

The Message at Pentecost

Welcome to Pentecost Sunday.

Who has ever been to a concert? Have you ever seen those pyrotechnic displays where there are pillars of fire or flames bursting out on the stage?

What a bunch of copy cats!

This morning turn with me to Acts 2:1-4 ESV

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

God created the pyrotechnic display way back at Pentecost and it wasn't on stage but on the head of every individual filled with the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever seen the posters that go up to announce a concert coming? It builds excitement and people want to attend the event.

God started 800 years before the event with the prophet Joel... look down to verse 16...

Acts 2:16

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel

That would have been an amazing service wouldn't it? There you are and in the calm you hear the sound of a rushing wind and then there is a tongue of fire on the head of everyone in the room – even yours! Pretty cool eh?

Then you start to speak in a language that you have never learned and you are being understood by thousands of people on the street of various races. Even more they are hearing you declare the wonders of God and giving him high praise in their own native tongues.

Can we agree that when God showed up – he got the attention of those in the service?

Now as amazing as all that was, when you go or have seen a rock concert and all the pyrotechnics, is that the only reason you showed up? Did you go for the attention getters and the environmental excitement or did you go to hear the music and the message in the music?

Some people get excited about all the flash, bang, pillar or fire, glory cloud, gold dust and so forth... and my friends they are great faith builders, but they are nothing compared with the presence of God and his message.

Once God had their attention, we see Peter getting up to say a few words. In fact he preached a message that breaks down essentially into four components:

- 1) He tells the people that God the Father sent Jesus to all Mankind.
 - a. Acts 2:22 – *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know —”*
- 2) Then he drops the heavy that God had sent him, but many in the crowd called out for his death.
 - a. Acts 2:23 – *“this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men”*
- 3) Then the message is more powerful than the wind and the fire. He tells them that Jesus didn’t stay dead – He rose again and is alive.
 - a. Acts 2:24 – *“God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it”*
- 4) Finally he reveals that Jesus is ruling and reigning at the right hand of God the Father.
 - a. Acts 2:33 – *“Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.”*

This sermon was a culmination of over 300 prophecies about Jesus from the Old Testament. How awesome that this wasn’t just a quick lesson by Peter on the theology of God. God came down and became flesh and died for us and to punctuate the gift that he said he would send, he brought it down with some amazing and pretty convincing miraculous events and pyrotechnics.

Paul and Silas preached Peter’s message later in Thessalonica and it was so powerful that the people said in Acts 17:6 – *“And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities, shouting, “ These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also”*

What an amazing thing!

- Friends can we agree this morning that the World is wrong side up?
- Friends can we agree that it needs to be turned upside down?
- Friends can we agree that we are the ones who are called to set the world to rights?

Here is the message folks:

- Jesus loves us
- We still sin
- We deserve the punishment of hell but Jesus took our place
- He died for our sins and he rose for our hope of salvation

Why does this offend some people so much?

How many of you remember Billy Joel?

Do you know that he got so upset with the message of the cross that he said: "There's a guy... nailed to a cross and dripping blood, and everyone's blaming themselves for that mans torment, but I said to myself, "Forget it. I had no hand in that evil. I have no original sin. There's no blood or any sacred martyr on my hands. I pass on all of this."

This celebrity atheist is wrong!

First of all in Psalms 14:1 we are told that the "Fool" says in his own heart there is no God... That deals with the atheism. As regards sin...

1 John 1:8 – *"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."*

Where have we as a society gotten the idea that our idea and image of ourselves is greater than God?

I am reminded of another historical event in the USA. President of the USA Andrew Jackson was attending a church service held by the evangelist Peter Cartwright. Cartwright was warned for political and denominational influence reasons not to offend the president.

The first words out of his mouth were these: "Andrew Jackson will go to hell, if he doesn't repent of his sin!"

Now how did the president react to this truth?

When he met Cartwright at the door to the church he said: "Sir, if I had a regiment of men like you, I could conquer the world"

Now can we agree Peter's sermon is pretty hard?

Now here's an interesting note: 3000 people repented and were baptized...

What was his bottom line? Turn with me to Acts 2:38 – *"And Peter said to them, "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."*

The Holy Spirit is what we have received at Pentecost. So what did we get?

Well John 14, 17-18 CEV tells us:

The Spirit will show you what is true. The people of this world cannot accept the Spirit, because they don't see or know him. But you know the Spirit, who is with you and will keep on living in you. I won't leave you like orphans. I will come back to you.

Now John 16:7-9 CEV:

But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin and God's justice and the judgment. The Spirit will show them that they are wrong about sin, because they didn't have faith in me.

John 16:5-15 CEV shows us why there is such a negative reaction

But now I am going back to the Father who sent me, and none of you asks me where I am going. You are very sad from hearing all of this. But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. The Spirit will come and show the people of this world the truth about sin and God's justice and the judgment. The Spirit will show them that they are wrong about sin, because they didn't have faith in me. They are wrong about God's justice, because I am going to the Father, and you won't see me again. And they are wrong about the judgment, because God has already judged the ruler of this world. I have much more to say to you, but right now it would be more than you could understand. The Spirit shows what is true and will come and guide you into the full truth. The Spirit doesn't speak on his own. He will tell you only what he has heard from me, and he will let you know what is going to happen. The Spirit will bring glory to me by taking my message and telling it to you. Everything that the Father has is mine. That is why I have said that the Spirit takes my message and tells it to you.

Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit to enlighten us about the meaning of the scriptures and to give us guidance in his truth. Just as was fore promised in Joel 2:28-29:

"Later, I will give my Spirit to everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will have dreams, and your young men will see visions. In those days I will even give my Spirit to my servants, both men and women"

This amazing gift of the Holy Spirit brings with him some amazing things.

His role in our salvation includes:

- Regeneration

- Indwelling
- Baptizing
- Sealing
- Filling
- Guiding
- Empowering
- Teaching

He also draws us to Christ

- *Saved* -

When we are saved he does a restorative work bringing about the likeness of Christ within us

He fills us and indwells us

He teach us the scriptures

He illuminates the meaning of the scriptures

He guides us into all truth

- *Baptized in to the HS* -

He commissions us to service

He empowers us for service

He sent us his Holy Spirit and today we need to be ever thankful for the fulfillment of his promise at Pentecost.

He has given us gifts to help us fulfill his commission to us:

- Gifts of Knowing
 - Words of Wisdom
 - Words of Knowledge
 - Discerning of Spirits
- Gifts of Doing
 - Faith for miracles
 - Healings
 - Works of Power
- Gifts of Speaking
 - Tongues
 - Interpretation
 - Prophecy

Today we need to celebrate the miraculous events in our Christian lives, but we also need to not miss the message that Peter brought to us about the good news of Jesus Christ.