

The Spirit Descends

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

! Acts 2, we're in Acts 1 last week, so we're going to take this book one, not quite one chapter at a time, because we'll be in this chapter for a few weeks.

But we are taking it one section at a time. So Acts 2, let me go ahead and begin reading in verse 1.

Acts 2 verse 1, in, actually I was going to the very first verse. 2 verse 1, when the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

[1 : 03] And divided tongues as of fire appeared on them, and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Verse 5, now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

And they were amazed and astonished, saying, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear each one of us, or each of us, in his own native language?

In your language? Parthians and Medes, Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene and visitors from Rome.

Both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians. We hear them telling in their own tongues the mighty works of God.

[2 : 24] And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, What does this mean? But others, mocking, said, They are filled with new wine.

Prepare to crash. These were the last words spoken on the Green Hornet. In the spring of 1943, the American World War II combat plane and its 11 men set off on a search and rescue mission over the Pacific Ocean.

Roughly 200 miles into the trip, the plane lost its two left engines, spiraled toward the sea, and exploded upon impact. On the Green Hornet was Louis Zamperini, a national celebrity at the time.

Louis had finished eighth in the 500-meter run at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and was predicted to run the first sub-four-minute mile. The good news, Louis somehow survived the crash.

The bad news, he was stranded in the middle of the largest ocean in the world, and nobody knew he was there. Louis faced brutal challenges as he drifted for the next 47 days.

[3 : 48] His skin burned with sun blisters and salt sores. His swollen lips pressed forcefully into his nose and chin. Without food, he lost almost two pounds a day.

To top it off, he had two enemies. The first came from below, a posse of 12-foot sharks, mockingly rubbing their backs on his flimsy, inflatable raft.

The second was from above, the Japanese. After weeks of aimlessly drifting, Louis was spotted by one of their planes.

They shot up his raft, and somehow they missed Louis. Yet, with these and all the other challenges facing his life, perhaps the greatest threat to his survival came from within, thirst.

Thirst. Thirst. How could this be? All he could see in every direction was water. Cool, crisp, clear water.

[4 : 51] It looked like drinking water, felt like drinking water, and even sounded like drinking water. How could this be an issue? Louis was surrounded by 64 million square miles of salt water, and he couldn't take a sip.

What would have happened if Louis drank the surrounding sea? First, the salt water would have dried out his insides and left him thirstier than before. Second, he would have experienced the worst hangover of his life.

He would have suffered explosive diarrhea, a pounding headache, muscle cramps, dizziness, a dry mouth, vomiting, increased blood pressure, and a rapid heartbeat. If he kept drinking, he would have fallen into a coma, experienced massive organ failure, and sustained irreparable brain damage.

Eventually, drinking salt water would have killed him. So Louis refused the urge to sip the Pacific.

But I wonder if we refuse and resist the same urge. While we're safe on land, we're still plagued by thirst.

[6 : 00] We're desperate for something to satisfy and fill us with joy, and all the world offers us is salt water. Maybe it's the promise of success that drives us far from home to chase our dreams.

The sky is the limit. All you need are good grades, a good work ethic, and the life, the good life will be yours. Yet success always overpromises and underdelivers.

Maybe it's the promise of comfort that causes us to believe the life we are supposed to have is one that's easy and pain-free. Remember that movie, *The Princess Bride*?

Life is pain, princess. But it's not funny. When the divorce that you didn't want comes your way, when the perfect house you bought comes with many problems, when the children continue to stray, when the nights are long and you've grown used to dulling the pain with drinks, or perhaps scrolling Facebook late into the night to dream of the life it should have been.

Maybe it's the promise of approval that gets you out of bed every morning. If I'm driven enough, pretty enough, creative enough, successful enough, godly enough, then people will finally like me.

[7 : 22] But all of it's salty water. This morning, we come to some of the most amazing verses in Scripture.

The Lord unveils His promise to give life and living water to a world dying of thirst.

This morning is not for you if you've got it all together. You're not going to fit into this passage. It's for those that are tired and weary from all the empty promises of success, comfort, approval, sex, money, power, and so on.

Where we're going, the Spirit gives life so that we might see and savor Jesus and draw others to life. The Spirit gives life so that we might see and savor Jesus to draw others to life.

