

## **The Purpose of Pentecost**

### **By A.D. Beacham, Jr.**

The eternal communion experienced between the Son and the Holy Spirit was demonstrated in human history through the thirty-three years and nine months of Jesus' life. His mother, the Virgin Mary, bore Him in her blessed womb as He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy some 700 years earlier. The Holy Spirit was with Him as He matured into manhood, was baptized, overcame temptations in the wilderness, understood the basis of His ministry (Luke 4), and communed with His heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit in constant prayer.

In the final hours with His disciples before His betrayal and arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, He spoke in detail about His constant spiritual companion (John 14-16). Ponder these words of Jesus in this intensive workshop on the Holy Spirit given in the Upper Room and on the way to the Garden.

- John 14:16, 17, "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."
- John 15:26, 27, "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."
- John 16:7-11, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the rule of this world is judged."
- John 16:13-15, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority; but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

Following Jesus' resurrection, He met with the disciples again, probably in the same Upper Room as on the previous Thursday evening. In the midst of their fear, Jesus said to them, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.' He breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (John 20:21-23).

St. Luke records that the Risen Lord spoke to the disciples about the Holy Spirit as He prepared them for the fulfillment of Joel 2 on the Day of Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4).

These passages, and many more, remind us of [the purpose of Pentecost](#): God the Holy Spirit empowering followers of Jesus to testify of who He is and the truth of the gospel. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is not about ecstatic experiences or simply our personal spiritual growth. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives binds us together with our fellow Christians around the globe as we act and speak in Jesus' name.

Our witness of Jesus centers around His sacrificial death on the Cross and what His death means to a sin plagued world. We need both parts of this world changing story: the Cross and the resurrection. Our witness centers around His victory over death in His resurrection. The Cross keeps us from an arrogant triumphalism that reeks of human power. The resurrection gives us courage to suffer for Jesus' sake because we know our labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58). And our experience of the same Spirit given at Pentecost not only enables us to see these truths clearly, but also enlivens our witness to a watching world.