

2008 PENTECOST- GOD'S GIFT TO US

Acts 2:1-4

An old adage warns, "bad things always come in threes."
 Have you found this true in your own experience?
 Or are we just more sensitive when bad things happen.
 You got a flat tire on the same day that
 a computer glitch devoured our hard drive,
 and your diamond ring just slid down the drain.
 there seems to be something significant about the power of three.
 Seems like if we have one death we have three.
 But if that's true why have we only had 11 funerals since January

There are three evils that we struggle with outside:
 The world, the flesh, the devil
 Three evils that we struggle with inside.
 The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

These three evils look like an unbeatable team,
 We realized that these three were the same enemy that
 Kept the Corinthian church from experiencing the full embrace of Christ.

**Benaiah son of Jehoiada (faced three things) was a valiant fighter from Kabzeel...
 He also went down into a pit, on a snowy day, and killed a lion. II Samuel 23:20**

Good things come in three also.
 Today the church celebrates the Trinity as well as Pentecost:
 We recognize God the Father as power,
 God the Son as Person,
 And God the Holy Spirit as presence..

All thru history there is the belief that without
 The spirit of the Living God
 we can not do the work of God.
 We cannot lead others to Christ,
 We cannot give wisdom
 We cannot teach truth.

The Holy Spirit gave Joseph skill to rule
 He gave Samson military prowess
 He gave Peter the gifts to preach.
 The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to teach and to heal.
 To die and rise from the dead.

And Jesus told his Disciples that this very same Holy Spirit,
 Would be sent to them in Jerusalem.

I. PENTECOST HAPPENED ON A SPECIFIC DAY

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Acts 2:1

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church.
 Pentecost is a Greek word meaning '50',
 Forty days after Jesus resurrection, he ascended to heaven.
 10 days later the believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit

Pentecost was the celebration of the wheat harvest,
 50 days after the slaying of the Passover lamb.
 It is also the celebration of the day Moses
 Received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

We all like new beginnings,

We call them birthdays.
 Just last week we celebrated Mother's Day.
 The birth of the first child,
 Is also the birth of a mother.
 Donna has a pillow that says: "When a child is born, so is a grandmother".

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church.
 Something happened in the Christian world,
 They had never experienced before.
 That would set them apart forever

Jesus said: I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Luke 24:49

At General Conference in Fort Worth I heard Bishop Mark Hanson speak and his experience reminded me of my own. At 10:30 one night I drove down to a Wal-Mart for some supplies. It was very busy and I noticed many people coming and going. As I was going in I saw a Moslem coming out, then I noticed that a Jew came out. Now how did I know that it was a Muslim, How did I know it was a Jew?
 Well the Moslem had on a head scarf called the **ghutra** and I knew he was a Muslim, and the Jew had on his cap called the **yamaca**. I knew he was a Jew.
 I thought to myself: how would they know that I am a Christian when they see me?
 I thought we need some new head gear.

Friends, We have head gear.
 It came at Pentecost with sign and flames of fire resting on each of the disciple's heads.
 The cross was there for our redemption,
 But the Holy Spirit came for our certification and qualification.
 We came under friendly fire.

It was a birthday for the Church.
 When God poured out his Holy Spirit upon the Church.
 He named us and claimed us and forever
 Pentecost happened on a specific day, it was a birthday.

II. ON BIRTHDAYS WE GET GIFTS.

4 "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. Acts 1:4

We like gifts, don't we?
 When I was at General conference there were booths
 Set up all over and they were giving gifts.
 From Health and Welfare I got a clip with a little compass and a pedometer.
 From UMM I got a little screw driver kit.
 The Communication booth gave me a 512 Mgb hard drive.
 From BOGM I got a pen with advertisement.
 This was a unique pen
 you could pull out the side and read a page displayed.
 I got gifts but they were cheap.
 The first Pen broke,
 I lost the little compass.
 And I misplaced the little screw driver kit.

I want to say to you that when God gives a gift.
 It's not cheap
 It's not junk
 It's not lost

Jesus said:

**But you shall 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.”
 Acts 1:8**

Now the only condition to receiving this gift was to wait.
 Wait for the gift.

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. Acts 1:4

Have you ever gone to grand opening where the business promises to
 Give away gifts.
 They advertise giving away a TV, grill, bicycle.
 I think I could use a new grill.
 So I go and discover that I have to sign up for the gift.
 You put you name in the barrel with a 1000 other names.
 Then they draw out one name.
 And it is not my name.
 I don't get the gift.

Aren't you glad when the 72 came to Jerusalem,
 And gathered in the Upper Room.
 God didn't say: Now you all sign your names,
 And when Pentecost came,
 God just drew out one name---Old Barnabas
 And he was the only one who got the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 That's how it was in the OLD TESTAMENT.

