Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the Service: *(#447)*

Bro & Sis: ***Our only Hope is found in the Lord our God, the Creator & Sustainer of all Things & Savior of those who trust in Him!***Grace be yours in abundance, with Mercy, Peace & Love from God our Father & the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Let us sing God’s Praise: Psalm **#146 “Hallelujah Praise Jehovah”**

***We will profess our faith using Nicene Creed*** *pg. 7 of Hymnal Please be seated*

***NOW FLIP OVER TO PAGE 35 of CREEDS Confessions and Liturgical Forms as we Read LD 27***

**Continue to worship and praise our God as we remain seated #183 “The Lord’s my Shepherd”**

***NOW WE COME TO OUR CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER:***

***Our Father***, in Heaven, You Are glorious and worthy of our Worship! We long for your Kingdom to come in all its glory! We long for the day when we will live forever in the new heavens and the new earth in your presence! Please hurry that day by blessing your church and the work of missions around the Earth. Call all your elect to yourself in power, we pray! So transform us and our world, that your will might be done on earth even as it is done instantly by the angels in Heaven! Help each one of us to LIVE out your will! Enable us to Practice and DO all the things which we have seen in godly pastors, elders and friends… We have learned and received and heard and seen so many godly principles and godly examples, and yet we so quickly forget and rebel again! Please forgive us! And enable us by the strength of your Holy Spirit to LIVE out the truth that you have revealed in the Gospel and in your Word/Law! May our lives be living sacrifices of praise & gratitude to you! Please provide for our needs as we seek you and serve you… you have called us not to be anxious, but to pray to you – and so we ask that you would bless us and establish the work of our hands! Please strengthen each man here – young and old. Build them (us) in courage, strength, and faith! Bless us to be godly leaders, strong workers, pure lovers of your will and ways! Bless and equip us to love our wives (for those who have them), and for those of us with children, make us courageous sacrificial fathers who are willing to lay down our lives to protect our children. BUT MOST OF ALL, Enable us to consistently picture Christ to our wives and children! May we, in all our brokenness do one thing particularly well – May we lead our families to the Living Water and the Bread of Life! May that be more important to us than our work… or money, or food or the stuff of this life! To that end, we also pray for our women, young and old, Wives and Mothers – that they would be Holy, Loving chaste and active in your Kingdom work! Enable them to persevere in doing well, and make up for what is lacking in their husband or fathers. Enable them to see and Follow Christ in all of life… that they might not be led astray by the temptations, anxieties and problems of this life! Please protect our little ones, and hold them true to your Covenant Promises! BE OUR GOD, and the God of our children after us, we pray! Please especially care for those who are pregnant, and continue to bless new life in the womb! We ask that you would hear us and provide for us even as we worship… For we pray in Jesus’ name. ***Amen.***

Our first Scripture reading is from**: Joel 2:1-3, 11-21, 27-32**

**God has given us such a great salvation - so** let us respond to His grace, by generously giving to support God’s kingdom work through His tithes and our additional Free-will offerings! ***( Deacons)***

*Let’s cont. to worship as we sing* **Our Song of Prep: #384 “***O God great Father***”**

***Sermon Text:* Acts 2:14-41 *Sermon Title: LD 27 – Sacraments #3: renewed Covenant***

***Let us now sing a* song of Response Dwelling on God’s saving power *–*#447 “A Debtor to Mercy Alone!”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: #531**

# Evening Sermon: Sacraments #3 – The reNEWed Covenant Heidelberg #29

Text: Acts 2:14-41 Reading: Joel 2:1-3, 11-21, 27-32

**Introduction:** Children, if you have a children’s Bible or a Bible storybook, then you have probably heard about the famous children of the Old Testament: King David, King Joash and Samuel. Samuel started working in the temple when he was 3-5 years old (The same age as Abi/Janei or Vincent or Keziah ?) **AND King Joash became king at age 7!!** Can you imagine Jonathan or Willem or Ivan becoming a king?! And King David killed bear, lion and Goliath when he was roughly teenager – a young man of HS age probably. ***Each of these boys had the Holy Spirit working in them in a special way.***

**These boys were very rare in the OT** – *not very many* children were leaders or teachers or had the Holy Spirit upon them… In fact, only a few special people ever had such blessings from the Holy Spirit living inside them in the Old Testament. Some of the Leaders and Kings, men like Moses (70 elders), some of the Judges and Kings (such as David and Joash), and some of the prophets, like Elijah and Elisha.

