



STORY

Pentecost - Acts 2:1-42

7/23/2003

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, I know that by my very best efforts I cannot make my students believe Your saving truths. But I have great confidence in teaching them Your word, for thereby the Holy Spirit will do His work of converting human reason to child-like faith in whatever God tells us. Without the work of the Spirit, all our efforts are in vain. Thank You for the gift of Your Holy Ghost! Amen.

VOCABULARY

Pentecost - The term itself means "fifty". Originally, it was the name for a Jewish harvest festival which took place fifty days after the Passover. For us this tenth day after Jesus ascended into heaven is the day on which Jesus sent the Holy Spirit upon the disciples so that they could effectively spread the Gospel. This same "festival of the Holy Spirit" is also known among us as Whitsunday (accent on "it"). This term had reference to "White Sunday," the day of Pentecost when the candidates for Holy Baptism were dressed in white gowns.

Devout - Pious, religious, showing reverence.

Proselytes - A person who has been converted from one religion to another.

New Wine - The word used may refer to new, or sweet wine. From its use here we know that it was recognized to be intoxicating. Third hour of the day: According to our measure of time, 9:00 AM.

Attested - Bear witness, declare to be true or genuine. Acts 2:23: "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;". Also correctly translated: "This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross."

Patriarch - The father and ruler of a family or tribe, as one of the founders of the ancient Hebrew families. In the Bible Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons were patriarchs.

Exalted - Praise, glorify, elevate with honor.

Promise of the Holy Spirit - With reference to the promise to send the Holy Spirit who will cause unbelieving hearts to believe the truth from God. Isaiah 44: "I will pour My Spirit on your descendants.. one will say, 'I am the Lord's'; another will write with his hand, 'The Lord's.'" Ezekiel 36: "...I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you... I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes. . ." Acts 2: (Quoting the Prophet Joel) "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh... I will pour out my Spirit in those days..."

Exhort - Urge earnestly by advice or warning, strongly admonish.

Perverse - Deviating from what is right or good. Something wrong, improper, corrupt, wicked.

Steadfast - Firm, fixed, settled, not changing, constant.

Breaking of bread - Instead of being sliced, pieces of bread were "broken." Note the use of this expression in the account of the Lord's Supper.

OUTER AIM

Jesus told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until He sent the Holy Spirit to them.

Upper - The Holy Spirit was poured out on His believers to enable them to witness about Jesus Christ.

INNER AIM

God, the Holy Spirit, comes to create and strengthen faith through the preaching and teaching of His word.

Upper - The Holy Spirit has called us through baptism and God's Word to be witnesses for Jesus Christ.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 2, pp.461-472)

When we heard about the Ascension of Jesus, we heard Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit upon His disciples. Ten days later, as they were gathered together with other followers of Jesus, it happened! The Holy Spirit came upon them with some miraculous signs: the sound of loud wind, tongues of fire on the heads of the apostles, and everyone heard them witness God's truth to them in their very own languages.

Recall the Holy Spirit's three miracles on the day of Pentecost: He caused the disciples to witness the word of God in many languages; He gave them courage and faith to witness His word; He caused many people (3000 that day) to believe and to be baptized.

v. 1-13

- ▶ The promise to send the Holy Spirit upon the disciples was to enable them to make disciples from all nations.
- ▶ This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was accompanied with external signs: the sound of a loud wind, tongues of fire set on the heads of the apostles, and they were able to witness in other tongues (known human languages).
- ▶ The Spirit of God had been active in Old Testament times, indicated by words such as: "the Spirit of the Lord was upon him."
- ▶ But now the word would not be confined to God's Old Testament people in Israel.
- ▶ It was to spread through all the world. Therefore, the emphasis is not on the gift of speaking in tongues, but on the preaching of the Gospel in words that people could hear in their own languages.
- ▶ As a result of this Pentecost miracle of language abilities, mockers accused the disciples of being full of sweet wine!

v. 14-36

- ▶ Peter delivered a sermon wherein he tied what was happening into what the prophet Joel had written about the pouring out of the Spirit (Joel 3:1ff).
- ▶ The work of the Holy Spirit, working in and through the witnessing, preaching, and teaching of the word from God, would continue until the second coming of Jesus in glory.
- ▶ Peter did not dwell upon the signs (tongues) of the Spirit, but underscored the saving work of Jesus who had been crucified.
- ▶ Peter convicted them of their sin of crucifying the Messiah, the Lord of Glory. But this was all part of God's foreordained plan.
- ▶ Through Jesus' suffering and death sinners would be redeemed from sin, ransomed from death, and saved.
- ▶ Peter also pointed to the resurrection.
- ▶ In Psalm sixteen God told His people the Lord would not leave "His Holy One" in the grave (hell), nor would His body see corruption.
- ▶ The resurrection of Jesus was the witness of God that Jesus of Nazareth was His Son, the promised Messiah.
- ▶ Peter's sermon contained both law (with reference to sin and death) and Gospel (God's love in Christ for all sinners — to redeem, reconcile, and give Life to them).

v. 37-42

- ▶ After the sermon a question was asked: "What must we do?" Answer: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.. for the promise is to you and to your children."
- ▶ The Holy Spirit worked mightily in the word that was preached, and three thousand souls were added to the Lord, for they gladly heard His word and were baptized.

- ▶ The believers (the congregation) in Jerusalem were all brought to faith by the Holy Spirit and He joined them in a unity of faith (fellowship).
- ▶ They are described by the words: “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers.”
- ▶ People were amazed by the love of the early Christians who generously shared their daily bread with one another.

STUDENT PRAYER

Lower: Jesus, You called me to be Your witness. My words cannot make someone believe. Send Your Holy Spirit to make me a good witness, by sharing Your word with others. By Your word, the Spirit makes believers out of unbelievers. Amen.

Upper: Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending Your Holy Spirit to turn our sinful hearts into believing hearts, cleansed and ready to serve as witnesses. May the Spirit bless my witness of Your word, by working faith in unbelieving hearts. This is Your good will, Your will be done! In Jesus name. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Tell the story with the same emotion and excitement as if you were there. Tell the story in your words, but be faithful to the account that God wrote through His apostle, Luke.

APPLICATIONS

1. In the explanation to the third article of the Apostles Creed we confess: “I believe that I cannot by my own reasoning or effort believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel...”
2. How thankful we are that our unbelieving hearts did not turn from the Gift of God which is eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. With the Holy Spirit present in God’s word, He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us and the whole Christian Church on earth... and He keeps us in that saving faith through the word until Jesus comes again in glory to take us Home.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

I Cor. 12:3 - No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

TLH # 229, Stanza 1: Holy Spirit, hear us On this sacred day; Come to us with blessing, Come with us to stay.

Middle any of the above and...

Romans 8:16 - The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

TLH #229, Stanza 2: Come as once Thou camest To the faithful few Patiently awaiting Jesus’ promise true.

Upper any of the above and...

Titus 3:5 - According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

TLH #229, Stanzas 3-4: Up to heav’n ascending, Our dear Lord has gone; Yet His little children Leaves He not alone. To His blessed promise Now in faith we cling. Comforter, most holy, Spread o’er us Thy wing.