals. So there was already an anticipation that was built into Pentecost.

But the anticipation of the disciples eclipsed that of the common Jew, because they were waiting for the promise, not merely of the field and the farm, but of the hearts and the souls of men.

And for that purpose, they were waiting upon the promise of the Spirit from the Father. In so many passages that speak about the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, it speaks specifically about how this is a promise from the Father.

[9 : 12] So for instance, in John chapter 15, verses 26 to 27, it says, But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. Or consider even if you just look back to Acts chapter 1, verses 4 and 5. And while staying with them, he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said, You heard from me, for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

So it is indeed, as they are waiting obediently, for the promise of the Father together, that we see in verse 2 and 3, that there comes suddenly from heaven, from God, from the Father, a sound like mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

And divided tongues appeared to them and rested upon them. So there is a descent from heaven of the sound of wind, as well as tongues of fire.

And both fire and wind or storm were both common elements in Old Testament theophanies or appearances of God.

[10:34] As, for instance, when the Lord descended upon Mount Sinai to grant them his law and his covenant. So what is taking place here is that in Acts chapter 1, Christ ascends, then now, in response to the finished, God-pleasing work of the mediator, the God-man Christ, Jesus, there is now a descent from God, of course, through the Son, and then this is the Holy Spirit and the gifts that come with him, the empowerment that comes from him.

But it is crucial to see the role of God the Father, or you could say generically God. If you are reading through the New Testament, you will recognize regularly that God the Father and God just in the generic are interchangeable.

Because of the background of this passage to, in the Old Testament, particularly in Genesis chapter 11. So I'm going to ask you to keep a finger here, and I'm going to ask you to turn to Genesis chapter 11, which is the account of the building of the Tower of Babel.

Turn with me to Genesis 11. Now the people here, we see are gathered together, but they're gathered together in rebellion to God's command earlier to Noah and his sons to, like Adam before him, kind of the dawn of the new race, to multiply and fill the earth and spread out throughout the earth.

Now the rebellion against God is made clear in verse 4 by three elements. First of all, there is the construction of a great tower, which is to reach up to heaven. Now historically, we know that this would have served both a political as well as a religious purpose.

[12:43] It was highly symbolic, and it illustrated a reaching up to be with God or gods. Secondly, they desired to make a name for themselves, we see.

So their purposes are not Godward, they're not God-glorifying, but rather are self-glorifying and self-seeking. And then thirdly, it says, lest we be dispersed.

This is a very strong statement in light of the background of God's command to Noah and his sons. It is as if they are saying, we need to do this lest we obey God, lest we do what God has told us to do.

And so the blessing of God, this command that had been meant as a blessing of God, they had been considering it as if it were a curse. And so what does God do?

Well, already in verse three, there's a funny little word play that illustrates what is to come. In mockery of their words, come, let's make bricks. In Hebrew, nilbana.

[13:49] God says, come, let us mix up nabala, their language. So God's kind of throwing some humor into what they are doing, kind of saying, now this isn't gonna succeed, I'm gonna come and I'm gonna change things completely.

So God acts to drive them apart, confusing their lips, mixing up their language, driving them away from this monument that is to their own glory.

And the peoples are dispersed. Their unity was used for anti-God purposes, and so the Lord separates them. So notice here some of the parallels between the account of Babel and our passage concerning Pentecost.

Whereas at Babel, the people gathered in defiance to God, at Pentecost, the apostles gathered in obedience to God in Christ. Whereas at Babel, the people themselves worked to ascend to heaven, at Pentecost, the apostles waited for the Holy Spirit to descend from heaven.

Whereas at Babel, their language was confused and their unified tongue was split. At Pentecost, divided tongues came together and people all heard of one glorious truth.

[15:06] Whereas at Babel, the people were dispersed in disunity, here at Pentecost, all peoples come together, united by the Holy Spirit for the sake of Christ. Whereas at Babel, the people want to make a name for themselves, at Pentecost, the people hear the apostles telling of the mighty works of God.

So whereas God came down to curse the people at Babel in regard to their speech, at Pentecost, he reverses the curse of Babel to grant a pure and unified speech through the Holy Spirit.

But it is something that happens from the heavens, from God, on account of the Lord Jesus Christ who has ascended on our behalf.

Well, let's go back to Acts chapter 2 and let's consider secondly the restoration of a pure and unified speech in the Holy Spirit with the elements of fire and wind symbolizing, among other things, the power and the sovereignty of the Spirit.

We read in verse 4, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. So here we see that the gift of the Holy Spirit brings about a gift

of tongues which is under the control of the Holy Spirit.

[16:28] So the gift of tongues is controlled by the gift, namely the Holy Spirit. Now I'm not going to comment this morning on the nature of the gift of tongues generally.

