

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAY OF PENTECOST (ACTS 2)

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Pentecost was a Jewish festival known as The Feast of Harvest, also known as The Feast of Weeks (**Exodus 23:16, 34:22**). It was observed on the fiftieth day after the Passover Feast, and it always fell on a Sunday, the first day of the week.



In this article we will take a look at this great day and its significance. Our concentration will be on the events recorded in Acts 2. This is the first account in the New Testament where this day is mentioned. From this record, we find several significant points about this day.

The day of Pentecost being arrived, the Apostles are gathered in an upper room in the City of Jerusalem. This meeting is an act of obedience to the command given to them by the Lord Jesus before He ascended back to heaven (**Acts 1:4**).

*Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in tongues... (**Acts 2:2-4**).*

The speaking in tongues by the Apostles is a sign of the reception of the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 14:22**), thereby signifying their being clothed with power from above, just as Jesus told them (**Matthew 3:11; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13**). Those who have come to witness this event think the Apostles are drunk, but they are not drunk. Rather, something great, according to God's plan, has just happened to them.

As it was his natural temperament, Peter, one of those who received power from heaven, stands up (with the eleven) and

starts speaking (**Acts 2:14-36**), first by explaining that this event is a fulfillment of what Joel prophesied (**Joel 2:28-32**). Then he preaches a powerful sermon that convicts those Jews gathered there of their sins (**John 16:7-8**).

This event marks the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostles, fulfilling the charge Jesus gave them to go into the world and preach the gospel (**Matthew 28:18-20**). Having listened to Peter's preaching and being convicted of sin, those listening ask a priceless question: "Men and Brethren, what shall we do?" Peter responds, "Repent and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (**Acts 2:37-38**). Here we find the beginning of the baptism in the name (by the authority) of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Prior to this event, people were baptized according to the baptism of John "unto repentance for the remission of sins" (**Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:3**).

Those who are baptized through immersion that same day amount to three thousand (**Acts 2:41-47**). Now, here we have come to the birth of the Lord's Church, the only true Church found in the Bible. From this day onward, the Church of Christ is mentioned as being in existence because the Bible says those who were baptized "were added to the church daily" (**47**).

With the opening of the Church, we have a fulfillment of another Scripture (**Matthew 16:18-19**) where Peter is told, upon making a confession that Jesus is the Son of the living God, that he will be given the keys of the Kingdom of heaven. He uses these keys, the gospel message, to open the doors of the heavenly kingdom, the Church.

Upon considering these events critically, we can sum up that the significance of the day of Pentecost cannot be overemphasized. In our modern time, as far as Christianity is concerned, we can talk of several practices we do within the Church that originated on this day.

Sundays at 6:30 AM



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From then, there has been a continued adherence to the apostles' doctrine (the doctrine of Christ given through the Apostles), fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers. It is a day full of fulfillment of scriptures and prophecies as well as being a day of beginnings.

THE HIGH CALLING OF HOLINESS

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After the glory of the Lord filled the newly erected tabernacle at the foot of Mt. Sinai, God spoke to Moses concerning instruction for Levitical priests and the nation of Israel. In **Leviticus 20:22-26**, we find the driving theme of all these commands; the latter verse brings this teaching to a head: *"And you shall be holy to Me, for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine"* (**Leviticus 20:26**).



God has always desired that His people be set apart from the world. Sometimes, this separation creates clashes between the Christian's life and the culture of the day. Just as Israel struggled to remain set apart from the surrounding pagan nations, Christians today may find difficulty to take on the high calling of holiness in a society that continually leans toward "tolerance" of sin.

Sin is in complete opposition to the character of God (**1 John 1:5**). It is lawlessness, a rejection of what God has commanded in place of satisfying selfish desire (**1 John 3:4**). Our perception of sin is important to our understanding of holiness. While the world grows in its acceptance of sin, we must be careful not to become desensitized. Lot was *"greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked...his righteous soul was tormented over their lawless deeds..."* (**2 Peter 2:7**). Are we tormented and greatly distressed when we see sin today? We must be careful not to sugar-coat sin as mere human "weakness"; instead, we need to reconcile our attitude toward sin with God's.

Scripture identifies three things sin does that are contrary to our calling. First, sin fights against us. Peter admonishes that we *"abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul"* (**1 Peter 2:11**). This war is no game; if we lose the fight, we receive the wages of sin: death (**Romans 6:23**).

Second, sin insults God and His glory. The Hebrew writer describes believers who continue sinning as those *"who*

[have] trampled the Son of God underfoot..." (**Hebrews 10:29**). To rebel against God is to reject the precious gift of His Son.

Third, sin opposes holiness. In **1 Peter 2:9**, the apostle beautifully proclaims our calling as *"...a holy nation...that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."* If we are born again, what sense is found in returning to the ways of the world? God's promise of eternal life in heaven is worth far more than the fleeting pleasures of this life!

In **1 Peter 1:13-19**, Peter quotes the Lord's command to "be holy, for I am holy" as recorded in Leviticus. Bringing this paramount tenet of faithfulness into the New Testament, Peter teaches us both how and why we are to be holy.

How do we set ourselves apart from this world of sin (**1 Peter 1:13-15**)? First, Peter tells us to *"be sober-minded."* We must rid whatever distracts the mind from focusing on spiritual things. If we take away something evil, it is wise to fill that void in our thoughts with something good (**Philippians 4:8**).

