

Hello everyone, happy birthday Church!!! Today is Pentecost Sunday, the day the church was born!

It is the day Jesus completed His promise and sent us His Spirit, our helper, our teacher, our comforter The Holy Spirit.

He arrived with lots of pomp and circumstance. The Apostles spoke in languages they had never studied and

Peter preached the Churches 1st sermon and 3000 souls were saved.

Hallelujah!!!

It was quite a day! I hope yours was good too. Patty and I said good bye to a dear friend today; Calvin Cheek passed a way Wed. His funeral is tomorrow. He was our pastor in 1990 at Beech Grove, our friend and one of my mentors. He will be greatly missed. He was an excellent pastor and a man filled with the Holy Spirit and the joy Of Jesus. May the arms of Jesus surround and support his family.

Next Sunday you are all invited to our church picnic after Sunday school at Dean and Lea Millers house. If you don't know where they live you can follow one of us. hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks will be provided, just bring a covered dish and a friend and come on out.

Next Friday, May 31st, we will be going to the Richmond River Rats games at 7pm. Tickets are \$6.00 there is a fire works display after the game. Come on out with us. The more the merrier.

We will be hosting the Brethren Home church service on June 2, 2013. Fell free to come worship with us there too at 2:30pm. All are welcome.

Have a blessed week!

Pastor Don

"The Holy Spirit Has Arrived" Acts

2:1-21 May 19, 2013

As the pastor was walking down the side walk, he noticed a small boy on the porch trying hard to reach the doorbell. The pastor walked up the steps and said here son let me help you. After pressing the door bell for the boy, the pastor said what do we do now, to which the little boy replied now we run.

As the church bus pulled back onto the road after letting the fire engine pass, the children began discussing why the fire men had a dog on board. "They use him to keep the crowds back," Tommy said. "No," said Sally, "he's just for good luck." Finally Little Johnny ended the argument when he said "They use the dog to find the fire hydrant."

We all need a little help from time to time don't we? That is why Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit. Jesus called the Holy Spirit the helper. He told us in John 16:7 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." The Holy Spirit was given to believers on Pentecost. Today

each believer receives Him when they receive Christ. Do we let Him help us? Do we obey His leading?

In Pasadena, California New Years Day means the tournament of Roses Parade. Every float is made of flowers. One year, the parade was temporarily stopped when a float ran out of gas half way through the parade route. Those floats behind it and all the spectators had to sit and wait for someone to bring a can of gas and get the parade started again. Usually this would not be a funny thing, but this float was from the Standard Oil Company. How ironic is that? A gasoline company running out of gas in its own float! Too often Christians neglect their spiritual maintenance and find them selves out of gas. Christians get their gas from the Holy Spirit, r we filled with the Holy Spirit this morning

A certain missionary was issued a car when he arrived at his mission field. He was delighted; but the car had a serious flaw; it had to be pushed to get it to start. The young missionary thought up a good plan. He went to a nearby school and got some students to push him each morning; then he would always park on a hill or just simply never turn the car off. He did this for 2 years until his mission was over & someone else took his place. As he was telling the new missionary about the car and his ingenious way of starting it, the new missionary popped the hood and began investigating the ignition wires. He found the problem, the battery cable was loose. He tightened it up, turned the key and the car started! For 2 years needless trouble had become a routine. The power was there all the time; it was hindered by a loose connection. God is the Christians power source; the Holy Spirit is our connection to Him. Do we have a good connection or a loose one? Prayer, bible study, worship & fellowship keep our connection strong. These are the Christians maintenance tools. Do we have good maintenance today? When we make a firm connection to God, his power & love flow through us. How firm is our connection today?

(Pray)

Pentecost is one of the 3 major holidays of the Jewish religion. Pentecost means fiftieth. It is the 50th day after Passover Sabbath. Since the Jewish Sabbath is Sat., 50 days makes it a Sunday, the first day of the week. God sent the Holy Spirit into the world 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus. People traveled from all over the world to Jerusalem for these celebrations.

It is also called the feast of weeks, the 1st fruits of the wheat harvest and the day of first fruits. During this celebration, the Jews brought God the first fruits of their harvest. This was given with thanksgiving in anticipation of the rest of the harvest. On this day, a great harvest of 3000 souls would be made. The Holy Spirits arrival on this day marks the first fruits of the believer's inheritance as well as the first harvest of new believers.

Eph.1:13-14 "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you

were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." The Holy Spirit is God's down payment to us on our future inheritance, which is our home in heaven with Him. The Holy Spirit proves that we belong to God. He works powerfully in us, transforming us into what He wants us to be and preparing us to live with Him forever. The Greek word for guarantee can also be used to mean an engagement ring. The church is called the bride of Christ; Jesus is the bridegroom; the Holy Spirit is the engagement ring. Are we ready for the wedding?

