

Kingdom of God - Week #7 Pentecost Sunday - Kingdom Power

May 27, 2020

Church Family,

Greetings to our beloved church family! I pray that you are well and that you are using the time God is giving you to continue to grow spiritually and to worship Him in new and meaningful ways. I know that we are all more than ready to begin meeting together again, but let me remind you that our Executive Committee made the decision to suspend our on-site worship services and all events until our county gets to the “Green” phase. I know that there are many voices out there and many ideas about what could and should be done, but we decided from the beginning to remain graciously protective of our congregation which includes many in the most vulnerable category. Please know that while our “church services” have remained suspended, our church has remained functioning as an approved essential business. The reasons we decided not to try and meet while our county is in the “Yellow” phase is that there isn’t enough space in the Sanctuary to provide enough space for “social distancing.” It also didn’t seem practical to try to do multiple services, because it would have taken about 4 services to fit everyone in the Sanctuary, and the building would have had to be cleaned between each service. The best way we can ensure everyone in the congregation is reached each week is to continue providing both our sermon videos on-line and mailing the printed copies. Please know the Executive Committee is doing their best to honor the Lord and make the best decision possible for all our “brothers and sisters” who want to come and worship. Together we will get through all of this and continue worshipping together, but for now we are all going to need to choose to be gracious to one another as we look forward to the days when we will once again worship the Lord together! I hope the sermon below is a blessing to you this week!

Welcome and thank you for choosing to worship with us today! Today is **Pentecost Sunday!** This is the 7th Sunday after Easter 2020, and it has now been about **50 days** since we celebrated Jesus’s death and Resurrection at Easter. We are marking the days **after** the Resurrection because several important events happened in these days, and we don’t want to miss out on their significance.

Let’s **pause for prayer** and ask the LORD to help us understand the significance of what He has done for us through the events we will read about in Scripture today. The results of these events are not isolated to the days on which they happened. The reality of what happened is a reality that we can live in too!

Prayer:

“Heavenly Father, You have done so much to reveal your Kingdom to us. Thank you for making a way for us to live in and enjoy your Kingdom both now and for eternity. Help us today to understand what Jesus has taught us about the **Kingdom power** that You have made available to help us live out Your Kingdom principles in our lives. We are grateful for everything You have done, and we want to live in the fullness You have provided for us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. We love You LORD. Amen.”

We have been focusing on Jesus’ teachings on the **Kingdom of God**, because we are told in Scripture that for 40 days **after** Jesus’ crucifixion and **before** He ascended to be with the Heavenly Father again, Jesus specifically taught about the **Kingdom of God**.

Acts 1:3, records this for us.

³ *During the **forty days** after he suffered and died, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about **the Kingdom of God**.* ^(NLT)

40 days after Jesus’ Resurrection He **returned** to the Heavenly Father and left the Disciples as He had told them He would. We mentioned this had happened in our sermon last week as we passed the 40-day mark. It is

interesting that even after 40 days of specific instructions from Jesus, **the Kingdom of Heaven** was still on the minds of the Disciples as Jesus was leaving.

We read of their final pre-Ascension conversation with Jesus in:

Acts 1:6-9

⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our **kingdom**?”

⁷ He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.

⁸ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ^(NLT)

So as Jesus is about to Ascend into Heaven to return to the Heavenly Father, He again restates much of what He has already told the Disciples. He states once again that only the Heavenly Father knows the time of Jesus’ return and the visible revelation of God’s Kingdom. Jesus states once again that they have a job to do while He is gone; they need to continue to tell others about Him and what He has done.

There is one final thing that Jesus reminds them of that we haven’t talked about yet in this **Kingdom of God** series, and it is what we are actually celebrating today on what we refer to as **Pentecost Sunday**. Jesus said this to them, “⁸ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.**”

There is **Kingdom Power** to live out all **the Kingdom Principles** that Jesus has told us about. We cannot carry out the **Kingdom work** without being filled with **Kingdom Power**. Trying to live the Kingdom way **without** the **Kingdom Power** will lead to personal frustration and failure.

Jesus had promised that He would **NOT** leave the Disciples alone when He returned to the Heavenly Father. He promised them that “**another**” helper would come, and He had instructed them to **WAIT** to continue the **Kingdom work UNTIL** this “**helper**” would come. Jesus knew they needed the **Kingdom Power** to live out the **Kingdom principles** as they continued the **Kingdom work**.

Listen to what Jesus had already said to them **prior to** His Return to the Father concerning His leaving and then the coming of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-29

¹⁵ “If you love me, obey my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you **another Advocate**, who will never leave you. ¹⁷ He is **the Holy Spirit**, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives **with you now** and later **will be in you**. ¹⁸ No, **I will not abandon you as orphans**—I will come to you. ¹⁹ Soon the world will no longer see me, but you will see me. Since I live, you also will live. ²⁰ When I am raised to life again, you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them.”

²² Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but the other disciple with that name) said to him, “Lord, why are you going to reveal yourself only to us and not to the world at large?”

