

The Holy Spirit 2017 Part 9

Last Sunday we talked specifically about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and some of the benefits that come to us personally when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This morning I want to briefly share another word about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the initial evidence of speaking in tongues and then I want to focus our attention on some lessons for the church from this Pentecostal experience.

When you look at the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2, you will notice there are some things unique to the Day of Pentecost like the sound of a violent wind and tongues of fire. But the physical evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit enabled is repeated other times in the New Testament.

There are five occasions in Acts where people were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Three times it mentions specifically that they spoke in tongues. Acts 2 the 120 spoke with other tongues when they were baptized in the Spirit. Acts 10:46 at the house of Cornelius Peter heard them speaking in other tongues. Acts 19:6 the believers at Ephesus were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke with tongues. On two other occasions it is implied or inferred. (Acts 8:17-18 in Samaria and Acts 9:17 when Paul is filled with the Spirit). We know from Paul's writing to the church in Corinth about 25 years after Pentecost, believers were still being baptized in the Holy Spirit and were speaking in tongues.

We believe speaking in tongues is the normative experience associated with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. As I said, out of the times it is mentioned in the book of Acts, tongues appear to be the initial, physical consequence or evidence of being baptized in the Spirit. It is not the only sign but it is the immediate sign of this Pentecostal empowerment.

Scripture encourages speaking in tongues. Jesus listed speaking in tongues as one of the signs following the believer in Mark 16. Paul writes, **"I would like every one of you to speak in tongues..."** and states, **"I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you."** **1 Corinthians 14:5,18.** That is a powerful endorsement. One other thing...

Speaking in tongues involves an act of surrender to the will and purpose of God. James describes the tongue as the most unruly member of the body. When the believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit, the Lord is given control of this unruly member. Speaking in tongues can be seen as another sign of His Lordship, his authority in the life of the believer.

I shared with you last Sunday some of what I believe to be the benefits of this experience. That Jesus and his word become more real to you, that it enhances your prayer life and opens the door to the gifts and supernatural manifestations of the Spirit. But as important as this is, I don't want the focus to become simply on speaking in tongues. I want to consider some other important lessons we learn from Pentecost. First, consider this simple lesson:

Something powerful happens when we obey Jesus. It's pretty simple isn't it? Jesus told them not to leave Jerusalem until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. **“Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” Acts 1:4-5** So what did they do? **“They went upstairs to the room where they were staying... [and] they all joined together constantly in prayer...” Acts 1:13-14**

They spent the next ten days praying, focusing upon Jesus and his promise, waiting for the fulfillment of the promise. They were hungry for whatever Jesus had for them. We can spend a lot of time debating about whether the baptism in the Holy Spirit is for today or is it for everyone or will you really speak in tongues or does Jesus really want you to have this experience but perhaps our time would be better spent if we just said, “I'm going to obey Jesus. This is what he said to do so I'm going to do what the disciples did. I'm going to pray and expect to receive this gift. I'm going to stay focused on Jesus and hungry for every gift, every experience, everything he has for me!” I think that's the key for us.

It's a simple lesson of Pentecost: When we obey Jesus, something powerful happens! When we obey Jesus he will pour His Spirit on us and needs will be met and lives changed. Because the disciples obeyed Jesus, Acts 2:41 says three thousand people were saved and added to the Kingdom of God that day and verse 43 says **“Everyone was filled with awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need...and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:43-47** Something powerful happened because they obeyed Jesus. It's still happening!

Here is a second lesson from Pentecost: **It will take more than our natural ability to get the job done.** To get what job done? The job Jesus assigned to us, to take the gospel to the whole world, to be his witnesses, to bring hope to the world. Jesus told them not to leave Jerusalem until they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. But think about it – they were

eyewitnesses to everything Jesus had said and done. Some argue we don't need the baptism in the Holy Spirit because we have the gospel, the bible. These people saw the gospel – they lived it. They had been with Jesus. What more could they have possibly needed? What more equipping could they need after being with Jesus for 3 years? But Jesus knew it was going to take more than knowledge to do everything God had for them to do. It was going to take more than natural talent or ability to carry out the mission. **“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8** They needed power and so do we!

Jesus told the disciples, and us, to **“Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19.** I believe **In order to carry out Matthew 28:19 you need Acts 2:4!** You need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. You need to be clothed with power from on high. You need to be anointed by His Spirit so you can be all he calls you to be and accomplish all he calls you to do. It will take the Holy Spirit's anointing, his direction, his knowledge, his truth, his life giving, miracle working power to carry out Jesus' great commission. If you don't think so, you need to get out of the house more often. You need to get involved in ministry at CAG. You need to volunteer in one of the schools in town. You need to get where the needs are. When you look at the brokenness of our world, our families, our communities, it's overwhelming. All the best programs of government and education and even the programs of the church, as good as they are, are not enough without the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that breaks the bondage in people's lives. It is the anointing of the Spirit that liberates and transforms the hearts of those to whom we minister. It takes more than our natural ability. It takes the power of the Holy Spirit.

When we look at the need and say, “God, I can't do this”, he doesn't say, “Yes, you can.” He doesn't argue with with us. He says, “I know you can't. Not by yourself. That's why I told you to be clothed with the power of my Holy Spirit!” God help us to recognize our need of the Holy Spirit and make us more reliant than ever on your help, your anointing, your power!

Another lesson from Pentecost: **God's kingdom and our mission involves the whole world.** On the day of Pentecost the bible says, “There were staying in Jerusalem God fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.” I told you a couple of weeks ago that after this outpouring of the Spirit Philip took the gospel to the Samaritans and they were saved and filled

with the Spirit and then Peter took the gospel to Cornelius and even the Gentiles were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit and then Paul and Barnabas began taking the gospel to the other nations. The call is to take the gospel to the whole world, to all people.