I'm going to approach this very simply. The first point is, what happened? Because there's a lot going on in this passage. What happened? Imagine if you lived in a remote indigenous village, or imagine you went and visited there.

[8 : 28] Imagine trying to tell them about some of the advances of the modern world. How would you explain the modern world to somebody who didn't know cars or planes or computers, doesn't even know television or telephones?

How would you explain electricity? Maybe you'd say, along the path going to my house, there's massive trees that are there every 100 feet or so.

Then in between those trees are strings between the trees that are pulled between the trees. These trees, they run along each road.

Then the trees, when they get close to our house, they bring one of those strings inside it. These strings are really powerful. I mean, how would you explain that?

You know, like the sun lights up the day. Well, these strings carry power to light up the house. You get it. It'd be a little hard, right?

[9 : 30] It'd be hard to explain that. Well, that's kind of what Luke's doing in our text. He's describing one of those, you had to be there moments. You know, the joke that lands flat. You just had to be there.

And he's trying to find the right words. There's an incredible experience. He's trying to put the right words. And you see that. He says, there's a sound like a mighty rushing wind. It's like a wind.

That's the closest thing I got. That's kind of what he's saying. It's tongues that were of fire that rested on people. You know, he's talking about things we've never seen.

And he's trying to explain it. He's trying to help us grasp it. Then he goes on. People are everywhere and coming from everywhere. And they each hear their own language. You had to be there. And even some of the people that were there didn't get it.

You know, look down at verse 12. They said, all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, what does this mean? What does this mean? Before we can determine what it all means, we've got to determine what happened.

[10 : 34] And I just want to walk through a bunch of details real quickly. But what happened? Well, the day of Pentecost that we see right there in verse 1. It's 50 days after Passover. So all these Jews, so that's where all the names, I was having trouble reading those names, they kind of all descended on Jerusalem for a feast, for a party.

It was the feast of the harvest. So they brought the first fruits of the harvest from their harvest to the Lord to worship. Then he points out that they were all together in one place.

So he's talking about those disciples, those 120 that we met last week. They're all together in one place praying. They're united in the upper room. And then the wind and fire comes.

We see that immediately. The sound like rushing wind comes. And then these tongues of fire appear. The idea is that the wind and fire make clear God is present. The wind and fire point to his presence and power.

The Lord appeared to Moses in a fiery bush. Remember that? It wasn't consumed. The Lord led the people with a cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night.

[11 : 44] When Solomon built the temple, remember he dedicated the temple and the cloud filled the temple. Well, that's what's going on. The Lord is present. This is a unique moment. And the Lord is present with his people.

Then verse 4, he says, The wind fills the house and the spirit fills all the people. The wind fills this house and the spirit fills all the people.

The fire rests on each person and each of them are given words. And that kind of pans out, an incredible scene of all these people kind of looking in. So somehow this radical thing that happens in this room where the disciples are gathered, all the world's looking in.

Each of them are hearing the mighty deeds of the Lord proclaimed in their own language. Look down there in verse 11. He says, So it's quite a series of events.

Quite a remarkable day. Not just an average day at the office. They were all perplexed and amazed. So what does it mean? We're going to tackle that first by saying, Point two, what it doesn't mean.

[13 : 02] What it doesn't mean. What this passage does and doesn't mean has led many to conclude different things about the Christian life. It's a passage that sadly divides more than unites.

That almost seems odd when you just read it out. And much of it revolves around the tongues. The gift of tongues is right here. So if you're our guest today, yes, I'm talking about tongues today.

Because the text does. The word for tongues found in this passage throughout the New Testament is used in reference to languages in two ways. I will briefly teach on this.

But first is a specific known language. That's what's going on here. A specific known language. And they say, you know, are they all Galileans? The reason he says that is because they're all Galileans and they all speak in a specific known language, Aramaic.

And so the Spirit descends and the disciples tell the mighty deeds of the Lord in known languages that are not known to them.

[14 : 11] Does that make sense? So it's a known language. That's one way. So that's used throughout the Bible. Revelation talks about every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

It's talking about a language representing a people. Does that make sense? Point two, though. Tongues is also a specific form of Spirit-inspired prayer or praise in unknown languages.

