

May 31, 2020 (Day of Pentecost)
Psalm 104-24-34, 35b; Acts 2:1-11
Reasons to Celebrate Pentecost

INTRODUCTION

1 N.S. Reports No New COVID-19 Cases, Gathering Limit Increased to 10 (Anjuli Patil · CBC News: May 29, 2020)

"Today we come before you with good news. No new cases to report. Zero. That's exciting," Premier Stephen McNeil said at a press briefing on Friday.

The province is increasing the number of people allowed to gather from five to 10.

The 10-person limit applies to:

- Social gatherings.
- Arts and culture activities like theatre performances and dance recitals.
- Faith gatherings.
- Sports and physical activities.

So we celebrate the day because it is a significant and encouraging milestone.



2 Pentecost

"Today we come before you with good news. Jesus said that we will be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days from now (Acts 1:5). Now his promise is fulfilled. That's exciting," Peter might say at a press conference in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago.



- The word "Pentecost" is Greek, meaning fifty, reflecting the fifty-day countdown.
- Pentecost was the day that the church celebrates its birth and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Pentecost was a significant and encouraging milestone for the early church in Jerusalem.

● **Theme: What are the reasons we celebrate Pentecost today?**

BODY

1 PENTECOST IS KEY FOR THE CHURCH

1.1 Jews Celebrate Pentecost as An Earthly and Spiritual Harvest

Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks is a time for Israel to gather in Jerusalem to celebrate...

- An earthly harvest
 - It is the first agricultural feast which is celebrated late May or early June.
 - The Jews eat foods without meat, and decorate their homes and synagogues with harvest produce.
- A spiritual harvest
 - It recalls when the Lord revealed to Israel the gift of the Law at Mt. Sinai.
 - The Jews read the Book of Ruth for which reminds of God's providence.



1.2 We Celebrate Pentecost for its Key Role to the Church

- The Holy Spirit: Missing (Alan Redpath in "Christian Life" magazine. Christianity Today, Vol. 29, no. 18.)

In many Christian circles the Holy Spirit is kind of like “the forgotten God.” The One given to unite the body of Christ is the center of controversy. This is a nettle which ought to be firmly grasped. So often Christian work is so rigidly programmed that it seems we need no longer depend on Him--yet Jesus said, "Without Me you can do nothing." ...

The late Dr. A. W. Tozer, author and pastor, said, “If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95 percent of what they did would stop, and everybody would know the difference.”

Pentecost is important because the Spirit would make the church different than the world.

2 PENTECOST GIVES US POWER TO CONFESS JESUS IS LORD

2.1 Who Are Filled with the Holy Spirit?

- Nobody has seen Jesus...
 - Nobody has seen Jesus who came to Israel 2,000 years ago.
 - Nobody has encountered Jesus who crucified in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago.
 - Nobody has met the resurrected Jesus 2,000 years ago.
- But we believe in...
 - We believe in his coming to earth today.
 - We believe in his crucifixion today.
 - We believe in his resurrection today.
- Unless someone persuades our minds and hearts, it is impossible to believe in this story. Paul said, *“So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:3, NLT).*

2.2 We Confess Jesus is Lord When We Are...

① The story of the burning bush



“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush” (Exodus 3:1-2, NIV).

- The story tells us when Moses truly encountered God in his life.
 - Moses met God not at the palace of Egypt but the wilderness of Horeb.
 - Moses encountered God not as a prince but as a shepherd.
 - Moses experienced God’s presence not as a young man but as an old man.

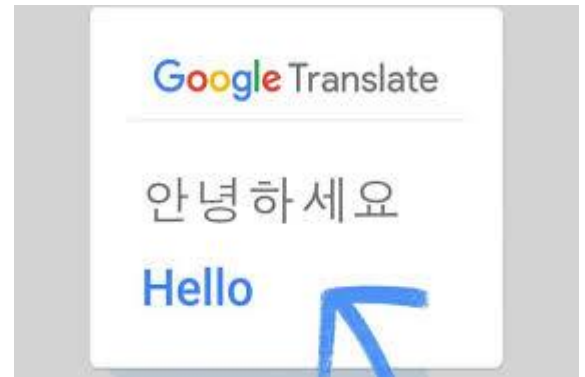
② The Story of Pentecost

- The story tells us when we honestly encounter God in our lives.
 - We may meet God when we are not busy but quiet.
 - We may encounter God when we are not in success but in failure.
 - We may experience God when we are not strong but weak and weary.
- Thus, we confess Jesus is Lord by the Holy Spirit when we are truly humble.

3 PENTECOST GIVES US POWER TO COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS THAT JESUS IS LORD

3.1 Five Reasons Not to Rely on Google Translate

- As of May 2020, Google Translate supports 109 languages at various levels.
- Most of the time, Google Translate is pretty accurate. If you need to write a message to your hotel before arrival or check the menu of a restaurant while traveling, this service is just what you need.
- It shouldn't be your go-to source when handling creative documents, confidential data, or business-related content, however. Google Translate isn't a reliable provider for translating financial reports, legal contracts, or health-related documentation.

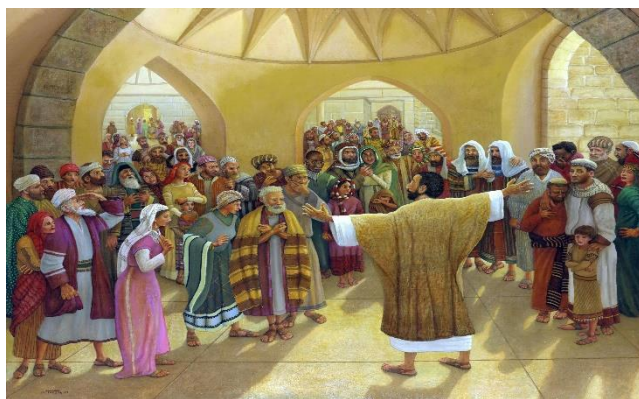


3.2 The Reason the Holy Spirit Translates

- ① As the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit translated the Galilean dialect to 16 different languages at highly accurate level.

They were completely amazed. "How can this be?" they exclaimed. "These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages! Here we are— Parthians, Medes, Elamites, people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, the province of Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the areas of Libya around Cyrene, visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism), Cretans, and Arabs. (Acts 2:7-10, NLT)

- ② At Pentecost, the purpose of speaking in other languages was to communicate others that Jesus is Lord.



Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:37-38, NLT)

- The church still proclaims the Gospel in many languages, but without the Holy Spirit the message is not cut to the heart of listeners.

③ Light Is Not Sight (A.W. Tozer, Born After Midnight. Christianity Today, Vol. 41, no. 5.)
Religious instruction, however sound, is not enough by itself. It brings light, but it cannot impart sight. The assumption that light and sight are synonymous has brought spiritual tragedy to millions. The Pharisees looked straight at the Light of the World for three years, but not one ray of light reached their inner beings. Light is not enough. The inward operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary to saving faith. The gospel is light but only the Spirit can give sight.

CONCLUSION

Why do we celebrate Pentecost today?

We celebrate because...

- Pentecost is key for the church.
- Pentecost gives us power to confess Jesus is Lord.
- Pentecost gives us power to communicate with others that Jesus is Lord.

(Psalm 104:33-34, 35b NIV)

33 I will sing to the Lord all my life;

I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

*34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,
as I rejoice in the Lord.*

35b Praise the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord