

Coming of the Holy Spirit (Part 2)

(Transcript)By Warren Zehring – 6/8/2014

Today is **Pentecost**. It is God's Holy Spirit that opens our minds to know God, and to recognize the will of God. The converted brethren of God's Church are only the **firstfruits** — the first **recipients** on a large scale to partake of God's Holy Spirit.

God makes a big point of the fact that that we are privileged firstfruits—indicating that there will be a much larger harvest to follow. God's word uses the phrase "firstfruits" liberally.

Romans 16:

- 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well beloved Epaenetus, who is the **firstfruits** of Achaia unto Christ.

Ancient Israel observed Pentecost – then, called the Feast of Weeks and the **Feast of Harvest of the Firstfruits** – in late spring after the barley harvest at this time.

Agriculturally speaking, firstfruits are the first produce to ripen each year. The first fruit is the most special and precious of all produce. God uses the analogy of the **harvests** to demonstrate His plan of salvation. In the Old Testament, the firstfruits offering was the first and best portion of a larger harvest—a **later harvest**.

Spiritually speaking, **Firstfruits** actually begin with Jesus Christ, represented by the first ripe grain of the Wave-Sheaf offering, and continue with us, the Church of God on up to Pentecost. After the soon coming **resurrection Pentecost**, salvation will extend to the entire world – but they will not have the magnificent privilege that we have of being Firstfruits with Jesus Christ. We, God's people, are a part of the spiritual Firstfruits.

Exodus 23:

- 16 [Thou shalt keep the Feast] of Harvest, the **firstfruits** of thy labors, which thou hast sown in the field:

This verse in numbers is speaking directly of Pentecost.

Numbers 28:

- 26 Also in the Day of the **Firstfruits**, when ye bring a new meat offering unto the LORD, after your [seven] weeks be out, ye shall have an holy convocation [Pentecost]; ye shall do no servile work:

In the Old Testament God directed the Israelites to bring the **firstfruits**. They are the first produce of a harvest to mature and ripen. (Deuteronomy 26:1-2, 10-11, Exodus 34:26)

James 1:

- 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of **firstfruits** of his creation.

All of Creation awaits our resurrection - so that it may be restored to its intended eternal glory.

Romans 8:

- 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now.
23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the **firstfruits** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

In Revelation we read of the resurrection of the saints on Pentecost.

Revelation 14:

- 3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.
- 4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are [spiritually] virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes...

These were redeemed from among men, being the **firstfruits** unto God and to the Lamb.

Jesus was the Firstfruit on the Wave Sheaf Day. We are the **firstfruits** on Pentecost – still a first harvest day. Jesus Christ is the **FIRST** of the **Firstfruits**.

1 Corinthians 15:

- 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the **firstfruits** of them that slept.
- 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the **firstfruits**; afterward they that are Christ's at **His coming**.

Those brethren who are converted in Christ will, after their salvation and resurrection to eternal life, aid in the conversion of all peoples of the earth. Reign and Rule with Jesus Christ...

The Church is **only** the **firstfruit** of God's Work and not the end of God's plan of salvation.

Today, you and I are privileged to hear the Gospel preached in many areas, and have the Word of God expounded in publications, tapes, correspondence courses and often, come into contact with a minister to teach us - or other brethren before baptism.

But, at the launching and inauguration of the Church of God at the **first century** Pentecost, there were few who understood where God was headed, and how God was working.

God poured out His Spirit in power and gifts in order to show clearly that great changes were taking place.

God was calling a **people** unto Himself – He would call it the “Church **of** God.” God the Father would place His Son, Jesus Christ to be the Head of His Church. Jesus said, “I will build My Church” – which is the Father's Church as well.

Jesus said, “My Church,” meaning a **spiritual entity** consisting only of those brethren who have received a **special calling** from God the Father.

The Church of Jesus Christ is the **called out** congregation of brethren through the ages – who have been given God's Holy Spirit – making them children of God, and who are led by God's Holy Spirit, and who have totally surrendered themselves to the rule of God.

Just as Jesus gave Moses the **Law of God** on that **first** Pentecost after the Children of Israel came out of Egypt, Jesus sent His Spirit to establish the Church of God on the **first** Pentecost after He had redeemed man from sin.

Acts 2:

- 1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- 2 And suddenly there came a **sound** from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.
- 3 And there **appeared** unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
- 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to **speak** with other tongues [foreign languages], as the **Spirit** gave them utterance.

God's Spirit is His Life, His character, His mind, His love, His very Spirit Life's essence that He is willingly sharing with us – to bring us into the eternal Family of God. God's Spirit is the essence of His incredible mind, and that is the motivating principle which God's children receive. God's Spirit includes His attitude, His principles, His thoughts, His feelings, His temperament, His disposition, and His will.

