

# Pentecost Sunday

Pastor Simon Bardone

## What is Pentecost?

We can pick up the story when Jesus dies in our place (substitutionary atonement) and is raised again a few days later. During his reunion with his disciples, he tells them that he has to leave, but in his place he will send the Holy Spirit.

So for two months they waited, and finally the day comes and the Holy Spirit descends like rushing wind 🌀 and tongues of fire 🔥 and supernatural manifestations of the presence of God joins them in that moment.

Jews from all over the world had already gathered together for a Jewish festival and it was in the morning on one of the days when the disciples began speaking in “tongues.”

Some thought they were drunk because they heard babble, but others heard the disciples speaking in their language.

Peter stood up and told them what this means from the prophet Joel, that the Spirit is being poured out over young and old.

And so what does that look like today in our world?

### Galatians 5:13-26

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

*The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ga 5:13–26.

## Questions



What do you imagine life would look like for you if you had complete mastery over your inner world?

- What if you only ever did the things you desired to do?

- What if you are currently doing the things you actually desire to do?
- What if not only did we live in such a way that we only want to do, according to our most sincere desires, and if those desires aligned with the Spirit of God?

Like every choice you made always led to peace and love and life and wholeness.

This is what Paul is talking about. For freedom, Christ set us free to live in alignment of the desires of the Spirit.

But the Holy Spirit can reorder our very souls so that our relationships and emotional state is transformed into someone can live completely in alignment with the Spirit.

How? How can we do that? How does one get filled with the Spirit?

How do we live lives of freedom wanting what truly matters and living for what we truly want?

## **How**

Is it true that we often think that the means to achieving spiritual maturity is done through using the power of God? So the Holy Spirit is my tool to achieve my end of spiritual maturity?

This is how we typically think, but this isn't how the Holy Spirit works.

Apps, tools, ChatGPT — those are all tools we use to advance and progress and grow as a culture.



But the Holy Spirit is not a tool to progress my will of my most pious desires, but a person we surrender to. God isn't simply trying to give us new spiritual desires.



The Holy Spirit doesn't want to give us new desires because the Holy Spirit wants us to surrender to his desires. The starting point to being transformed is not to tell the Holy Spirit where you're going, but to surrender and ask the Holy Spirit where he's going.

My desires are a mixture at best all the time. And I don't need to simply negotiate with God to barter for affection and find a compromise. I'm just attempting to use the Holy Spirit like magic to move the universe around, but he taught us instead to surrender.

My desires from day to day probably don't align with my Father's desires. But when I surrender, then the Holy Spirit begins to work on them.

## **Receiving the Holy Spirit is An Issue of Lordship**

Pastor Simon shared an anecdote about a woman who wants to become a Christian but is stuck on a particular issue of Christian ethics. So let's zoom out and see what is going on here.

Who's will is ultimately going to win out?

Is God really good, and did Jesus really conquer sin and death? And didn't he pour out his Spirit so we can be constantly aware of and reminded of his love?

We hold to the fact that yes, he did those things. But the real issue isn't this issue of Christian ethics, but if you're willing to surrender to Jesus, the conquering King?

## Relinquishing Power

“The world itself is the will to power - and nothing else!”... —  
Nietzsche

But Jesus comes along and says, “relinquish control.”



Receiving the Holy Spirit begins with surrendering to the King and relinquishing control.

## Rest

“Just wait and wait and wait and be still.”

This is probably what Jesus’ command sounds like.

We’re not expected to work our butts off to attain this Holy Spirit power, but to sit and be still and rest.

**God loves our bodies but is opposed to our flesh.** The flesh in Greek refers to our carnal nature. Dogs eat poop and return to their vomit, and that is an understanding of what “carnal” can be.



Instead of giving into our carnal nature, or working as hard as we can to fight our carnal nature, God instead invites us into rest.

Unless the Lord builds the house,  
the builders labor in vain.

Unless the Lord watches over the city,  
the guards stand watch in vain.

In vain you rise early  
and stay up late,  
toiling for food to eat—  
for he grants sleep to those he loves.

*The New International Version* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ps 127:1–2.



God wants to give us rest, and it takes all our strength to be able to surrender and accept the rest.

## Why

Why is the important?

Because Pentecost is all about relationships.

The passage in Galatians began and ended with a reminder to bless others: they are relational bookends.

**Bookend 1:** You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free.  
But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love

The marks of a Spirit-Filled Life in the middle.

**Bookend 2:** Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

On the day of Pentecost, Babel was reversed. Instead of humanity ascending to the heavens and uniting, he confuses their language and is reduced to babbling at each other.

Thousands of years later on Pentecost, The Holy Spirit reverses Babel and reunites humanity under one Lord: Jesus.

Why Pentecost? Because God is into reconciling brothers and sisters, making enemies into brothers and sisters. That's what this is all about.

If we have all of the gifts of the Spirit but lack love for one another