

Pentecost Sunday

Matthew 28:18-20

Today we celebrate/remember Pentecost Sunday. Just like the first followers of Jesus, all believers are called to be sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit to fulfill the great commission.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV)

As we journey along the path of our life and mature more in our walk by faith with Jesus, we have to admit that our lives will never perfectly reflect the truths we preach. But it is by Grace that we testify.

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NKJV)

As we recognize our limitations, our lack of talent, our lack of power, we learn to depend more and more on God and we deepen our worship. As we admit that we point other people to Jesus through God's strength not our own.

That was the failure of the Old Testament Law.

But when we as sinners, repent of our sin and know that Christ on the Cross has rescued, redeemed, atoned, made up for our mistakes, you and I can share that experience with the world.

That makes us messengers of God.

Every believer is called to be a messenger, at work in missions or ministry, not just Pastors. As Christians, all of you have a calling, a duty and a responsibility to tell the Good News and reach out to others in love. It is a paradox when any Christian does anything less.

*"To live above with those we love, oh that will be glory.
But to live below with those we know, now that is a different story."*

1 John 4:20-21 (NKJV)

There is probably no greater summary of God's love than John 3:16. God's love is truly an amazing and overwhelming gift, so much so that we can barely comprehend it. Jesus said "freely you received, freely give". Love should be an easy thing to give but it is not always easy to love people, is it?

Someone asked the question; "How many of us are living as if Jesus were coming tomorrow when we should be living as if Jesus were here today? Because He is."

We must care about the lost and hurting just as Jesus does. But how when it's so hard sometimes?

After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus ascended back up into heaven. But not without leaving us an extraordinary gift.

Luke 24:49 (NKJV)

Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)

Theologically there is nothing that churches struggle with more than Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. The idea of spiritual fire, and speaking in tongues, and mighty wind or infilling of the spirit, miracles, just makes some people uneasy.

Why is it so difficult to understand and acknowledge the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit?

On that day of Pentecost everyone there fully understood. In fact, understanding was one of the works of the Holy Spirit that day. It allowed every believer to hear them speaking the gospel of Jesus in their own varied languages.

Acts 2:7-11 (NKJV)

I wonder how much of what is done in many churches today happens with very little thought, not much prayer and without the leading of the Holy Spirit?

A.W. Tozer, said *"If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the Church today, 95% of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference."*

I believe we've forgotten the command to tarry and wait...When you invite the Holy Spirit into your life, then you cannot expect to still be in charge and live life your own way. The New Testament church is commanded to be "Full of and lead by the Holy Spirit."

A small-time preacher once was invited to speak at a large symposium of scientist and physicist. He began by lifting up a glass and asked, "How can I get the air out of the glass?"

A prominent department head of sub-atomic particles stood up and explained how that one could use a pump and draw all the air out by creating a vacuum but that would most likely shatter the glass. After several other scientific suggestions, the preacher raised the glass, picked up a pitcher of water and filled the glass. There, he said, "all the air has been removed."

He then went on to explain that victory in the Christian life is not accomplished by drawing out a sin here and removing a sin there, but by being filled with the Holy Spirit.

What does it mean when you are "Filled with and lead by the Holy Spirit?" The term is "sanctification." Sanctify means "to set apart, to make holy."

In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle was sanctified. Placed between the altar and the tent of meeting was a bronze bowl with water that was used to make clean or baptize the priest before they touched the altar or the sacrifices.

There was a table of “showbread” twelve loaves that symbolized God’s provision for each of the twelve tribes of Israel. There was a lamp stand made of pure gold. The priest burned the purest olive oil and as long as the lamp was lit it was a picture of God’s light in the dark world. There was incense that was placed right near the entrance of the Holy of Holies and the smell of the incense was a reminder of the prayers of the priest that went up to heaven every morning. There was a thick woven veil and on the other side was the “Holy of Holies.”

In that Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant which contained a bowl of manna, Aaron’s rod that bloomed, and the tablets of the Ten Commandments. These were things that God had directed to set apart as holy.

Today, through the promise of God, which is the Holy Spirit, all Christians are to be sanctified.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (NKJV)

You see you never will be able to control all the sinful aspects of your life. The only way to be sanctified, holy, and justified, made right with God is by the Holy Spirit.

- It is the Holy Spirit at work in you that brings forgiveness and deliverance.
- It is the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross that brings healing and salvation.
- It is God’s actions that brought you to salvation and set you apart as holy.

Revival comes when we let the full expression of the Holy Spirit be free to work in our life and the church that we might know and receive the gifts and benefits of the Kingdom of God.

I BELIEVE WE NEED FRESH FIRE FROM HEAVEN TODAY!