Acts 2:

- 5 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of **every nation** under heaven.
- 6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man **heard** them speak in his own language.
- 7 And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans?

Where did they learn to speak my native tongue?

Acts 2:

- 8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Peter is speaking to **Israelites** from all over the known world who have come to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Pentecost.

Acts 2:

- 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,
- 10 Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes,
- 11 Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

And as we shall see – a great many of these **Israelites** were **converted** – receiving the **Holy Spirit** -- and returned to their home countries with the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Acts 2:

- 12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, **What does this mean?**
- 13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.
- 14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:
- 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. [9 am]

Peter quotes Scripture to the crowd:

Acts 2:

- 16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;
- 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:
- 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my **Spirit**; and they shall prophesy: [inspired preaching]
- 19 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:
- 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:
- 21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter begins to display a courageous – fearless preaching that we have not seen in him before. Remember it was less than two months ago that he was afraid for his life and **denying** Christ. Peter has been **emboldened** by God's Spirit: He preaches a extraordinary sermon.

Acts 2:

- 22** Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man **approved** of God [and accepted – Wave Sheaf] among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:
- 23** Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God [God was not to weak to prevent Christ's death], ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:
- 24** Whom **God hath raised up**, [Jesus did not raise Himself] having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

The grave could not hold Jesus captive. Victory over death! Never before heard of!!! Jesus Christ lives! – Our Hope. Peter plugs Christ into the Old Testament Messianic Prophecies:

Acts 2:

- 25** For David speaks concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
- 26** Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:
- 27** Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [grave], neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

The point of this discourse is obviously David's body is still in the grave—so this verse was a Messianic Prophecy about Jesus Christ—whose body did not remain in the grave but was resurrected by the Father after only three days and three nights.

Acts 2:

- 28** Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.
- 29** Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.
- 30** Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;
- 31** He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.
- 32** This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.
- 33** Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the **Father the promise of the Holy Spirit**, he hath shed forth this [outpouring of God's Holy Spirit], which ye now **see and hear**.
- 34** For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, [God the Father to Jesus Christ—our Lord and Master]
- 35** Until I make thy foes thy footstool.
- 36** Therefore let all the house of Israel [Peter is speaking to Israelites from all over the known world] know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. [Messiah]
- 37** Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, **what shall we do?**

They were totally convinced! That is the right question! **What shall we do?** Man is now able to overcome sinful nature by Christ **living** in him through God's Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:

- 38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the **gift** of the **Holy Spirit**.

God gives a measure of His own remarkable Spirit to begin inclining His children to think the same way He thinks, and to begin living the same way that He lives.

Acts 2:

- 39** For the **promise [of the Father]** is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.

This is only an abridged version of Peter's sermon on that first Pentecost that we are reading here:

Acts 2:

- 40** And with **many other words** did [Peter] testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
- 41** Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about **three thousand** souls.

That too, was the work of God – not men with **sales pitches** and flashy techniques.

John 6:

- 29** Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the **work** of God, that ye believe on [Jesus Christ] whom he hath sent.

Acts 2:

- 42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Peter and the apostles had been waiting in Jerusalem – as Jesus had instructed them – waiting for the “**Promise of the Father.**” Jesus had told them that the Holy Spirit would bring all things that He taught them to their remembrance.

John 16:

- 13** Howbeit when the **Spirit of truth**, is come, it will guide you into all truth:

That promise was God's indwelling Spirit, which would **empower and enlighten** them to carry on the mission of Jesus.

John 7:

- 38** He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.
- 39** (But this spoke he of the **Spirit**, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

At Pentecost the apostles were **empowered and enlightened** by God's Holy Spirit in them. It is only if we have the indwelling Spirit of God, that we are Christians:

Romans 8:

- 9** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God **dwell in** you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Notice that we receive the **Spirit** of God the Father.

Romans 8:

- 11** But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, [God the Father must dwell in us] He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you.

Romans 8:

- 14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Brethren, God gave us priceless gifts. He gave us His **Son** as a sacrifice, as a guide, and a companion. He gave us His **law**, both physical and spiritual. And He gave us His **Holy Spirit**, which if you understand it, is the very essence of Him, and His **Life**. As God's Life, the Holy Spirit is the motivating influence which comes from God Himself.

He gave us of His Life and Mind to dwell in us, so that we may learn how to take that law and how to apply it, to change our **heart** from something **hard** to something that's soft, malleable and moldable. Paul calls the Holy Spirit a Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind.

We are looking at the workings of God's Holy Spirit, because a **tremendous change** occurred at that first Pentecost in Jerusalem. God's Spirit is His **Life**, His character, His mind, His love, His very Spirit **Life's** essence that He is willingly sharing with us – to bring us into the eternal Family of God.

