

Transform and Empower

- Christmas reminds us that God is with us.
- Good Friday reminds us that God forgives us.
- The resurrection reminds us of God's victory for us.
- Pentecost reminds us of God in us.

- Matthew 28:18-20- Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
- Acts 1:4-5,8-9— On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit...8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." 9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.
- Acts 2:1-4- When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- The Holy Spirit filled the believers and gave them power to do the work of God, to fulfill the impossible task. On that day, 3,000 people put their faith in Jesus.

- The day of Pentecost was the birth of the church. It was the beginning of a new age in history- the age of the Spirit!
- The day of Pentecost is so important for us to remember! It's the birthday of the church!...so happy birthday church!
- Christmas: God with us, the crucifixion: God forgives us, the resurrection: God's victory for us, and Pentecost: God in us.
- What we see on this day is God filling His people with His Holy Spirit, and now He lives in them rather than a temple.

- **When God is inside**: 1. He transforms the ordinary into holy. 2. He empowers us to fulfill the impossible task.

- The Garden of Eden is this beautiful picture of God and humans together. It's a holy place because most Holy God lives among ordinary people.
- God gives a seemingly impossible task to Adam and Eve: "...fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." The Lord brought all the animals to Adam to see what he would name them.

- Adam and Eve communed with God and to commune with God means empowerment for the impossible task.
- After this, Adam and Eve sin and this brings a terrible separation where God and man no longer walk together. Everything is ordinary and nothing is holy. Fallen humanity is lacking the power it needs to fulfill the impossible task. For a long time, humans live separate from God.
- But then God comes to a man named Moses and He reveals Himself to Moses in a bush **marked by fire**.
- Before the bush was on fire, it was just an ordinary bush on some ordinary ground.
- When God came inside, the ordinary was transformed to holy.
- God speaks to Moses and gives him this impossible task: go to the most powerful nation on earth and demand the freedom of the Israelite people.
- Moses has a stutter, Moses is a coward, a fearful man, Egyptians and Jews dislike Moses...how could Moses possibly do this? God tells him, "I will be with you." God's presence empowered Moses to do the impossible task.
- Fast forward- Israel is free and their task is to worship and obey God. This seems impossible- how can, sinful humans, worship and obey the Creator God- we don't even know what He requires?!
- And then God shows up on an ordinary mountain...and transforms that ordinary mountain into a holy mountain.
- Exodus 19:18, 16- "Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire...there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain."
- Moses is given the impossible task to lead a group of 2 million people through the desert to the promised land.
- "Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. **14** The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you..." Exodus 33:12,14
- "Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the "tent of meeting"... As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the Lord spoke with Moses. The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend." Exodus 33:7,9,11
- This is amazing! GOD!!...among man.
- This was an ordinary tent, but when God went inside, the ordinary was transformed to holy.
- The Tabernacle became God's dwelling place, where His presence would reside among the people.
- This tabernacle was made out ordinary material, just like the tent of meeting. But then God fills the tabernacle with His cloud of glory. God inside this ordinary material, transformed the Tabernacle into the most Holy place on earth.

- After this, the Tabernacle is replaced by a temple. The temple itself was pretty ordinary...until God went inside!
- 2 Chronicles 7:1- "When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple."
- The Temple is now God's home on the earth. This is how God lives amongst humanity.
- Eventually the temple is destroyed.
- Humanity is longing to be with God, they long for the Garden, the bush, the mountain, the tent, the tabernacle, the temple...and for 400 years, it's like God is absent. No glory, no presence, no transformation, no power.
- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:1,14)
- God made His dwelling among us, through Jesus. Jesus comes and He's the perfect collision between God and man. Made out of ordinary skin and bones, yet He was the Holy Son of God.
- Jesus was God's home amongst humanity.
- The Greek word used here for "dwelling" is the same word that is used to describe the Israelite tent and tabernacle.
- "The idea behind this phrase (made his dwelling among us) is more literally, 'dwelt as in a tent among us'. From the sense and the context, John connected the coming of Jesus to humanity, with God's coming to and living with Israel in the tent of the tabernacle. It could be stated, and 'tabernacled among us.'" David Guzik
- "God now dwelt among men in the humanity of Jesus Christ."
- Jesus coming to the earth is Immanuel, "God with us." God came to be with us, through the person of Jesus.
- In the OT, God showed up time after time and He marked His home with a glorious cloud and with fire...the day of Pentecost is no different.
- Acts 2:1-4- When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.
- By filling the house with wind and marking the people with fire, God was making humans His new dwelling place. Humans were now the tent, humans were God's new temple.
- Peter and Paul were transformed.
- This was not a one time event, this was not for a few, specific people. This gift is for the whole church! We see that believer after believer after believer was filled with the Holy Spirit, becoming a temple of God, being transformed and empowered! *Pentecost is the beginning- of God dwelling among people by dwelling INSIDE people!*

- 1. The Holy Spirit dwells inside of you to transform the ordinary into holy.
- 2. The Holy Spirit dwells inside of you to empower you for the impossible task.
- And God is not only *with* the Spirit-filled believer, He *dwells in* the Spirit-filled believer, empowering them for the impossible task!