

May 23, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (Pentecost Worship Service)

Message by Pastor Teichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: "The Day of Pentecost Has Arrived!"
— The Fulfillment of the Promise —

Text: Acts 2:1~4

2:1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

2:2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

2:3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Introduction

I have visited the Federated States of Micronesia which is called one of the heavens on earth. The country is about the size of Amami-Oshima Island in Japan and consists of 607 islands. I went to Truck Island, one of them.

Truck Island's emerald green sea, the never-ending beach and the beautiful **coral-reef** are amazing. As I love the sea, I took swim in the sea under guidance of a local pastor. I saw the inside of the sea through swimming goggles. It was a world of the coral reefs and innumerable tropical fish. I can't forget that wonderful feeling of that time.

Many kinds of colorful (red, yellow, blue, etc.) tropical fish were swimming there. It was very impressive, and I was fascinated by them. However, since I could not visit Truck Island again, I have a small water tank in my room. I really enjoy watching the world of small tropical fish at my office.

Surprisingly, those small tropical fish (less than 1cm) are swimming cheerfully and freely in the water in a tank that is kept warm. Even though their fins are within a few millimeters, they are swimming energetically.

I wonder how such a small tropical fish gets the energy to swim smoothly and very fast. I feed them every several days. The reason is that the energy is in within them and also, they are alive. I understood that the power of those small tropical fish is hidden in them.

My friends. Being Christians who believe in God, where do you think our power is hidden? It is in the Holy Spirit. The driving force of Christians is in the Holy Spirit.

Today is a memorable day, in which the Holy Spirit was poured out on believers. It is called Pentecost Day (which means 50). When the Holy Spirit rested on the people who believed in God, Christians were given power from God and the Christian Church was born. Then, the Gospel of God spread over the world.

Today is a very important day, Pentecost. Let us study the reason why the Holy Spirit was poured and how the Holy Spirit helps us according to the following two points.

Main Points

1 . The Significance of Pentecost

1) The Festival of the New Grain of Wheat

One of the important festivals for the Jewish people is **Passover**. In the old days, the Israelites were under slavery for 430 years in Egypt. The story is that God chose Moses as their leader and led the Israelites to Canaan (Israel), the promised land.

God loved the Israelites. He told the Egyptian king Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go to Canaan, however the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he rejected God's command. Then, God brought Egypt the **ten plagues**. As a result, Pharaoh was compelled to let the people of Israel go to Canaan.

When the people of Israelites left Egypt, God taught them to celebrate **the Festival of Passover**. Therefore, it is the very important festival for the Israelites. The Jewish people celebrate **the Festival of Passover** every year, even today.

The Israelites had to count seven full weeks (49 days) from the day after the **Festival of Passover**, and they celebrated the festival of the new grain. This is the Festival of Pentecost, the fiftieth day.

Leviticus 23:15 "You shall count seven full weeks from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering.

23:16 You shall count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall present a grain offering of new grain to the LORD.

God set the fiftieth day (Pentecost) to be a particularly blessed day.

Acts record in 2:1 as below,

Acts 2:1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place.

"They were all together in one place" meant that they came together to present an offering thanks for new grain of wheat. It is probable that the place they came together was **the upper room (Acts 1:13)** where they had the last supper or at **the temple (Luke 24:53)**. Anyway, they were all together in one place and were praying.

They kept the words of Jesus in their mind, **"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my father promised, which you have heard me speak about."** (1:4) and **"They were all together in one place."**

Psalm 133 records,

133:1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

**133:2 It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard,
on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes!**

133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion!

For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

My friends, let us look at the point that the Holy Spirit was poured on the believers, who believe in God, on the festival of the first fruits of the wheat (on the fiftieth day) that is recorded in the Old Testament.

2) The Signs of Pentecost

2:2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

2:3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

These three signs occurred on the day of Pentecost.

① The First Sign

2:2 ...suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind,

The first sign was an audible sound. Everyone heard it. **The wind** sometimes refers to the Holy Spirit in the Bible.

John 3:8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” 」

The Scripture records that there came from heaven, so we understand that **the sign came from heaven.**

② The Second Sign

2:3 ...divided tongues as of fire appeared

They could see the second sign. A fire or a flame refers to the Holy Spirit in the Bible. The appearance of the fire seems to show purity.

Matthew 3:11 I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and.

3:12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

③ The Third Sign

2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The third sign was that they began to speak the work of God in other tongues. The wind shows power and the fire shows purity, and the third sign is thought to be the universality of the Gospel.

The reason why is that the Gospel is preached by the word (languages).

Jesus said,

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Jesus said that the Gospel of Christ will reach to the ends of the Earth. It has been about 2000 years since then, and the Gospel of Christ is reaching to the end of the Earth through mediums such as social networking today. Three signs of Pentecost are very significant ones. Like this, God's plan makes a great step forward.

