

This Is That

I am an eyewitness to Pentecost. Nothing can dissuade me, confuse me, or convince me otherwise. I am not merely a proponent of some strange doctrine, ferociously paddling my fragile little theological canoe upstream against the prevailing current of modern Christianity. I am a Pentecostal. I make no claim of being 2,000 years old. I was not there for Acts 2. In fact, that is the point. If the Upper Room was a “once-and-never-again” historical fluke, Pentecostal theology – subject to the ravages of time – would be forced to stare forlornly at its own history through the dusty exhibits of some ecclesiastical museum. But we are not just a fluke!

Those who would reduce Pentecost to the status of a treasured relic deny its greatest reality. That reality is this: the same Jesus who came in power in the Upper Room has not just left us to our own devices. He is still in His church through the Holy Ghost, and He still can do what He always did. The apostolic doctrine was that every believer should be filled personally, not just in theory. That conviction, that holy priority, is at the epicenter of the Pentecostal earthquake that has shaken the church and the world for the last 100 years. The Pentecostal power, some 2000 years old, remains unbroken and undiluted by time.

Did it ever occur to Peter, even years after the Upper Room, that the Pentecostal experience was optional, or that Christianity would some day try to divide itself into non-Pentecostals and Pentecostals? Certainly not! A non-Pentecostal Christianity would have been no more imaginable to the First Century Church than a non-electrified city would be to modern Canadians. Pentecost is the church’s defining Power and Light!

Martin Luther did not envision a Protestant church, but a biblical one! John Wesley didn’t hope to create a Methodist church in England, but a spiritual renewal! The Bible College students in Topeka and the humble churchgoers at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles didn’t envision a Pentecostal denomination, but an empowered church!

It is critical to realize that we do not possess some “new” revelation. That we exist at all is a reminder that the Pentecostal experience today is the very same fire that burned in Acts 2, unextinguished by denominational formalism and doctrinal corruption. Without Pentecost, the Church in every age becomes hardly more than a glorified Kiwanis Club.

With that in mind, I’m going to preach someone else’s sermon today – Peter’s sermon from Acts 2. This chapter is the birthday of the church, the very first time people were ever baptized with the Holy Ghost, the very first time people spoke in tongues, the very first time anyone asked “What must we do to be saved?” and the very first time anyone ever preached how to obey the gospel.

Acts 2:12-18 ¹² And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, **What meaneth this?** 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. 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:

Pentecost – “fifty” (seven weeks plus one day) – commemorated the end of the wheat harvest and the giving of the law

Leviticus 23:17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD.

Hebrews 10:16-17 ¹⁵ Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, ¹⁶ This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

On Pentecost, the priests waved two loaves, the aroma filled the streets, and people got hungry. Now, 120 loaves fresh from God’s Upper Room Bakery filled the streets, and the whole city got hungry for God.

Peter quoted King David, who spoke prophetically to say that Pentecost will affect your heart, your tongue and your body!

Acts 2:26 Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope:

v.12-13 – some were amazed, some doubted, some mocked (**these are still the standard responses to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost!**)

WHAT MEANETH THIS? THIS IS THAT!

- What you are seeking is what Joel prophesied.
- Truth doesn’t come out of experience; experience comes out of truth.
- Every “this” must have a “that” in the Word of God.
- If your “this” doesn’t have a “that” I doubt your “this.” (T.F. Tenney)

Joel just said that God’s Spirit would be poured out. It was Peter connected the dots from Joel’s prophecy to Isaiah’s prophecy ...

Joel 2:28-29 ²⁸ And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: ²⁹ And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Isaiah 28:11-12 ¹¹ For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. ¹² To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

THIS (speaking in tongues) IS THAT (outpouring of God's Spirit)!

The Church and its doctrines did not produce Pentecost; Pentecost produced the Church and all its doctrines. It was not merely the preaching of the Apostles that brought down power from on high; rather, men full of the Holy Ghost spent the rest of their lives trying to explain, articulate, and invite others into the power God had given. They were not mere Pentecostal apologists defending some creed out of a sense of duty to the prophet Joel; they were souls on fire whose doctrinal utterances on Spirit baptism came out of their own experience.

Doctrine is good. We are admonished to preach sound doctrine. But there are whole churches and denominations sinking like dinosaurs into the tar pits whose doctrines on paper are right. They are destined to become nothing but fossils of former revivals, because they have the right doctrines, but they are not radically altered by a real experience. **Experiential Pentecost, not doctrinal Pentecost, is the apostolic model. The right doctrine will always follow the right experience.** In Acts 19 at Ephesus, Paul didn't ask, "Do you believe there is a Holy Spirit?" They could have answered that right. But he asked, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

Pentecostal preaching of DOCTRINE may ensure that we BELIEVE in the Holy Ghost. But only Pentecostal preaching of spiritual HUNGER ensures that we will RECEIVE the Holy Ghost. A believed-in Pentecost is good, but it was a received Pentecost that turned the world upside down. And it still works that way!

YOU DON'T RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST THROUGH YOUR HEAD, BUT THROUGH YOUR HEART! YOU MUST BE HUNGRY FOR IT!

Ezekiel 47

- God brought Ezekiel to a door with water coming out
- Ezekiel had been to this door before, but didn't open it
- Ezekiel was brought to the brink of a mighty river – that's US

Ezekiel 47:1-5 ¹ Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. ² Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. ³ And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. ⁴ Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. ⁵ Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

Acts 2	door opened	river of Holy Ghost starts flowing
Acts 3	water to ankles	lame man healed
Acts 4	water to knees	prayer meeting, house shaken
Acts 5	water to loins	number of disciples multiplied
Acts 6	waters to swim in	everyone a minister!

Throw yourself in the river if you want the Holy Ghost – don't just wade around in the shallow water!

Isaiah 12:3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

John 7:37-39 ³⁷ the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. ³⁸ He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. ³⁹ (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

For thousands of years, Pentecost had been in Hebrew theology (they could quote it) but not in their experience.

Electricity hasn't changed, but our concepts have changed – so we're doing things with it that have never happened before. We changed our capacity to conduct it. That's like what is happening now with the Holy Ghost – God is doing new things!

Habakkuk 1:5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you. (*quoted by Paul in Acts 13:41*)

History tells us that when Jesus came ...

- 90% of the population was committing adultery
- 70% of the population was addicted to alcohol
- 50% of the population was enslaved to the other 50%

Pentecost was born in an environment of promiscuity, addiction and bondage – that's why it still works today!

Peter's sermon – any time you exalt Jesus, His Spirit comes down.

THAT SAME JESUS ... WHAT SHALL WE DO?