

Pentecost Sunday

Today is Pentecost Sunday! What an important day in the history of the church. As we look at the account of Pentecost in the book of Acts today, we have lots to celebrate.

It's not just a story about one time that God moved mightily in a group of believers. It's an account where we can reflect on the beginning of the church and the lives of believers being radically changed by the Spirit of God, who continues to do the same thing today!

If this is something you have struggled with in the past, I urge you....just listen to the scriptures today. It's up to you today if you will receive the Word as truth or stick with your preconceived ideas that you may have brought with you today.

The Holy Spirit is not just an added bonus, The Holy Spirit is essential to the Christian walk!

Who wants to do great things for Jesus? Without the Holy Spirit....you can't do it! We NEED His Spirit....

After Jesus had walked with these disciples for over 3 years, died on the cross for the sin of the world, then was raised from the dead, He spent another 40 days with these disciples and ended that time with this:

Acts 1:4-9 (NKJV)

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

So right before Jesus is about to ascend to heaven, He tells the disciples to wait for the Promise of the Father. Here is where we see that promise.....

John the Baptist was a prophet. He came before Jesus to declare the way of the Lord, to speak the word and the truths of God.

Luke 3:16 (NKJV)

16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John is telling of the promise of Jesus, the Messiah, but also of the Holy Spirit....and that Jesus is the baptizer in the Spirit. What we see here is that you can't have Jesus and reject the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the very one who does the baptizing!

So Jesus told the disciples, "Go, wait, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now"

He follows that up with telling them "You shall receive POWER, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"

I gotta pause right there....we are talking about the POWER of God! The power to overcome, to raise the dead, heal the sick, give sight to the blind, cast out demons, preach with boldness.

Without the Holy Spirit you don't have the power to accomplish anything that matters in the scope of eternity.....It's by His power!

After Jesus tells them this, He ascends to heaven. I tell you what, I always thought if I was there, I might be pretty disappointed that Jesus was leaving, but He said "go and wait for the Promise and you will receive POWER"

Now that's something to be excited about....I might lead the charge...."To the upper room!"

Imagine, there they are....waiting....for days. I'm sure there were some who were praying "Lord....how long must we wait???". Some afraid to go to the bathroom in case it comes while they are gone!

But they waited.....

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Imagine the excitement in the room when the Spirit had come, the wait was over, the power had come.

Look at the condition they were in.....v1 says they were all with one accord in one place.....they had the same passion, seeking God. We see this all through the book of Acts (one accord).

Church, if we want to see the Holy Spirit move in power, we have to have the same passion.....seeking Jesus. We don't all have to be best friends, we don't all have to think exactly the same, but we do all have to have the same passion.....More of Jesus, more of His Spirit! We need to be Jesus seekers not people pleasers....

Another way you see them being in one accord is that they were willing. They were seeking Jesus therefore they were willing to receive His promise. That's a problem many people have.....an unwillingness to receive the Holy Spirit.

Maybe you don't think it's necessary, or it's not for you.....I'm here to tell you the Holy Spirit IS necessary and the Holy Spirit IS for you! But you have to be willing to receive it, just as the disciples were....

How many of you have fed a baby? Think about a baby when they get to that age where you sit them in a high chair or some kind of seat and spoon feed them some sweet potato baby food.....

They look at you and smile, they open up real big, they are willing to eat it, "Go ahead mom/dad, load me up....this is good stuff"

It's going great, then you decide to try some peas flavored baby food. That baby smiles, opens up real big, takes a bite and spits it out. You try the next bite, they're like "AHHHHH, I'm ready!"

Then as soon as you get close, all of the sudden they have these incredible reflexes, their head turns at the speed of light, bam, peas in the ear instead. You work the spoon around to try and force some in their mouth but their lips are clenched so tight, there is no force on earth that will get those peas in their mouth. They are not willing, you can't get in....

Many Christians act like babies with the Holy Spirit, "Yeah, I want that" then here it comes and bam, you turn your head as quick as you can, nope not today". Next time, "Yeah, I want it" then here it comes, and your lips are clenched, "not today, Holy Spirit, you're not getting in here"

We've got to be willing, we have to have a passion to seek Jesus and have more of Him in our lives.....otherwise the rest of this doesn't matter.

Acts 2:2 (NKJV)

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

This was not a rushing mighty wind, it was AS a rushing mighty wind. The Holy Spirit is unexplainable, Luke uses the best description that he can with what he knows. When the Holy Spirit came in power, it's wasn't as a soft gentle breeze but we are talking the God of POWER, like a mighty rushing wind. This was the mighty unseen power of the Spirit of God!