Suffice to say that it is very clear here that this gift enabled the apostles to speak in languages that were unknown to them but known to their hearers so that they can understand in their own native language.

It says in verse 5, Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. Every nation under heaven.

Now that is a, you know, it's a slight exaggeration, but the exaggerative language here is important for what it portends.

The believers, and particularly the disciples, are to be Christ's witnesses, as it says in Acts 1.8, to the end, or the ends of the earth.

[17:34] The very ends of them, everywhere, without extent, without bounds, without boundaries. They are, as we know in the Great Commission, they are to make disciples of all nations.

So here, this slightly exaggerative language is helpfully pointing out that this is the beginning of that consummation that will take place in every nation of the world.

In Luke 24, 47 to 49, it states this, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you.

But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.

Now, the people's response to this miracle is, in verse 6, bewilderment. In verse 7, amazement and astonishment.

[18:39] And in verse 12, amazement and perplexity. They're astounded by what they see and hear from the Spirit through the apostles who are speaking.

and all these different tongues that enable them to understand in their own languages. Surely, this is a work of the Holy Spirit, the one who blows how he wishes in ways that are unknown to man, incomprehensible.

You can't wrap your mind fully around what God is doing. Well, in Acts 2, verses 9 to 11, we see a list of various regions and peoples which is broken down into four groups of four.

I'm not going to read the entire list, but it is an impressive list, but not only so, but it also, with this, you know, four by four sort of grid or pattern, symbolizes the four corners of the earth.

So again, you have this emphasis on all the nations, the full compass of what God is going to accomplish through the preaching of his gospel.

[19:54] But verse 11 also adds an important detail, which is the subject of the apostle's speech, the mighty works of God. Now, that's a very general statement, but given what Peter goes on to say, it seems certain that the content related more explicitly to the gospel of Jesus Christ, his death for sin, his resurrection, his recent ascension.

In verse 14, Peter goes on to explain what is going on by citing the prophet Joel. You can go, if you want, later on and read that section, Joel 2, 28 to 30, and it mentions there the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, accompanying gifts and signs, and which finishes by saying, everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

again, alluding to the global implications of Christ's death and resurrection. And it is fitting that it is the coming of the Holy Spirit which ushers in this global mission because the idea of spirit connotes the idea of no restraint, no constraint, no boundary, no limits, no bounds.

If we're not careful, you see, we as Christians, we can think of spirit as being something that has a lack, it lacks a body. But in reality, it is the body which is a constraint upon spirit.

And God, who is spirit, does not have these constraints and so it is fitting that in the sending of the Holy Spirit, there is this great extension that is going out into all the earth that is without bounds.

[21:42] But the Spirit does this by focusing the apostles and the hearers upon the gospel of Jesus Christ. And so thirdly, this pure, restored speech is from God the Father, it is in or by the Holy Spirit, and it has as its purpose, its subject, its end, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So starting in verse 22, Peter gets at the heart of the gospel message. Now most everyone gathered there at Pentecost had heard of Jesus of Nazareth, although probably those coming in from other parts of the world, not as much so as those who were local.

But most everyone would have known and agreed that he was a man who had done great works, there were wonders and signs that he had done by the power of God. But when it came to his cruel and unjust death, although the responsibility for this greatest of sins lay upon the people of Jerusalem and her leaders, yet Peter preaches he was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

That is to say that the Father sent his Son to die in the place of you and I and that this was not plan B for God.

This was something foreknown. This was something that God had planned from before the foundations of the earth as a part of a greater and glorious plan.

[23 : 21] Not only for his own glory but for the glorification, the lifting up of his Son and all those who had put their faith in him. And so verse 24 states then that God raised him up.

Being both the living God, very God of very God our creeds confess, as well as righteous and innocent man, on both those accounts, it was not possible for Christ to be held by death.

And he cites Psalm 18 as proof. You will not abandon my soul to Sheol or let your Holy One see corruption. And then progressing from the resurrection to the ascension and then to the enthronement of Christ, Peter says in verse 33, being therefore exalted at the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Peter then cites Psalm 110 verse 1, which is the most often quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament, and then delivers the summation, let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

And so Peter, anointed by a fiery tongue, speaks by the Holy Spirit with fervent or fiery power, and the Holy Spirit brings conviction to the heart of those who crucified Christ.

[25 : 05] They were cut to the heart as it says in verse 37, and they cry out about what they should do. Here's Peter's response. Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. And as if there are any here this morning who have never received the gift of forgiveness and eternal life, I call upon you to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, to put your faith in the one who has died for you, who has risen and conquered death, and who has ascended to the right hand of God.