1 Corinthians 6:

- 17** But he that is joined unto the Lord is **one Spirit**.

In fact, those who have been called and converted – also have the **same Spirit** as Jesus and the Father. The Holy Spirit is the mind of Christ which we have received that allows us to know the things of God; to know what God has prepared for us, and to know the things which have been given to us.

Ephesians 2:

- 18** For through him we both have access by **one Spirit** unto the Father.

The Father and the Son are **one**, not in the sense of being the same person, but in the sense of being perfectly united in will, in thought, in intent.

1 Corinthians 12:

- 4** Now there are diversities of gifts, but the **same Spirit**.

God is bringing many sons and daughters to **Glory** - Hebrews 2:10 Glory is Eternal **Life**. I want to bring your **attention** to this point that God's Spirit is God's **Life** because I do not believe that it has been **emphasized** enough in God's Church. God's **Life** that He so **wondrously** is willing to share with us. God's Spirit is His **Life**, His heart, His mind – not just raw power to move mountains – but His very Spirit **Life's** essence that He is sharing with us – to make us His eternal children of God. When we receive God's Holy Spirit, we have God's **Life** in us. God's Holy Spirit is another way to say – God's eternal **Life**.

This fact is almost totally lost on us today, but **spirit** and **breath** used to be synonymous. Without breath you die—with breath you **live**. With God's Spirit—you live eternally. God's Holy Breath, which is Spiritual **Life** eternal.

John 5:

- 26** For as the Father hath **Life** in himself; so hath He given to the Son [Jesus Christ] to have **Life** in Himself;

We humans do not live “eternally.” Those who believe in an “immortal soul” believe that we already have eternal life in us. **We do not!**

1 John 3:

15 [No one] has eternal life abiding in him.

We all deserve to die because we have sinned.

Romans 3:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Everyone in the flesh eventually dies – the breath goes out of them. As breath is essential to physical life, so is God’s **Spirit** to spiritual **Life** and to eternal **Life**. When an animal dies it stays dead forever and ever! Humans are no different – but there can be an exception.

Romans 6:

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the **gift** of God is eternal **life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This “gift” is the very **life** of God. We do not naturally have it. At some point in our lives, this “gift” must be given to us by God.

Colossians 3:

4 “When Christ, who is our **Life**, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

1 John 5:

11 “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal **Life**, and this **Life** is in his Son.”

Romans 6:

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into **death**: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of **Life**.

Our baptism pictured our burying the old man of sin—death. Jesus sacrificed His **life** – so that we might have **life**. Make no mistake about it – Jesus purchased His Church, this one body of believers, with His own **life’s** blood (Acts 20:28).

1 John 5:

20 “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may **know** him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal **life**.”

Jesus dwells in those who have received God’s Holy **Spirit**. We see that the goal of our existence is to come unto the Father, and to be in His Kingdom. Let’s not let the subtleties of the Scriptures go over our heads – we have to put all the deeper meanings together in order to grow in grace and knowledge. But to be able to come to the Father, we must go through Jesus Christ because He is the only way, He has the only truth, and He is **life**.

John 14:

6 Jesus said, I am the **way**, the truth, and the **life**: no man comes unto the Father, but by me.

John 10:

9 I am the **door**: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

We are to put into practice the way of **life** that Jesus taught. Jesus is the key. As individual members of His body, we are to live as He lived. We are to follow in the steps of our Lord and Master. Who He is, what He is, and what He has promised us is of no consequence, if we do not apply it in our daily lives.

What has happened to the Church of God? We have come to a time when we claim to be aware of other members of the spiritual body of Christ, but we will have nothing to do with one another. We are obligated by God, to extend our realm of fellowship and service to include all who have the earnest of God's **Holy Spirit**. The Church of God consists of all those who are heirs to everlasting **Life** according to the promise.

Jesus Christ has only one spiritual body with many members. They possess the **Spirit** of God and the **Life** of God and they are scattered all over the face of the earth.

As we apply God's principles in our lives we grow in spiritual character, spiritual knowledge, maturity and the discernment of right and wrong. When a true Christian who is being led by the Spirit of God studies the Bible, God **works in** that person to develop a spiritual mind attitude—as Jesus put it, that they might have **life**, and that they might have *it* more abundantly (John 10:10).

Pentecost pictures our Salvation! When we are yielding to God's Spirit, then our minds will be sound—they will be disciplined and self-controlled. Our minds will be sensible, sober, balanced, restrained, and we will have wisdom, discretion and solid judgment.

1 John 3:

- 14** We know that we have passed from **death** unto **life**, because we love the brethren. He that loves not his brother abides in death.

Deuteronomy 30:

- 19** I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you **life** and death, blessing and cursing: therefore **choose life**, that both thou and your children may **live**:

End: Coming of the Holy Spirit – Part 2