

## What Does Pentecost Mean for You?

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait to receive the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you' and you will be my witnesses in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup>When the day of Pentecost came, they were all in one place. <sup>2</sup>Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. <sup>4</sup>All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4 NIV



## Introduction

Today is Pentecost Sunday. The window that you see was designed by the famous artist Gian Lorenzo Bernini. As part of a large sculpture that graces St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, it is intended to depict the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. In many nations throughout the world, tomorrow will be a national holiday, a time historically given to the Church in order for its people to reflect upon the significance of Pentecost. In some places around the world, the Church celebrates the entire week prior to this day, with revivals, daily sermons highlighting the coming of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Church, and the gifts that the Holy Spirit brings to the people of God. Unfortunately, in Pentecostal churches in the United States, this day is often overlooked. Many pastors do not preach on the topic, nor do Pentecostals typically know when it is.

You have undoubtedly heard the story of Pentecost before, especially the account given in Acts 2:1-4. For the entire narrative within the context that Luke gives to it, I would like to encourage you to take the time today to read through the first two chapters of Acts. We could actually benefit from spending several weeks studying this very rich text, because what it describes is or should be extremely important to Pentecostal Christians.

In this congregation, there are some who have grown up in Pentecostal churches. In earlier times, you have heard about the significance of the original Pentecost and you have probably experienced a personal encounter with the Holy Spirit in a powerful way. Others of you have participated in the life of Bethany Church only recently and you may not understand what it means when we tell you that Bethany Church is a Pentecostal congregation. Yet the basis for that claim lies in this text before us this morning. The term "Pentecost" refers to a celebration that took place each year, fifty days after Passover in the Jewish calendar. It was one of those feast days enumerated in the Old Testament, when every male Jew was expected to return to Jerusalem. It came at the beginning of the harvest, and these men brought to the temple, the first fruits of that harvest. Historically, the Church has celebrated this day since the first Christian Pentecost described in Acts 2, as the day the Holy Spirit gave birth to the Church. It was the day that the Holy Spirit came to indwell and empower all Christians.

While this is a general overview of how Pentecost has been viewed by the Church for two millennia, it is not the full story. Bethany Church is an Assemblies of God congregation. The Assemblies of God, in turn, is part of the much larger Pentecostal Movement, a fluid movement that recognizes the person and work of the Holy Spirit in profound ways, a movement within the larger Church that may include up to 25% of all Christians worldwide. On the whole, the Church invokes or

invites the Holy Spirit to participate in most Christian services around the world. Yet the work of the Spirit in the world as well as in the lives of individual believers within the Christian community is often ignored by large parts of the Church. Pentecostals, however, go back to these important verses and draw their understanding of the importance of Pentecost. I want to look at three points that our texts make clear. The first point is Jesus' command to his followers.

### **1. Stay in Jerusalem and Wait to Receive the Gift My Father Promised!**

The Bible reveals a great deal about the person and work of the Holy Spirit, but the Old Testament tells us very little on the subject. We must wait for the ministry of Jesus and the exposition of that ministry by the apostles to get a full understanding of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is mentioned in Genesis 1:2 as hovering or brooding over the waters at the moment of creation. The Spirit is also the one who provides gifts to the people of God, from those who designed and built the tabernacle in the wilderness (Exodus 31:1-5). The Spirit may also fall upon people such as the judges (Judges 3:10) and the prophets, at times the Scripture tells us that the Spirit falls upon a prophet (Numbers 11:24-29), sometimes turning him into another man (1 Samuel 10:6; Hosea 9:7), that is, the presence of the Spirit is clear when the Spirit comes upon someone.

Even when you see the Spirit, it seems only to be for a moment and then the Spirit is gone. The Spirit comes upon someone to enable that person to do a specific task, and then the Spirit withdraws. The Spirit does not seem to come upon the people of God and stay with them or reside in them. The Spirit is always outside, a transcendent power that comes and goes as the need arises or as God wills it to take place.

