

Pentecost Sunday  
23-05-2021  
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church – Tweed Heads

Acts 2:1-21	The Holy Spirit comes at Pentecost
Psalm 104: 26-36	The Lord is in control of all the Earth His Spirit renews it
Romans 8:22-27	We live in the Hope of Future Glory – The Spirit intercedes for us in our weakness
John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15	Jesus tells his disciples he is leaving, but He assures them He will send the Counselor to guide them in all Truth.

### Introduction

I'd like to begin this Morning by wishing you all a Happy Birthday. Today as we celebrate the festival of Pentecost, we hear from our Sacred Texts of the coming of the Holy Spirit on those first followers of Jesus. This is often seen as the birth of the Christian Church, so Happy Birthday. I think we are around 2000 years old.

### Last Days

In our first reading this morning from the Book of Acts, we hear of how the Holy Spirit filled those first believers. And then, to address the accusations of drunkenness, Peter stands and quotes from the prophet Joel. He begins with these words:-

In the last days, God says – I will pour my Spirit on all people.

We are in those last days NOW. The Holy Spirit is available to us NOW. This might not seem like such a revelation to you and I, being members of a Christian Church here in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, but it was very revolutionary for those first Christians. In the Jewish tradition from which they came, the coming of God's Spirit onto individuals was not always a common occurrence. It was usually reserved for the likes of Prophets.

In the Old Testament Book of Samuel when the Lord first called Samuel as a boy, It said this:-

In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

But that was in Old Testament times. We are now in the time, when the Kingdom of Heaven has arrived in the person of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is available to all of us right now.

In fact, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us the moment we accept Jesus into our lives. How else would we be able to know and accept Jesus? That's not to say though that we won't have further filling and experiences of the Holy Spirit as our faith journey continues. Of course, we will and we should expect this to happen. But we should know that as followers of Jesus the Holy Spirit dwells in us. A little earlier in chapter 14 of John's gospel, Jesus says this to his disciples about the Counselor/Advocate :-

If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever – the spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. (John 14:15-17)

### Work of the Holy Spirit

So, we know that as Christians the Holy Spirit is in us, but what role does the Holy Spirit play. In the Gospel reading today (John 16:8) Jesus says this about the role of the Holy Spirit:-

When he comes he will convict the world of guilt with regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin because men do not believe in me: in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the Prince of this world now stands condemned.

These three points of sin and righteousness and judgment that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of seem to fit in with the message of salvation which comes through the New Testament.

Salvation is assured for those who believe, but salvation is past, present and future.

1. Past - We were saved by what Jesus did for us in his life, death and resurrection,
2. Present - we continue to be saved by the work of the Holy Spirit at Work in our lives, this is otherwise known as Sanctification,
3. Future - and we will be saved in the future when Jesus returns.

## Sanctification

Let's look at the present – The work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, otherwise known as sanctification. I gave you a brief definition of Sanctification last week. It means to “be made holy” or “to be set apart”. When we accept Jesus into our lives, it's not the end it's only just the beginning. It's not like something happens and then that's it. Like any relationship we should continue on a Journey in our relationship with God, and it is the Holy Spirit at work in our lives that guides us along in this journey.

It is the Holy Spirit that helps us to strive and to be more and more like the example Jesus gave us as we continue in relationship with Him. It is the Holy Spirit that helps us to be “set apart” so that when others see us, they might see God at work in the world.

And each and every one of us are given gifts by the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 12:7 we hear:-

<sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

It goes on to say that we are all given different gifts, but the important thing we need to know is that we each have gifts that are given to us by the Holy Spirit, to use in building up the Church. I was given the gift of praying in tongues as a teenager, and that has been a great source of comfort for me at times, but I knew another lady who wasn't given that gift, but had much greater discernment than I did. We are all given different gifts to use to build up the Church.

And as believers we are not left to our own resources to cope with problems. As we hear in the reading from Romans, even when we don't know the right words to pray, the Holy Spirit prays with us and for us. And God listens. With God helping us to pray we don't need to be afraid to come before him. As we ask the Holy Spirit to intercede for us “in accordance with God's will”, then we can be confident in bringing our requests to God, and trust that he will always do what is best for us.

## Conclusion

I pray this Pentecost that we will all be renewed and refreshed in the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit would so set us apart, that we might be strengthened and encouraged as witnesses. And that through our lives we might bring others to know and love Jesus, just like those first disciples did, on that first Pentecost. Amen.