

Whitsunday (Pentecost)  
Holy Spirit Anglican Church  
May 31, 2020  
Acts 2:1-11

Today we celebrate “**The day of Pentecost**”. It is an important day, because Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian Church. It is day that the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles

The coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost is one of the most important events concerning the life of a Christian. It is **both** the Sacrifice at the Cross and the coming of the Holy Ghost that define our lives as Christians. **Without the Holy Ghost, we would be useless as Christians!**

And yet to many Christians, the work, the person, and the ministry of the Holy Ghost are a mystery.

I hope to remove some of that mystery for you today.

**The Holy Ghost is God, just as much as Jesus is God and the Father is God.**

**The Holy Ghost is a person**. He is not a thing. For example: He is not enthusiasm. He is not courage. He is not energy. He is an individual. He is one being.

**The Holy Ghost has always been present**. He has existed from the beginning of time.

Both the Hebrew word for Spirit “Ruwach” (whore-oo’-agh) and the Greek word “pneuma” (fnew’ mah) mean **breath** (BR-ETH).

When we read: **Genesis 1:2**, it says, “*And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*” or **Genesis 2:7**, “*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul*”. And there are hundreds of other passages concerning the breath and Spirit of God.

A study of them shows that the Spirit of God and the breath of God are one in the same.

The two words are interchangeable. As we just heard, The Holy Spirit was a part of creation. Adam became a living being by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has been around forever.

**However, and this is important, until Christ came and died for us, the HS did not DWELL within people**.

We read throughout the Old Testament about persons who “were suddenly filled with the Spirit”.

In **1 Kings 18:46** we read about Elijah having the power of the Lord come upon him and out running Ahab and his chariot. And in **Judges 15:14**, the bible tells us of the Spirit of the Lord coming on Samson in power, and how he killed 1000 men with the jawbone of a donkey.

The difference between the Old Testament people and those who receive the spirit today, is that in the Old Testament the Spirit would come upon a person for a short time, give them great power, wisdom, or strength, but would then leave.

**Now, we have that same power, that same strength, that same Spirit, living IN US all the time!**

Jesus promised us this. In **John 14:16-18** Jesus said, *“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and **shall be in you**. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”*

Notice Christ’s words here: He says the Comforter will be with us forever. And that He abides with us and will be in us. **This means that the Spirit lives within us and is here to stay!**

It is the Holy Spirit that gives us our power to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If you afraid to share your faith with another person, look at what happened to the disciples before and after they received the Holy Spirit.

The disciples had spent quite a bit of time following Jesus around. They were there when He preached the Sermon on the Mount. He told them over and over again what was going to happen to Him, and why it had to happen. He had fulfilled Scripture - the prophecies from the Old Testament.

The disciples had lived with Him, eaten with Him, followed Him, but they still did not understand Him.

Even at the Last Supper when Jesus predicted His death, and tried to comfort His disciples. Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Thomas said to him, “Lord we do not know where you are going...”

On the night before His death Jesus and His disciples went to Gethsemane. Before Jesus went to pray, He said to them, “Stay here and keep watch.” Then He returned and found them sleeping.

**They still had no idea what was about to happen**. When the crowd came to arrest Him, the disciples were caught off guard and in a panic. And after a brief struggle, “Every one of them deserted him and fled.”

After all that had happened: after spending three years living in the presence of God’s One and Only Begotten Son, the disciples were still full of fear and trembling!

When Jesus was Crucified they were hiding behind closed doors, and afraid.

Even after Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to them and hundreds of others, we don’t hear about them running around in the streets proclaiming the gospel, unafraid of the Jewish leaders.

They were not well educated men. They did not hold any high offices or places in the synagogue. They were poor, common ordinary men. They often argued with each other, were easily offended, impulsive and prejudice. They certainly were NOT the kind of men someone would call to turn the world upside down. But God's ways are not our ways. **Jesus had promised them that God the Father would send the Holy Spirit to them.**

And when that happened, the Spirit would teach them all things and would remind them "of everything" Jesus had said to them.

*And so, "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."*

**In other words, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were filled with a power like never before.**

When the Holy Spirit came upon the believers at Pentecost, they immediately began to have the mind of Christ. And they began to walk as Christ walked.

Suddenly, Peter, the man who had denied Christ three times, out of fear that he would suffer the same fate, stood up in front of the crowd, "raised his voice", and preached the first sermon ever in the new church age. Peter spoke with authority and forcefulness! He preached about the prophecy of David, the eye-witness testimonies of the disciples, the exaltation and the ascension of Jesus into heaven. He talked to them about heaven, and he also taught them the reality of hell. And he proclaimed to them that God had raised Jesus from the dead, "freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its' hold on Him." Then Peter declared, "*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.***"

And that powerful Spirit-filled message is as true and applicable today as it was over 2,000 years ago!!!

**We too have that power!**

The critical point is this: The command to be filled with the Spirit is still to this very day God's command to every believer, both individually and corporately, as the Church!

**"Be filled with the Spirit," Paul declared in Ephesians.**

All who are baptized and believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior have the Holy Spirit living within them.

And once we are filled with the Spirit...GREAT things can begin to happen!

The Spiritual things of God will suddenly begin to make sense. The same power that the 1st disciples had, we have. **It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the ability to witness to the world.**

At our Confirmations we received the seven gifts of the Spirit: those of Wisdom and understanding; Counsel and Ghostly strength; Knowledge and True Godliness; and the Spirit of Holy Fear.

Those gifts in turn produce in us the twelve fruits of the Spirit: those of Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Truth, Meekness, Patience, Modesty, Temperance, and Chastity. Together they make us able to carry out Christ's command to preach to all the nations and make disciples of every nation.

So, you see. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are able to love the unlovable, minister to the unwanted, serve those who reject us, and build the kingdom of God.

We are the Church Jesus Christ established! We are His body! His representatives here on earth!

**We are all called to be Spirit filled professing Christians using our gifts to help and save the world!**

When Christians allow the power of the Holy Spirit to take control of their lives they are changed, they become alive for Christ and there is no more powerful force in the entire world!

Which is why, before Jesus ascended into Heaven He promised the disciples: *"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

And that is exactly what happened on the day of Pentecost, and 3,000 people became Christians that very day.

The world changed after Pentecost because of the Church's influence on that world.

**And it ought to be the same today!**

We are called to be a church which is FEARLESS, filled with enthusiasm, and filled with love!

God created the Church. God brought the Church into being and it is His Church.

But He has called us and given us the opportunity and privilege of being a part of it.

He has commanded us to go into all of the world and preach the saving grace of His Gospel.

And to do so by the power of the Holy Spirit who abides with us and in us. Amen.