The role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament is clearly different from what we find in the New Testament. The prophets sensed that a change was coming. Ezekiel prophesied a time when God would cleanse His people, give them a new heart, and put a new Spirit, in them, His Spirit (Ezekiel 36:26-27). Joel also prophesied that in the last days, God would pour out His Spirit upon "all flesh" (Joel 2:28-29) and that would yield some dramatic results that erased traditional gender lines, class lines, and age lines - women, servants, and young people would be empowered. Males and females would be empowered. Rich and poor would be empowered. The old and the young would be empowered. All flesh would be affected by the coming of the Spirit.

When we get to the New Testament, we are immediately confronted with new information about the Holy Spirit. All four Gospel writers, for instance, introduce us to the ministry of Jesus by telling us that baptism in or with the Holy Spirit will

be linked directly to the ministry of Jesus. John the Baptist told his followers that Jesus would bring a baptism of Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33). When John baptized Jesus, the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove (Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32).

Throughout His ministry, Jesus often spoke of the Holy Spirit. It is John's Gospel that records some of the clearest points that Jesus made regarding the Spirit. He knew that before very long, He would be leaving His disciples. As a result, He told them that when He returned to the Father, He would ask the Father to send the Paraclete to be with them (John 14:16). According to Jesus, when the Spirit arrived, the Spirit would be working throughout the world, both within the Church and outside of the Church. While the outside world is unaware of the Spirit's presence because they cannot receive Him (John 13:15), the Holy Spirit is nonetheless active in the world, convincing the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8-11). The Spirit's primary role within the Church is to bear witness to (John 15:26) and to glorify Jesus (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit does not come on His own authority (John 16:13) but teaches us and reminds us of what Christ has taught (John 14:26), taking that which Jesus wants us to know and declaring it to us (John 16:14).

Jesus also revealed a very significant difference between the People of God in the Old Testament and His followers. While the Spirit of God fell upon selected individuals in the Old Testament for short periods of time, enabling them to do certain things that God wanted done, Jesus promised that when the Paraclete came, the Paraclete would dwell with us and be in us (John 14:17). That is what separates Christians from non-Christians. In Romans 8:9, the Apostle Paul said it this way, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ".

Within the Christian community, the Holy Spirit does not simply come and live within each one of us, the Holy Spirit does all of the things that Jesus said the Spirit would do - and more! It is the Spirit who baptized us "into Christ" making us one Body - again breaking down the artificial barriers that we so often construct to separate us. Paul says that because the Holy Spirit has placed all of us in Christ Jesus, He has effectively broken down the wall between Jews and Greeks (or Gentiles), and between those who are free and those who are slaves. In Christ, neither ethnicity nor class divisions exist, for we are One (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit has placed us into one Body. Paul goes on to tell us that the Spirit has given each of us gifts that are intended to contribute something to the welfare of the Body of Christ. These gifts or charismatic endowments are given solely in keeping with the will of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11), and the goal

is that we will use them in loving ways (1 Corinthians 13:1-13 to build up the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:1-12) and to bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 14:22-25).

When we add all of these things together, we can see that the coming of the Spirit is incredibly important to the birth and the ongoing health of the Church. The Holy Spirit gives us life and vitality. The Spirit takes what is Christ's and gives it to us. The Spirit is intended to make a difference in our lives. The Spirit unifies us. The Spirit sets us apart and makes us holy. To forget these things, not to act upon these things, is to forget who we are. We are the Body of Christ, set apart from the world, indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God who has made us One so that we might become witnesses to the world around us of the reconciling power of God. This is the reason that Jesus instructed his followers, to go to Jerusalem and wait. Something was about to happen. Once Jesus had ascended into heaven, the followers of Jesus acted with one mind. They returned to Jerusalem to wait and anticipate the promise of the Father, their baptism in the Holy Spirit.

[Play <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1R-ZIIHE6Q> .]

Anticipation! After Jesus had ascended into heaven, His followers, about 120 of them, returned from the hillside to the city of Jerusalem and began their wait for this "Promise of the Father". They waited. And they waited. Acts 1:14 tells us that "They all joined together constantly in prayer". They were of one mind. They prayed in anticipation of what was to come. Often, if we don't anticipate something we might miss it altogether

Anticipation! Carly Simon may have sung the song, but Heinz made the concept of "anticipation" famous by giving us a vivid illustration of what it means. Heinz Ketchup pour's slowly! We are forced to wait while it makes its way from the bottle to the hamburger. The point of the ad, of course, is that what the Ketchup adds to the flavor of the hamburger is worth the wait. As we watch that ketchup pour slowly from the bottle, it tantalizes us. Our eyes open wider. Our salivary glands begin to work. "Come on, come on, hurry up", we urge the ketchup. "I'm starving. I can hardly wait". Our anxiety level might even rise as we wait with expectancy for that first mouth-watering, succulent, juicy bite - full of rich, tasty flavor. In the end, Heinz wants us to imagine, "It is worth the wait!"

Jesus had made a promise to His followers that was worth the wait. "I will not leave you alone. I will ask the Father to send you the Paraclete". He had also given them a command. "Stay in Jerusalem until you receive the 'Promise of the Father.'" "Stay in Jerusalem until you have been baptized in the Holy Spirit". Wait there! Wait! They waited about 10 days after Jesus ascended into heaven. And it was worth the wait!

## 2. You Will Receive Power When the Holy Spirit Comes on You.

Jesus promised the 120 that if they waited, if they anticipated the coming of the Spirit upon them, they would not be disappointed. They would receive something that they were lacking. It would come when they received the promised gift of the Father, when they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, when the Spirit came upon them in power. They would receive the power needed to accomplish what the Lord wanted them to do!

**You may remember** that Peter had lacked the power to stand by Jesus when the young woman named him as a disciple. Instead, he cursed, denied His Lord, and fled (Matthew 26:69-75). **You may remember** that when Jesus appeared to the disciples they thought he was simply a ghost! Even when Jesus fixed them broiled fish and joined them at the barbeque, they didn't believe it (Luke 24:36-43). **You may remember**, too, that Thomas doubted that Jesus had actually risen until Jesus offered to let him touch His wounds (John 20:24-29). **You may remember** that even after Jesus had appeared to the disciples, Peter seemed to be in such a state of mind that he informed James, John, Thomas, and Nathaniel that he was returning to fishing. They joined him there, fishing all night but catching nothing (John 21:1-3). **You may remember** that when Jesus met up with Cleopas and another man on the road to Emmaeus, they were so distraught that they didn't even recognize Him. He was simply a stranger - until He broke the bread and disappeared (Luke 24:13-38). Jesus knew what they needed. They needed the power that would come only with their encounter with the Holy Spirit!

If you don't get anything else from my sermon today, I want you to hear this point. **Jesus is concerned that each one of us encounters the Holy Spirit in such a way that it transforms our lives.** The Pentecost event is about a life-changing encounter with the Holy Spirit. It is about putting all of our personal ambitions aside. It is about shedding all of our fears. It is about letting go of our past and seeing nothing more than the risen Lord as He comes to us through the Holy Spirit. What Jesus tells His followers, you and me, is that when you have encountered God the Holy Spirit, when the Father has baptized you in or with the Holy Spirit, you will know it. The New Testament scholar, B. H. Streeter, said it quite clearly some 75 years ago when he wrote that the earliest Christians experienced the Holy Spirit in a way "as definite and observable as...an attack of influenza". There was no mistaking whether or not they had received the Holy Spirit in His fullness. They knew when it had happened. They knew that they had received the Spirit. That moment had been transformative for them. What was it that they had experienced that was so transformative?

If you go on to read Acts 2:1-4, you will see that on the Day of Pentecost they *heard* the first manifestation of the Spirit. It didn't suddenly become windy. But suddenly the entire house in which they had been praying, anticipating the coming of the Spirit, was filled with the sound as though a mighty wind were blowing through it. This is obviously symbolic language. The word for Spirit used in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament is *Ruach*, which is frequently translated as "wind" or as "Spirit" depending upon the context. Similarly, in the Greek text of the New Testament the word used is *Pneuma*, which again means "wind" as well as "Spirit". Wind - Jesus used that metaphor with Nicodemus in John 3:8 "The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." The sound of a powerful wind filled the place.