²³ Jesus replied, “All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home **with each of them**. ²⁴ Anyone who doesn’t love me will not obey me. And remember, my words are not my own. What I am telling you is from the Father who sent me. ²⁵ I am telling you these things now while I am still with you. ²⁶ **But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.**

²⁷ “I am leaving you with **a gift—peace of mind and heart**. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don’t be troubled or afraid. ²⁸ Remember what I told you: **I am going away, but I will come back to you again**. If you really loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, who is greater than I am. ²⁹ I have told you these things before they happen so that when they do happen, you will believe. ^(NLT)

In this passage we hear Jesus speaking of His **“going away”** to the Father, but also that the Heavenly Father will send **the Holy Spirit** as Jesus’ representative to teach and remind His followers all Jesus has taught.

During the **40 days after the Resurrection**, Jesus spoke of the Gift of **the Holy Spirit** that would come from the Heavenly Father. Jesus **“commands”** the Disciples to wait for this gift of **Kingdom Power** before they continue their ministry.

Acts 1:4-5

⁴ Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “Do not leave Jerusalem **until** the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. ⁵ John baptized with water, but in just a few days **you** will be baptized with **the Holy Spirit**.” ^(NLT)

A short time later, Jesus ascends to the Heavenly Father and the Disciples follow Jesus’ instructions and wait for **the Holy Spirit** to come. They end up **waiting 10 days**.

On the **50th day** after Jesus’ death and resurrection, something very important and life changing happened. It is recorded for us in:

Acts 2:1-4

On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. ² Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. ³ Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. ⁴ **And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit** and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. ^(NLT)

On the day of Pentecost, **the Holy Spirit** comes just as Jesus had promised and He filled all the believers with **God’s Kingdom Power**.

Scripture records for us that there was both an audible sound of **a mighty windstorm** and a visible sign of fire at the coming of the Holy Spirit, so that they would know what was happening.

It is important to note that **“all the believers.....present were filled with the Holy Spirit.”**

A huge progressive shift has just happened in **God’s Kingdom!** Jesus, the Son of God in human form, was limited to being at one place at a time while He was here on Earth. Now that He has gone to Heaven, the Holy Spirit is sent and makes the **“power of God”** available to **all** believers, at **all** times, in **all** locations. In the work of **the Holy Spirit** we see God’s power and presence **multiplied exponentially!** It is through the empowering of the Holy Spirit that **the Kingdom of God** is going to continue to grow, develop, and mature **until** the return of Christ!

It is important to note that this happened to the believers as **individuals!** Though they were all at the same place when this happened for the first time, they **individually** received the filling of the Holy Spirit. This too is just as Jesus had promised it would happen in **John 14:23** when He said that He and the Father would come and **“make our home with each of them.”**

Why fill all of them?

They would each need **God's power** to live and grow into the mature **Kingdom people** that God intended them to be.

We see **God's Power** immediately evident in their lives as they *"began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability."*

Now I know this is the part of the verse that makes many people nervous...but it doesn't need to. I also understand that different groups interpret the words *"began speaking in other languages"* in different ways. My friends, if we let the misunderstanding of these words rob us of experiencing **the Kingdom Power** that God has for us, then we will **fail** to be **the Kingdom people** that God created us to be, and we will **fail** to complete the task He has given us to do.

I would like to show you, through Scriptures, that those **filled** with the Holy Spirit are experiencing exactly what Jesus said would happen. Scripture also records that these believers used their new **"Kingdom Power"** to do exactly what Jesus had instructed them.

Let's look again at what Jesus **said** would happen and follow it through **the events** recorded in Scripture.

In Acts 1:8 Jesus says,

*⁸ But you will **receive power** when the **Holy Spirit** comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

The Holy Spirit comes, and in **Acts 2:4** we read, *"And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability."* ^(NLT)

So, the Holy Spirit comes and fills them with Power, and they begin to speak in other languages.

Now let's see what the verses say **after this filling with the Holy Spirit**, and see if these believers are speaking as **witnesses** to others as Jesus instructed them to do.

Acts 2:5-11

⁵ At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. ⁶ When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. ⁷ They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, ⁸ and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! ⁹ Here we are—Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. And we all hear these people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done!" ^(NLT)

These believers, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, are able to speak in the languages of **all** the people present.

What was it that they were speaking to these people about?

They were speaking about the wonderful things God has done! ...just as Jesus instructed them.

Once again, exactly what Jesus said would happen has transpired!

As I said, the coming of **the Holy Spirit** marks a progressive shift in the work of **the Kingdom of God** here on the Earth. In fact, the remainder of the New Testament is a record of the Holy Spirit's work in and through the lives of the believers who are **filled with the Holy Spirit**. It records the growth and maturity of these **empowered believers** as they go out to share the Good News about Jesus and the Kingdom of God.