Next, Peter writes that we need to rest our hope fully on God's grace. Through every storm and trial, we can stand on His promises to the faithful. Third, Peter says we are to do these things *"as obedient children."* Holiness requires submission to the authority of God's word. Notice, there is no passivity in *"girding up the loins"* of one's mind. Each of these components requires an intentional mental cleansing of all the impurities that come from living in a fallen world.

Finally, let's consider why holiness is our calling (**1 Peter 1:16-19**). Peter says we must be holy, first and foremost, because it is written. We should not undervalue the power of Scripture: it makes us complete and equips us for every good work (**1 Timothy 3:16-17**). Be holy—because God says so.

Second, God will be our impartial judge. Though we may freely choose how we live, God's request for holiness will not come back void. All deeds will be brought into judgment by the standard of holiness upheld in His word. Last, we are to be holy because Jesus paid for our sin. He walked among flesh and experienced the temptations we face each day—yet He knew no sin (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). Jesus became the ultimate example and sacrifice; and because He ascended in victory, we have hope of achieving the same.



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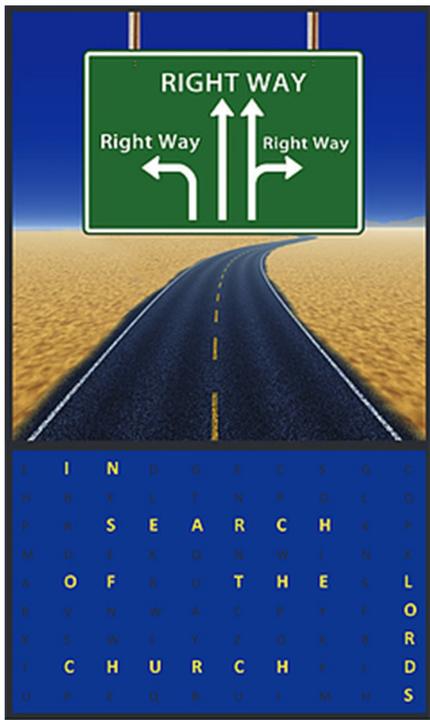
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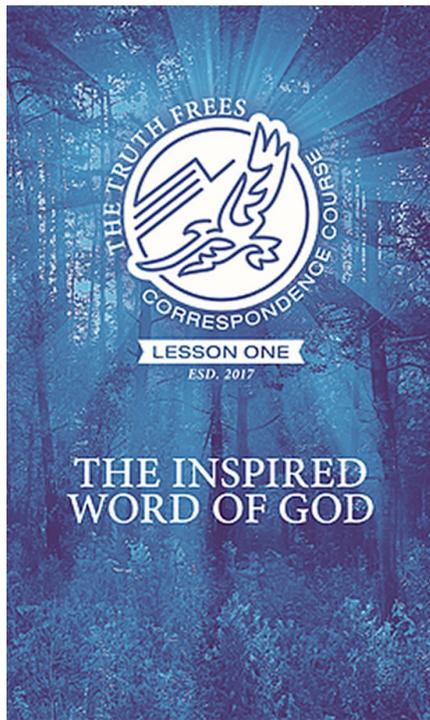
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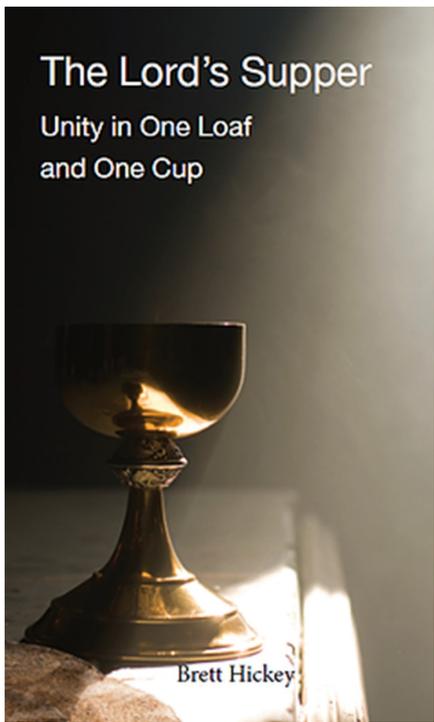
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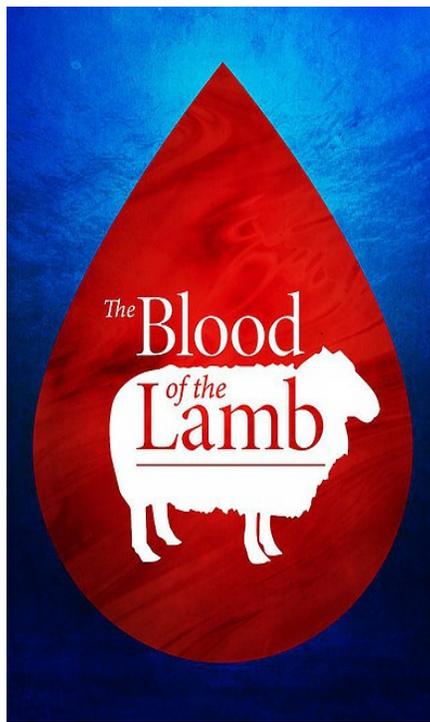
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