A specific form of Spirit-inspired prayer or praise in unknown language. That's what's going on in 1 Corinthians 14 when Paul says, I speak in tongues more than any of you.

This is Spirit-inspired prayer or praise. It's a personal, private prayer or praise language that enables one to pray when they don't know how to pray.

To pray with groanings too deep for words. That said, I want to point out what this passage doesn't mean in reference to the gift of tongues.

[15 : 20] First is, this passage doesn't mean all Christians will speak in tongues. All the disciples and the 120 were filled with the Spirit.

All of them spoke in tongues, yes. But this gift is not given or therefore available to all. 1 Corinthians 12, 28, which we have for you. Do all speak in tongues?

It's rhetorical. No. Spirit gives gifts to each as He wills. Second, this passage doesn't mean speaking in tongues is the initial or primary evidence of the Spirit.

You do not have to speak in tongues to be filled with the Spirit. Some say that. Some say you have to speak in tongues, out loud, in a service, in order to be truly a Spirit-filled church.

Even though that practice is strongly prohibited in the New Testament. The point is, if you confess Christ, you possess the Spirit.

[16 : 26] That's what the Scripture says. We have 1 Corinthians 12, 3. Which I think we have for you. No one can say, Jesus is Lord, except in the Holy Spirit.

No one can say, Jesus is Lord, except in the Holy Spirit. You know, honestly, some of the most Spirit-filled people I know do not speak in tongues or talk a lot about the Spirit.

One of my friends is battling stage 4 lung cancer. Last year was given, I don't know, six months to live. It seems like his life is completely dominated by the Spirit's presence and power.

Charles Spurgeon didn't speak in tongues. He was probably the most fruitful minister outside of Jesus Christ.

Paul. Ever walked the face of the earth. He did pray every time he went into the pulpit. As he stepped on each step, I believe in the Holy Ghost.

[17 : 33] I like that. Thirdly, this passage doesn't mean you should not pray for this gift if you don't presently possess it. Do you speak in tongues?

What do you think about this gift? Do you think it's biblical? Now, we don't have a lot of message on this, so if you're new, this is not something we tackle every Sunday. And, you know, it's not like at the core or the center of who we are as a church.

It is in this text, so I am going to tackle it. But in many ways, it is commended in the Scriptures. I see no biblical warrant for saying any spiritual gift in the New Testament has ceased or passed away.

So if it's biblical, is it desirable? Do you pray for the gift? Point three, what it does mean.

What this passage does mean. I'm sure you can see now why this passage divides more than unites, but I think that's wrong.

[18 : 37] No, this passage is meant to amaze us and excite us about God's promise to give life and living water to a broken, weary world.

It's about God's promise to supply all that we need. And so we're just going to tackle this for the rest of the message. The first is this passage is telling us that the age of the Spirit has come.

The age of the Spirit has come. Look down there with me in verse 2. Verse 2, Acts 2, verse 2. He says, suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind.

You know, remember last week we talked about how, as promised, Jesus ascended into heaven and is exalted at the right hand of God. Well, when it says heaven right here at the beginning of chapter 2, it's trying to tell us that now that Jesus is exalted, He sends the Spirit down.

Remember in John, He said, I will go to the Father, but I will send another to you. I'll send the Comforter to you. And so Jesus sends His Spirit down from heaven on all who receive the good news.

[19 : 42] And so before the moment of Pentecost means anything for us personally, we must take note of what Pentecost means in the perfect plan of God. Throughout the history of His salvation in the Old Testament, the Lord gave the Spirit to specific people in specific times and specific tasks.

Prophets were given the Spirit to prophesy. Certain people were given gifts of the Spirit to interpret dreams. Specific craftsmen were given gifts of the Spirit to craft things for the temple.

But the age of the Spirit now has come on all people. Look down in verse 16 and 17, actually. What we'll tackle next week.

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. So this is what happened. This is what Peter's saying. And in the last days it shall be, God declared, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

That's what's going on. The Spirit is descending on all flesh. On young and old, male and female, servants, people of every tribe, tongue, and nation.

[20 : 50] After Jesus ascends, the Spirit descends on all who receive the good news. He gives life. He's the wind that comes into our dry bones.

