

Acts #3
Preparations for Pentecost
Acts 1:12-14

In our last study of this book, we looked at the glorious, triumphant, ascension of our blessed Lord, as seen in verse 9, “And, when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight.” **The disciples returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, where they had just witnessed that most phenomenal event.** We also saw that before He was taken up, He gave them instructions and a great commission. Their commission was to go into all the world and preach the good news, baptizing and teaching all nations in the Name of Jesus. But before they could accomplish that great feat they were instructed to go and wait in Jerusalem for the coming of the Comforter Jesus had promised them – the Holy Spirit.

We too need to remind ourselves that the church of today needs the power of the Holy Spirit if we are to be successful in carrying out God’s will of reaching others and meeting needs. Without Him we cannot be all God intended for us to be. The extent to which a person opens up their life to the empowering of the Holy Spirit is the extent to which God can use them in His purposes.

But I must remind you that Pentecost did not just happen. It was just a happenstance one day in the history of the Early Church. Therefore, I want you to look with me as we study the preparations for Pentecost.

Look once more at verses 12-14, “Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day’s journey (5 furlongs, or just over a half mile). And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon he Zealot and Judas the son of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”

Evidently, the site of the Upper Room was a well-known place in Jerusalem. Mark 14:15 tell us that it was also the scene of the Last Supper, and here we are told that it was the place the disciples chose to wait for the “**promise of the Holy Spirit**” to be fulfilled. Some biblical historians believe that the Upper Room was a part of the house belonging to John Mark’s mother, as recorded in Acts 12:12.

Whatever, or wherever, the Upper Room was it was a place of prayer and expectancy, and that is what will make our church a special place also.

We need to walk through those doors expecting God to do something special every time we come to church.

Many times we hear preachers and people talking about Pentecost, but few of us ever stop to realize that Pentecost did not just happen, it had been celebrated by the Jewish people from as far back as Leviticus 23:15-22. It was known as the Feast of Harvest, or the Feast of Weeks. It was a day when the people enjoyed the harvesting of their fields, and gave God the glory for their first fruits!

Truly this special day must have had a bearing in the mind of God, as He knew that the seeds of the ministry had been sown, and now the great harvest of the Church would start to take place.

But, as I said earlier, Pentecost was a special day where special things were going to happen, but there are no accidents with God. So what were the preparations for Pentecost?

First of all, there was Pentecostal prayer. Acts 1:14 says, “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.”

The Bible teaches us in no uncertain terms that the Church was born in a prayer meeting. From the Upper Room where they met in concerted prayer, the river began to flow which spread throughout the whole world.

Today we wonder why we are not having the greatness of power in our churches that was shown forth in the book of Acts, it is because we live in a world where prayer is all but outdated. Our schools, our homes, and many times our churches never find the time for prayer. It seems that the modern day Christian is looking for a thousand dollar answer to a ten-cent prayer!

Let me remind you that God is not waiting for the world to turn to Him in repentance; He is not waiting for our political leaders to seek His face; He is waiting for the Church to get on her knees! And yet, in a recent study it revealed that the average Christian spends less than 30 minutes a week in prayer.

If we are ever going to see a spiritual awakening take place in our times – in the Church of Jesus Christ, in our community, in our state, or in our nation, it will come about as a result of prayer. The Bible conveys this message to us time and time again as we read countless stories of how God moved on behalf of His people, turned nations and situations around in response to prayer. And He has declared in 2 Chronicles 7:14, “If my people who

are called by my name will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

There was a time of Pentecostal prayer!

Secondly, there was Pentecostal preaching. Acts 2:36 says, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ.”

Today we have people preaching “Civil Right,” “States Rights,” “Gay Rights,” “Children’s Rights,” “Women’s Rights,” “Men’s Rights,” War and Peace, but on the day of Pentecost, Peter preached the Lordship of Jesus Christ!

Jesus as “Christ” indicates the offerings of deliverance and salvation. Jesus becomes the Christ of your life when you are born into the family of God, by faith in His finished work.

Jesus as “Lord” indicates that He has now become the Master of our lives. This means that we have come to the place of realizing that He owns all and we own nothing.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Bible is a Him book, and when we stand to preach and we do not share Jesus Christ, we have no message! So, there was Pentecostal preaching.

Third, there was Pentecostal fellowship. Acts 2:46 says, “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.” In other words, they were going from house to house with joy in their hearts, telling about Christ and sharing His love with each other. The Bible calls that having “fellowship.”

The word for “fellowship” is the Greek word “koinonia” which means “social interaction” or as “being committed to the friendship of others.” Jesus said in John 13:33-34 that our love for each other was to be the mark of discipleship.

I believe it is an indictment of American Christianity that most believers can quote John 3:16 but they cannot quote 1 John 3:16, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.”

The phrase “one another” or “each other” is used more than 50 times in the New Testament. We are commanded to love each other, pray for each

other, encourage each other, admonish each other, greet each other, serve each other, teach each other, accept each other, honor each other, and be devoted to each other. All these commands are what God expects from us a Christians as we relate to one another!

There was Pentecostal fellowship.

When one puts all of the preparations together, what are the results?

There was, first of all, Holy Spirit healing. Acts 3:1-10 says, “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man, lame from his birth, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked as alms. And Peter fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said silver and gold have I none, but, such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and anklebones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God; and they knew that it was he who sat for alms at the beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.”

We are living in a time when people no longer talk of miracles. Preachers even say things as “The day of miracles are over.” But I am telling you that it is still the will of God, as in the past, to heal all who have need of healing, and the only reason we no longer see the miracles is simply because we have allowed ourselves to be strayed from the Pentecostal power of God!

Second, there was Holy Spirit conviction in the preaching. Acts 2:37 says, “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?”

I am convinced that when preachers get back to preaching the basics, get back to preaching the Word of God, and the good news of Jesus Christ, then the Holy Spirit will honor that kind of preaching, and will began to convict souls of sin, and men and women will come to know the fullness of salvation! But as long as we have out pulpits filled with preachers that are willing to compromise the Word of God in the face of denominational doctrine and religious tradition, there will be no Holy Ghost revival power!

Third, there was Holy Spirit power given to the church. Acts 2:2-4 says, “And suddenly there came a sound from heaven like a rushing mighty wind, and it

filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

G. Campbell Morgan once said of Pentecost, “There was born the Christian Church, not by the sprinkling of water, nor by votes and resolutions, not by creeds formulated and signed, but by the power of God.”

On that Pentecostal event, the Church was given a very special power from God that the world knows nothing about. A power that offers victory over death, hell, and the grave. A power that gives men the boldness to stand for the cause of Christ against the greatest of odds.

There are those people that are advocating another Pentecost, but I am convinced that what we really need today is to exercise the power that God has already given us at the first Pentecost.

If you are not saved, why not come tonight?