[vs.1] All 12 of the disciples, who are now apostles, were gathered in one place and had one mind; they were in unity. When Christians gather together in unity and worship God, great things happen. Notice that they are now called apostles. An apostle is a messenger or missionary were a disciple is a student or follower. They have now passed from being students to being teachers. Jesus had given them a command to take his gospel into all the world. Acts 1:8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." The disciples replaced Judas Iscariot by praying and then drawing lots. The lot fell on Matthias and he became the 12 apostle. We aren't told much about Matthias. That is because in Acts 9 Jesus chose his own 12th Apostle; a man named Saul who persecuted Christians and the church. Jesus chose him; Saul repented and was baptized; became the Apostle Paul and wrote nearly half of the New Testament. God can do mighty things through us if we let his spirit fill us and guide us. Are we led by the Holy Spirit? Has the helper arrived in our hearts?

[vs.2] suddenly there was a heavenly sound like the mighty rushing wind. It filled the whole house where they were meeting. The wind was a sign and a signal. It brought the multitude to them. [vs.3-4] above each ones head was a fiery, divided tongue. Fire often indicates the presence of God & usually symbolizes his purifying presence. We remember Moses and the burning bush; the pillar of fire that guided the Hebrew children at night as they fled Egypt; God descended upon Mt. Sinai in the form of fire; By fire he consumed Elijah's offering on mount Carmel, and with a red hot coal from the alter fire, he touched and purified Isaiah's lips. The Spirit, like fire, melts the heart. It burns off the dross and kindles holiness in its place. The fire of God burns away the undesirable elements of our lives. It puts a flame in our hearts to ignite us & others.

This is the fulfillment of John the Baptists words in Luke 3:16 "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." On Mount Sinai, God confirmed the validity of the Old Testament Law with fire. At Pentecost, God confirmed the validity of the Holy Spirit ministry with fiery tongues at top the apostle's heads. The fire came down in only one place on Mount Sinai.

At Pentecost, fire came down on many believers. This symbolized that God's grace and presence is available to any and all who will believe. At Pentecost, God spoke via rushing, mighty wind and fire. Sometimes he makes a lot of noise when he speaks, sometimes he doesn't. Elijah saw a great wind, a fire, and an earthquake, but God spoke to him in a still small voice. How does God speak to us? Do we listen? Do we obey his voice? The Holy Spirit helps us to hear & obey God.

To those of us who grew up watching westerns on TV, having divided tongue is not a good thing. In the old west vernacular, a forked or divided tongue meant a lying tongue, but here in Acts it is a good thing, it means that God's word is to be divided up into each and every nation. Each nation could now experience the grace of God. Speaking in tongues or other languages is a sign that Christianity is for all people, no matter where they are from. In Genesis 12:3 God told Abraham that the entire world would be blessed through him. Jesus is how this is possible; therefore the church has a world wide mission; are we carrying it out? The tongues may have been divided, but the message was & still is unified. Each apostle was telling the gospel in a different language. Christianity is not limited to any particular race or nationality. It is available to any one and everyone who will believe. It is our job as believers to spread the gospel by any and every means necessary. Are we doing our job?

[vs.5-13] the sound of the mighty rushing wind did its job; it gathered the crowd together. Jerusalem was filled with all kinds of people from various and assorted places. They were there for the Pentecost festival. This huge crowd gathered and to their amazement each heard an apostle speaking in his own language. It was a miracle. The hearers were amazed as they heard uneducated, rough and tough Galileans, most of whom were fishermen, speaking all these different languages. They were witnessing a miracle.

Speaking in tongues is a gift from God. It simply means that one can fluently speak a language they have never studied. This would come in handy when you are sent by God to tell the entire world about Jesus. Most were amazed and perplexed, wondering what it all meant. Isn't it amazing though, everywhere you go there are always skeptics? Some said they were drunk. How many miracles do we miss because we are skeptical at times? This is truly a miracle. People speaking a language they had never studied and possibly never even heard before. They were praising God and proclaiming his wonderful works. Do we tell people about the wonderful works of God?

Peter stood up and answered the skeptics. [14-15] Peter says these men are not drunk, it is only 9am. Peter told them that this was what the prophet Joel prophesied. [Read 16-21] Peter was the first in church history to preach a sermon. And what a sermon it was! 3000 people accepted Christ that day! Joel 2:28-32 was his text. God promised to pour out his spirit on all believers. Peter says that time is now. God's grace

is for all genders; your sons and daughters will prophesy. It is for all ages; your young men will see visions and your old men will dream dreams. Joel is telling us that God will use any and all who come to him. God has a plan for each of us, are we letting him fulfill it?

Peter is telling us that Pentecost is the beginning of the last days. Pouring out his spirit upon all flesh is the final act of deliverance. It will continue to the end of the age. It will continue until Jesus returns. Are we ready for His return? Do we long for his return?

Are we helping others get ready? Do we want to see others find Jesus?

