

What is Pentecost all About?

Martin Luther, once said, “The Christian Church is a mouth-house of God.” So, whose words will the Church speak? Jesus’ words to be exact. Words like the ones Jesus gave His church at His ascension: “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you,*” (Matthew 28:19-20).

Pentecost is the Greek name for the important Jewish observance of the Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23:16) or, as it was also called, the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22). Pentecost means “50th,” for the feast took place 50 days after the Passover Sabbath (Leviticus 23:11, 15-16). Every pious Jew tried to be in Jerusalem for this feast. Those who could not come to Jerusalem observed it in the synagogues throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. Freewill offerings were brought (Deuteronomy 16:9–11)

That Sunday came as it came every year, but God had special events in mind for this Pentecost. What Jesus had promised concerning the Holy Spirit would now take place (John 14:15-26 and 16:12-14).

Acts 2 records a sound like a violent blast of wind, tongues that separated, like flames that came to rest upon the disciples, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples were able to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability to speak. God’s Word was declared by Peter to thousands gathered in Jerusalem from around the Mediterranean. Each person heard in their own language that Jesus had died and rose for them. It was a joyous harvest – not of wheat for winter – but of people, from all nations for eternal salvation! After all, God shows no partiality or racism. Jesus died and rose for all nations.

Today, Pentecost is a day for hearing that Jesus died and rose again – for you! It’s also a day for speaking this good news to others. If the Christian Church is to speak God’s Word, breath is needed. No breath, no words. At Pentecost Jesus sends, or rather breathes, the Holy Spirit upon His Church.

The Holy Spirit’s job is pointing people to Jesus’ death and resurrection, calling people to faith in this gospel, and breathing faith in Jesus into your hearts. In other words, the Holy Spirit makes *you* holy by giving you the forgiveness of sins Jesus won for you on the cross. Pentecost is a yearly reminder that the Holy Spirit gives you ears to hear God’s word and mouths to pray, praise, and give thanks. God speaks and we hear the word of God, each in our own language: Jesus died, rose, ascended, and sends the Holy Spirit for you!