What Ezekiel 37 says, he removes the heart of stone, Ezekiel 36, and gives us a new heart. He baptizes us at conversion. I love this.

1 Corinthians 12, 13, which we have for you as well. He says, for in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free. That's all people.

That's what he's saying. And all were made to drink of one Spirit. We are baptized in it. Now, I am a Baptist, you know, so that means full-on immersion. There was no sprinkling with the Spirit.

It was full-on immersion. The idea is that we were given all the Spirit. We were made to drink of it. He gives us power to obey. You know, this morning I was doing some sort of devotion or attempt at it around the breakfast table.

[21 : 51] I said, does anybody have trouble obeying? And my hand shot right up. Even Knox went, yeah. You know, we have trouble obeying.

So some of what we do when we're parents, we're looking to see evidence of new birth, evidence of new life. Has the Spirit come to help obey?

I mean, we're looking for perfection, looking for our kids to kind of check all the boxes and do all the right little things, you know, make their bed every day or something like that. We're looking for evidence of the Spirit because that's what he promises to do.

The Lord said, I'll put my Spirit in you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. That's what the Spirit does. He gives us gifts and fruits and works miracles.

He gives us a down payment of all we receive. That's what the text says. The Holy Spirit is a down payment of all that we will receive. He gives us a real felt sense of the love of God in Jesus Christ and a certain sense that we are children of God.

[22 : 58] Most of all, the Spirit gives life so that we might see in Savior Jesus Christ. The Spirit is like glasses. I wear glasses.

I couldn't tell you what color a robin is without glasses. I can barely tell you with them, you know. The Spirit brings Christ into focus.

Well, it's hazy. Who created this world? Heaven's clear of the glory of God, but who is Christ? The Spirit brings Christ into focus so that we can see and savor Him, so we can live for Him.

It sets us free from all the empty promises. That's what's going on, you know. That's why opening with that, you know, the promise of success or comfort or approval or any of these things, the Spirit sets us free from them to see the glory in Jesus Christ.

One of the things I love about Louis Zamperini's story, I didn't want to leave him on the Pacific for you, but he made it to land. He had it brutal.

[24 : 06] One of the many folks who was brutally persecuted and brutally beaten by the Japanese, made it back to the States, pounded alcohol for years, trying to figure out what was going on with his life.

And believe it or not, he was born again at a Billy Graham revival out in California, and gave the rest of his life to serve in the Lord.

Isn't that incredible? That's what the Spirit does. It changes everything in a moment. Yeah, I think what the point of this passage is, the Spirit puts an exclamation point on the good news of the gospel.

Christianity is not maintenance. It's a miracle. It's new life. It's not a few touch-ups. It's a dead man being raised up. Christianity is not rules.

It's grace. Christianity is not performance. It's gift. It comes to those who wait, not those who work. Christianity is not religion. It's gospel. Christianity is not flesh.

[25 : 10] It's spirit. And God did not put Acts 2 in our Bibles so that we can look back and say, isn't that great? God put it there so that we would long to live in the good of the Spirit.

I love John 6, 63. It says, it is the Spirit who gives life. The flesh is no help at all. Man, when you're getting out of bed motivated by the flesh, just proclaim that verse to it.

The flesh is no help. The kingdom of God is not right-thinking, rule-keeping, and obedience. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. That's incredible.

It puts an exclamation point on the gospel. Second, all Christians are meant to live in the visible and evident power of the Spirit. The Spirit's invisible.

We were talking about that this morning. The Spirit is invisible. The wind blows where it wishes. And though you don't see it, you hear its sound and see its effect, right?

[26 : 12] You see those pines bending back and forth in the wind. So too with the Spirit. The Spirit fills and they speak in this facet.

The Spirit controls them so much that some say they're drunk. It's not the only time the Spirit's been confused with inebriation.

Ephesians 5.18 says, Don't get drunk with wine, but that's debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit. I think the idea there is that both wine and the Spirit leave a visible effect.

They're meant to. They leave a visible effect. Martin Lloyd-Jones famously said, Both too much wine and the Spirit can be described as being under the influence.

