

## Holy Spirit in the Church (Part Two): Festival of Harvest {Pentecost}

**Relevant Bible Verses:** Acts 2:1, 4:33-34 ; Romans 8:23 ; Ephesians 1:13-14 ; Galatians 5:22-23

**Main Points:** The Holy Spirit is the first evidence, the proof, that the things we've had faith about are *true*. The day of Pentecost is as relevant now as it was for the disciples in the Upper Room. We know when the Spirit comes upon us as, like the disciples were, are transformed from the inside out.

### Message Notes:

- In Acts 2:1, it talks about 'when the day of Pentecost comes...'. This phrase is applicable to us, as it was to the disciples in the Upper Room, reflecting the promise of the Father; the baptism of the Holy Spirit. As when the disciples waited for the gift Jesus promised, when the Holy Spirit comes, we are *empowered for witness*
- From the time when Jesus was crucified and the disciples fled, to the time of the Pentecost, there was a complete transformation in them. They changed from 'scaredy cats' into people who changed the world. We know the Spirit has come upon us as we too are transformed from the inside out.
- The Roots of the day of Pentecost comes from the Hebrew Festival of Harvest. Pentecost, meaning 50<sup>th</sup> in Greek, has its history rooted in Exodus and the idea that 50 days after the Hebrews fled from Egypt, they were planted as a people (transition from slaves to an established people). Because of this, the Festival of Harvest required people to travel to the temple with a gift proportionate to how they had been blessed by God; a concept related to agriculture and the 'first fruits' of the harvest.
- As with the Festival of Harvest reflected the 50 days after the Exodus, when the Hebrews became an established people, on the 50<sup>th</sup> day of festivals, the Holy Spirit was given and the Church was established; a parallel to the establishment of the Israelites.
- In Canada, with the long winters, the first sign of ice melting is a relief, but cannot be seen as a true sign of spring. The first flower, however, can be seen as a more concrete sign, a *promise of proof*, of spring. Now, we can just go to the store for food during these long periods of cold, however, in the old world, the food need to eat was grown. Every year, people would plant and wait with anticipation and patience for a harvest, many times with no sign of growth for months. Once first signs popped up, they would still be cautious, as all kinds of uncontrollable factors could come into play (for example, weather or bugs). However, once the first grain, or first fruits, appeared it would be a *defining moment*. A proof or promise of blessing.

- The Word of God says the Holy Spirit is a *foretaste*; an incredible revelation of what is to come.
- God breathed into Adam the breath of life in Genesis. Breath is connected to Spirit in Hebrew, showing that God gave Adam *life* through Breath/Spirit. In other words, where breath is life and the Spirit is life, lack of the Spirit is death.
- ***How to apply to our lives:*** As with crops, once the first fruits of the Holy Spirit begin to appear in our lives, there is a defining moment; proof of the promise of God active in our lives, and a guarantee of our inheritance.
  - We trust in the Word of God, and the promises he has made, but once the Spirit moves in our lives, we get proof and what we believe comes alive. In the same way, we can believe that another person is born again but it is not until we see the Spirit move, in and through them, that we see proof through their actions
  - The degree of transformation, such as alcoholics being freed or drug addicts healed, shows the Spirit move. The change in people may not be as drastic as that, but it always reflects evidence and proof of God (it takes the Spirit and the Word of God to make real to us).
  - The Festival of Harvest is connected to wheat, which is connected to bread, which is then connected to life. As lifegiving bread, the reason for the festival, was a gift from God, the Holy Spirit is life given from God for us. The world is perpetually hungry because they lack the Holy Spirit.
  - We are known by our *fruit* not our giftings. To know if a person is walking in Christ, we need to look to the fruit, not to the gifts, as fruit will emerge in those who have truly given their lives to Christ. Fruit may or may not be immediate when they give their lives to Christ, but it will emerge.
  - The Holy Spirit is God with us therefore, if the Holy Spirit is with us, we can go anywhere because we know the presence of God is with us.
- ***Summary:***
  - The Spirit's presence validates God with us and distinguishes us among all others on Earth. The Holy Spirit brings life, change, and transformation; it can make us unrecognizable from what we were before.
  - The Fruit of the Spirit appears when the Spirit is present and provides us with evidence that all we believe and hope for is true. When the Holy Spirit moves within us, we are shown that there is something beyond this life, the first fruits of what is to come.

**For Further Study:**

- Take this and do something with it, beyond just this service. Reflect on your own life and consider, what is the fruit? If there is none, seek the Holy Spirit.