

4 Results of the Day of Pentecost

The whole drama of the book of Acts is a reflex of the activity of the Holy Spirit in the lives of yielded disciples and apostles—people who were willing to listen and follow, without question, the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was in charge of things, not simply as a behind-the-scenes observer, but “as the living Representative of Christ who is teaching and inspiring and enabling His followers to fulfill His mission,” as John Lancaster says in “But the Holy Ghost said ‘Yes’,” *Paraclete* 15, #1, (23).

This is exactly what Peter meant when he said, “The Spirit told me to go” (Acts 11:12). Thus the Holy Spirit again sets for the Church of today a precedent—He wants believers to have a sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that we will recognize His leading and have the courage to follow Him, even when He cuts across preconceived ideas and does a new thing (Lancaster, 24).

Jesus gave the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after Passover. About 120 Galileans waited in Jerusalem, including the 12 apostles and the disciples. Women and children were present too (Acts 1:14-15). One hundred and twenty followers of Jesus Christ prayed in the Spirit. The 120 were not preaching. They were praying as they had been doing daily, waiting for the Holy Spirit to come. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the 120 believers by faith transitioned from praying with their intellect to worshiping in the Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

The crowd, hearing the noise, went to see what was going on and what was causing all the commotion. To their surprise, they saw and heard the gospel in their own languages. When so many Jews heard the gospel in their own languages, and were

astonished that uneducated Galileans spoke foreign languages, they accused them of being drunk. Peter responded to this charge by giving his first sermon of power (Acts 2:5-13).

In the record of the events on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, we can notice several points.

1. The new church is filled with the Holy Spirit and for the first time the gospel is publicly preached with such power and attraction that a large number of people are converted to Christ and brought into the Church. Clearly the new dynamic power in the Church is the Holy Spirit.

2. The Holy Spirit's coming is accompanied by corporeal (sensible, easily identifiable) phenomena—the sound of the rushing wind, the appearance of fire-like tongues, and the speaking in other than usual languages.

3. Peter assumes leadership and begins his first public preaching. He assures the audience that the group is sober (not drunk)—so we assume a large part of the group could not understand the tongues being spoken. Peter also attests that this phenomenon is the work of the Holy Spirit of God (quoting Joel 2:28-32).

4. The power continues, as we are told that through the ministry of this Spirit-filled Church the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

What should we conclude from these points? The infilling with the Holy Spirit is not a one-day experience but a continuing reality, according to Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan in *Catholic Pentecostals Today* (79-80).

When we read Acts 1:8, “you will receive power . . . you will be my witnesses,” we realize the entire program stated in the book of Acts. The business of the people of God in this world is to bear witness to Him. The field of operation is marked out for the disciples. They are to begin where they are—at

Jerusalem. Then they are to reach out to places nearby, such as Samaria and Judea. Then they will reach out even farther, until finally they get to the ends of the earth. No one is to be left out.

These were unqualified people being sent on a nearly impossible task. But the Spirit would qualify them with all the power necessary to do the task. Pentecost “was the releasing of the redemptive power of Christ among men. Pentecost was the making of the redemptive power of Christ available for men,” states Walter Thomas Conner in *The Work of the Holy Spirit: A Treatment of the Biblical Doctrine of the Divine Spirit*, (61).

What we have, then, in the book of Acts is the power of Christ Himself continuing to work in the lives of men. Peter, in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, attributes the coming of the Holy Spirit to Christ. The living Christ was doing this work among them. He had not gone away from them but was still with them, working in a new way for the coming of His own Kingdom.
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