

From the West Meadow
By Pastor Wes Higgins

In Acts chapter 2, we find a powerful enactment of one of God's great festivals – here called Pentecost, an English interpretation of the Greek word for 50. This is often considered a Jewish festival, but in Leviticus 23 God calls this, and the other festivals listed, “feasts of the Lord”. God specifically says “these are My feasts” (see Leviticus 23:2). Paul, in writing about these feasts, tells us these are prophetic “shadows – but the substance” or purpose is found in Christ, Colossians 2:17, NKJV. Indeed, we find one of the great fulfillments of the Day of Pentecost (there have been several, with more to come) being used by God to start His New Testament church through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It may be hard to understand the full impact the giving of the Holy Spirit has had on mankind. Note that the writer of the book of Hebrews places the blame for the failure of God's covenant with Israel (generally called the Old Covenant) not on the covenant itself, but on the people's lack of having the heart to keep it. See Hebrews 8:8. So in Hebrews, we find the restatement of an earlier promise to “put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts”, Hebrews 8:10, NKJV. Here is the promise of the Holy Spirit – the promise of a changed heart and mind that we may walk with God and become His people.

The Holy Spirit is a gift that can only come from God. In Acts chapter 2, when the people hear Peter's explanation of what was happening, they were cut to the heart and asked 'what could they do?' Peter's reply was to “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”, Acts 2:38, NKJV. That gift came from God through the laying on of hands, see Acts 19:5.

The Holy Spirit is the most powerful force in the universe. It created out of nothing everything we see, hear, or know. “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said 'Let there be light' and there was light”, Genesis 1: 2-3, NET. If the Holy Spirit can form the universe, it can recreate us in the image of God, with a new heart and mind.

So what does the Spirit look like working in the lives of God's people? With God's Spirit in you, you should find yourself more loving, kind, joyful, patient, at peace, gentle, and self-controlled, see Galatians 5:22. The Spirit will produce unity of hearts among God's people, it will teach God's way and will lead us into all truth. It will give discernment and understanding of world events as they unfold, see John chapters 14-17. In fact, God's Spirit dwelling in us gives us everything we need to live in harmony with God and Jesus Christ. See 2 Peter 1:3, “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness”, NKJV.

Paul warns us not to “quench the Spirit”, 1 Thessalonians 5:19. When we quench the Spirit, we block God's interaction with us. We cut off His guidance and direction. When we quench the Spirit, it is like a child refusing to receive instruction from a parent.

God's Spirit dwelling in us as Christians gives us life and it gives it abundantly, as long as we allow it to guide and lead us. And the promise of the Holy Spirit is generational – “to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call”, Acts 2:39, NKJV.