God loves the whole world, every race, every color, every nationality, every tongue, every culture. He is not willing that any should perish the bible says. That's why he sent his son to die upon the cross as a substitute for us. God loves Arabs and Jews, God loves Hispanics and Asians and Native Americans and Europeans and Africans, Muslims and Hindus, immigrants and native born, he loves us all. But understand, there is only one name given under heaven upon which we can call and be saved and that name is for everyone, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or Christian and that name is Jesus, God's Son and our Savior. Pentecost let us know that God's kingdom and his good news is for the whole world. God's passion is for the lost of this world and our mission is to go into every man's world and proclaim Jesus the Savior.

There has been a lot said about DACA and the Dreamers and immigration this past week. I know there are strong positions on both sides of the issue and I don't want to debate anyone as to what the Christian response should be since there are Christians on all sides of the issue. I want to suggest something for you to think about. You know it took persecution to get the disciples to take the gospel to their world. What if God said, "I told the church in America to go into all the world and make disciples. I blessed America with abundant resources. I sent preachers and revivals, including the Pentecostal outpouring in 1900 and the Charismatic renewal that swept the world. I kept anointing them and telling them to go into all the world but they wouldn't go. Only a handful would even cross their southern border, to the nearest countries, so I decided to send the world to them." What if the reason there are 11 million illegal immigrants in America right now is because the church refused to go preach the gospel so Jesus sent them here. Maybe God isn't concerned about borders, he's just concerned with matching lost people with believers so we can tell them about Jesus. "Here, I'll make it easy for you. I'll bring the nations to you. All you have to do is go next door and tell them about Jesus." And instead of telling them about Jesus, we're trying to round them up and send them back home. Maybe it's not about immigration, maybe it's about evangelization. Jesus may keep sending people to America until we get busy and get them saved. Maybe instead of looking at this like Democrats or Republicans or Americans, we ought to be looking at this like followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. It may be the government's job to decide their status, but it's our job to love

them and tell them about Jesus. When we stand before God I doubt he asks our position on immigration but I'm pretty sure he is going to ask if we did everything we could to reach everyone we could with the news that Jesus loved them and gave his life for them! I'd hate for God to say, "I sent you 11 million people so you could tell them about Jesus and all you did was try to send them back where they came from." Just something to think about.

Think about this. On the day of Pentecost 3,000 people came to Jesus and they were from all nations. From its beginning the church was multi-national, multi-cultural. **Pentecost is about unity and diversity at the same time.** Centered around Jesus, filled with his Spirit, but from different nationalities and backgrounds. Maybe we aren't as Pentecostal as we think we are if our church isn't filled with people from all different races, cultures and nations.

Notice too, while some were amazed and asked "what does this mean?" others mocked. **"Some however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine.'" Acts 2:13** Not everyone will be respectful of the gospel message or the messenger that delivers it. Not everyone will believe or receive. And Notice Peter didn't scold them, instead, he said, "Let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say."

We have people coming to church for various reasons. Next Sunday is our Day of Hope. People will come because they need groceries or shoes or a haircut. Some may come wondering "what does this mean?" and some may come to mock or make fun. Some will come because they need the groceries but they could care less about church or Jesus or Christians. They doubt our motives. They have no reason to trust the church and they don't know anything about Jesus. But friends, that's why we are here. We are here to show them Jesus. We let people come as they are to find Jesus. The language may be a little rough or the outfit might be inappropriate for church, but we don't ask people to clean up their lives or actions before they get here. We tell them about one who can transform their lives if they ask him to save them. We are here to love them because Jesus loved them and died to save them. Pentecost teaches us that God's kingdom and our mission involves reaching the whole world, not just nice, neat, polite, cleaned up people but every person in every kind of situation on this planet! Lord, help us see the world with your eyes, to see the harvest. Let our Pentecostal experience empower us and move us to reach our world with the love and concern of Jesus. We still need guest hosts. Sign up and help us!

The final lesson I want to mention from Pentecost, **God is still pouring out His Spirit on all flesh.** When Peter began explaining to the crowd what was happening on the day of

Pentecost, he told them the experience of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, an OT prophet. **“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.” Acts 2:17.** Peter then told the crowd if they would repent and believe upon Jesus, they too would receive the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. He told them, **“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off- for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Acts 2:38-39**

All who are far off, all whom the Lord will call. That’s us. God is still pouring out his Spirit, he is still empowering his church. He is still calling us to be his witnesses, to take his message, his good news to the whole world by the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. He is still speaking prophetically and powerfully through sons and daughters. I believe he is telling us this experience is for us today. Pentecost is still vital and necessary for the church today because if we are going to get the job done and carry out the mission Jesus has given us we need the power of the Holy Spirit. We simply can’t do it without the Holy Spirit’s power!

It starts with Acts 2:38. **“Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38** Repent, believe and receive. That’s his word to us.

Jesus said if we would ask the Father, he would give us the Holy Spirit. If you are a follower of Jesus, then this experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit is for you. The initial physical evidence of being baptized in the Spirit is the same today as it was on the day of Pentecost and throughout the book of Acts. You will speak with other tongues as the Spirit inspire or enables you. Ask, because Jesus said to ask. Ask because you want to obey Jesus. Remember, something powerful happens when we obey Jesus! Ask because you need that power. You can’t do all Jesus has for you to do, you can’t be all he wants you to be without his power, without his help. Ask for all he has for you.

If you desire more of Jesus, if you desire all he has for you, including the baptism in the Holy Spirit, would you join me here at the front. I want us to pray together. If you want a fresh anointing of the Spirit’s power, come join us here. If you need his help to do what he is calling you to do, come join us and let’s pray. Let’s ask him together for the Spirit’s help and power!