

The Promise of Pentecost

Series Introduction:

- A. Four-part series focused on Pentecost—the promise, preparation, power, and people of Pentecost
- B. Focus will be given to the meaning, significance, and impact of Pentecost on believers in the past and now
- C. This series, with an emphasis given to the Holy Spirit, will culminate on Pentecost Sunday—50 days after the resurrection (June 9)
- D. This series will challenge us to pursue ALL God has for His people, to be ALL He desires us to be, in order to be an effective gospel-witness
- E. This series should provide clarity on the person, role, and function of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer
- F. Allow God to break down any preconceived notions and opinions regarding Pentecost and pray that the Holy Spirit will give you clear and fresh revelation rooted in the truth of Scripture

Sermon Introduction

- A. Brief context of passage
 - 1. Second Volume—first, Gospel of Luke: ministry and teaching of Jesus

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen. Acts 1:1-2 NKJV

- 2. Ministry and teaching about Christ continues but is done through the Apostles and the church who are empowered by the Holy Spirit
 - Acts 3—Healing of Lame Man
 - Acts 4—Upset the people when they preached the resurrection
 - Acts 5—Many miracles done by the Apostles
 - Acts 13—Sent out missionaries
- 3. Post-resurrection appearances happened for 40 days
 - Acts 1:3—He appeared many times
 - a. Sporadic appearances (i.e. disciples behind locked doors)

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- b. Proved He was alive (i.e. Thomas in the upper room)
- c. Taught about the Kingdom of God (i.e. Road to Emmaus)

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. 7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. 8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. 1
Corinthians 15:3-8 NKJV

- 4. Instructions regarding the promise of the Father come toward the end of the 40 days prior to Jesus' ascension (1:9)

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:4-5 NKJV

B. The Validity of God's Promises

(ILL—The weakness of a human promise vs. strength of God's promise)

- 1. Number of promises in Scripture unknown: 8,000-30,000 suggested
- 2. The word "promise" appears over 100 times in scripture
- 3. Solomon declared the integrity of God's promises
- 4. The promises of land and descendants were realized by Abraham and Israel
- 5. The assurance of God's promises are upheld by His oath
- 6. All of God's promises are centered in and fulfilled in Christ

For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. 2 Corinthians 1:20 NKJV

- 7. New Testament understanding of promise

"A gift graciously bestowed, not a pledge secured by negotiation."—Vine

(Transition): The promise of Pentecost speaks of one of the greatest gifts given to believer's, so let's take a few minutes to unwrap the beauty of this gift—its content, origin, and necessity.

I. The Context of the Promise

A. Jesus promised the soon arrival of a gift

And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me. Acts 1:4 NKJV

B. The gift promised was the Holy Spirit

For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Acts 1:5 NKJV

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49 NKJV

C. This gift would clothe believers with a unique power

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; Acts 1:8a NKJV

1. This gift is subsequent (in addition) to the gift of salvation—speaking to His apostles (v. 4—“Gathering them”)

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all. Acts 19:1-7 NKJV

— After imprisoned and released

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31 NKJV

2. The free gift of salvation brings the full indwelling of the Holy Spirit

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Romans 8:11 NKJV

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, 22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 NKJV

NOTE: The promise of Pentecost is given and available for believers and is a work of God subsequent to the work of salvation.

3. Unique power accompanies the promised gift of Pentecost (1:8a)

- a. “Dynamis”—power, strength, ability
- b. Enhance their witness ability and accomplish mighty works
- c. Impacts speech—preach with boldness

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31 NKJV

- d. Provides an unwavering devotion to Christ and His mission despite challenges

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Acts 7:55 NKJV

And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts 7:59-60 NKJV

- e. Not political power, which was their ambition (v. 7)

II. The Origin of the Promise

- A. Pentecost is rooted in the Old Testament Feast of Weeks (Discussed in future sermon)
- B. Old Testament spoke often of the pouring out of God’s Spirit

