Babel: spreading failure and ignorance
Genesis 10v8-11, 11v1-9

- Babel was an attempt to create a secure home in the post-flood world
- Babel amplifies sin leading to a world of idolatry at war with God

➢ "Abraham began life as an idolater." True or false? (See Joshua 24v2)

➢ What direction did the people travel in (11v2)? (Compare Genesis 3v24, 4v16-17)

➢ Which city represents the whole world in its opposition to God (a) Nineveh, (b) Babylon, (c) London? (See Revelation 18).

(1) Man trying to be God
- creator
- break boundaries [Isaiah 14v13-15]
- name [Isaiah 63v12-14; 45v16]
- idolatry
- control

► ends in failure

➢ What does reach heaven from Babylon? (Revelation 18v5)

(2) God being God
- only the LORD is God
- preserves man
- humbles man
  - failure
  - ignorance

► true knowledge begins with listening to God

➢ What was God's concern at Babel: (a) that man would rival God, or (b) that man would destroy himself?

(3) God becomes man
- Spirit comes down so the nations can hear [Acts 2v6, 8, 11, 14, 37]

► God dwells with those who are humbled by their sin [Isaiah 57v15]

➢ Speaking in Athens (Acts 17v30) Paul describes the worship of idols in the world as i _ nor _ n _ e.

Questions for discussion:
1. Where do we look for security in a dangerous and uncertain world? Do we find it?
2. How does human technology compare to what God has made?
3. Why is it right for God to make a name for himself (e.g. Nehemiah 9v10), but not us?
4. What lies at the root of idolatry? Why does idolatry end up enslaving us?
5. People often dismiss the Bible as ignorant (i.e. lacking of our modern understanding of e.g. history and science). In what areas does the Bible expose our lack of knowledge?
6. In what ways does the coming of the Spirit in Acts 2 'reverse' the events of Babel?

1. Man and God compared:

Words of the people (v1-4)	Words of God (v5-9)
One language and speech	One people and language
"Come, let us"	"Come, let us"
Build a city	Stopped building a city
Make a name	Given a name
Not be scattered	LORD scattered them

2. God reversing the plan of man:

All the earth one language (v1)
    People settle together there (v2)
        Said to each other (v3)
            Come, let us make bricks (v3)
                A city and tower (v4)
                    The LORD came down (v5)
                The city and tower (v5)
            Come, let us confuse (v7)
        Not understand each other (v7)
    People disperse from there (v8)
Language of the whole earth (v9)

[Adapted from: Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15* (Word Biblical Commentary, 1987) p235 & Bruce Waltke, *Genesis* (Zondervan, 2001) p176]