Jesus had been teaching the Disciples and others about **the Kingdom of God**; now with the coming of **the Holy Spirit**, the **Kingdom of God** was becoming a reality for them in a very real and personal way. Remember what

Jesus said in *John 14:17*, “But you know him, because he lives **with you now** and later **will be in you**.” **The Power of God is now within them for the very first time!** God’s power, love, faithfulness, and righteousness were now things the Disciples experienced on the inside of them. As a result of the Holy Spirit applying **God’s power** on the inside, they naturally began to experience changes in their actions on the outside.

What does all this talk of the **Holy Spirit** and **Kingdom Power** have to do with you?

Well, most simply, **the Holy Spirit** is still filling believers with the **Kingdom power** to do what Jesus has instructed us to do. God’s Kingdom work continues to progress in our lives, and generation too, and will continue until Jesus’ return. We too can experience the **Kingdom principles** that Jesus taught in a personal way, not through personal striving, but through **God’s empowering** within us!

This is true for **all** of us who believe in Jesus Christ. You can read the Bible stories and the instructions from Jesus all you want, but **the only way** for you to have them **shift** from being mere stories and principles that you strive to achieve to becoming **a reality** in your life is to allow **the Holy Spirit** to fill you with His Power. It is the Holy Spirit that makes **God’s Kingdom principles** a reality **in** your life.

There must be a shift in your life, where you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Holy Spirit **isn’t** just **with** you, but that He is **in** you!

Certainly, there is **more** to the **depth and breadth** of the work and understanding of the Holy Spirit, but this is where we need to start, because this is how Jesus started with His Disciples and then they progressed from there.

So, let me conclude today by asking you a question and then giving you an opportunity to respond.

Do you know **about** the Holy Spirit, or do you know the Power of the Holy Spirit within you?

Knowing **about** the Holy Spirit is **not** enough. Just as knowing **about** Jesus **isn’t** enough to claim His salvation. You must **choose** to make Jesus your personal Lord and Savior and then begin to live for Him. In the same way, you must **allow** the Holy Spirit to **fill** you and begin empowering you to live out the Kingdom principles.

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then we believe that the Holy Spirit is **within** you and His Power is available to you! You, however, must **choose** to follow His directions and guidance in your life. You must trust Him to empower you to complete the task to which Jesus has called you.

Let me remind you once again of:

Acts 2:4, “And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.” ^(NLT)

That last phrase is so important, “**as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.**”

When the Holy Spirit fills you with God’s power, He will give you the ability to fulfill God’s plan for your life...whatever it is.

So, how would you like to respond on this “**Pentecost Sunday?**”

If you are already a Christian and know that the Holy Spirit is empowering you to live out the Kingdom Principles, then you should **respond in worship and thanksgiving** for this wonderful gift that the Heavenly Father has given you.

If you are already a Christian, but you **don't know** the **empowering presence** of the Holy Spirit in your life, and you feel like you have been trying to apply Jesus' Kingdom Principles in your own power and failing...then I would invite you to pray and ask the Heavenly Father to **fill** you with the Holy Spirit and His power. Tell Him you want His power to fulfill His purposes for your life.

For some of us it's like driving your car with on-board GPS, but never turning it on, so you struggle in your own power to get to where you are going.

For believers, the Holy Spirit is already "on board," but we must choose to listen to His guidance and directions. You must choose to turn the "power" on!

If you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior yet, then you need to start there and ask Him to become your Lord and Savior. Then following that you can invite the Holy Spirit to have full control of your life.

My friends, Jesus taught us clearly about the Kingdom of God, then He made the Kingdom Power available to all believers through the Holy Spirit. With the Power of the Holy Spirit we can continue to live out the Kingdom Principles and fulfill our roles to help the Heavenly Father's Kingdom come and will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven!

This day, Pentecost Sunday, celebrates the 1st time the Holy Spirit began filling all believers with **Kingdom Power!** I can think of no better way to celebrate today than to ask the LORD to fill us with His **Kingdom Power** too!

As I close in prayer, let me encourage you to ask the Lord for what you need and want today. If you need His Power, Ask! If you need His Salvation, Ask! If you are thankful for all He had done IN you, tell Him thank you!

Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, hear our prayer responses to You today. For those who have already experienced being filled with the Holy Spirit we express our thanks to You today! For those asking for the filling of the Holy Spirit and Your Kingdom power, we ask that You grant their request in an unmistakable way. For those seeking salvation through Jesus Christ, we ask that You cleanse them of their sins and begin to transform their lives to be all that you have created them to be. May all of us live with the reality of Your Kingdom power in our lives! In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."

Blessing:

"May God fill you with His Power through the Holy Spirit, and may you live as a powerful witness for Jesus Christ! Go and live powerfully for Him!"

Please remember these other ways we are reaching out as a Church Family in these days of separation.

Church Phone: 724-628-3949

Church E-mail: centralfellowshipchurch@verizon.net

Church Website: www.centralfellowshipchurch.com

Church Facebook page: www.facebook.com/centralfellowshipconnellsville

NEW Church YouTube channel: Search for Central Fellowship Church or

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ5mrAnoy6Bhe4UwtyICQ8g>

Love and Prayers for you all!

Following Christ,

Pastor Mike Martin