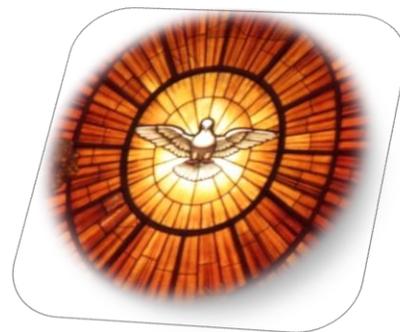


## Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

May 26, 2020

This coming Sunday is the day on which the Church celebrates Pentecost. You probably know that in Judaism the three mandatory annual festivals/feasts were **Passover** (Pesach), **Pentecost** (Shavuot),<sup>1</sup> and **Tabernacles** (Sukkot).



The Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost, was essentially a harvest celebration. The term “weeks” had to do with the approximately seven weeks of grain harvest from the beginning of the barley harvest to the end of the wheat harvest. It was a feast of joy and thanksgiving for the completion of the harvest season. Able-bodied men were expected to be present at the sanctuary, and special sacrifices were offered.<sup>2</sup>

“Pentecost” is the name given by Greek-speaking Jews to this festival, and it was on Pentecost in the year 33 that God’s Holy Spirit was poured out on Jewish followers of Jesus who were in Jerusalem to observe the Feast. That event was the real beginning of a distinct community of persons who were—and *are*—committed to following the Way of Jesus.

There were actually three “Pentecost” experiences in which God’s Spirit was given in new and powerful ways. The most familiar one is the one that actually took place on Pentecost morning, and that is described in Acts 2:17-21. On that morning, Peter quoted from the prophet Joel to explain what was happening (Joel 2:28-32).

Some days later, God’s Spirit was also poured out on Samaritan believers (Acts 8:14-17) and on Gentile believers (Acts 10:44-48). We looked at the “first” Pentecost two weeks ago, and we’ll look at the other two on Sunday.

This tri-fold Pentecost reminds us that no single language or culture can be considered to be the prime or essential conduit of the Spirit or of the Spirit’s message. Such global diversity is not a problem to be overcome, but is a basic element of God’s Design. The message of Pentecost is that the blessing and presence of God are intended for the whole world.

“Pentecost” can also be used to describe those moments when the Holy Spirit takes believers who are scattered, alone, and afraid, and multiplies them and transforms them into a dynamic, multiplying community of faith . . . in such times as COVID, perhaps.

Red is the liturgical color of the Season of Pentecost, recalling the tongues of flame by which the Holy Spirit descended on the first Pentecost, and reminding us of the blood of the martyrs, which began being spilled not long after. On the next page are a few questions for self-reflection as we approach COVID Pentecost, and also attached are a number of references to the Holy Spirit which you might ponder during the remainder of this week . . . and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> See Exodus 23:16, 34:22; Leviticus 23:16; Numbers 28:26; Deuteronomy 16:9.

<sup>2</sup> Later tradition associated the Feast of Weeks with the giving of the Law at Sinai. It had been concluded by some that Exodus 19:1 indicated that the Law was delivered on the fiftieth day after the Exodus. Some thought that Deuteronomy 16:12 may have connected the Sinai event and the festival, but Scripture does not make any definite link between Sinai and Pentecost.

In the synagogue, the scroll of Ruth is read because the story of Ruth embracing Judaism and the description of the scene of harvesting are appropriate to the festival of the Law and of the harvest. Another reason given is that King David, one of Ruth’s descendants, died on Pentecost.

**CBF: transforming Oakland Mills into a community others wish to replicate.**

When are you most aware of the Holy Spirit?

- Reading Scripture
- In praise and singing
- Praying with others
- In solitary time with God
- In nature
- At church
- Other?

In comparison to what the disciples experienced when the Holy Spirit came upon them, how would you describe your experience with the Holy Spirit in the past?

- Similar to theirs
- Much more tame
- Different, but just as real
- Something I can't explain
- Not worth comparing with them

How would you describe your experience with the Holy Spirit now?

- "on fire"
- A "glowing ember"
- Up in the air
- *Gone with the Wind*

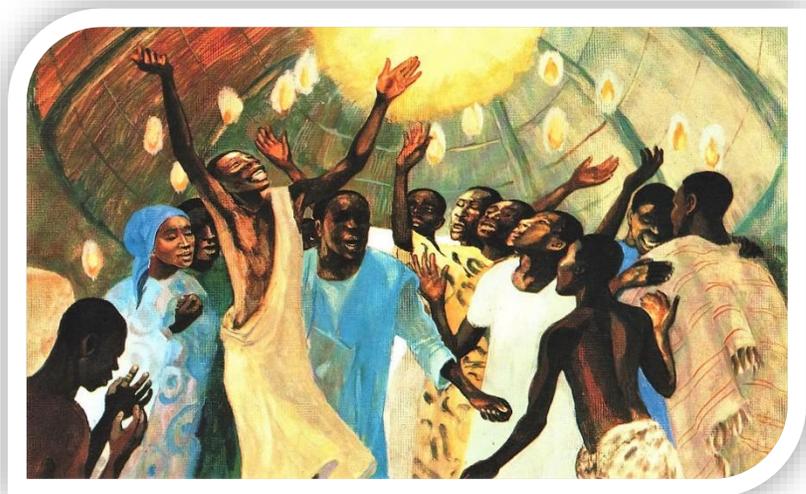
What *might* your life be like if you were filled by the Holy Spirit's POWER?

How would you get there from here?

Do you think you really *want* to?