The Father has declared him pleased with what Christ has done, declared him Lord, he will return to reclaim his throne. You have sinned, but there is a way to sit with God and Christ in the heavenly places.

There is a way though you are condemned on account of the sins of your flesh to be right with God and that is by putting your faith in Jesus Christ, turning away from your sins and Satan and setting your hope towards Christ and God and then being baptized as that symbol, that reflection of what has taken place in the inner parts of your heart.

Do not wait. Today is the day of salvation for Christ is risen and he is seated at the Father's right hand. It is speech that is about Jesus Christ and this is the speech that ought to always fill our mouths as we bear witness to our crucified, risen and reigning Lord.

[27 : 24] I want to finish with three exhortations this morning. We've very briefly kind of tree-topped this passage that you could take so much more out of it.

We've tugged at one thread in the beautiful tapestry of this passage, but I want to leave you this morning with three exhortations in light of this speech that is granted to us and it's empowered in us.

What must we do? First of all, joyfully proclaim the gospel as evidence of the Holy Spirit's filling. filling. If you trace this idea of the filling of the Holy Spirit throughout the book of Acts, what you will find over and over again, and I don't know if there might be one or two exceptions, but it is a very regular pattern that when you have the filling of the Holy Spirit, there is a proclamation of Jesus Christ that comes from it.

the filling of the Spirit is for proclamation. Acts 1.8, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

John 15, 26 to 27, but when the helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me, and you also will bear witness

because you have been with me from the beginning.

[29 : 07] So often, we may speak about the desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to experience the peace, the joy, the power, the freedom that comes with the filling of the Spirit.

And here now, I'm not speaking merely of that initial work of the Holy Spirit, which gives us life, regeneration, but the fact that there are subsequent works of the Holy Spirit bringing us fresh joy, fresh power.

And we desire that, but here's the reality as we look at this truth, perhaps from the opposite standpoint, or coming at it from backwards, if you will.

that if you want to experience the power, the joy, the filling of the Holy Spirit, you need to be proclaiming boldly the gospel, and you will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

For roughly about two years now, a small group from our church has gone out largely to sky train and bus stations to do street evangelism.

[30 : 19] Now, don't get me wrong, I don't think this is the only way to do evangelism. I do not even think it is the primary way to do evangelism. However, it is a good way to do evangelism, and we, as we do this, what I have found is that even though the fear of man has not completely gone away, I still, as I, you know, grab my tracts and prepare to, you know, pass them out and even do a little bit, a little bit of proclamation, telling people what the message is as they walk by, my heart still flutters somewhat.

But, you know, as I do that, I often sense the filling and the joy of the Holy Spirit in a special way.

And, in fact, in those few occurrences, it is not very often, in which you are insulted for the name of Christ, or derided.

Somebody says something negative, usually under their breath as they go by. You know, in those times, interestingly, well, perhaps not surprisingly, when you read the scriptures, there is special joy in that.

So, if you want to experience the filling of the Holy Spirit, boldly proclaim and witness to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has a circular, fulfilling functioning function.

And if the pouring out of the Spirit, right, that river or that spring that is to go out of those who believe, as it speaks about in the book of John, if that does not happen to come back, it grieves the Spirit.

[32 : 03] It quenches him. It keeps him from issuing out for the purposes of bringing back in. Second exhortation this morning.

Speak boldly as prophets concerning sin and judgment. Notice in our passage, Peter's boldness. In Acts 2.23, it says, This Jesus, so Peter speaking, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

Peter is calling his listeners murderers. Did you catch that? Verse 36, Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus, whom you crucified.

Now, he's very particular here, and we're going to circle back to that. But we also hear, in very general terms, that judgment was, you know, was part of his message, although we don't have much of that, because it says in verse 40, And with many other words, he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

There's judgment coming. This is a wicked generation. So save yourselves. So there's a couple of things I want to point out about Peter's message here, both the, just the general idea of judgment and speaking about sin, but then the particular aspect of it as well, and the fact that he names the murder of Jesus Christ.

[33 : 55] So the first thing is that this is a preeminent sin, the murder of Christ. This is the sin that is above all other sins.

And in a certain sense, we all are responsible for the death of Christ. This is not something that we lay at the feet of the Jews. The Father sent him for us and for our sins.

And Christ came willingly to deliver us from our punishment. You are responsible, in a certain but important sense, for the death of Christ, because you have sinned against the most high God of heaven.

But it is not only a preeminent sin that Peter is speaking of, but a particular sin. All right? And this is where I want to focus just for a minute. Peter was not afraid to press the finger right upon the nerve of the people.

You did this. Now, often for people to know that they are sinners, that is, that is their state before God, they have to be convinced of particular sins.

