**May 28, 2023 MY THOUGHTS ON PENTECOST**

Pentecost is the story of the Holy Spirit breathing movement into the life of the disciples. During this time of the year, we also celebrate the birth of church.  The history and development of the church is guided by the Holy Spirit. It was now 50 days since Passover, and it was the custom of the Jewish community to celebrate two important things during this time: “The first fruits of the Harvest (The Harvest of the Weeks) and the giving of the Law”.

The disciples had gathered in Jerusalem. Jesus had instructed them not to leave Jerusalem; to wait for the gift that the Father had promised. As the disciples waited, the disciples found themselves surrounded by travelers from all over the world. The Jews had come back home to participate in this agricultural and religious Festival. Some had come from Europe, some from Asia, and some from Africa. Many different nationalities and languages could be seen in the marketplaces.

The Gift that the Father had promised came like a mighty rushing wind and flames of fire on the disciples who were filled with and engulfed by the Holy Spirit. They began to speak to everyone about what Jesus had done.

Peter said we all are witnesses of this fact that Jesus exalted to the right hand of God has poured out the Holy Spirit upon us. Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus who you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

It is the story of the coming of the Holy Spirit. Today, we cannot duplicate the exact events of Acts. That was a one-time event in the life of the church. We may not be able to duplicate the exact event, but we can duplicate three things that occurred on that day, and I would like to point out the three things that the church needs to duplicate if we are to reach people for Christ.

The first thing we need is passion and desire. The disciples expected something to happen. They wanted to reach the world for Christ. It is a desire for Pentecost to stay alive and for others to repent of their sins and be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The second is that the church must have power: The church needs people with passion. But if we are to reach people for Christ, we also need power. At Pentecost the disciples were given the promised gift of the Holy Spirit. They were given power. It is hard sometimes to relate to a concept of spiritual power. Too often, we fear, we get the misconception that when the disciples received the Holy Spirit, they became spiritual supermen. Nothing could be further from the truth that these men had far less talent, creativity, resources, and education than the people sitting in the church council meetings. What they did have was compulsion. It was this motivation that thrust these dozen men out into the world with a message of redemption and by the end of the first century over a half million people had been brought under the Christian banner.

One sure way NOT to experience the power of the Holy Spirit is to isolate ourselves. Someone once said “There is no Christianity without communion. There is no love without family. There is no power without Pentecost”. How about us? Have you experienced the power? Have you ever experienced the reality of Christ? How can you experience the power of the Holy Spirit? If you would like to know more about this, please join us in our worship on Sunday at 11:00 AM.

Peace!

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj

Minister