

1

The Jews who had gathered in Jerusalem are “bewildered” “amazed” and “astonished” to hear Galileans speaking their native languages. Why did God choose a miracle of words to begin the work of the church?

2

How does this event demonstrate that the Holy Spirit and the newborn church were “ready for the world”? Are we as a local church also ready for the world? How do our posture and practices point to that readiness?

3

Commentators have noted that the countries listed in verses 9 through 11 are a sampling from the “Table of Nations” given in Genesis 10. What is significant in linking this gathering of Jews with the descendants of Noah?

4

In what sense is Pentecost a reversal or re-working of the events of the Tower of Babel, where language became confused and the people were scattered?

5

The details of Pentecost point to an event of unity—God’s people being gathered together, able to communicate God’s truth to one another. Where today is the church experiencing the most disunity? How can we be a people that prioritize unity in the body of Christ?

6

This work of the Holy Spirit, in which men speak human languages they had never learned, is called xenoglossia (see other occasions in Acts 10:45-46, 19:6). Paul also writes about speaking in tongues (glossolalia) in 1 Corinthians 12-14, naming it among the gifts of Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:8-10) and indicating that the language spoken was directed to God not men (1 Cor. 14:2), and was not understood unless someone with the gift of interpretation was present (1 Cor. 14:13). What are some similarities and differences between Luke’s account of speaking in tongues and Paul’s account?

7

There is some division among Christians of different denominations over speaking in tongues—whether Luke and Paul’s accounts are actually different in nature or the same thing, whether speaking in tongues is a necessary sign of regeneration, and whether the gift of tongues is still present in the church or ceased with the apostolic age. How should we approach these kinds of differences with fellow believers who take a different stance than we do?

8

What is the content of the apostle’s miraculous speech (v 11b)? How does this event provide a demonstration of the way the Holy Spirit works? Have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life before and did it testify to “the mighty works of God”?