*But as we will see in our text*, that all changed when the new covenant came… the limits on who had the Holy Spirit dramatically changed as the **Covenant** *which God made with Abraham* was made new in the sense that it was expanded and improved!

(Review) In the first 2 sermons on the sacraments we have learned that circumcision was the sign of the covenant which God made with Abraham and his descendants. **That sign was a spiritual sign which served as a seal/badge that Abraham and his children were made righteous by faith in God.** Indeed, we learned that Abraham’s spiritual covenantal children are ***only those*** who have his faith. As such, Abraham is our father in the faith, as we’ll see this evening: the covenant God made with Abraham is our covenant still!

*Our text can be summarized in the following theme:*  ***The New Covenant began as a renewal, improvement, and expansion on the Old.* (REPEAT)**

We will examine the text under 3 headings:

1. **The New Covenant Predicted**
2. **The New Covenant Accomplished**
3. **The Covenant ReNEWed** *I hope to move thru first 2 quickly most time on 3rd*

*In the first half of the chapter we see our first point:*

# The New Covenant Predicted *by Joel*  *(REPEAT)*

* 1. **The chapter begins with the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost** (vs. 1-14)

The Context for the sermon in our text is the Feast of Pentecost. At the beginning of the chapter the disciples were hidden in a room, working on finding a replacement for Judas. They were together in one place… because Jesus had told them to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit was poured out on them in power. And that is exactly what happened on the day of Pentecost… and I love how that event is described for us!

The description clearly portrays an event beyond full understanding! It is **not** *matter-of-fact* language… rather, it is comparative language: A noise *Like* a rushing wind came… There *Appeared* to be tongues of fire resting on their heads… It doesn’t say that there was an actual wind, nor was there actual fire – but that noise and that sight were as close as Luke could describe the situation to us as readers. It was a moving, supernatural event!

 And the disciples were enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak in different languages. The text is quite clear that they were not talking in gibberish or ecstatic speech (as most modern churches define speaking in tongues). No, rather, 16 distinct language groups could all hear the mighty deeds of God being explained in their native language! What an awesome miracle of God to prove to all these people that God Himself was at work here!

 Evidently, the noise drew a crowd, and some in the crowd thought that the disciples were somehow drunk. But ***Peter Stands up to explain:***

* 1. **This was the Outpouring of the Spirit as predicted by Joel** (vs. 15-21) ***READ vs.15ff to 18***

***What is so remarkable about this prophecy?*** What would have struck the original audience to whom Joel spoke? It is kinda the same point that I was making in our introduction… VERY FEW people experienced the blessings of the Holy Spirit in a special way in the Old Testament! And there were especially few young people or women who received the Spirit powerfully. *And yet, God prophesied through Joel that a day would come* when Men and Women, Old and Young would ALL receive the Spirit in a miraculous way! And that special time would introduce the final phase of history – the New Covenant in Christ! Pentecost was just the first day of that new era**… The New Covenant is not new in the sense of being separate & unrelated… It was a Continuation/expansion of the old!**

The Grandest expansion is in ***VERSE 21:*** that all who call on name of the Lord will be saved! *You might have missed that point… But previously only the Jews were saved… but there the prophesy explains that ALL who call on the name will be saved! THAT leads to the implicit question,* **HOW is this salvation possible?**

*Peter answers that in verses 22 to 36, where we see our Second point:*

# The New Covenant Accomplished *by Christ*

* 1. **Vs.22-24 Peter summarizes the supernatural power of the Life, Death, Resurrection of Christ**

In vs. 22, Peter speaks straight to the hearts and consciences of his hearers… pressing on them the fact that these men and women KNEW that Jesus had worked miracles and that this was proof that He was sent by God!  *Now, these people were the same crowds of people who likely would have been in Jerusalem when Jesus was crucified… and while they were probably agreeing with Peter in part… their internal lawyers were probably asking the question, “If this Jesus was from God- Why did He die?!” And Peter knew they might wonder that and answers the question directly* ***look at vs.23 – and this is Amazing! READ***