Well, I want to be under the influence. I've been under the influence of wine. I want to be under the influence of Spirit. That's the idea. The Christian life, we're meant to experience the Spirit in deeply evident, visible, and life-changing ways.

[27 : 17] Throughout the history of the church, people of all kinds, that means all kind of theological backgrounds, have told stories, tell stories of deep experiences with the Spirit.

Blaise Pascal was a mathematical genius in 1623. You probably heard of him. He ran from the Lord for 31 years. One night, he had a dramatic encounter with the Lord.

And he wrote about it. Look at these words. He says, Year of grace, 1654. Monday, 23rd November. From about half past ten at night to about half an hour after midnight, fire.

God of Abraham. God of Isaac. God of Jacob. Not of philosophers and scholars. Certitude. Heartfelt joy. Peace. God of Jesus Christ. God of Jesus Christ.

My God. My God. And your God. Joy. Joy. Joy. Tears of joy. Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ. May I never be separated from him.

[28 : 27] I mean, what's that even mean? He doesn't even make sense. He wrote it. Sewed it into his jacket.

I think the point is, he finally realized he knows the Lord. And the Lord knows him. He could read the book a thousand times. But apart from that experience, he doesn't know it.

I'll never forget after becoming a Christian, I think I went down every altar call possible. I mean, that's kind of my default. Altar call, go down. Altar call, go down.

I remember in the fall of 2001 at a youth gathering there as a chaperone, believe it or not. But 21 years old, had become converted.

In that moment, there was an altar call, and I was, should I go down? Felt like the Lord said, subjectively, yes. An experience saying, it's not for you anymore.

- [29 : 36] The altar call is not for you. You're already mine. Acts later says, the Lord knows whose are his in every city. The Spirit bore witness with my spirit that I was a child of God.
- I didn't go down to any other altar call. A powerful moment. Lord, yes, you plucked me out.
- I don't know why, but this I do know. Faith in Jesus Christ is not a faith in a man that lived.
- It is that, right? It's not even faith in a man that lived and died for other people. Faith in Jesus Christ. Saving faith in Jesus Christ is that Jesus Christ is a man who lived and died for other people, but also for me.
- That's saving faith. That's full-on trust. I mean, that's what I offer you. I offer you the gospel of Jesus Christ, not merely as a nice man, not merely as a good man, but as a saving man who comes to save and rescue.
- [30 : 48] That's what he wants you to believe. That's what he wants you to know. So Christianity is not dead religion. It's not outward action. It's a religion of the heart. It's a heart that's been transformed by knowing and loving this God.
- So you should pursue joy, delight, certainty, peace, and strength in the Holy Spirit. I think that's the point. I mean, do you pray for the Spirit's power?
- I should get an amen from Ron back here. Yeah. If your life can be lived in your own strength, then you aren't living. Every day.
- Lord, I can't do this. I can't be the man I got to be. I can't be the father I got to be. I can't be the husband I got to be. I can't be the community member I got to be on my own.
- Take joy, for instance. We're commanded. Joy's commanded, right? Delight yourself in the Lord. Make a joyful noise.
- [31 : 55] We don't sing because some of us can't sing. I can sing, but no, I'm just kidding. But, you know, happiness is something we can feel, you know, when things are going well and life's good.
- You know, you got that paycheck. You know, you got that spring in your step. But joy is different. It can't be manufactured. It can't be produced. First, it's a fruit of the Spirit.
- That's why. There's so many things I could say right now. But one thing I would say, just pray to be filled. Pray to be filled. John Piper, very conservative guy, says, I pray for the baptism of the Spirit every day.
- It's not a weird thing. I'm praying to drink of it again. I need to drink of it again. I need a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit to empower me.
- There's so much I'd like to say, but I should keep moving. And third, the Spirit empowers us to draw others to life. The Spirit empowers us to draw others to life. You know, in many ways, this whole scene is a picture of the rest of the book of Acts.
- [32 : 54] You remember, chapter 1, Jesus gathers up the apostles and the 120, and he tells them that not long from now I will go to be with the Father, but the Spirit will come from on high, Acts 1-8, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, all Samaria, and even to the end of the earth.
- And so it's kind of like this is a picture of that. So we get to Acts 2, and when the Spirit falls on them and fills them, the Spirit empowers them to proclaim the mighty works.
- Do you see? It's like he's given a foretaste of what this is going to be. The promise is true. You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, to the end of the earth.
- But the Spirit is going to do the heavy lifting. I love that. You're going to be my witnesses. And he makes it sure, because the first time they witness, they don't even know the language they're speaking.

