

I Want MORE (Part 11)

Sunday, May 28, 2023

Today we celebrate Pentecost!

Shavuot, the Jewish Pentecost, is a holiday that today commemorates the single most important event in Israel's history: the giving of the Torah (the first five books in the Hebrew Bible) to Moses at Mount Sinai. ...it is one of the three major festivals often called "pilgrim" festivals because in Bible times, all Jewish males were required to observe them at the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Christians will be more familiar with the Greek name for Shavuot, Pentecost — the holiday that Jesus' followers were observing in Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit was given to them. Since Pentecost is the Greek word for 50, and as Shavuot occurs 50 days after the first day of Passover, it was referred to as Pentecost in the Christian Bible.

The holiday is also known as the "Feast of Weeks," since it is celebrated seven weeks (or 50 days) after Passover.

During the days of the First and Second Temples, Shavuot was a harvest festival. Called the "Festival of Harvest" (Exodus 23:16), sheaves of barley (the winter crop) were brought to the Temple each day, beginning on Passover until Shavuot, the beginning of the harvest season 50 days later. It was a joyous celebration, with the people bringing the firstfruits of their harvest to the Temple with thanksgiving to God for His provision.

With the destruction of the Second Temple and the expulsion of the Jewish people from their land in 70 CE, the celebration focused more on the anniversary of the giving of the Torah to Moses at Mt. Sinai — which also fell 50 days after the first day of Passover.

The two holidays, Passover and Shavuot, are linked by more than just their proximity. The Exodus from Egypt, which Passover celebrates, marked the beginning of physical freedom for the Jewish people. But Shavuot is a reminder for the Jews that physical liberation was incomplete without the spiritual redemption represented by receiving God's Law.

What Is Shavuot — The Jewish Pentecost?

The Fellowship | May 18, 2023

From <<https://www.ifcj.org/learn/jewish-holidays/what-is-shavuot-the-jewish-pentecost>>

As the feast of Shavuot celebrated the giving of the law, so today Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit. It represents the power to declare the life-giving message of the Gospel and signifies the beginning of the Church.

Acts 2:1-4

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

As we continue our series “I Want More”, on this Pentecost Sunday I declare...

I Want More of THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. An Awareness of the Gift

Our awareness of the Holy Spirit begins by knowing that He is the third person of the trinity. Just as God, The Father, is real, just as Jesus, The Son, is real - and we can have a relationship with them - The Holy Spirit is real, and we can have a relationship with Him through His presence abiding in our lives and through the gift of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Just as we see The Father in the Old Testament and just as we see Jesus, The Son, (the scarlet cord of redemption) throughout the Old Testament; we also see the power and presence of the person of the Holy Spirit.

In the Old Testament this relationship was manifested as The Holy Spirit would come upon an individual for a specific anointing and purpose. But Joel prophesied of a day when God's Spirit would be poured out in ALL flesh and Peter declared that the Day of Pentecost was the beginning of the fulfillment of that prophecy and that the gift was available to all who believe.

Acts 2:14-21

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 “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. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

Acts 2:38-39

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

Joel Prophesied there would be a time we could have more...

John The Baptist pointed to this more when he said...

Luke 3:16

16 John answered them all, “I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Jesus taught his disciples about this gift and told them to wait until they had this more...

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Luke 24:49

49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Acts 1:4

4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

And the Disciples continued to teach people about and lead people into the experience of that more...

Acts 8:14-17

14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:44-46

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Acts 19:1-6

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

3 So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

4 Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

That's why I am glad that as a young man I was introduced to the Assemblies of God, a denomination that believes in making people aware of this precious gift of the Holy Spirit.

I was saved, I loved Jesus, I went to church, I wanted to live for Him; but I had never been taught about the Baptism in the Holy Spirit until I walked into First Assembly of God in Wichita, Kansas. The first service I was there, there was a message in tongues with interpretation. The worship was different, full of life and I thought. WOW this is the kind of church I want to go to. These people have something that is real. Something more, and I want that more.

Not long after that Jimmy Swaggart held a crusade in Wichita and our church helped serve at that crusade, so I got to go each night. He said the last night would be Holy Spirit Night. He preached a message on the Holy Spirit that night and asked everyone to come forward at the altar call who wanted to receive the baptism of The Holy Spirit. That night I was filled with the evidence of speaking in tongues.