And it filled the whole house!

WIND blows where it wants, unpredictable, changes directions, cant' see it just it's influence, if you are going against it vs with it...

Acts 2:3 (NKJV)

Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

Again, Luke is trying to explain something he has never seen or experienced before. The Holy Spirit comes in mighty power, and something appeared like fire and sat upon each of them. They were not literally on fire.....

It was the Spirit of God! We see God described as fire several times, such as the burning bush. Fire indicates the presence of God, burning in holiness. The presence of God, the Holy Spirit came from heaven, filled the room and sat upon each of them.

Fire is a symbol of transformation and purification. Fire changes whatever it touches!

Consider these disciples.....before Pentecost they were scared, they doubted, they lacked faith

But After Pentecost, they were on fire! Filled with a new boldness, confidence, faith, fearless

Just like fire changes what it touches, the Holy Spirit changes what He touches. You just can't be touched by the Spirit of God and walk away the same.....The Spirit brings transformation and works purification! This was true for the disciples then and it's true for you today! Believe that!

2 Chron. 7:1 - When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

supernatural fire from the presence of God fell on the sacrifices.

This indicated to the people that God had accepted the tabernacle and the Temple as His dwelling place

The proof of his acceptance was the supernatural fire that fell from heaven.

The Apostle Paul uses the term temple to indicate that under the New Covenant our bodies are the Temple" of the Holy Spirit

1 Cor. 6:19 - Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;

At Pentecost, the individual believers had tongues of fire over them,
Supernatural fire from heaven ...

Once again God sent His own fire to demonstrate that from now on He would accept the "temple" – the individual as His dwelling place,

So that the believer is a "temple" of the Holy Spirit.

The Church - would now become the dwelling place of God's Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:4 (NKJV)

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This is AN evidence of the miraculous work of baptism in the Spirit! Why do people make this weird? It's not more weird that casting out demons, healing the sick, or raising the dead! Those things are all miraculous works of the Holy Spirit!

Weird means involving or suggesting the supernatural....these things are weird! Supernatural works of a supernatural God!

Tongues are not bad, they are of God, it's in the scriptures and this is not the only place....this wasn't an isolated incident.

Acts 10:45-46 (NKJV)

45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Acts 19:6 (NKJV)

6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Look at what accompanied speaking in tongues.....magnifying God, and prophecy (speaking the Word of the Lord, therefore magnifying God)

I don't know how someone could argue that those are bad or not of God.

Church, don't be close minded to the things of God that He has for you. You've got to be willing to receive the blessings of the Lord.

No it doesn't always look the same. That is something that handicaps the church, when we seek what God did last time or what He has done before. Don't limit Jesus! If He's got something new for you or wants to move in a new way....then you get out of the way.....Let Him move!

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is important to your life, I'm telling you, you don't want to live without it. Surrender to God, let Him have access to every area of your life today!

To be baptized means to be immersed like a sunken vessel or ship. To go completely under, submerged to the point of being overwhelmed.

When a ship is sunken, where does the water go? Everywhere. It floods every part of the ship, every compartment. This is God's desire for us as we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, the Spirit will flood every part of you with His presence, filling all compartments with His life and power!

This kind of immersion is what we are intended to experience. It should be overwhelming. It should bring forth new qualities in your life in character.

Many who desire to be filled with the Spirit focus on speaking in tongues. The ability to speak in an unknown language is result of being filled in the Spirit, but "tongue talking" is not the purpose of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. The reason God fills you with His Spirit is to empower you to bring glory to Jesus as His witness.

Your willingness to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit should not focus on the gift but the giver.

Think with me for a moment about the process of being filled with the Holy Spirit. [1] You have receive Jesus as your savior and you believe that Jesus wants you to be filled with the Spirit. [2] You recognize that you need to be filled; you have expressed your desire to the Lord saying, "fill me; I am thirsty for more of You." [3] You are willing to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit coming to Jesus who has offered "living water." But now notice something about what Jesus said.

Jesus said, "If you are thirsty, COME TO ME and drink." Jesus emphasis is not upon what He will give you to drink; the focus is on Him as the one who provides you with what will satisfy your thirst. Jesus says "Come to me! Come to me and drink!" Jesus is the baptizer and He will fill you as you look to Him.

The Church was birthed in the power of the Holy Spirit,
Society won't be transformed until the Church is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The people of God that are walking in the Spirit
Flowing in His gifts
Cherishing his presence
And stirring up the fire he has placed within us