I think that's supposed to be a picture of what evangelism, what living for Christ is like. What do you think the disciples thought after Pentecost? You know, I mean, that's quite a day. You know, you're going to rest well that night, right?

[34 : 06] This is incredible. Pentecost, party down. You think they woke up the next day and said yesterday was great, but I just don't know if I can go preach today. I don't know if the power would be there.

You know, the folks at the temple are going to be really mad. They're going to come after us, so we should lay low. We should lay low, avoid something. Are you sure the good news is for those guys over there?

They're Gentiles who don't know anything about the things of God. No, the disciples or the apostles didn't think like that at all. Pentecost provided the apostles all the certainty they needed that they would preach the gospel and that the Lord would draw many to Christ.

I think that's the idea. Pentecost gave them all the certainty they needed that they would preach the gospel and God would lead many to Christ. But is it enough certainty for you?

For me? You know, sometimes we read Acts and we think, this is just an anomaly. This is just, these are just those people that were really eyewitnesses that saw Jesus raised from the dead.

[35 : 14] It's not meant to be that way for us, but that's not the way we should read it. They're far more like us than we realize. But is it enough certainty? Is Pentecost enough certainty for you to walk across the hall to speak to your suite mate?

Is enough certainty to call your brother up and tell him what really happened? Is enough certainty to step out of your comfort zone?

One of my friends likes to say, is enough certainty to cross the pain line? You know, we can have conversations with neighbors, friends in the grocery store, co-workers that are pain-free.

Talk about the balls. Not much to talk about, but talk about different things going on. But does it cross the pain line? Does it go into, what's your spiritual background?

What do you believe about Jesus Christ? What do you know about him? Does it go outside what's comfortable? Is it certain enough?

[36 : 18] Is it enough certainty for you to rise up each day with this confidence? That regardless of how ordinary your day is, your simple, faithful witness to Jesus Christ matters.

Because the Spirit has come and promises to draw many to life. The Spirit gives life so that we might see and savor Jesus Christ and draw others to Him.

Have you ever heard of Jim Elliott? Got a nod back there. One of the five missionaries in the 50s who took the gospel to Ecuador was speared by the Akka Indians just soon after arriving there.

Jim is great. But I think we would be better served by trying to be like his brother, Bert, who I guess you've never heard of.

Bert said, who recently passed away, my brother Jim and I took different paths. He was a great meteor streaking through the sky.

[37 : 36] He continues, Bert was not. He did not go streaking through the sky. Nobody lined up with telescopes to watch his life.

Instead, he was a faint star in the distance that faithfully rises night after night, always there, always faithful, always doing the same boring thing.

In the kingdom of God, there's a great need for streaking meteors, but most of us won't be that. We will instead be faint stars, husbands and fathers, wives and mothers, accountants and teachers, business people, students.

We'll go through life day after day doing very much the same thing tomorrow that we did today. The important thing for us to remember is that we're needed. We have the privilege of holding up the gospel in our day.

There's a great need, he continues, for people to be willing to stand in the midst of the boring, convinced that there's no such thing as ordinary when you follow an extraordinary God.

[38 : 46] Rise and stand, and then tomorrow, do it again. I think standing on the shoulders of Pentecost should have a standing and rising day after day to proclaim the only message under heaven by which we must be saved, the only message that rescues from death to life, the only message that offers living water to a world dying of thirst.

Let us do it. Father in heaven, thank you for your mercy towards us and Jesus Christ. Thank you that once we were not a people, but now we are your people. Once we had not known mercy, but now, by the grace of God, we know mercy.

Father, I pray that you would help us be a people that firstly are totally blown away with the grace of Jesus Christ, that we would not embrace any lesser form of Christianity.

It's more rules and more work and any of these things, that we'd be blown away by the biblical Christianity and the biblical Jesus.

Lord, help us to live for him, to worship him, and to give our lives to him. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[40 : 22] You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com.