

Pentecost And The Holy Spirit

Today we celebrate one of the most amazing gifts God gives. Today we are talking about Pentecost and the Holy Spirit.

Introduction

Today is Pentecost Sunday. This is 50 days after the sabbath following Passover. Today marks the day when Christians received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is integral to the Christian life. It is impossible to live the Christian life and fulfill your calling without the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. When you ask Jesus into your heart and you accept His gift of salvation the Holy Spirit enters you and becomes that Great Counselor and helps guide you, but there is much more to the Holy Spirit. Many miss out on the power that is available to do all God has created us for and called us to.

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

We are going to spend a few minutes discovering the influence that the Holy Spirit has on the lives of people who follow Jesus Christ. To do that, we first need to learn about the first experience of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. We are going to start by reading what Jesus said about this promised gift in Acts 1:1-5.

Acts 1:1-5

(1) In my former book, 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. (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."

Jesus gave some specific instructions in this passage of scripture. First, he says to not leave Jerusalem. They were there because Jesus was crucified and rose from the dead there. He was teaching them about the Kingdom of God for 40 days after he had risen from the dead.

Jesus wasn't finished with them yet. He didn't want the apostles to go back to fishing, tax collecting, their careers, and their own way of life. Instead, he wanted them to stay and be patient with expectation.

Jesus' Next Instructions

This leads us to the second instruction Jesus gives. God was going to give them a gift he had promised them. We see this promise in John 14:26 which says:

John 14:26



(26) But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

The final instruction Jesus gave them was that they would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They didn't know what this meant or what to expect. However, they obeyed. We read later in Acts chapter one that they all joined together constantly in prayer along with the women and Jesus' family.

Not only did they wait expectantly, but they also prayed constantly. They didn't want to miss the gift, they wanted to receive it and be ready for it even though they didn't understand what it meant. They understood that if this gift was from God, he had a purpose in it for their good. The apostles completely trusted Jesus and his word.

We don't see them second-guessing Jesus. We don't see them asking clarifying questions. What we read is that they obeyed. They didn't need an explanation. They believed that what Jesus said was true. They may not have understood what he was talking about, but that didn't matter. Jesus said it and they chose to believe it.

Sometimes we are afraid to experience something that is from God simply because we don't understand it. If we truly believe that God is good, and his purposes are good, then we should wholeheartedly trust him whether we understand him or not.

The Holy Spirit Shows Up

Let us continue our story and see what happens when this promised gift of the Holy Spirit shows up. We find the purpose of Pentecost Sunday in this passage of scripture. Let's read Acts 2:1-4.

Acts 2:1-4

(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.

What an experience! First, a noisy, violent wind blows through the room, and what looks like fire comes and rests on top of each believer. This must have been quite the sight. For those watching, there would have been no denying that something miraculous just happened.

Then, every one of them was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages! Acts goes on to say that those watching were amazed because they heard their own foreign language being spoken.

This was the promised gift of the Father. This was a powerful experience but not one of a kind, it was just the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of God's people. The Holy Spirit then was poured out on believers as they said "yes" to Jesus.

We read all through the book of Acts where Peter, Paul, and the other apostles met with people, and after they repented of their sins and accepted Jesus that they were baptized in the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues.



We read how the Holy Spirit filled Peter with boldness, so he could preach to the Sanhedrin and those who opposed Christ. We read how the Holy Spirit came upon Paul to perform miracles in the name of Jesus. Throughout the New Testament, we see how the Holy Spirit took ordinary Christians and made them extraordinary by displaying the power of God in their lives.

The Holy Spirit Today

This power, this gift, did not stop when the apostles died. It didn't end when the Bible was complete. The Holy Spirit is the third part of the Holy Trinity. Just as God is active today and Jesus is still saving souls, today, the Holy Spirit is still baptizing people so that they can speak in tongues and have power displayed in their lives to be a testimony of the Gospel.

Before Jesus ascended into Heaven, after he told the apostles to not leave Jerusalem, he said this about the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8

(8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

This is the purpose of the Holy Spirit. It is to give you power so that you can preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ with boldness. It provides you with everything you need to fulfill what God has called you to do. Speaking in tongues increases your prayer life and intercedes on behalf of others and is the most common gift given, but there is also the gift of healing and other miracles, along with others. Praying in tongues brings power to your prayers and gives you a deeper understanding of God. Your relationship with God will be strengthened and deepened when you receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It is for today and it is for you.

Conclusion

If you have said "yes" to Jesus and have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in your life, then we invite you to ask the Lord to receive this gift. Be patient and wait for God's timing and then use the power you are given to affect great change in this world and to point people to a life in Jesus Christ.

There is power in the Holy Spirit. He is our comforter, advocate, counselor, and guide.

Today, on Pentecost Sunday, we encourage you to seek this power from God and know that God's purposes are what is best for you. We encourage you to read more about the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts and throughout the New Testament.