Until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, And the fruitful field is counted as a forest. Isaiah 32:15 NKJV

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. 29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30 "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. 32 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the Lord Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the Lord has said, Among the remnant whom the Lord calls. Joel 2:28-32 NKJV

C. Foreshadowed by John the Baptist's ministry

John answered, saying to all, "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 fire. Luke 3:16 NKJV

D. Demonstrated in the baptism of Jesus as the Holy Spirit descended upon Him

When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22 And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." Luke 3:21-22 NKJV

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. Acts 10:38 NKJV

1. This event inaugurated Jesus' ministry
2. Anointed to preach Good News

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed. Luke 4:18 NKJV

3. To carry on Christ's mission, believers need this same anointing

E. Promised by Jesus prior to His arrest and crucifixion

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. John 14:15-17 NKJV

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. John 14:26 NKJV

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. John 15:26-27 NKJV

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you. John 16:12-15 NKJV

"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:9-13 NKJV

NOTE: Our heavenly Father knows how to give good gifts

F. Spoken of by Jesus after His resurrection—our text

(TRANSITION)—The promise is the gift of the Holy Spirit that has its beginnings in the Old Testament and is seen more clearly in the ministry and teaching of Jesus. Now let's turn our attention to the necessity of this promise—why it is vital.

III. The Necessity of the Promise

The promise of Pentecost will pave the way for Kingdom advancement and make possible our obedience to the Great Commission

A. The promise of Pentecost equips us to continue the ministry of Jesus in His absence

1. The departure of Christ makes possible the arrival of the Holy Spirit on believers

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. 8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. John 16:7-8 NKJV

2. He promised we would do greater works because the Holy Spirit will fill the church

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. John 14:12 NKJV

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B. The promise of Pentecost equips more believers to be effective witnesses of the Gospel in ALL places

NOTE: We need the power of the Holy Spirit if we are going to testify of Christ and reach the 3.15 billion/7,098 people groups who are unreached—can't be accomplished in the flesh.

1. Look at the advancement of the Gospel following Pentecost
2. Look at the growth of the church—multiplied
3. The Great Commission can't be fulfilled apart from the power of the Holy Spirit

C. The promise of Pentecost will give us boldness to proclaim Christ despite the circumstances

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:31 NKJV

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God. 2 Timothy 1:7-8 NKJV

D. The promise of Pentecost assures us that in our endeavors to accomplish a seemingly impossible task, we aren't doing this alone.

1. We have a helper/advocate
2. He will guide us into all truth
3. He will teach and remind us

"If you love Me, keep My commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever — 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. John 14:15-17 NKJV

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. John 14:26 NKJV

IMPORTANT: The promise of Pentecost would help launch a missionary movement

E. The promise of Pentecost stirs in believers an urgency to share the Gospel—to the ends of the earth

Conclusion:

"Without the Spirit of God, we can do nothing. We are as ships without the wind, branches without sap, and like coals without fire, we are useless."—Charles Spurgeon

*Student Volunteer Movement Illustration

NOTE: The promise of Pentecost is still available today, so let's be a church that pursues this promise so that the Gospel spreads and lives are transformed.

According to John R. Mott, Arthur T. Pierson, a Presbyterian minister, was responsible for sounding the trumpet that started the Student Volunteer Movement in missions a hundred years ago. In 1882 Pierson wrote in the Missionary Review that three things were needed to finish the Great Commission and energize the world: 1) the whole church needed to be involved; 2) evangelistic zeal was needed in the lives of believers; and 3) a baptism of the power of the Holy Spirit was needed.

On this last point he wrote, "To do this work in twenty years, we must get more Gospel, more vitality...The church has money, brains, organizations, rivers of prayer and oceans of sermons, but she lacks in POWER." (Mission Frontiers, 10/8, August, 1988, Supplement, "The Crisis of Missions" Todd M. Johnson, p. 6).