God put a new fire and hunger in me for being in His presence and His word. He subsequently called me into the ministry, and I have been serving Him ever since. 37 years as a credentialed minister in the Assemblies of God.

Let me read to you from our 16 Fundamental Truths (Our Church Doctrine)

7. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry.

This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as:

- an overflowing fullness of the Spirit,
- a deepened reverence for God,
- an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work,
- and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost,

8. THE INITIAL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance.

The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues, but is different in purpose and use.

This is what we need to be aware of.

In the Pentecostals Magazine that I put in your bulletins this morning Doug Clay, General Superintendent of The Assemblies of God, writes...

Pentecost views Spirit baptism as a distinctive work of grace in the life of a Christian, separate from the salvation experience.

The Book of Acts goes out of its way to demonstrate the availability of an after-salvation anointing of the Spirit for ministry. At salvation, the Spirit comes to live inside all Christians (Romans 8:9), but afterward, Jesus desires to pour the Spirit outwardly upon us for increased ministry anointing (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-5, 8).

Jesus' command for the disciples to wait (Acts 1:4) for power from on high points to a distinct experience needed after salvation. In addition, there was a subsequent need for people who had experienced Spirit baptism to be refilled repeatedly for specific situations and tasks.

- Doug Clay (Pentecostals Magazine 2023)

In answering questions about Passing Pentecost to The Next Generation, Marcus Arrington says...

God loves us perfectly, unlike earthly parents, despite their best efforts. Earthly parents may buy their children a new iPhone or a new outfit. As wonderful as those gifts may be, they pale in comparison to the Holy Spirit. He empowers. He transforms. He performs miracles. He intercedes. Why be afraid of a gift like that?

We need to be filled with God's power to live holy, to love purely, and to act courageously in the midst of lions.

- Marcus Arrington (Pentecostals Magazine 2023)

2. A Hunger for the Gift

Remember our Key Texts for this series...

Matthew 5:6

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Psalms 63:1

1 You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

Psalm 42:1-2

1 As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

Remember it is a hunger for more of God, the third person of the trinity -a person - not speaking in tongues. There are a lot of different things that can get in the way of that hunger. Amazingly some people hunger for this gift without even realizing what they are hungering for - Like the Gentile Cornelius in the book of Acts.

Others are hungry but find that hunger dampened by a mind full of questions, doubt and fear.

I love the article that Tim Enloe wrote for this Pentecostals Magazine - "How To Receive The Baptism of The Holy Spirit" Let me read you a couple of excerpts...

VULNERABILITY

There is an underlying principle in receiving anything from God, namely, vulnerability. Vulnerability toward God involves humbling ourselves when receiving from Him. How did we experience salvation? We first realized that we could not fix our own sin problem and then called on Jesus to save us. We humbled ourselves and prayed. If you have received a physical or emotional healing in the past, what did you do to welcome this miracle? Very likely you prayed. The Bible says, "Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him" (Hebrews 11:6, NLT). We receive from God most often through prayer. If you want to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, you need to draw near in prayer. Prayer is a state of vulnerability. Prayer declares, "I cannot meet this need in my life, but I believe God can." As the Scripture above explains, the reason we come to God is because we believe that He exists and responds to our seeking.

Our job in receiving anything from God is to become increasingly more vulnerable with Him. Pray out loud, lift your hands, voice your passion for Him, do not hold yourself back. Give your best effort to lowering your guard, moment by moment trying to yield more and more to Him. Raise your voice a decibel or two and lift your hands an inch higher. You may need to pray vulnerable prayers, expressing how much you need God. Do it for a few minutes before you sense the next phase beginning to happen.

AWARENESS

After some time of vulnerable, vocal prayer, you will become aware of the Holy Spirit's presence falling upon you or stirring you deeply. Jesus is responding as you cry out vulnerably.

His presence will not scare you. You will not be out of control. You will recognize His presence because you have sensed Him before. Most likely, your new awareness Of His presence will be stronger than usual.

You may sense that He falls upon you, then His presence lifts. This is not because you have made a mistake; this is a common experience.

You will find that if you choose to draw near in vulnerability again, His presence will fall upon you again.

He is surrounding you with His presence so you will have just enough courage to know that He is with you as you step into the final phase.