After this, God's history that He planned has developed over the world through Jesus' Great Commission. On top of that, the Bible teaches that the end of days comes after the Gospel of Christ has reached all the people in the world.

It is Pentecost today, so I will not speak about the end of the world. Rather, I want to speak about the Holy Spirit, who is the blessing of Pentecost.

2 . The Blessing of Pentecost

1) The Work of the Holy Spirit

We studied the miraculous signs of Pentecost. If we had been there, we would have been paralyzed with terror.

Breathtaking ⇒ Surprise (Astonishment) ⇒ A feeling of awe (Reverence) Amazing!

However, we need to be careful to see what is truly important here. **Signs, phenomena, and events** are all wonderful things. However, the core event was not in the signs but was the fact that everyone filled with the Holy Spirit.

My friends, we heard the phrase, "to be filled with the Holy Spirit." What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? What do you think about it? It is said that no theologian can explain the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is God Himself. The appearance of the Holy Spirit is multifaceted and acts in many fields. Therefore, it is difficult for us to understand Him within our limited ability.

Certain people insist that when the Holy Spirit rests on people, emotional excitement, healing of sickness, a prophetic work, or supernatural events occur. Yes, such amazing things can happen. I don't deny them. (I do not deny it at all).

One day, Jesus said,

John 14:16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.
I think that one of meanings is to become God's property. It means that God uses him/her without any hindrance.

The believers in the early churches were sent to the untrodden lands to preach the Gospel of Christ. It was nothing but the work of God, the Holy Spirit. People did not understand believers. The believers were opposed, sneered at, and persecuted. However, it was the path laid out for them.

When they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they became fearless and boldly preached the Gospel of Christ. The Holy Spirit dwelled in them and guided them. It was the power of God. We can find many example stories throughout the church history. The Holy Spirit is with us and works as another Helper.

2) We Should Ask the Holy Spirit for His Guidance

Then, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit and became the property of God and be in the presence of God, what will happen?

John 14:17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

When God dwells with us, we feel His comfort, His encouragement, His courage, and His power. The Holy Spirit speaks to us through the God's words every day. He works on us through amazing and diverse approaches.

However, God does not work in some cases as below,

Matthew 12:32 And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Jesus does not forgive speaking against the Holy Spirit. Why does he not forgive this sin? The reason is that the Holy Spirit points out **our sins**. Therefore, if we deny the Holy Spirit, God does not work and forgive it.

The Holy Spirit is called the **Third Person of the Trinity**. The Trinity is a theological term, and the Bible does not record it. It is said that the term is very difficult to explain so that there is no one in the world who can explain the God of the Trinity.

It is presumptuous of me, who is just a man, to explain a term that refers to the Almighty God. However, let me explain for the beginners as below.

First, the three persons are God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. The God who has three persons is revealed in human history as being Trinity and also One God.

God the Trinity reveals Himself as below,

① God the Father

In the days of the Old Testament, the days of before Christ, God chose the people of Israelites and set the model of relationship between God and the Israelites. It is **God the Father** who spoke to the

Israelites through prophets in various eras. **God the Father** appeared in the days of the Old Testament.

② **God the Son**

When God's time had come, God sent Jesus Christ in a shape of a man to His beloved Israelites. It is God who took the shape of a human.

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

It means that Jesus is the One who is in the shape of a man. Jesus had both the divine nature and the human nature in Him. For this reason, Jesus receives human pain and sufferings like us. It is **God the Son** that the four Gospels record about.

③ **God the Holy Spirit**

Jesus Christ was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead. God sent the Holy Spirit to the saints who believed in Him. It is Pentecost that we study today.

The Acts records in Chapter 2 that the Holy Spirit rested on each one of them.

2:3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

It means that today is the day of the Holy Spirit. God the Holy Spirit rests on each of us, who believe in Him. He directly helps and works on us in various situations.

In this day and age, we receive the blessed privilege that the people in the days of the Old Testament and of Jesus Christ could not receive. We live in the days that the Holy Spirit speaks to the believers who believe in Him.

Then, what is God like?

Exodus 13: 21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.

13:22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

The author of Psalms, who experienced the guidance of God, praised Him as below,

Psalms 119:103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

David, the king of Israel, praised the Lord in his later years as below,

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

23:3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

God is present in history. The living God walks before us and always leads us. The living God dwells in us and leads us as the Holy Spirit. Christians believe in the wonderful God like this.

Jesus said,

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The term dynamite derives from the term power (dynamis in Greek) in the Scripture above.

The Holy Spirit who was poured out on believers on the day of Pentecost works today like in the past. It is the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the Trinity. God prepared the wonderful way for us, who are hopeless before God. Therefore, we only praise the Lord.

Conclusion

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We listened to the Lord's voice on the day of Pentecost today. We rejoice, give thanks to the Lord, and praise His name.

Let us read the words of Jesus that he spoke on the last day in this world and conclude the sermon today.

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

* God bless you!