They *saw* the second manifestation. It is described as "tongues of fire". This fire was unique. It moved all by itself, separating itself into multiple flames all without any external help. And these flames came to rest on each one of those who were present in that place. Again, this is the language of metaphor. Fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, and in this case, it is a symbol of the presence of this one Holy Spirit spreading itself onto each of Jesus' followers who had obeyed His command to wait, to anticipate the Promise of the Father. It was a sovereign act of God's Spirit.

There was a third manifestation that accompanied the coming of the Spirit in power as well. Acts 2:4 tell us that they began to speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled them to do so. It created quite a stir. Those outside wondered what was going on. It wasn't the sound of wind or even the tongues of fire that attracted *their* attention, it was the fact that they heard the 120 speaking in their various languages and they knew that these followers of Jesus had never learned these languages.

For those who have never spoken in tongues, it may seem like a scary proposition. Does everyone have to do that? Do I have to speak in tongues to be baptized in the Spirit? Let me assure you that there is nothing spooky or scary about it at all. Tongues may be spoken in wild ecstasy or they can be vocalized quietly and in an orderly manner. Much depends upon the personality of the speaker. What I find interesting in this text is not so much that they spoke in tongues, but what they said when they did so. When they spoke in tongues, they told of "the mighty acts of God"!

This phrase, "the mighty acts" or "the mighty deeds" of God appears several times in the Greek version of the Old Testament, but never more clearly than in Psalm 105 where the Psalmist recites a list of the mighty acts that the Lord had



performed on behalf of Israel. Beginning with the call of Abraham, the Psalmist reminds his readers of what God had done through Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. He recounted the exodus of Israel from Egypt and the fact that God had brought them into the land of Israel. These "mighty acts" spelled out God's role in the history of salvation for the people of God.

[stand and sing: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwAmNJFM\\_1Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwAmNJFM_1Q) ]

This is precisely the kind of thing that Pentecostal people do and say when they speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enables them to do so. They praise and worship our Lord at a level that we cannot reach simply by using our own thoughts and words. The Holy Spirit transcends our rational processes and speaks through us. Pentecostal people believe that what happened at this first Pentecost is a repeatable event, available to those who anticipate encountering the Holy Spirit in His fullness, just as it was to the men and women who followed Jesus' instructions and waited in Jerusalem for the Promise of the Father.

Peter made it clear in Acts 2: 39. "The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." While some of those who heard them speaking in tongues, wondered whether Jesus' followers were drunk, and others would have all kinds of questions about what they were seeing, still others seemed to have recognized that something supernatural was occurring and they wanted to know, "What does this mean?" What is God saying through all of this? Peter simply stepped up to the microphone and began by reminding them "This is that, which the Prophet Joel told us would take place in the Last Days." This is that!

It is very easy to be sidetracked by the metaphors of wind and fire. It is even easier to be sidetracked by the manifestation of speaking in tongues that accompanied the falling of the Spirit upon these individuals. And yes, this experience is repeatable. It happened again with the household of Cornelius in Acts 10:44-46. It happened yet again after Paul met up with and explained the message of Jesus Christ to followers of John the Baptist in Ephesus in Acts 19:1-6. And it has happened to literally hundreds of millions of people since that time. It happened to me when I was 19 years of age.

Sadly, far too many people continue to be sidetracked by their fear, or misunderstanding of this manifestation. But what is of primary importance is not the manifestation. It is the encounter with the Holy Spirit. It is the encounter with the Holy Spirit that is so awe-filled, that is so profound, that is so powerful, that your worldview, your life, your future, even your language is transformed. In a sense, you are no longer the person that you were. Peter, who had days before denied His Christ three times, and had run off to go fishing while he licked his



wounds, was no longer afraid. He stood up in front of the crowd that very day and he told them quite pointedly, "This is what the God of Israel promised would take place through the prophet Joel. This is that! And he explained how God had continued to work in history to bring about the salvation of all people through the life, death, resurrection, and now the bestowal of the Holy Spirit that was being manifested through the 120 who were speaking in tongues that they had not learned because the Spirit had enabled them to do so.

