

**~Other Speakers S-Z: Classic Christian Writings:**

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the distinguishing feature of the Christian religion. It is the very soul of our faith. In His indwelling Presence is the secret of all Christian experience, and in the abiding energy of His power is the dynamic of all Christian service.

The promises concerning the Spirit challenge us. The record of the Day of Pentecost challenges us. The history of the Christian Church challenges us. Do we believe in the Holy Ghost?

The blessing of Pentecost is the blessing of fullness. The symbols of wind and fire reveal the mission and quality of the Gift, but the essential truth is that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Fire, power, courage, and joy had their source in the fullness of the indwelling Spirit. They overflowed because they were filled to overflowing.

In the Upper Room on the first day of the resurrection, the risen Lord had breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22). Pentecost verified and completed an infilling Presence and an overflowing power. It is the fullness that makes the difference.

The blessing affects the whole being. The seat of the indwelling Presence is in the innermost recesses of the spiritual being, but it permeates, energizes and controls every faculty of our nature.

**The Holy Spirit Incarnate In Man**

The gift of the Holy Spirit is another incarnation of which the body is the consecrated believer. The Holy Ghost clothed Himself with waiting disciples in the Upper Room, and He still clothes Himself with consecrated believers. He clothes Himself, and they are clothed in Him. In them He finds a body, and in Him they find the power of spiritual expression and execution. Without confusion, without loss of personal consciousness, without change of inherent qualities, there is mutual appropriation and oneness of operation.

The effects are seen in the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. In every particular the experience corresponds to the promise. Jesus had said the coming of the Spirit would bring fullness of knowledge. "[In] that day ye shall know (John 14:20). Things He could not teach them they would know with certainty when the Spirit of Truth had come, and they did.

There is nothing more wonderful on the Day of Pentecost than the wisdom and certainty with which they taught. Prophecy shone with new meaning, and the facts of Christ's death and resurrection were interpreted in the light of the eternal purpose of God. The Word of God becomes new, and the history of Christ's teaching and ministry was filled with new meaning to them, but Pentecost changed all their outlook. The Scriptures were made luminous in the light of the Holy Ghost.

**Change Of Character**

The change in their characters was even greater than the change in their knowledge. The Gospels portray these men as proud and contentious, selfish and cowardly, but the first pages of the Acts of the Apostles tell another story. Something happened between the judgment hall and the streets of the city. Resurrection found them all shivering behind closed doors for fear of the Jews, but at Pentecost they were openly preaching Jesus and charging the rulers with His death.

Pentecost transformed them. It was the fullness that made the difference between timidity and joyous daring, between shivering weakness and exultant power. They were jubilantly fearless and hilariously happy. That is the difference Pentecost makes.

How does the challenge find us? Do we measure up to the standard of the fullness of Pentecost? Is not the explanation of our confusion about Pentecost in the lack of it?

There is danger that we claim more than is promised, but how do the unchallenged tests find us? What about our assurance of heavenly things? There is an end of uncertainty when the fullness of Pentecost is known.

Have we power over sin? The Spirit of Truth is the Spirit of Holiness. He sanctifies in truth. The Day of Pentecost changed carnal thought into spiritual vision, pride into humility, selfishness into love and cowardice

into courage. It changed hearts and transformed lives. Victory comes by fullness. Have we the joy of conquest over sin? Is the character of the average Christian anywhere near the standard of the Spirit-filled soul?

What about the love of the world? Jesus said He was One "whom the world cannot receive" (John 14:17). They are irreconcilable antagonists. What has become of the doctrine of separation? If believers were filled with the Spirit, would they haunt the world's gaudy fountains and brackish springs? It is mockery to profess fullness and go about panting with thirst and gasping with vanity.

What about the power for service? Is our decline due to external difficulties, or internal weakness? Think of the host of workers, the vastness and variety of their service, the earnestness and ingenuity of their labors, and the scanty result of it all. Pentecost brought awakening, conviction, conversions, and baptism. The gift of the Spirit is the gift of power, and the lack of power is due to the absence of His indwelling fullness.

### **The One Thing Needful!**

There is no doubt that the one thing needful for the Church is the blessing of Pentecostal fullness. The flood would sweep away all the rubbish, fill all the dikes, and fertilize all the desert. The work of God cannot be accomplished without the fullness of the Spirit.

Everywhere God waits to give His Holy Spirit to them who ask Him. It is His will that every believer shall be filled with the Spirit, overflow in the power of the Spirit, and in all things prevail in the Spirit. The blessing is for all. The conditions are simple, unalterable and universal. God waits to fill ordinary people with extraordinary power and to turn a baffled faith into a rapturous conquest.

How? Ask Peter and James and John! They were deeply attached to the Lord Jesus Christ before Pentecost. They had left all for His sake, but were still without Pentecost. They believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and were witnesses of His death and resurrection. They were workers, stewards, preachers, evangelists, workers of miracles, without Pentecost. Then they heard the promise of the Spirit and set themselves to claim, wait and pray, and according to the Word, the Spirit came, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit!