

The People of Pentecost

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, June 2, 2019

Main Theme – Considering what manner of people received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday.

WORSHIP & PRAYER COMMUNION

USHERS – Please come forth to distribute the emblems of Communion

NOTE – I would like to share an IMAGE while the emblems of Communion are distributed (**SLIDE**)

What you are looking at is a SMALL PORTION of the National D-Day MEMORIAL (located in Bedford, VA). This memorial—in particular—honors those AMERICAN soldiers who participated in D-Day. For those who may now know, D-Day was a monumentally SIGNIFICANT event of WW2 (exactly 75-years ago this Thursday, June 6).

Allow me to share the following:

FYI – During World War II (1939–1945), the Battle of Normandy, which lasted from June 1944 to August 1944, resulted in the Allied liberation of Western Europe from Nazi Germany's control. Codenamed Operation Overlord, the battle began on June 6, 1944—also known as D-Day—when some 156,000 American, British and Canadian forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France's Normandy region. The invasion was the largest amphibious military assault in history. By late August 1944, all of northern France had been liberated, and by the following spring the Allies had defeated the Germans. Thus, the Normandy landings of D-Day have been called the beginning of the end of the war in Europe.

Q. Why does this memorial exist? (Why does any memorial exist to some degree)?

- It helps us to remember a significant event
- It helps us to remember incredible heroism/valor
- It helps us to remember sacrifice (few for the many)
- It calls us to consider the manner of our life and living

KEY (SLIDE) – The Lord's Supper/Holy Communion functions as an ongoing MEMORIAL. Though this memorial is NOT tethered to a geographical position—and though this memorial is NOT comprised of rock/stone—it IS a memorial, nonetheless.

- It helps us to remember a significant event
- It helps us to remember incredible heroism/valor
- It helps us to remember sacrifice (one for the many)
- It calls us to consider the manner of our life and living

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NIV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Regular Events (SLIDE)**
 - Men’s Ministry – Taking Place Saturday, June 8, from 9–10:30am
 - Women’s Min – Taking Place on Tuesday, June 11, from 6:30–8pm

- **Special Events**
 - Royalty’s Birthday Party – Open to All (Taking Place TODAY Post-Service)
 - Teen Challenge Sunday – Scheduled for Sunday, June 30 (Outside Service)

MORNING OFFERING

At this time, I want to call forth our ushers.

- Thank you for your faithfulness in giving to the Lord/His work
- Your giving fuels the work of Christ in and through this church

NOTE – Allow me to once again note that ONLINE GIVING is available (website)

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- **CHILDREN DISMISSED FOR CHILDREN’S CHURCH**
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Main Theme – Considering what manner of people received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday.

INTRODUCTION

As always it is wonderful to see you. I do look forward to these moments of corporate worship and instruction. I pray that you are ready to receive what the Lord has for you today. Please have your Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes.

SETTING THE STAGE

FYI – Next Sunday morning—June 9, 2019—is Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost was the day on which the Early Church was LAUNCHED into the fullness of MINISTRY/MISSION (nearly 2000-years ago), having been EMPOWERED by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2).

Acts 2:1–4 (NIV)

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they [i.e., the early Christians] 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.

NOTE – And we know the OUTFLOW or RESULT of this event (i.e., apostles/Peter empowered to preach; salvation of 3,000, etc.). Clearly, the happenings of Pentecost were and remain SIGNIFICANT – and shall be addressed in greater detail NEXT Sunday.

KEY – This morning, HOWEVER, I am NOT interested in the EVENTS of Pentecost. Rather, I am interested in its PEOPLE (**SLIDE**). I am interested in the BELIEVERS to whom the Spirit was given and through whom God changed the world. Consider a SMALL HANDFUL of men & women started it all!