Aren't you glad that on that first Pentecost Sunday it says in Acts 2:1-4
 God did a new thing.
 He poured out his spirit **on all** who believed.

God did a new thing.
 He did it with Strong wind blowing.
 God did a new thing
 He did it with flames of fire setting on the heads of every disciple.
 God did a new thing.,
 All began to speak in different languages that everyone understood.
 God did a new thing:

(((When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak. Acts 2: 1-4))))

And he still does that today with signs and wonder.

1. God does a new thing when you come to church
 And bow your knee before the King of Kings.
 2. God does a new thing of forgiveness,
 when we come with sin in our lives.
 3. He does a new thing with peace
 When we have guilt in our lives.
 4. He will replace bitterness with joy,
 5. Envy with contentment,
 6. Lust with love.
 7. Confusion with direction.
 8. Impatience with Self control.
- God does a new thing.

The only hindrance to the Spirit of God in our lives,
 Is that we just don't show up.

God said: "Wait in Jerusalem and I will send the holy Spirit."
 Are you here in worship waiting for the gift today?
 Or are you just here and getting impatient to leave?
 God gives us a gift.

III. THE GIFT GOD GIVES EMPOWERS US.

Then Peter stood up and began to preach.
 The Crowd heard him and said: "What shall we do?"

38Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:36-39

We are the ones God is talking about who are the "far off,"
 We are the "children's children" he speaks of.

41Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. Acts 2:41

God's gift comes with power
 What do you want from your God today?

This past week I was speaking to a group of people at
 Worthmore Alcohol Treatment Center
 I asked: "what is it you want your God to do for you today?
 To make a difference in your life?"

One young man said:
 I want my God to be able to forgive my sins.
 He didn't say he wanted his God to help him with his **sobriety**.
 He didn't want God to keep his **family together**.
 Or to keep his **marriage**,
 Or to keep him **sane**.
 He said: "I want my God to forgive my sins."

Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried
 And he rose from that grave
 And sent his Holy Spirit to you to prove
 He has the power to forgive sins.

When those 3000 heard Peter preach, they
 Fell on their knees and discovered their sins forgiven.

The Holy Spirit guides us into the truth about Jesus,
 Guides us into the truth about ourselves and our sinfulness –
 And about sins consequence and judgment –
 and gives us the 'big picture' and God's will for the future
 That's why Jesus said: (John 16:8-13).

**7 But it is actually best for you that I go away, because if I don't, the Counselor^{F74}
 won't come. If I do go away, he will come because I will send him to you. 8 And
 when he comes, he will convince the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and
 of the coming judgment. 9 The world's sin is unbelief in me. 10 Righteousness is
 available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more. 11 Judgment will
 come because the prince of this world has already been judged.**

He will convince the world of its sin,
 And of God's righteousness.
 And the coming Judgment.

When you become a Christian,
 You allow Christ to enter the front door of your life.
 Don't think God is on the roof and you in the basement.
 God is the house,
 He is the place where you kick off your shoes,
 And eat pickles and crackers
 He is the place where you sleep and eat,
 Where you rest and read.
 Just as your earthly house is your refuge,
 God is your refuge and strength.
 A very present help in trouble.

Sure its a scary process to let go and let him take full control of your life.
But God will empower you to do it.

As many as received him, and to those who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. John 1:12

The word power is Dunomos.

Dynamite.

Something implodes within us

That enables God to do a new work inside us.

Pentecost is the day we commemorate God in action.

In the power of the Holy Spirit in our world.

How can I be filled with this wonderful Holy Spirit today?

1. First we must desire him –

hungering and thirsting for what is right (Matthew 5:6).

2. Then ask him to fill us: 1 John 5:14,15

if you ask for anything he wants, he'll hear you.

3. Thank him for filling us, Acts 1:8

4. Expect him to change us. II Corinthians 5:17

Soon after St. Augustine's conversion, he was walking down the street in Milan, Italy. There he met a prostitute whom he had known most intimately. She called, but he would not answer. He kept right on walking.

"Augustine," she called again. "It is I!"

Without missing a beat ---"Yes, but it is no longer I." Adrian Dieleman, Receive the Holy Spirit.

All who are in Christ are new creation, the old is gone and the new has come. II Corinthians 5:17

Will you bow your head right now

With every eye closed and every heart open.

Will you ask God to forgive your sins,

And to take complete control of your life.

Will you allow the Holy Spirit to began a new work in you,

As you surrender to the living Lord Jesus.

I trust you will today.

Let pray this prayer together in closing.

Thank you Lord Jesus for forgiving my sins. Thank you for taking control of my life, Come into my heart by the power of your Holy Spirit, and begin a new work in my life today. I release my will into the hands of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.