Leviticus 6:13 (NKJV)

Acts 10:38 (NKJV)

John 16:7 (NKJV)

In the same way that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit for His Ministry, He wants to fill us with the Holy Spirit so we can transform people’s lives today just as we have been transformed.

Luke 3:16 (NKJV)

1. JESUS HAS COMMISSIONED HIS FOLLOWERS TO GO AND DO:

First, He chose 12 disciples.

Luke 9:1-2 (NKJV)

Next, Jesus sent out the 70.

Luke 10:1-2 (NKJV)

Luke 10:9 (NKJV)

Today, Jesus sends out ALL His followers.

Mark 16:15-18 (NKJV)

Matthew 10:7-8 (NKJV)

If you have received of Jesus, then Jesus calls YOU to go into the world with His full power!

2. JESUS WANTS TO FILL US WITH HIS POWER:

Acts 1:4-5 (NKJV)

That Greek word ‘baptismo’ means to be immersed in the Holy Spirit.

It’s like the process a cucumber goes through to become a pickle.

It’s vitally important for us to soak in His presence for extended periods of time to be filled for works!

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

We need a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit’s today to be the witness of Jesus power and divinity!

3. LOOK AT THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

1 Corinthians 12:6-11 (NKJV)

Notice it doesn’t say anywhere that the pastor is the one to receive all of these. Rather each believer is given different gifts of the Holy Spirit, as God directs for the benefit of all.

COMMUNICATION GIFTS:

- Prophecy - a divine word of the Holy Spirit to encourage, edify or comfort people.
- Tongues - the gift of speaking supernaturally in a language not known to the individual.
- Interpretation of tongues - an understandable interpretation of a message that is given in tongues.

OPERATIONAL GIFTS:

- Word of wisdom - wisdom to know what to do or how to do it, either for you or someone else.
- Word of knowledge - knowledge of an event or other information in someone’s life (past or present) that you were not aware of in the natural.

- Discerning of Spirits - to discern the spiritual world, to tell whether something is divine (God or angels), human (natural origin) or demonic (Satan or demons)

POWER GIFTS:

- Faith - (not the faith that saves you) a unique form of faith that supernaturally trusts and does not doubt concerning specific matters – to believe God for the impossible.
- Gifts of healings - the healings God performs supernaturally. Instantaneously.
- The working of miracles - the manifestation of Power beyond the ordinary course of natural law. This is where something that could never have been done naturally occurs.

4. UNDERSTANDING THE INITIAL EVIDENCE OF SPEAKING IN TONGUES:

To correctly understand the gift of speaking in tongues, we must realize there are two different kinds of speaking in tongues mentioned in the Bible.

A. TONGUES AS A GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THE CHURCH.

(v.10b) “to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

1 Corinthians 14:5 (NKJV)

The spiritual gift of tongues and interpretation is God speaking to the church. This is initiated by the Holy Spirit, as He wills it. It won't be received or exercised by all believers.

1 Corinthians 14:12-13 (NKJV)

When you are exercising the spiritual gift of tongues in public, pray for the interpretation so the church can understand and be encouraged.

B. TONGUES AS A PERSONAL PRAYER LANGUAGE:

1 Corinthians 14:2-4 (NKJV)

Tongues as a personal prayer language is the believers spirit speaking to God. This gift of tongues speaks mysteries (beyond human understanding), and edifies your spirit.

All believers can and should receive and exercise this gift of the Holy Spirit. It is the initial physical evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Mark 16:17 (NKJV)

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 (NKJV)

If you don't have the gift of interpretation, it is still okay to speak in tongues as a personal prayer language.

C. WHY SPEAK IN TONGUES? (Personal Prayer Language)

1 Corinthians 14:18-19 (NKJV)

1. To EDIFY yourself – building up your spirit.

1 Corinthians 14:4 (NKJV)

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

2. To BUILD UP your faith.

Jude 20-21 (NKJV)

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

3. To PRAY the perfect will of God.

Romans 8:26-27 (NKJV)

Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groaning's which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

4. To PRAISE and magnify God.

Acts 10:46 (NKJV)

For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

Before Peter was filled with the Spirit, he denied Jesus three times! After the Holy Spirit came upon Him, He had new boldness and power!

How do we receive? We ASK!

Luke 11:13 (NKJV)

Jesus emphasize the importance of the Holy Spirit for ministry. How much more do we need the Holy Spirit in our life and church today? If Jesus needed the Holy Spirit for ministry how can we possibly think we can succeed without it?

I encourage you to seek this Gift of the Holy Spirit from God. It will empower you to fulfill Gods will in your life.