Q. What manner of people were they?

Q. What qualities characterized/defined them?

Q. Upon what manner of people did the Lord pour out His Spirit and change everything?

NOTE – As I will make plain in latter segments of this sermon, these are NOT abstract questions that are meant to our satisfy intellectual curiosity. NO! They are deeply significant questions, as their answers inform and impact how we SERVE and LIVE in the PRESENT.

Q. What do we know re: the believers who experienced the outpouring of the HS on Pentecost?

EXPECTANT

KEY – The **FIRST** thing I want to note is that they were an **EXPECTANT** people.

i.e., They were a people who sought the fulfillment of the promise of God (**FAITH/ANTICIPATION**).

NOTE – We must consider the **FLOW** of **EVENTS** between the **RESURRECTION** of Jesus Christ and the Day of **PENTECOST** (FYI – 50-day interval). Scripture teaches that for **FORTY** days after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to many and offered instruction to those who were His.

Acts 1:1–3 (Emphasis Mine)

1 In my former book (i.e., the Gospel of Luke), Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of **forty days** and spoke about the kingdom of God.

KEY – In the midst of this forty-day period Christ issued the following command/**PROMISE**:

Acts 1:4–5

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. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

NOTE – After forty days of teaching and offering instruction, Jesus Christ **ASCENDED** into heaven.

Q. What did the disciples do?

A. They heeded the Lord and **EAGERLY** anticipated the fulfillment of His promise (10-days in total)

KEY – They were a people who—by **FAITH**—believed the promise of Christ/sought its fulfillment.

-This introduces the **SECOND** characteristic of the people who received the Holy Spirit...

OBEDIENT

KEY – The **SECOND** thing I want to note is that they were an **OBEDIENT** people.

NOTE – This is a **SIMPLE** point, but one worth making. Christ **ISSUED** a command/promise:

Acts 1:4–5

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. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Q. What did the disciples do as they eagerly anticipated this promise of God?

A. They **OBEYED** the word of the Lord. Christ **COMMANDED** them (at least on one occasion – potentially more – cf. Luke 24) to **WAIT** in the city of Jerusalem until they had been clothed with power from on high – and that is **PRECISELY** what they did...

Acts 1:12–13

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives [i.e., Ascension], a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.

NOTE – And for **TEN** days they **REMAINED** in the city! We know this because Acts 2 records their location on that ancient Pentecost Sunday (i.e., Jerusalem)! Jesus said to **REMAIN** in Jerusalem until they received power – and **REMAIN** they did (**OBEY**)

QUOTE – "The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its Master".

-This introduces the **THIRD** characteristic of the people who received the Holy Spirit...

PRAYERFUL

KEY – The **THIRD** thing I want to note is that they were a **PRAYERFUL** people.

Q. How did they fill the 10-day interval between the Ascension & Pentecost?

Q. What was the primary activity of the church of Jesus Christ in that interval?

Acts 1:12–14 (Emphasis Mine)

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together **constantly in prayer**, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 2:1

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

Q. What do you think they were doing when the H.S. was poured forth?

Acts 2:2–4

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.

KEY – They were a people of **PRAYER** who expectantly and obediently sought the Lord!

-This dovetails with the **FOURTH** characteristic of the people who received the Holy Spirit...

PERSISTENT

KEY – The **FOURTH** thing I want to note is that they were a **PERSISTENT** people.

Q. What do we note re: the prayer-life of this people? They were TIRELESS!

Acts 1:12–14 (Emphasis Mine)

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They all joined together **constantly** in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

A. They were tireless in prayer – they were unceasing in prayer – they were PERSISTENT in prayer

NOTE – This was NOT a one-hour prayer service that nearly NO one attends and almost NO one prays during. This was a body of people who TARRIED in prayer for NOT one day or two or a week, but for TEN days! And they ALL prayed (cf. 1:14)!

