

060522 "**Pentecost**" John 14:25-27

Today is Pentecost Sunday. The resurrected Jesus did not immediately ascend to heaven, but He appeared to his disciples while staying on earth for 40 days. Acts 1:3 says, "After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God." As Jesus ascended to heaven, he said to his disciples, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for what the Father has promised, as you have heard from me." Ten days after Jesus' ascension, (Some people confuse this part. Not another 50 days after ascension, but 10 days after His ascension) on the 50th day after Jesus' resurrection, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples, and we celebrate this day as Pentecost Sunday.

The reason why Pentecost Sunday is so important in churches today is that this day is the beginning of the church's history. At the same time, today is also the 66th anniversary of the founding of our church. In Christianity, along with Christmas and Easter, one of the three major feasts of the church is the Pentecost Sunday. But why don't we celebrate Pentecost like we do Christmas and Easter? Well, Perhaps, this is indicative of the fact that while we as Christians believe in the Holy Spirit we don't think much about the third person of the Trinity.

Originally in the Old Testament, Pentecost was named for the 50th day after

the first Sabbath after Passover, commemorating the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. So, in the Old Testament era, it was also called Feast of Weeks to celebrate seven weeks after the Passover, and after the settlement of Canaan, it was also called the Feast of Harvest to celebrate the harvest of barley.

According to Acts 2, the members of the early church were gathered together in one place. We sometimes call it the upper room of Mark. If you look at the original Greek word that is translated as "together," it means "in one mind." In other words, the early church members were all of the same heart! Therefore, the Acts emphasizes that the early church members were not only in the same place, but they were all in unison in mind. Come to think of it.

One mind? What does that mean? You are always of one mind with your spouse, right? If you have siblings, you are always of one mind you're your siblings because you have one or both parents in common, right? NO! I may be nothing compared to many of you, but my wife and I have been married for 22 years and have known each other for 27 years, so my wife and I are always in one mind? Well... Not always. Were they always of one mind in everything? It's not like that.

It is the heart that aspires to wait for the promised Holy Spirit! There were people overflowing all over Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost, but only the

early church members were obedient to the words of Jesus and fully desiring and waiting for the Holy Spirit “in one mind”. Some people say the number of people who had gathered there was 120. No matter how many people gathered there, it was nothing compared to the huge crowds gathered in Jerusalem for the feast of that time. However, they were in one mind in anticipating and waiting for the Holy Spirit.

Imagine all the promises Jesus could have made to the disciples but didn't. He didn't promise immediate success. He didn't promise the absence of disease or struggles. He never guaranteed a level of income or popularity. But he did promise the perpetual, empowering presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is central to the life of the Christian. Now in John's Gospel only in the whole New Testament the Holy Spirit has another name as well, the Advocate. It's Greek word *Paracletus* means, counselor, adviser, advocate, petitioner, and mediator! The English version of the Greek word: The Paraclete. That word “Paraclete” is a name so full of meaning that no English translation has ever captured it. God the Father creates us; God the Son redeems us; God the Spirit comforts us and empowers us.

David wrote many psalms. Of course, not all of the psalms were written by David, but David wrote many psalms. 1 Samuel 16:13 says, “So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.” David's prayer doesn't always praise God. David was the one who told his feelings to

God without hiding it. He always talked with God.

Psalm 10:1, "Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"

Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my cries of anguish?"

Psalm 43:2, "You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"

Psalm 88:14, "Why, Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me?"

There are so many of these that I cannot read all of them here. Like David, please pray to the Holy Spirit, our Counselor. The difference between King Saul and King David lies here. King Saul went to Samuel and asked him to pray to his God. Even though he was anointed, he didn't pray himself. On the other hand, David himself went out to God through prayer.

It is also important that the Psalms do not end with just complaints. When we get to the end of the Psalms, we see many of his feelings and his problems resolved. For example;

Psalm 42:5/42:11/43:5, "Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."

Psalm 40:1-2, "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my

feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand."

Psalm 40:16, "But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who long for your saving help always say, "The Lord is great!""

Dear beloved sisters and brothers in Christ, there is the grace of God here! I thought this was the image of the believers who came out to God and prayed, and was counseled and treated. Too many people today need a counselor. No, actually everyone needs one. When Jesus says, "I leave the Holy Spirit with you," he goes on to say pretty much the same thing with other words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you." The Holy Spirit is God's peace. Go in peace. Fairfield Grace, may God's grace, peace, goodness, and mercy be with you and your family, and your business, and your studies, and with the lives of your children. Amen.