*"The Kingdom of Heaven is like a pearl merchant on the lookout for choice pearls.*

*When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!"*  
(Matthew 13:44-46)



# The Holy Spirit

1. God is Spirit (John 4:24), and the only personal experience you and I have with God is with God's Spirit.
2. The "Holy Spirit," the "Spirit of God," the "Spirit of Jesus," and the "Spirit of Jesus Christ" are the same Person (see Romans 8:9; Acts 16:6-7; Philippians 1:19; and 1 Peter 1:11).
3. God's Spirit is mentioned 72 times in the Old Testament; 222 times in the New Testament.
4. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is God's act of redemption. This baptism is the FIRST, not a second or later blessing (Acts 1:8, 2:38; Romans 8:10).
5. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is permanent and cannot be repeated. The Spirit enters at conversion and never "leaves or forsakes" us (Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 12:3).
6. The fullness of the Holy Spirit is a variable and must be repeated day by day (Ephesians 3:19, 5:18).
7. Gifts of the Spirit do not automatically bring with them equipment for ready or wise use of them. Gifts seem to come "in the rough" and require education, training, practice, and experience for their proper use.
8. God's primary gift to us is soul friendship.

## A. God's Spirit has a character of:

Counsel (John 14:26)  
Glory (1 Peter 4:14)  
Holiness (Romans 1:4)  
Life (Romans 8:2)  
Truth (John 14:17)  
Wisdom & Understanding  
(Isaiah 11:2; Ephesians 1:17)

## B. God's Spirit has the attributes of personality:

Ability to Communicate  
(1 Corinthians 2:13)  
Goodness (Nehemiah 9:20)  
Knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10-12)  
Love (Romans 15:30)  
Understanding (Romans 8:26-27)  
Will, Plan, & Purpose (1 Corinthians 12:11)

## C. God's Spirit is a Person:

The Spirit can be blasphemed or slandered  
(Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28-29).  
The Spirit can be insulted (Hebrews 10:29).  
The Spirit can be lied to, but not deceived  
(Acts 5:3).  
The Spirit can be resisted (Acts 7:51).  
The Spirit can be stifled  
(1 Thessalonians 5:19).  
The Spirit can be tempted or tested,  
but not led into sin (Acts 5:9).  
The Spirit can experience sorrow and grief  
(Ephesians 4:30).  
The Spirit communicates with us  
(John 14:26; Romans 8:16;  
Hebrews 10:15).  
The Spirit experiences jealousy  
(James 4:5)

#### **D. The Spirit's Ministry to Unbelievers:**

- The Spirit reveals God's plan to unbelievers (Ephesians 3:4-6).
- The Spirit convicts unbelievers of sin (John 16:8).
- The Spirit draws unbelievers to Jesus (John 6:44; 1 Corinthians 12:3).
- The Spirit adopts unbelievers into God's family (Romans 8:15; Ephesians 1:4-5).

#### **E. The Spirit's Ministry to Believers:**

- The Spirit baptizes believers (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
- The Spirit causes believers to be "born again" (John 3:5; Galatians 4:29).
- The Spirit causes believers to overflow with hope (Romans 15:13).
- The Spirit causes us to be pure and pleasing to God (Romans 15:16).
- The Spirit comforts believers (Acts 9:31; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4).
- The Spirit confirms the truth or error of various teachings (Romans 9:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Hebrews 10:15; 1 John 5:6).
- The Spirit fills and controls believers (Luke 1:41, 67, 2:25, 10:21; Acts 2:4, 4:8, 31, 11:24; Ephesians 5:18).
- The Spirit fills believers with love, peace, and joy (Romans 5:5; 14:17, 15:30; Colossians 1:8).
- The Spirit gives a foretaste of future glory (Romans 8:23).
- The Spirit gives believers spiritual power (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:13-14; 2 Corinthians 6:6; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Peter 1:11-12).
- The Spirit gives direction to believers (Mark 1:12; Acts 8:29, 11:29, 19:21, 20:22-23; Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18, 22, 25; 2 Peter 1:21).
- The Spirit gives eternal life and inner peace (John 6:63; Romans 8:6).
- The Spirit gives special gifts or abilities to each believer (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4, 8-11; Hebrews 2:4).
- The Spirit gives victory over evil and over evil spirits (1 John 4:4).
- The Spirit grants spiritual freedom to believers (2 Corinthians 3:17).

- The Spirit helps us in our distress (Romans 8:26).
- The Spirit is God's guarantee of our salvation (2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:14).
- The Spirit is sent by the Father to be with us forever (Matthew 28:20; John 14:16).
- The Spirit leads believers into truth (John 14:17, 15:26, 16:13; 1 John 2:27).
- The Spirit leads believers to worship (Revelation 1:10).
- The Spirit lives within every person who has been born again (John 7:39; Acts 2:38, 15:8; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Galatians 3:2; 2 Timothy 1:14; 1 John 2:27, 3:24, 4:4, 13).
- The Spirit lives within the Body of Christ, the Church (Ephesians 2:22).
- The Spirit makes believers holy (2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2).
- The Spirit prays for us (Romans 8:26-27).
- The Spirit produces a change of heart and mind in believers (Romans 2:29, 8:6, 12:1-2).
- The Spirit produces character fruit in believers' lives (Galatians 5:22-23).
- The Spirit reminds believers of the teachings of Jesus (John 14:26).
- The Spirit reveals what He receives from Jesus and from the Father (John 16:15; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Ephesians 3:5).
- The Spirit selects the leaders for the church (Acts 20:28).
- The Spirit sets believers free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2, 11).
- The Spirit speaks through believers (Matthew 10:20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12).
- The Spirit speaks to believers (Acts 10:19, 13:2, 16:6-7; Romans 8:16; 1 Peter 1:11-12).
- The Spirit speaks to churches (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22).
- The Spirit transforms us into the likeness of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)!