

The New Pentecost

Acts 2:1-5

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly, there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under Heaven.

The Pentecost began with the coming together of the believers in Christ. And as a rushing mighty wind moved their hearts we can see in this Pentecostal moment that a binding force was at work that bound them one to another. In essence, the Pentecost has two dimensions. One is a faith in God, the other is a gathering together of believers with a heart of love towards one another. When these two elements are fulfilled then the dwelling of God can be with men.

In Acts 2:5 it is mentioned that every nation under the sun had been gathered together. Herein lies the critical ingredient necessary to ignite the new Pentecost. When we say every nation under the sun, we mean every race, every religion and every culture. And when this kind of gathering to occur, certain barriers will have to be broken. In Acts 10, we see the barriers that Peter had when God told him to pass from the Old Testament into the New by eating meat from animals previously considered unclean. As Peter was in a trance on the roof-top, God made it clear to him that a new dimension of history was unfolding in which those who would be called chosen would not be so by birth but by the fact that God had cleansed them. Peter was chocked at his experience, but from it he realized that God was moving in a new direction, in which God's people would be believers from every nation under the sun. But even in its very origins, Christianity went through great struggles to try to realize the unity of love that allowed for the Pentecost.

We see that, as centuries passed, the Pentecostal unity has been broken and divided into many denominations, and denominations themselves are divided culturally and racially. Tonight, we need to realize where our divisions come from. They originate not from differences of color, or nation, or creed, but the division between men originated from the time when man fell away from God in the Garden of Eden. Satan is the source of all division, and his main goal in the

religious sphere is to divide people one against another, because in that God's ability to dwell with us is nullified.

But what can help us to break these barriers down? As we saw with Peter, God can reveal that the time had come for Jews to embrace the Gentiles, and with their faith in Christ they could become God's chosen people. Now we are in the time of the new Pentecost and as God commanded Peter God is now commanding all of us once again to embrace the Gentile, the centurion, the Catholic, the Protestant, virtually all religions, cultures and races. But just as Peter was afraid to step out of his old traditions and into the new, we are also anxious about stepping from our tradition towards a new age. This is why Christ must come again.

Though Jesus' sacrifice the door of salvation was opened, but our passage through to the other side can only be eternally secured through the realization of a love of God and a love for man that fulfills the two great commandments that Jesus gave in Mathew 22:37-40. The first commandment is love God with all you heart, all your soul and all you mind. And through Jesus' first coming we could learn, through love Jesus, how to love God.

Here we are gathered tonight as true believers who have realized the first commandment. An yet the realization of the second commandment has not yet come. Jesus told us to love one another, but even Paul said that, though he delighted in the laws of God with his min, his body was at war with the law of his mind. And we likewise, who have been saved, find that, though we delight in the belief in the Kingdom of God, our substance cries out with deadly pain and fear in a world where God's ideal of love is hard to realize.

Christ's second coming is at hand. And just as Peter had to open his mind from his roof-top experience, we also must prepare to open our minds towards new things that God will bring, that we have never been taught before. When people are brought together with a renewed belief and a new realization for love of all people, a Pentecost is going to sweep the world, a Pentecost that will shake both heaven and earth.