


# Pentecost - Fresh Filling of the Holy Ghost

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How many knew it was Pentecost Sunday this Sunday? Well that's fantastic, so Pentecost Sunday. I thought well if it's Pentecost Sunday, we should focus on that this Sunday, so we're going to go back quickly to the Old Testament, then I want to pick up three things in the New Testament. It helps if we get a context for it, and so let's go in the Old Testament, the first Pentecost, oh how glorious! Look at this, Exodus 19.

It came to pass on the third day, in the morning, there were thunderings and lightnings, a thick cloud on the mountain; the sound of trumpet was very loud, and all the people in the camp trembled! Oh glory! And Moses brought the people out of the camp - and here's what it's about - to meet with God. Pentecost is about meeting with God - and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was completely covered in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, the whole mountain shook. Now that is something! Then the blast of the trumpet sounded long, and came louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Now that's the first Pentecost. Isn't that fantastic?

The first Pentecost was a meeting of God with His people. It was a demonstration of the nature, the power, the goodness of God. Notice that. Smoke and thunder and lightnings, mountains shaking - that's not something hidden away is it? That's something that's so visible, that everyone got a bit scared of it; then they heard the voice talking from the mountain. This is the first experience of Pentecost. I won't go into the Hebrew background of this, but very simply when you look at the whole context of it, God was meeting with them, to invite them into a marriage relationship with Him. There are many pictures and symbols in there that indicate that the Hebrews would have understood this, including what happened after, the giving of the law as being God entering into a marriage relationship with a people, for the very first time in history.

So Pentecost is not just about the smoke and thunder and lightnings and fires. It's about engaging in intimacy with God. That's what it's primarily about. We're going to look at two or three things related to it shortly. Let's have a look in Leviticus, Chapter 23. This was such an important feast, one of three major feasts, that God required they remember the feast, and interestingly enough He talks about it in Leviticus 23. You know I'm going to go to Acts, but I'll get there in just a moment. He says now - in Verse 16 - count 50 days - Pentecost is 50 - 50 days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you'll offer a new grain offering to the Lord. So notice that they count 50 days, 50 days after Passover was the Feast of Pentecost. Then on that day, it was a new offering to the Lord. In other words, it was a meeting with God again. Now when you came to Christ, Christ became your Passover. You experienced the power of salvation. You experienced change in your life, but now He's saying there's another meeting with God.

This one is to enter into intimacy with Him, and so notice He makes several things about it - I'll come back to this, and refer to these a little later, because they're quite important.

Notice it says that He says: you'll bring an offering. You'll come to God, presenting something. The second thing I want you to notice is this. In Verse 21 it says: this is a holy gathering or convocation to you. Do not ordinary work on it. So notice this: come with an offering, and no work. We'll show you what this means just shortly, and how vital this is. This is giving us an idea of what is about to come up, in terms of living and walking in the spirit. It's about an offering to God; and no work; no struggling, striving or trying. You actually rested on that day, so Pentecost then was a day when they rested, and it was a day of engaging God, and they rested.

Now the next thing it says - and this is also important - when you reap the harvest of your land, you won't wholly reap the corners of your field when you reap, nor gather any gleanings from your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the Lord your God. Now I want you just to notice these. We'll come and I'll refer to them when we get into the New Testament fulfilment. Here's what He's saying. Pentecost - now He required they celebrate this every year. Every year they were required to gather and celebrate this feast for a day. Notice this - they came before the Lord to experience and encounter Him. They came to give Him something. It was no work, no labour, no striving, no struggling. It was rest, and they also gave to the poor.

Now we're going to go into the New Testament and look at Pentecost, and you'll see all of these facets are there in what Pentecost really means for us today. I know the moment I talk about Pentecost you'll think of speaking in tongues, and that's a part of it, but there's somewhat more to it than that. So let's go into Acts, Chapter 2, where there's the fulfilment of this. Remember the Old Testament was just the picture; here is the reality. Here is the substance. This is what it was always pointing towards. So the disciples, Jesus has offered Himself. He's become the

Passover lamb. He's risen from the dead. He's become the first fruits to the Lord. Now, 50 days later, they've been in prayer, they've been in hungering, and it is the Feast of Pentecost. Everyone has gathered in the city. It's a day when they're going to celebrate the feast, and they're going to make an offering to God. There'll be no work, and it's a time of giving to the poor. Now notice what happens.

It says they were gathered - Verse 1 - when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. Suddenly a sound from heaven, like a rushing mighty wind - that word rushing is a roar, a mighty roar, like the roar of a thunder. It says a mighty wind - that means it's forceful and powerful, and notice then it filled the whole house where they were sitting. There appeared to them tongues, or flames like fire on them. They were filled with the Holy Ghost, began to speak in other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance. Of course it was so noisy, 120 people filled with the Holy Ghost, the noise was so dramatic, everyone came to have a look at it. When they came to have a look, they were amazed because of what they heard, and experienced. The power of God, the presence of God had come upon a room. It was filled now, with the presence of God, and the people were speaking in tongues. They were full of joy and laughter, and were carrying on like drunk people. That's why some mocked and said: they've been drinking.

Now you would never say to a person: you've been drinking, unless you had evidence, or it looked like they were, so if you said to someone: you've been drinking, it's because you've observed something about their behaviour that indicates they've been drinking. In other words they're laughing a lot, they're staggering a lot, they're carrying on like drunk people. They are absolutely immersed in the Holy Spirit - so that's got to be a good thing, for all those who love to be in control. That's how God desires to do it. I didn't write that, He did. [Laughter] So I want to share with you three things, primarily focus on three things. Number one, Pentecost is about a personal experience, of being filled with the spirit of God. It's an engagement to Him, to enter intimacy, so you notice the first thing that happened is, they got baptised in the spirit, began to speak in other tongues. Now essentially it means this. The baptism in the spirit is an entrance into a new realm of relationship with God. It's the entrance into the supernatural. It's like a gateway experience you walk through, but here's the thing.

The role of a gate is to provide a separation between one realm and another realm. If you're going to go through the gate, the idea is you live in the realm beyond the gate, so the baptism of the spirit literally means to be immersed into the realm of the spirit, or to be able to engage with God, in a level of intimacy and spirit connection you never had before that experience. So the first one that comes is this dramatic manifestation of God, but it's just like it was, and similar to the Old Testament. God is setting up, hey, this is my engagement to you. You are coming into intimacy, and in order to be intimate, you need to talk, so a language is given, a language to be intimate with God. That's a great thing isn't it aye? So God wants us to be filled with the spirit.

Now the idea is not just that one time alone you enter that gate and you get in; well that's it, I've done that. Been there, done that, now what's next? You know, well there's a lot next, but it actually means learning how to live and enjoy and experience that realm, so God wants us to be filled with the Holy Ghost. Acts, Chapter 4, they prayed, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost. The Bible says: be filled with the Holy Ghost. God wants you to be constantly filled with the Holy Ghost. If you're not filled with the Holy Ghost, you'll be filled with something else. It's really as simple as that isn't it? So like for example in Ephesians 5:18 it says: don't be drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; halleluiah, filled with the Holy Ghost.

Now let me just go into that verse just for a moment. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess. What is it gets you drunk? Is it trying, or is it the wine? Think about that. Do you have to try and make yourself drunk? You don't try to make yourself drunk. Drunkenness, or the loss of balance, laughter, all that goes with that, is the consequence of receiving something into yourself. In other words, there's no effort to get yourself drunk, you just drink, and you'll get drunk, isn't that right? Have you noticed that Richard? [Laughter] I see you nodding. I never found it very difficult to get drunk at all. I still wouldn't - just keep drinking, you get drunk. You just keep drinking, and you get drunk. What do you do when you're full of wine? You get drunk, and you get out of your mind, and you say things, and you babble, all sorts of stuff - not good. Not good.

Now the Bible says: don't be drunk with wine. It says rather be filled with the spirit, so now a lot of people try to put on the life of the spirit. Christianity is all a big trying hard. The Bible tells us, it's not about that at all, it's about being filled with someone - filled with the Holy Spirit. If you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the natural - there's certain things are going to flow out of your life. You can't pin the oranges on a tree. You know, I couldn't go over the road to that oak tree over there, and pin some oranges on it, and try and fool anyone that it was anything but an oak tree. [Laughter] It's true isn't it? You cannot pin it on. You actually grow it. Joy is a fruit of someone expressing their life in you. Peace

is the fruit of someone expressing their life in you. I believe many Christians really struggle, because they don't know how to get filled up with the Holy Ghost.

Their experience is not one of being filled. Their experience is one of struggling, and trying hard to be good enough, to be a good Christian. Would that be right? How many enjoy that experience? Its blimmin' miserable! It is miserable trying to be good, and here's why it's so miserable trying to be good; because you're forever blowing it. It's such an effort all the time to be trying so hard to look good, and be good, and here's why: because all your efforts are energised by the flesh and they can never produce the things of God. What is needed is the understanding of how we can be filled with the Holy Ghost, filled with the Holy Spirit, day after day after day. So normally the problem is this, it's that we don't really believe what God's word says. We believe what we feel and experience, and we in other words, believe in the things around us, rather than believing in what God says.

The big problem we have is believing life is found somewhere apart from God, so how can I be filled with the spirit? Let me give you two or three things that will help get you filled with the spirit - three things. There's probably heaps of things. Here's three things that occurred to me: number one, speaking in tongues is one great way to allow your life to become filled up with God. Why is that? Speaking in tongues - speaking in tongues is a great gift. I pray in tongues every day. I pray for a long time every day. I enjoy praying in tongues. I get energised - see, when you pray in tongues, your spirit is praying, as the Holy Ghost is giving you utterance, so now when you choose to pray in tongues, there's a flow from the spirit of God into your spirit. Your spirit begins to arise, starts to fill up with life, so praying in tongues is one of God's gifts to you, to help, because you can pray in tongues anytime you like. Build up your inner man, and start to come alive in God anytime! Anytime! Anytime! Ooh, [prays in tongues]

I pray in the morning, and if I get up too late and then there's people out I run into when I'm walking. They look... I say it's okay, I'm alright, I'm happy. [Laughter] I'm filled up with the spirit of God. I'm enjoying God. I'm using my language to love on Him. He that speaks in an unknown tongue is speaking to God. This is intimacy - you don't listen in. You know, you're talking with your wife, intimately, you don't want people listening in. You've got a good language, to be able to talk intimately with God, and not have people listen in, see? They just hear the mumur, but that's all, they don't know what's going on. It's between you and God.

Here's a second part of being filled with the spirit. This is perhaps one of the most powerful ways that you can do it, because it addresses where one of the biggest problems is. The biggest problem is what you believe in your heart, so here's the second way you can be filled with the Holy Spirit, is through meditation in the word of God. I cannot overstate how much meditation helps you to shift your believe system, and start to engage with heaven's reality - meditation.

You notice it says: they'll be filled with the spirit, and it says they'll have dreams and visions and so on. It talks about having dreams and visions. Now when God gives dreams and visions, there's nothing to indicate in those passages that those were open visions, or they saw them with their open eye. In fact when you dream, you actually close your eyes; you're asleep, and you have something come to you. Where does it come to you? In your mind and imagination, so clearly when God gives you dreams, then they come into your imagination, and likewise when God gives you visions, for the most part, unless it's a distinctly open vision, which is not quite so common, it comes into your mind and imagination as a mental picture. So we can see from that, that the imagination is a connecting point, between the realm of the spirit, and your soul or your spirit man.

So you can use your imagination creatively, for example, we can take the word of God, and create a picture in our mind, and begin to imagine what that would feel like, and look like, and how we would experience that. You see for many Christians, say for example the truth, that you are the temple of God; for many Christians, it doesn't mean much. It's just head knowledge, because they don't feel it. Many Christians, when we say that God loves you, it doesn't mean much, because they don't experience being loved by God, and experience is important to our being filled with God. One of the things that can help you immensely, is to train your imagination - you can pray in the spirit and get your spirit arising up, but to train your imagination, to meditate on truth, to picture it, as a reality for you.

So for example if I were to take the truth that I am the temple of the Holy Spirit, my body's a temple of the Holy Spirit, well you know that verse. See we know it in our head, but what if you were to become conscious everywhere you go, the spirit of God is living within me? What would it be like with God's spirit living in me? What would it feel like, if God was to just fill every part of me, just like He filled the Old Testament temple? What would it be like if God filled every part of me? I begin to imagine that, and I can begin to feel the spirit of God filling me. See, your imagination is the way for the reality of the truth to be experienced. A lot of people get worried about this. They think New Age and all that kind of stuff. Listen, New Age came around a long time after this. It's a latecomer on the scene. They just found what worked, and used it to their own methods without God. We're talking about taking the word of God, what God

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