[35 : 16] And this is why it is important that we be willing to be a prophetic people and to point out other sins in order to bring conviction. This isn't wrong to do.

It is right, and in fact, we are responsible to do so. Now, of course, we don't always need to lead with this in our conversations. However, it is important that we do not shirk our responsibility and hide behind some vague idea of God's love or some cultural sense of Canadian niceness and politeness.

If you are part of the prophetic people of the church, you are called to preach against the sins of your culture and your time, just as Peter did. Francis Schaeffer says this.

We are saying that we want, so this is, this is, how many decades ago? 30? 30 years ago? Three decades ago? Maybe a little bit more? He's saying this. We want reformation and we want revival. We want, we want another work like this, right? In Acts chapter 2? We want that, but still we are not preaching into this generation. God exists. He is holy and we must know that there will be judgment.

[37 : 05] And like Jeremiah, we must keep on so speaking regardless of the cost to ourselves. there is cost for speaking out boldly, for putting your finger on the sins of others.

According to tradition, Peter died a martyr's death in Rome, but not before he saw thousands saved by his preaching.

May the Lord use us in such a way. Lastly, this morning, I call on you to pursue the unity of peoples and nations by teaching truth.

truth. We see here this wonderful idea of the spirit and the proclamation of Jesus uniting these people before it, it goes out into all the earth.

Truth is transcultural. Truth is transcultural. Truth is transcultural. Truth is transcultural. We know that this one gospel message that united all these peoples here at the beginning, at the inception of the church, was carried out into all these corners of the earth.

[38 : 28] For instance, into Rome, as BK has been mentioning. It was planted. The church was planted there, not by any apostle, but by those who took this message of Jesus Christ, probably from this work at Pentecost.

So it is the truth of Jesus that unifies the tribes, tongues, languages, and nations, as we read of in Revelation chapter 5. But consider this.

Consider the times we live in, in which the powers, evil powers, it seems very clear to me, are trying to unify the human race against God.

The World Economic Forum, the UN. And at some point, whether it is close at hand or in some distant future, there will be a measure of success in this anti-Christ unity that Satan wants to try to bring about.

Because it says in Revelation 13, 7 to 8, also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation.

[39 : 46] And all who dwell on earth will worship it. Everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.

Satan is always trying to counterfeit the unity of Christ and his church. He can't truly do it. And he certainly can't do it without all sorts of totalitarian power pressing on that takes away freedom.

Rather than the Lord Jesus, who through the Holy Spirit grants freedom. But it is as we hold to the truth of Jesus, as we are willing to be marked by his message, rather than the marking of the beast system of the world, which I don't think is just something coming in the future, but there's a pattern that gets repeated, a principle that gets repeated throughout history.

It is as we do that, that God grants the unity of all peoples. It says in Ephesians 4, 4 to 6, There is one body and one spirit.

Just as you are called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

[41 : 10] Hallelujah. How do we achieve this unity? Or just a little later, the Apostle Paul says this, And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I want to commend you, Squamish Baptist Church, that though there have been some ups and downs in the history of the church in the time that I have known it, and there are those, of course, who have known it longer here than I, that by and large, there has been a preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ here.

A holding fast to the only truth that is able to unite peoples. And as the Lord God brings in people of other tribes, tongues, languages, and nations, immigrants, newcomers, refugees, you will find that the truth of Jesus Christ is what will unite you.

If we leave behind the trappings of tradition, whether they are European-type trappings and traditions, whether we're tempted to move our traditions over to some other culture, certainly all that we do does have some aspect of culture to it.

I'm not discounting that completely. But sometimes churches get so wrapped up in how we do things to try to reach people. What you need to do is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[43 : 19] And that truth will resonate in the hearts of people no matter their tribe, their tongue, their language, their nation. Let me just close by reading from Zephaniah 3, 8 to 9 again.

For at that time, I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech that all of them may call upon the name of the Lord and serve him with one accord.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, how blessed is this unity that you grant through a purity of speech.

Lord, you have cleansed our lips through Christ and his atonement, through the sending of the Spirit to give us new life. But also, you have consecrated us and equipped us and empowered us to speak for Jesus.

So help us to do that. Help us not to be cowards. Forgive us for when we have been. Lord, help us to be full of your Spirit and for the resulting joy and peace that comes from the proclamation of Jesus and bearing witness to him.

[44 : 46] Help us to think more about how Jesus, you're worthy of our proclamation more than that we're scared to say what you say. And help us be willing to put our finger at the right times and the right ways with boldness, also with grace and our speech seasoned with salt upon the sins of people, of our culture.

And Lord, we look forward to how you will bring in the nations as we find the center in the truth of Jesus Christ. We pray this for the glory of Christ.

Amen.