As a Pentecostal, I covet such an experience of God for each person in this sanctuary today. Young people - if you lack direction for your life - what you need today is a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit of God. I am not here to tell you what that encounter must look like, but I want to tell you that such encounters are not only possible for God's people, they are highly desirable for them. They can be life changing.

Remember Moses (Exodus 3:1-4), who encountered the Lord in the bush that burned but was not consumed. The Lord called out, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am" This Divine encounter ultimately led him to the halls of power in Egypt, and for 40 years, he served God by leading the people of Israel out of slavery, through the desert, and to the border of the Promised Land.

Remember Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-13), who encountered the Holy and Transcendent God of Israel in a vision while in the temple at Jerusalem shortly after the death of King Uzziah. Isaiah knew that he did not belong in the presence of this Holy One for he was a sinful man among a sinful people, but when he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" his response was immediate. "Here am I", he said, "Send me!" I wonder if he even realized that he had spoken these words.

Remember Mary (Luke 1:26-38), who was perhaps or 14 to 15 years old when the angel sent by God made the extraordinary announcement that she would conceive of the Holy Spirit and bear a son who would be called Jesus and who would save His people from their sin. Imagine her responding, "I am the Lord's servant...may it be to me as you have said," and then rejoicing. When that first Christian Pentecost arrived, she was with the rest of Jesus' followers anticipating the coming of the Holy Spirit in His fullness.

I can assure you from my own experience that such Divine encounters are incredibly powerful! Can you imagine what it is like to know that God has addressed you, even by name? If you think about it very long, it can overwhelm you. It can terrorize you. Fear hits us at the deepest level of our being. That the Lord has our attention is a given. How we respond is not. We don't always know how we would respond, but a personal encounter with the Spirit of God leaves my

imagination open in a way similar to that of Bart Millard, who penned the words, "I can only imagine."

Will you dance, or stand still in awe of the One you encounter? Will you even be able to stand, or will you fall? Will you sing, "Hallelujah" or will you be struck dumb? Will you hear the sound of wind, or see flames, or even speak in tongues? You can only imagine it until it comes to you. But Jesus viewed such an encounter as incredibly important for all of His followers to experience. We cheat ourselves of what God might have for us if we do not wait for Him to move upon us. **The key is to forget yourself, to set aside all of your personal hopes and dreams and ask the Lord to fill you with the hopes and dreams that He has for you. The key is to lay your fears aside and trust Him to empower you for the tasks He has for you to fulfill. The key is to wait before the Lord, willing to receive all that the Lord wants to give to us. The key is to anticipate all that the Lord who is the Spirit will give us only good gifts (Luke 11:9-13). The key is to be open and to expect the Holy Spirit to fill you in ways that you never even imagined!**

### **3. You Will Be My Witnesses...to the Ends of the Earth.**

The bottom line is that the Lord has a task for each of us to fulfill. We can do it in our own strength with limited results. Or we can wait upon the Lord, anticipating His promise, open ourselves up to Him and allow Him to transform our lives - regardless of age, gender, color, or class - and go forward as His witnesses in the power that the Holy Spirit alone provides. Zechariah the prophet noted that it was neither our might nor our own power that guarantees the success of God's mission in your life, but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zechariah 4:6).

Jesus told his followers that their mission in life was to be "my witnesses...to the ends of the earth." It is no different for us today. We are called to be His witnesses throughout the world, wherever we are. But what is a witness? Most of us will probably think that it is a person who has seen, heard, or experienced something and then that person tells others what he or she has seen, heard, or experienced.

The word that is always translated here as "witness" is literally "*martyrios*" or martyr. What Jesus says is, "You shall be my *martyrs*...unto the ends of the earth." While most of us are able to accept the fact that we might be asked to speak about what we have seen, heard, or even experienced of Jesus, if we had our choice, most of us would prefer to avoid being put to death for Him.