*That is awesome… in one verse we have BOTH God’s set providential decree, and man’s sinful failure! These men sinfully agreed to call for Jesus’ death, and yet, God was simultaneously at work!* Please PAUSE to understand this and marvel at the glory of God! ***The Jews sinfully called for Christ’s death But GOD Planned for that to happen!*** *Your sin and God’s providence are NOT mutually exclusive – BOTH are true at the same time!*  *Jesus was a prophet, and God wanted Him to die… Peter continues in vs.24 READ*

**Jesus only Died because He gave up His spirit, & it was impossible for death to hold onto Him!** *Jesus was the Messiah!*

* 1. **Then in Vs.25-36 Peter proves that this view of the Messiah was not New (***like we saw with Paul Rom.4***)**

Peter appeals to David, important since Messiah was to be the Son of David.

(verses 29-31) David prophesied about it, God Accomplished it, and Peter says, “we witnessed it!”

Vs.33 gives Image of Incredible Power… Christ reigning… Pouring out the Holy Spirit – ***fulfilling Jesus’ promises and the prophesy of Joel!*** Peter is saying, Jesus is the one at God’s right hand creating this event which you can’t understand!

***Final Power of Peter’s Preaching vs.34-36!!*** *Messiah is Lord at right hand of God, until ENEMIES made footstool* ***Vs.36 THREAT\HOPE!*** *The Jesus you killed, is the Lord of all! And yet, there is hope because this Jesus is also the Promised Christ! The People recognize the power of Peter’s Words in Verse 37,* **pierced TO THE HEART** *Brothers, what shall we do?*

***Peter responds in verses 38 and following****; where we see our third point:*

# The Covenant ReNEWed *by Peter’s restatement of the promise* (vs. 37-41)

* 1. **Peter first responds with the Gospel in verse 38**

This is the Fundamental Gospel – REPENT: meaning turn away from sin and return to God… We all know that Repentance and Faith go together, but Peter actually leaves that implied when He says: *Be Baptized…*

Peter didn’t forget/neglect the concept of faith – it would clearly be demonstrated in the response of his hearers. If one of these Jews were to repent of their involvement in Jesus’ death, and they were baptized in the name of Jesus as the Christ, they would necessarily be putting their faith in Jesus as God’s promised Savior! And Peter doesn’t stop there… If you repent/believe/baptized into Jesus **you will receive the Holy Spirit…**

You will remember the promise of John the Baptist, while he only baptized with water, John said that the one who followed him, the Messiah, would baptize with Holy Spirit and fire… which was reference to Pentecost! The next verse makes it clear that in the New Covenant, water baptism is inseparably connected with the baptism of the Holy Spirit! *The church could have stopped water baptism when the Holy Spirit came, but they didn’t because Christ commanded them to baptize.* ***He did that, because Christian water baptism signified both faith and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.* Although, the Holy Spirit’s work wouldn’t always be so visible as at Pentecost!**

**One commentator:** *The two are closely linked, since it the Spirit who accomplishes the inner cleansing of which baptism is the outward symbol!*

* 1. **This connection makes verse 39 very important to the WHOLE Gospel/Covenant Message!**

**READ 38-39** *What Promise?* A couple of possibilities:

1. Peter speaks in similar language to the Covenant Promise to Abraham, and since he has been connecting the supernatural life, death, and resurrection of Christ to the Messianic prophecies – it makes complete sense to see that He is restating the Abrahamic covenant in its “NEW” and improved form… no longer the type and shadow of things to come, but the sure salvation based on what has come and been accomplished in Christ. God promised Abraham that through His descendants, all the nations of the earth would be blessed – that promise is only fulfilled through Christ and the New Covenant! **And so Peter is Re-NEWing the covenant promises to Believers & children.**
2. There is another possible meaning of “the promise”… Twice already in Acts, the word promise has been used to refer to the promised Holy Spirit. One such use was here in this very sermon… vs.33 **Therefore,** Peter might be saying that the promise of the Holy Spirit is for those who repent and believe/baptized AND their children and those who are afar off, all whom the Lord our God will call.
3. Now, these two views are not mutually exclusive, **we don’t have to say** that if Peter is referring to the Abrahamic covenant promise then He CAN’T Also be referring to the promise of the Holy Spirit. IT CAN BE BOTH! Why? How?