FYI – Please don't think that they prayer life of the church STOPPED with Pentecost. We see the ancient people of God given to prayer to a degree that would make the MOST mature among us feel ASHAMED! (cf. Acts 2:42)

Acts 2:42 (Emphasis Mine)

42 They [the Pentecost believers + the 3,000 new converts] **devoted themselves** to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to **prayer**.

-This leads me to the FIFTH characteristic of the people who received the Holy Spirit...

SUBMISSIVE

KEY – The FIFTH thing I want to note is that they were a SUBMISSIVE people.

Q. What do I mean by submissive (for the sake of THIS sermon)?

A. I mean that they were a people who SOUGHT the guidance of the Lord in the making of decisions and YIELDED to His leading accordingly. Thus, not only were they obedient to the EXPLICIT command of the Lord (i.e., wait for the gift of the Father) – they pursued His leading in matters He had NOT previously addressed (e.g., replacement of Judas's apostolic office).

Acts 1:15–26

15 In those days [ten day interval between the Ascension and Pentecost] Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 16 and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. 17 He was one of our number and shared in our ministry."

18 (With the payment he received for his wickedness, Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. 19 Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 "For," said Peter, "it is written in the Book of Psalms:

"May his place be deserted;
let there be no one to dwell in it,"

and,

“‘May another take his place of leadership.’

21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, 22 beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

KEY – Whereas as the MODERN CHURCH might have formed a search committee and trusted in the workings of some bureaucratic process (governed by Robert’s Rules of Order) – the Early Church COLLECTIVELY SOUGHT the guidance of the Lord and TRUSTED in the wisdom He provided!

-This leads me to the SIXTH & FINAL characteristic of the people who received the Holy Spirit...

CONNECTED

KEY – The LAST thing I want to note is that they were a CONNECTED people.

NOTE – You can almost FEEL the familial connection these early believers shared when you read:

Acts 1:12–14 (Emphasis Mine)

12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk[c] from the city. 13 When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. 14 They **all joined together** constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

KEY – Everyone was engaged; everyone had a voice and a place; everyone mattered in the Body.

Acts 2:1–4 (Emphasis Mine)

1 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.

FYI – And this sense of fellowship, connection & community did NOT dissipate with time (GREW).

Acts 2:42–47

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

KEY – The Early Church functioned like an interconnected body w. Christ as the Head (cf. Eph. 4).

TRANSITIONS

Q. Upon what manner of people did the Lord pour out His Spirit on Pentecost?

Q. What manner of people did the Lord use to change the world for time & eternity?

- 1) An EXPECTANT people – those who longed to see the fulfillment of His promise
- 2) An OBEDIENT people – those who heeded the word of the Lord/divine directives
- 3) A PRAYERFUL people – those who sought the Lord via the spt. discipline of prayer
- 4) A PERSISTENT people – those who tarried in prayer in an 'unceasing/constant' way
- 5) A SUBMISSIVE people – those who sought the guidance of God and yielded in kind
- 6) A CONNECTED people – those who experienced/operated in a state of community

KEY – THIS was the MANNER of people who received the Spirit and were used of the Lord.

HARD QUESTIONS

NOTE – As I consider this, I am forced to ask some challenging/probing QUESTIONS:

Q. To what DEGREE are these the hallmarks/key characteristics of the MODERN church?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by spiritual expectancy?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by a marked obedience?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by 'deep' prayerfulness?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by 'abiding' persistence?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by seeking His guidance?

Q. To what degree is the Church of North America characterized by Christian connection?

KEY – To personalize this a bit more...

Q. What are the areas in which we are weak v. wrong? How can we move forward (ind./coll.)?

FINAL POINTS

NOTE – This is a VITAL topic for I posit that God is looking to cultivate and empower such a people

NOTE – This is a VITAL topic because Pentecost was NOT a one-time event – an “ongoing” reality

Q. What might happen if we pursue expectancy, obedience, pers. prayer, His wisdom & conn.?

Q. What might happen if the N.A. Church truly repents of its ways and follows bib. precedent?