Scripture is full of martyrs and martyr language. Shortly after the Spirit came to the followers of Jesus, Stephen was stoned to death by a mob for reciting the

history of God's intervention in Israel's history and accusing them of opposing the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:1-60). All of Jesus' original twelve disciples except for Judas who committed suicide and John who was exiled to the island of Patmos, are said to have been put to death because of their witness to Jesus Christ.

The word "*martyrios*", however, carries more than this narrow single meaning. It does refer to those who lose their lives because of their faithfulness Jesus Christ, The term also means "witness" as it is translated in this text. But a witness need not only be a person who speaks. A witness may also be a person who presents evidence in different ways, a person who provides proof that something is true by the way he or she lives.

Unfortunately, many of us think that witnessing is best left to pastors and evangelists, maybe even to theological teachers, what we might call "Church professionals". But that is certainly not what Jesus has in mind. Yes, they are witnesses, but so is each of us. Some of us are good at telling others about Jesus Christ, about what He has done for us, and they are good about showing other people how to find salvation through Jesus Christ. Not all of us are **called** to be pastors or evangelists or theological teachers, Church professionals. **But all of us have been called to be "martyrs" to serve Christ, one another, and the world in varieties of ways.**

Martin Luther used the Latin term "*vocatio*" when he described our various occupations. The word translates into English as "vocation". Each of us has been called to a specific vocation. It is not about might, power, or even how much money we can make. It is about service to our Lord. Some may be educators, while others work in groceries, or at a restaurant, or in the medical profession, or in government, or in various fields of science, or as laborers, or accountants, or a host of other fields. All of us are called to be witnesses to the transforming power of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit in these vocations.

### **Conclusion**

What does Pentecost mean for you? Perhaps the question before you should be this. Have you given yourself to God in such a way that He has been able to baptize you in His Spirit? Have you allowed Him to encounter you in a baptism that utterly transforms your life into a vital piece of evidence that demonstrates what Jesus Christ is capable of doing by the power of the Spirit? Is the way that you live your life in the exercise of your vocation, proof of the power of the Holy Spirit to change you and provide direction in your life? The key is simple. Wait. Anticipate. Be receptive. And allow the Holy Spirit to move upon you in any way He wishes. The Lord will do the rest and give you power for life! Amen.

The official doctrinal statements of the Assemblies of God regarding baptism in the Holy Spirit are found in its *Statement of Fundamental Truths* and are as follows:

### **7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it come the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12–17; 10:44–46; 11:14–16; 15:7–9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37–39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

### **8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit**

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4–10, 28), but different in purpose and use.

#### **Some Summary Statements Taught by the Assemblies of God**

1. Throughout the Old Testament, the early chapters of Luke's Gospel and the Book of Acts, there is a pattern of inspired speech when the Holy Spirit comes upon people.
2. The outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost is the model, or paradigm, for later outpourings.
3. Speaking in tongues, as to the manner in which it occurs, may be regarded as a specialized or variant form of prophecy.
4. Speaking in tongues was an integral part of Spirit baptism in the Book of Acts. It is the only manifestation associated with Spirit baptism which is explicitly presented as evidence authenticating the experience, and on that basis should be considered normative.
5. The Pentecostal doctrine of "the initial, physical evidence" of speaking in tongues is an attempt to encapsulate the thought that at the time of Spirit baptism the believer will speak in tongues. It conveys the idea that speaking in tongues is the initial, empirical accompaniment to Spirit baptism. Nowhere does the Scripture indicate that one may be baptized in the Spirit without speaking in tongues.
6. First Corinthians 12:30 is sometimes elicited as evidence that tongues are not a necessary component of Spirit baptism since Paul asks, "Not all speak in tongues, do they?" But both the broad context and the immediate context relate the question to the exercise of the gift in corporate worship, as noted by the question immediately following: "Not all interpret, do they?" According to 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, only some believers are prompted by the Holy Spirit to give an utterance in tongues in a gathering of God's people.