

Why is Pentecost important?

By

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In the Old Testament, the day of Pentecost was a celebration held 50 days after the Jewish festival of Passover (Leviticus 23:16, Exodus 34:22). In the New Testament, on the day of Pentecost, after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came powerfully upon His disciples, enabling them to speak in foreign languages (sometimes called “tongues”) that they had not studied, and to proclaim the Gospel boldly to those gathered in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost (Acts 2). The events recounted on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 have a number of important implications for Christians today.

1. Presence of Jesus with us

After His resurrection, Jesus promised to always be with the disciples (Matthew 28:20). Then He left them and went up to heaven (Luke 24:51). However, the spirit of Jesus (namely, the Holy Spirit) came upon the disciples at

Pentecost, fulfilling Jesus' promise to be with the disciples always.

2. Gospel for all peoples

Prior to Jesus' coming, a person had to be a Jew to be one of God's people. Or you had to convert to Judaism, including culture, customs, traditions, etc. However, the supernatural proclamation of the Gospel in other tongues on the day of Pentecost was God's way of powerfully declaring that the Gospel is for all peoples, cultures, and languages. People from any culture or language can be God's people. They do not need to convert to Judaism. They can stay in their own culture, and use their own language, and still be a believer. Even more than that, God is now calling all people everywhere to repent and believe the Gospel (Acts 2:38-39).

3. Power for testimony

The disciples were scared and not yet proclaiming the Gospel widely, prior to Pentecost. Jesus knew this and told them that He was sending His Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49, John 14:16-18). That way, they would receive

power to be witnesses of their risen Lord, Jesus Christ, throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

Before Pentecost, the Spirit was not absent as He was involved in creation (Genesis 1:2) and in regenerating God's elect so that they would believe in Him (John 3:8, Titus 3:5). But at Pentecost, the Spirit came much more powerfully upon Jesus' disciples, and now dwells in (and empowers) all disciples of Jesus today (Ephesians 1:13-14). The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost and the specific events of that day were a one-time event, but the Spirit continues to be present with all Christians, enabling them to be tell others about Christ and to live the Christian life.

4. The Holy Spirit and the effect of witnessing the Gospel

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is also a blessing in another way. It's not because of the apostles that so many people repented and started to believe in Christ Jesus. No apostle or preacher or witness of the Gospel can change the heart of someone else. Neither can a hearer of the Gospel change his or her own heart. But the Holy Spirit uses the Gospel of Jesus Christ to create new life in

people (John 3:8). As a result of that renewing work of the Spirit people start to acknowledge their sins and seek salvation in Jesus Christ, who is crucified and resurrected from the dead.

5. We are living in the end times

After the Spirit came at Pentecost, Peter stood up and explained to those listening about the meaning of what they had seen and heard. His explanation is recorded in Acts 2:14-36.

In short, he said that the coming of the Spirit was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy about what would happen when the Messiah (Jesus Christ) came at the end of time. The amazing events of Pentecost signal the beginning of the end of the world. Many people think about the end of the world as something in the far future, but in the Bible, the end of the world (or, the end times) is a long period of time, beginning with the first coming of Christ 2000 years ago and concluding with the second coming of Christ when He returns to judge the world. Everything in-between the first and second coming of

Christ is considered the end times. The coming of the Spirit at Pentecost was a sign that the end of the world is coming.

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