

June Teaching Theme: Holiday Season (Pentecost, Trinity, Father's Day, Juneteenth)

讲员 Speaker: Dr. Ted Moon

题目 Topic: Pentecost

经文 Scripture: Acts 1-2

Monthly Theme: The month of June is full of both special days on the church calendar and special days on the Western Calendar in the United States. So, this month we will not focus on an over-arching theme but we will deal with topics pertaining to each unique Sunday. This past Sunday was the celebration of Pentecost, which for the Christian points us back to the origins of the Church in the Pentecost event found in Acts 1-2.

Resources:

[Sermon Video](#)

Discussion Questions (Pastor William R. Horne)

- (1) Read Acts 1:1-11, 2:1-24 together. What observations do you make, and what stands out to you? How would you summarize the passage?
- (2) According to the narrative of Act 1-2, what was the main task that the Spirit empowered the people of God to accomplish? How can we better participate in this work? How would you describe the mission of the Church?
- (3) The prophets spoke about the day when God would send his Spirit and launch a new phase in history. Read Ezekiel 36:25-27, Jeremiah 31:33-34, and Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:17-21). What new realities characterize this new chapter in history? How do these new realities change how we live as individuals and function as the community of the Church.
- (4) What has your experience been with the work of the Holy Spirit in your life? What are some ways we can be better in-tune with the work of the Spirit.

Important Notes (Pastor William R. Horne):

Notes on Q2: We see in Acts 1, the women and men who were following Jesus and witnessed him after his resurrection were told to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The power they received would enable them to “be [Jesus] witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8). We then see when the actual outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurs in Acts 2, they are immediately empowered to reach the nations as they proclamation of the Good News of Jesus was heard in multiple languages of those who journeyed to Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost). So we can see that the main task of the Spirit was to empower witnesses of the Good News of King Jesus through both their word and actions.

When God poured out his Spirit, he created a new reality and a new community, known as the Church. The Church is to be the location where the presence of God is experienced, where all receive belonging, and the Kingdom of God is revealed. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians, “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s

ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

We see that the Church is A Kingdom Embassy whose Chief Ethic is Reconciliation.

In a broken, fragmented world, the Church is called to be the first-fruits of a new creation by embodying a reconciled community. The Gospel speaks to all areas of brokenness in our world, and we as Christ Ambassadors must "implore other's on Christ behalf to be reconciled to God." And that in this experience of reconciliation with our Creator and the hope of Ultimate reconciliation upon King Jesus' return, we would pursue reconciliation in all facets of life. That we would be people who pursue peace, who speak truth even in hard situations, who break down barriers with love.

And it is from this place of the new Messianic Age, launched by King Jesus and the pouring out of the Spirit, that we have a clear mission as the church. And it is from this clear mission that we must make all of our decisions as a local church body. What embodies this new reconciled, transformed community the best? Where has God called us to proclaim the good news of King Jesus in word. What actions has God called us to in our community to embody the way of his Kingdom? Where is God calling us to expand our imagination of what our community can be and what it can look like, in light of the work of the Spirit?

Notes on Q3: We see in Ezekiel 36:25-27 and Jeremiah 31:33-34 that this new age of the Spirit, is characterized by transformation and the ability to change. We, as both individuals and a community, have been empowered to live by the ways of the Kingdom. The Spirit has come and we can experience transformation. We are not trapped in brokenness, but through the work of the Spirit, we can experience change. Now, this doesn't mean that we will be able to escape brokenness and suffering, but we can experience change. We have been empowered to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. We have been freed from the power of sin. The Messianic Age, launched in the Acts 2 Pentecost events, has opened up the door for the transformation of ourselves, others, and the type of communities we create.

In Joel's vision of the Messianic age, and Peter's proclamation in Acts 2, this new community launched by Jesus and the Spirit is a place where all social barriers and hierarchies are broken. The Spirit is available to all people - men and women, young and old, and those on the bottom of society who have been excluded from power. God is doing a new thing and creating a new community characterized by equality.

And this reality should and must change our mindset about others. That all people have been given the capacity to receive the Spirit and experience transformation. That all people are invited into the community of God's people. There is no such thing as someone who is "too far gone," or someone who is inherited rejected from the people of God. But, all are invited. All can experience the freedom of the Spirit of God.

Like the Apostle Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5, “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: a The old has gone, the new is here!”

If we as broken people have been made new, we can no longer look at others from a “worldly point of view” that sees them as best competitors and worst enemies. The Kingdom of God breaks down the world's relational “walls of hostility,” allowing us to see others as equally made in the “image of God,” with the capacity to be “made new” in Jesus. Thus, we are compelled to extreme depths of love towards others. In a broken, fragmented world, the Church is called to be the first-fruits of a new creation by embodying a reconciled community.