Joel says there will be signs and wonders. Wonders is the amazement people get when experiencing or witnessing supernatural works. Do we wonder when we see miraculous things happen? Do we share what we have seen and experienced? Signs points to the power of God, which is behind the miracles. Marvels and miracles have no lasting value if they do not point to God and bring him glory. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, many miracles were done by the apostles. Speaking in tongues is the first one. Others include miraculous healings and resurrecting people from the dead. The sun turning to darkness and the moon to blood are signs of Jesus 2nd coming.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to all believers. Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was only given to a few; usually just prophets, judges, kings and priests.

The Holy Spirit would empower them for a while and give them the victories that they needed and then leave again. Today we receive the Holy Spirit when we receive Christ as Savior. He is our constant companion. Jesus called him our helper. He helps us to listen for God's voice; he helps us remember verses, guides us as we witness, & helps us discern God's will for us. It is God's will that everyone be saved. This is the good news of Jesus Christ; all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

Any one can be saved; no one is too bad for God to save and no one is too good to need saving; all anyone has to do is ask and receive. As Ambassadors for Christ our job is to tell them and show them Jesus. Our job as spirit filled believers is to take the message of Jesus Christ to the world. Are we doing our job? Our lives are the only bible some people will ever read. Is our life filled with the Holy Spirit? Does it show? Are we good examples of Jesus?

Let's look at Acts 1:4-8 [read]. Jesus is once again giving his disciples the great commission. He tells them to go from Jerusalem to Judea, then to Samaria and then to the ends of the earth, telling everyone about Jesus. Only one thing first; wait until you have received the Holy Spirit. They received it here in Acts 2. Immediately they began witnessing in Jerusalem, to the people around them. Then they spread out as Jesus told them to. This is what God wants us to do as well; witness 1st where we live, play & work. He wants us to bloom where we are planted.

Do we do that? We don't have to preach a sermon to witness; all witnessing is, is telling what we know about Jesus, just tell others what He means to us. We can all do that, all we need to be is willing. The Holy Spirit will help us if we let Him. He will show us how, he will show us when. Are we willing?

The disciples followed their instructions; they waited until they had received the Holy Spirit. Christians receive the Holy Spirit when they receive Christ. We don't have to wait; we can witness now, r we doing that? Jesus said in Matthew 9:37 "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Are we willing to be laborers for God? Whatever God calls us to do he will equip us to do; all we have 2b is willing, are we willing to be an ambassador for Christ? Peter was and 3000 souls were saved that day. [Read 40-47]. They stayed in one accord. They prayed together, fellowshiped and had communion with each other. They surrounded themselves with other Christians. Too often we neglect the assembling of ourselves together. We get pulled down by the cares of this world. We surround ourselves with worldly people thinking worldly thoughts. Instead of influencing them for Christ, they become a stumbling block on our straight and narrow path.

We need to stay in close contact with our Christian brothers and sisters. We need to support each other in prayer. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can influence others for Christ. In order to carry out our mission, the Holy Spirit gives each of us different gifts. These gifts are ours to use for the furtherance of God's work in this world. We should not get mad if we did not get the gift we wanted. We should not be jealous of someone else's gift. We should use our gift to the best of our ability has led by the spirit. A successful church needs people who use their gifts properly. God disperses his gifts throughout his church to make it the most effective. If we don't use our gifts properly, we can hurt the church. Are we using our gifts to the best of our ability? Do we know our gifts? Do we recognize the gifts of others? Are we a spirit led, gift utilizing church?

A successful church still needs the same two things these apostles had at the beginning of Acts 2; to be of one accord and in one place. Unity is the secret to a successful growing spirit led church. Do we have unity/ r we spirit led/r we doing r job?

The Helper is here; are we letting Him help us follow Jesus Christ? Do we rely on his help in our ministry? Are we living the Christian life in our own strength or do we rely on the strength of the Holy Spirit? Amen, let's pray!

Offertory: IT WAS PENTECOST SUNDAY. As the congregation filed into church, the ushers handed each person a bright red carnation to symbolize the festive spirit of the day. The people listened attentively to the reading of the Pentecost story from the Book of Acts about how the disciples had heard "what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven"; about how the Holy Spirit had appeared "like tongues of fire." Then came the sermon: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon us," the preacher began. "Like the powerful wind from heaven!" shouted a woman sitting in the first pew. Then she threw one of the red carnations toward the altar. The preacher began again: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon us." The same woman's voice rang out again, "Like the tongues of fire, the tongues of fire!" Again, she threw a red carnation toward the altar. The preacher looked straight at her and said, "Now throw your wallet." To which the woman replied, "Preacher, you have just calmed the wind and put out the fire." Does our desire to obey the Holy Spirit enable us to overcome all our selfish attitudes and ideas? Do we wish to obey the Holy Spirit? Are we sensitive to His leading? Are we on fire for Jesus? Is the Spirit of the Lord upon us?