

Our Greatest Need—The Holy Spirit And How to Seek for Him

Meditation 1

What happened when the Holy Spirit Came at Pentecost?

“The Spirit came upon the waiting, praying disciples with a fullness that reached every heart. The Infinite One revealed Himself in power to His church. It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit’s grace.

And under the influence of the Spirit,
words of penitence and confession
mingled with songs of praise for sins forgiven.
Words of thanksgiving and of prophecy were heard.

All heaven bent low to behold and to adore the wisdom of matchless, incomprehensible love. Lost in wonder, the apostles exclaimed, ‘Herein is love.’

They grasped the imparted gift. And what followed?

The sword of the Spirit, newly edged with power and bathed in the lightnings of heaven,
cut its way through unbelief.
Thousands were converted in a day.”

(Acts of the Apostles, 38)

“What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost?

The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the uttermost parts of the inhabited world.
As the disciples proclaimed the message of redeeming grace,
hearts yielded to the power of this message.
The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions.
Backsliders were reconverted.
Sinners united with believers in seeking the pearl of great price.
Some who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions.

The prophecy was fulfilled, ‘He that is feeble. . . shall be as David;
and the house of David . . . as the angel of the Lord.’ Zechariah 12:8.

Every Christian saw in his brother a revelation of divine love and benevolence.

One interest prevailed; one subject of emulation swallowed up all others.

The ambition of the believers

was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character
and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom....

So mightily can God work when men give themselves up to the control of His Spirit.”

(Acts of the Apostles, 48-49)

Will God do such a great things for us as He did at Pentecost?

“What the Lord did for His people in that time,
it is just as essential, and more so, that He do for His people today.
All that the apostles did, every church member today is to do.

And we are to work with as much more fervor,
to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit in as much greater measure,
as the increase of wickedness demands a more decided call to repentance.”
(Review and Herald, June 13, 1903)

Then why don't we often see the Holy Spirit working in this way?

“The lapse of time has wrought no change
in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative.
It is not because of any restriction on the part of God
that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men.
If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be,
it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be.

If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit.

Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of,
there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death.

Whenever minor matters occupy the attention,
the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church,
and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking,
though offered in infinite plenitude.”

(Acts of the Apostles, 50)

Then what should we do?

“Since this is the means by which we are to receive power,
why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit?
Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it?

The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him
than parents are to give good gifts to their children.

For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God.

Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help,
for heavenly wisdom,
that they may know how to plan and execute wisely.

Especially should they pray that God will baptize
His chosen ambassadors in mission fields with a rich measure of His Spirit.
The presence of the Spirit with God's workers will give the proclamation of truth a power
that not all the honor or glory of the world could give.”

(Acts of the Apostles, 50)

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Meditation 2

How were the disciples' characters changed after Pentecost?

“Under the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit’s teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework.
No longer were they ignorant and uncultured.
No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements.
No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness.
They were of ‘one accord,’ ‘of one heart and of one soul.’ Acts. 2:46; 4:32.

Christ filled their thoughts;
the advancement of His kingdom was their aim.

In mind and character they had become like their Master,
and men ‘took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.’ Acts 4:13”
(Acts of the Apostles, 45)

“Brought into close communion with Christ, they sat with Him in heavenly places.
With what burning language they clothed their ideas as they bore witness for Him!

Their hearts were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching,
that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying to the power of Christ.
They were filled with an intense longing to carry forward the work He had begun.
They realized the greatness of their debt to heaven and the responsibility of their work.
Strengthened by the endowment of the Holy Spirit,
they went forth filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross.

The Spirit animated them and spoke through them.
The peace of Christ shone from their faces.
They had consecrated their lives to Him for service,
and their very features bore evidence to the surrender they had made.”

(Acts of the Apostles, 46)

What gift has God promised to prepare us for His coming?

“Before the final visitation of God’s judgments upon the earth
there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness
as has not been witnessed since apostolic times.

The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children.”
(Great Controversy, 464)

“But near the close of the earth’s harvest, a special bestowal of spiritual grace is promised to prepare the church for the coming of the Son of man.

This outpouring of the Spirit is likened to the falling of the latter rain;
and it is for this added power that Christians
are to send their petitions to the Lord of the harvest ‘in the time of the latter rain.’
In response, ‘the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain’ (Zechariah 10:1).
‘He will cause to come down...the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain’ (Joel 2:23).

But unless the members of God’s church today have a living connection
with the Source of all spiritual growth,
they will not be ready for the time of reaping.”
(Acts of the Apostles, 54-55)

What did the disciples do as they were waiting for the Holy Spirit?

“In obedience to Christ’s command, they waited in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father
—the outpouring of the Spirit.

They did not wait in idleness.

The record says that they were ‘continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.’ Luke 24:53.

They also met together to present their requests to the Father in the name of Jesus.
They knew that they had a Representative in heaven,
an Advocate at the throne of God.

In solemn awe they bowed in prayer, repeating the assurance,
‘Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.
Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name:
ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.’ John 16:23, 24.

Higher and still higher they extended the hand of faith, with the mighty argument,
‘It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again,
who is even at the right hand of God,
who also maketh intercession for us.’ Romans 8:34.

As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise,
they humbled their hearts in true repentance
and confessed their unbelief.

As they called to remembrance the words that Christ had spoken to them before His death
they understood more fully their meaning.
Truths which had passed from their memory were again brought to their minds,
and these they repeated to one another.
They reproached themselves for their misapprehension of the Saviour.
Like a procession, scene after scene of His wonderful life passed before them.
As they meditated upon His pure, holy life
they felt that no toil would be too hard, no sacrifice too great,
if only they could bear witness in their lives to the loveliness of Christ’s character.
Oh, if they could but have the past three years to live over, they thought,
how differently they would act!
If they could only see the Master again,

how earnestly they would strive to show Him how deeply they loved Him,
and how sincerely they sorrowed for having ever grieved Him
by a word or an act of unbelief!
But they were comforted by the thought that they were forgiven.
And they determined that, so far as possible,
they would atone for their unbelief by bravely confessing Him before the world.

The disciples prayed with intense earnestness
for a fitness to meet men
and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ.

Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy,
they came close together in Christian fellowship.
They drew nearer and nearer to God....

These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching.
The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord
for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving.

They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely.
They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls.
They realized that the gospel was to be carried to the world,
and they claimed the power that Christ had promised.

During the patriarchal age the influence of the Holy Spirit had often been revealed in a marked manner,
but never in its fullness.

Now, in obedience to the word of the Saviour,
the disciples offered their supplications for this gift,
and in heaven Christ added His intercession.
He claimed the gift of the Spirit, that He might pour it upon His people.”
(Acts of the Apostles, 36-37)

How can we also prepare to receive the Holy Spirit?

“The heart must be emptied of every defilement and cleansed for the indwelling of the Spirit.
It was by the confession and forsaking of sin, by earnest prayer and consecration of themselves to God,
that the early disciples prepared for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.”
(Testimonies to Ministers, 507)

“Our heavenly Father is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him,
than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children.

But it is our work,
by confession,
humiliation,
repentance,
and earnest prayer,
to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessing.
A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer.”
(1 Selected Messages, 121)