*Because the promise of the Holy Spirit was a promise made to those who were already members of the Abrahamic covenant!* **In fact, the last phrase of vs. 39 is the conclusion of the verse that Peter began quoting in verse 21! JOEL 2:32** *Peter was explaining that the spiritual remnant of the nation of Israel, the Old Covenant people of God would be saved as God called them to repentance and faith in Christ. And as they believed and were baptized into Jesus Christ, then they & their children would receive the promised Holy Spirit.*

***This is a remarkable New Covenant because of how it expands and improves the original Covenant made to Abraham.***

**Conclusion:**

 In examining Peter’s Pentecost sermon, we have already covered many ways that the New Covenant (the reNEWed Covenant) is an improvement on the old, but let’s review their application to us.

1) As we saw in the prophecy from Joel, the Holy Spirit is poured out on all peoples, both men and women (no longer restricted by age, gender, office, or nationality), **and the real glory of that expansion is symbolized/demonstrated in the expansion of the covenant sign!** No longer do merely men receive the sign of the covenant – because God has granted His Spirit to all people (which is signified by baptism) … ***Therefore:*** All His bondservants men and women, now receive water baptism! **Just because well-known doesn’t mean it doesn’t apply**

2) Joel prophesied that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved – that is fulfilled in the expansion of the covenant to all peoples. While Peter may not have known at the time, his words “for all who are afar off, for all whom the Lord our God will call” includes those that God has chosen to call from every nation tribe and tongue (no longer merely Jews)!

3) With reference to this series on the sacraments, this passage is quite important***. Because here we see the promise of the Abrahamic covenant (or at least the promise of the Holy Spirit) extended to the children of those who repent and believe.*** Since Peter stated this promise in much the same way as God spoke to Abraham in Genesis 17, we begin to see that there was no official break between the old covenant and the new where children are forbidden to be included. ***All we see is continuity.*** If children were no longer included in the covenant promises, or were not allowed the sign of the covenant, then THIS is where we should find a prohibition/explanation. But it isn’t here!

The best explanation for how this works is one I read recently – think of a farmer: A farmer tells his workers to brand his cows and to include all the calves (the ones they plan to keep as well as the ones they might sell). After a while, due to various changes at the farm, they decide to stop branding and go to ear tags. The farmer explains to his workers that they are to stop branding and that they are to start tagging ears instead. Now, what are the workers going to do? They are going to naturally understand that the calves are all to still be tagged unless the farmer tells them otherwise!

When the Jews called out on Pentecost, ***Brothers, what shall we do?!*** Peter replied with the Gospel, and the new covenant sign, water Baptism signifying the spiritual baptism of the Holy Spirit. – BUT HE NEVER CUT OUT THE CHILDREN… Which means we are right to baptize the infants of believers! For in doing so, We obey God’s covenant call to include them among His people, and to bring them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord our God. AS our Forms explain – we baptize in obedience to God’s commands, trusting His promises!

The last phrase of our text really has a lot of various applications ***– for all whom the Lord our God will call***… Ultimately salvation comes down to that. **God saves those covenant children He desires to save – your actions will impact them one way or another – God promises that!!** However, that should provide comfort for us when we fail as parents (as we all will to some degree)… instead of beating yourselves up about mistakes made, you should confess them and correct them… Trusting that God was in control in your life/failures, even as He was in control of the greatest crime of all time – the crucifixion of Jesus Christ!

**And flowing from that fact**, you should instead focus on the grace of God for saving so many of us who came from non-Christian homes, or saving us from Christian homes where our parents rarely lived the life described in Deuteronomy 6 – when it all comes down to it, ***it is a miracle when* any *covenant child comes to faith, because it is the Lord who changes their heart and gives faith.*** Do you understand that! IT is always a miracle! Neither your sinful parenting mistakes or your epic faithfulness results in the salvation/damnation of your child! Rather, the faithfulness of a covenant child is a gift from God according to His sovereign plan!

 Therefore, you must rest in HIM, (His Power, His Will, His Love) and give Him the Glory! **Amen.**