

THE DAY OF PENTECOST – INCEPTION OF NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Pentecost was the second of three Annual Festivals or Feast Days instituted by God for the Israelites under the Old Covenant. It was the day on which, after Christ's ascension to Heaven, the New Testament Church began (CP Ac 1:1-8, 12-15; 2:1-47). Ac 2:1-47 is the scripture record of the birth of the New Testament Church – a Spiritual phenomenon issuing forth from the Prayer meeting of the hundred and twenty Disciples of Christ gathered together in the upper room of the house where they were staying in Jerusalem, and culminating in nearly three thousand souls convicted of sin, repenting and being baptized in water as Jesus commanded (CP Ac 2:41 with Mt 28:18-20 and Mk 16:15-16). The *sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind* in Ac 2:2 was the Holy Spirit. The *cloven tongues like as of fire* which sat upon each of the Disciples in Ac 2:3 signified that they had all received the baptism in the Spirit which is confirmed in V4 “... and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (CP Ac 2:2-4). Speaking in tongues is the sure evidence that Christians have been baptized with the Holy Spirit (CP also Ac 8:18-23; 10:44-46; 19:1-6). *Matter* in Ac 8:21 (KJV) means **speech, talk, something said, divine expression** – a clear reference to talking in tongues by those who Peter and John had just laid hands on, receiving the baptism in the Spirit. (See also author's comments on Mt 28:19-20(A) and (B), Mk 16:16; 16:17-18, Ac 1:8, 2:1-4(A) and (B), 2L19-21, 2:22-23, 2:29-36, 2:37-38, 2:41(A) and (B), 2:46-47 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament.**)

The plain teaching of Scripture is that speaking with other tongues or “talking in tongues” as it is also referred to in the contemporary Church is the sure evidence that Christians are baptized in the Spirit. Conversely, this means that Christians who do not talk in tongues have not yet received that baptism. This is not said to disparage those Christians but to encourage them to seek even more the Holy Spirit empowering for service (CP Mt 11:12). The *violent* who Jesus describes here as taking the Kingdom of Heaven by “force” are truly committed Christians who press in with ardent zeal and intense exertion to secure their place in the Eternal Kingdom and fulfil God's purpose for their lives. They will allow nothing to hinder them from ensuring their place in God's Kingdom, which is the life-task of every professing Christian (CP Lu 13:24-27 with 1Cor 9:24-27; Php 3:7-21). See also author's comments on Mt 11:12; 1Cor 10:1-5, Php 3:7-11 and 3:20-21 in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**, and his studies *The Christian Calling – Winning Souls to Christ* in his book **Foundational Truths of the Christian Faith**, and *Redeeming the Time – Winning Souls to Christ* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**.

When the hundred and twenty Disciples came down from the upper room in Ac 2 they came down in the dynamics of being baptized in the Spirit: talking in tongues, empowered to work miracles in the earth, and to evangelize the world. They were empowered for

service to Christ exactly as He promises His Disciples throughout the New Testament, regardless of the Church era in which they live (CP Jn 7:37-39 with Mt 3:1, 11; Mk 16:14-20; Lu 24:49; Jn 14:12-17; 16:7-15; Ac 1:1-8; 2:1-4, 12-21, 38-39; 5:32; 8:14-17; 9:17; Ro 8:1-18; Ga 3:13-14; Eph 3:20). In Jn 7:37-39 Jesus typifies the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and empowering for service as *rivers of living water* flowing out of the belly of every truly committed Christian throughout the Church age from the day of Pentecost onward. Every Believer in Christ can participate in this empowering if they so desire. It did not apply only for the Disciples in the first century so the Church could be established in the earth, as so many in the contemporary Church would have us believe. It is for *them that believe* regardless of the Church era, as Jesus promises in Mr 16:14-20, *he that believeth on me* in Jn 14:12-17, *all that are afar off* in Ac 2:38-39, and *them that obey* in Ac 5:32. Every professing Christian in every Church age from the day of Pentecost onward is included in one or another of those categories. They are all integral to God's ongoing Redemptive Plan for fallen man – not only the first century Disciples. (See also author's comments on Mt 3:11; Mk 16:17-18, Lu 24:49, Jn 14:12-14, 14:15-17, 16:7-15, Ac 8:14-17, 9:17-18, Ro 8:1-2, 8:3-4, 8:11, 8:12-16, 8:17, Ga 3:13 (B), Eph 3:20 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament.**)

Scriptures clearly refute any teaching in the church that suggests God's Redemptive Plan for fallen man was only a temporary activity that would cease with the establishment of the first century Church with His last statement in Mt 28 ...“*and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*” (CP Mt 28:20). *World* here (KJV), means “age”. God's commands and promises both apply until the very end of the Church age, when Jesus comes to take all the Saints of God, both living and dead, New Testament and Old Testament alike, back to Heaven with Him at the First Resurrection (CP Jn 14:1-3; 1Cor 15:51-58). See also author's comments on Jn 14:1-3, 1Cor 15:51-58, and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament.**

It should be noted here before bringing this study to a close that there are two distinct and separate operations of the Holy Spirit recorded in Scripture: one is that He dwells *with* repentant sinners upon their conversion to Christ – He baptizes them into Christ's Body, the Church. The other is that He *indwells* them when they are baptized in the Spirit, the sure evidence of which is that they talk in tongues. Christians are obligated to make themselves aware of this (CP 1Th 5:21). Every teaching Christians receive must be tested in the light of Scripture. Any teaching not strictly conforming with Scripture must be rejected out of hand immediately regardless of who teaches it (CP AC 17:10-11, 1Th 5:21, 2Pe 1:16-19 and 1Jn 4:1-6 and all related cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament.**)