COOPERATION

Now that the Holy Spirit is being poured out upon you, you must learn to cooperate with His gentle leading. He will not make you speak in the supernatural language called "tongues"; you must learn to follow His promptings. He will nudge you and give you just enough faith to try to speak out loud in the new language, but you must choose to cooperate with Him. Your goal is to offer your physical ability to speak for His use, not yours. As long as you are speaking words and sentences you understand in English, Spanish, or whatever language you may know, you will be speaking out of your intelligence. Your goal is to try to speak out of your Spirit where He is stirring you.

Often, at this point, people begin to experience different types of prompting from the Holy of some strange sounds or syllables. This is when they should begin to try to speak. If this happens, say the sounds out loud. Your brain will try to talk you out of it, but trust the Holy Spirit's leading when He is upon you! Sometimes people feel a physical urge to speak, but are not quite sure what to say. Cooperate with this physical prompting; take a step of faith and try to give your raw sound to this inner prompting. You may grunt or sputter for a few moments, but relax and you will find new syllables beginning to emerge. Yield to the new words; let them flow.

You will find that when you begin to speak in this new, unknown language, your mind can still think, and may even begin to try to rationalize what is happening. This is normal. The apostle Paul explained, "For if I pray in tongues, my spirit is praying, but I don't understand what I am saying" (1 Corinthians 14:14, NLT).

You will not understand the supernatural words you are speaking. It is normal to have a mix of intellectual questions and spiritual sensation. Your brain will not

recognize the new language and will likely doubt its authenticity, yet your spirit will be released in a new way, and you will likely sense an inner strength.

From this day forward, you can start and stop speaking in tongues as easily as choosing to yield to the Spirit or not. You do not need to yell or cry; sometimes our emotions connect, and sometimes they do not. Emotions (or the lack of them) do not validate the concrete sign that He has to you.

Whenever you are praying in the Spirit, you are practicing yielding your voice to the Holy Spirit's prompting. It will become more natural for you to follow Him in the days ahead.

IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING

Sometimes it can feel difficult to receive something from God because Of our misunderstandings or sense of overwhelming unworthiness. If you feel like you are struggling, or that there are a million reasons why you can't experience this gift, it's all right. Jesus wants to empower you with His Spirit. He will help you, and He will fill you. As long as you continue to seek Him, He will navigate around any barriers you put up and any hang-ups you have, as long as you continue to pray to receive the gift you don't feel you deserve. And don't ever stop seeking to be filled. (Tim Enloe serves as the AG national evangelist representative. This is a modified excerpt from the 2018 book, Goodbye Chicken Hello Dove (E.M Publications)

- Tim Enloe (Pentecostals Magazine 2023)

It's a hunger that needs to continue. I have said it many times the question should not be "When were you filled with the Holy Spirit," but "Are you FULL of the Holy Spirit."

In Acts chapter 4, after they had already been filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and after Peter and John had been detained, questioned, and threatened by the Sanhedrin; the disciples prayed and were filled again.

Acts 4:23-31

23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

"Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? 26 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.'

27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

In Acts chapter 6 we read that they chose seven men who were "Full of the Holy Spirit and Power" (Not who had been filled) to serve tables

This fits in with another MORE that I wanted to preach on but won't have time to get to in this series - I want more intimacy with God

It's based on a verse in Exodus 33 that says...

Exodus 33:11

11 The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent.

I've always loved that verse and it points to a spiritual hunger from young Joshua, a desire to stay in close proximity to the presence of God. Who knows what all God poured into his life preparing him for the day when he would lead the children of Israel.

3. A Participation in the Gift

What good does it do to have a gift that just sits on the shelf. We use the gift to help us in...

Our walk with God

Our prayer lives

The edification of The Body of Christ

For power to witness

4. A Protection of the Gift

We are told in 1 Thessalonians...

1 Thessalonians 5:19

19 Do not quench the Spirit. (or as one translation puts it "Do not put out the Spirit's Fire)

Paul gives us more teaching in Galatians Chapter 5

Galatians 5:16-17; 19-25

16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. 24 Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Keeping in step with the Spirit is something Samson failed to do, and it cost him greatly...

Judges 16:20-21

20 Then she called, "Samson, the Philistines are upon you!"

He awoke from his sleep and thought, "I'll go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the Lord had left him.

21 Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding grain in the prison.

What a powerful and precious gift we have been given. Let us never take Him for granted.