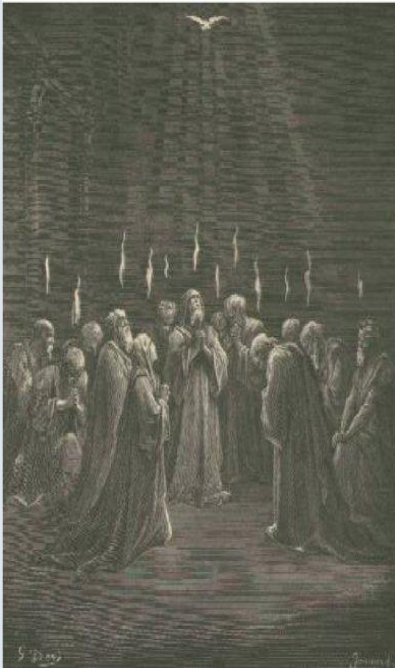


# CONDITIONS FOR PENTECOST



We continue the topic of Pentecost. What is necessary of the human vessel that God will fill with His Spirit? We must realize that there are conditions, or prerequisites if you will, to realize genuine Pentecost.

*“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.” -Acts 2:1-2*

*“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” -Galatians 2:20-21*

Nothing so comprehensively describes the Pentecostal vessel as these inspired words written by the Apostle Paul. The wise masterbuilder profoundly sums up pure Christianity in one phrase when he declares...

*Galatians 2:20a ...Christ liveth in me*

The next breath he plainly unveils the key to this life by confessing...

*Galatians 2:20b ...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God*

Make no mistake: Biblical grace places man in Christ and Christ in man and there is no greater miracle than this. By exercising faith in the finished work of Christ, the Apostle literally bore the very life and essence of the resurrected Lord. Meaning, simply, he was a man utterly filled with the Holy Ghost of God. Everything God redeems by the blood, He

intends on filling with the Spirit. This is not only true for the individual but also true of the Body collective. When we buy a house our intention is to live therein, so it is with God: we've been purchased with His blood, born of His Spirit, washed in His Word, it's only right that we be inhabited with His Person. Thus, when we, as the Church, fail in our call of Pentecost, we deny God His ultimate aim, a body for habitation. We must understand, if Christ is to live, He must live in His Body.

*James 2:26 ...the body without the spirit is dead*

Where there is no indwelling, resurrection power of God's Spirit, there is nothing but death.

*Ezekiel 37:14 And [I] shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live...*

Hence, the Bible says in...

*Ephesians 5:18 ...be filled with the Spirit.*

This is not an option, nor simply a privilege of the deeper life, it's basic Christianity, and it is stated as a command. The Apostle Paul declared that he dare not frustrate the grace of God.

Frustrate: (Greek) *ath-et-eh'-o*, To disesteem, neutralize or violate.

Let it be known, there is no greater grace than to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

*"...the one thing needful, the one thing essential and only available to our rising out of our fallen state, and becoming, as we were at our creation, an holy offspring of God, and real partakers of the divine nature. If it be asked, What this one thing is? It is the SPIRIT OF GOD brought again to His FIRST POWER OF LIFE IN US. Nothing else is wanted by us, nothing else intended for us, by the Law, the prophets, and the gospel. Nothing else is, or can be effectual, to the making sinful man become again a godly creature." -William Law*

God forbid, that we would frustrate God's attempts to utterly and completely fill us with His Spirit. Now, there are spiritual requirements we must not overlook, ignore, or violate if we are to realize Pentecost in our midst. I see three inescapable conditions expressed in Acts 1:1 that are often foolishly taken for granted, but we will consider in this article...

The vessel God will *fill* and use must be *willing*, must be *yielded*, and must be *prepared*.

## THE VESSEL MUST BE WILLING

*Acts 2:1a And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were...*

The phrase '*they were...*' implies a fully cooperating and willing body.

*Isaiah 1:19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land...*

Willing simply means that they consciously purposed that their will would be aligned with God's expressed will. In Luke 24:49 Jesus exhorted them to...

*Luke 24:49 ...tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

In Acts 2:1 we read the beautiful testimony of their willingness, it said, '*they were...*'. Remember, in Acts 1:4 Jesus commanded them...

*Acts 1:4 ...that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father*

This means they '*forfeited their will*' to embrace '*His will*'. That little local church in Jerusalem, only 120 folks, were fully committed to Christ, and therefore they were committed to His will. Now, God's will is God's Word. You cannot divorce the Word of God from genuine Pentecost. Every man/church that is filled with the Holy Ghost loves and obeys God's Word. The only way we will ever desire Pentecost is to stare unflinchingly into the holy, unchanging, immovable, infallible face of God's Word.

*Psalms 119:136 Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.*

The Psalmist is heartbroken because God's misrepresented and he yearns to obey and fulfill God's Word.

There must be a hunger to accomplish God's Word.

*Proverbs 27:7 The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.*

Those who are not fiercely devoted to fulfilling God's Word are never too concerned with being filled with God's Spirit.

*Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

If it required divine inspiration to put God's Word on paper don't think God's Word will put flesh apart from the Holy Ghost. The local church at Jerusalem knew all to well their spiritual obligation. The ordination of Christ still rang in their ears...

*John 20:21 ...as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*

They knew spiritual charades would not do. They must have what He had for they must be what He was. They were *willing* because they were first *desperate*. Desperation to be filled with the life of Christ produces willingness to lose one's own.

*"If our prayers are answered with Pentecostal power, we must pay Pentecostal prices."*  
-G.D. Watson

Willingness implies that we set aside our life, our agenda, our life so that they may be displaced by the life of the Son of God.

## **THE VESSEL MUST BE YIELDED**

*Acts 2:1b ...they were all with one accord in one place.*

They were divinely led to both one place physically and spiritually. This reveals they were not only willing, but they were obviously yielded. Their willingness was validated by action. Meaning, they were actively committed to anything and everything God had revealed to them. To walk by faith requires that we yield ourselves to the promptings and leadings of His Spirit. Many times the instructions will be sparse. Abram was called by God.

*Genesis 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee...*

Notice, Abram didn't know where he was going but God told what to get away from. Many times, if we choose to walk by faith, this will be the spiritual pattern. Other times, its like the 120, they didn't know much, but they knew where to go and they knew what to believe. First, they were all divinely planted in one local church.

*1 Cor. 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*

Nobody's in that upper room because of a job transfer to Jerusalem. They knew this was the place God had called them to serve. Nothing can replace the spiritual resolution produced in the knowledge of "God sent me here." Though many underestimate the necessity of the local church, the importance of spiritual fellowship and discipleship is communicated here. These believers were yielded to the same spiritual end. The Local Church is to be a place of spiritual confrontation and challenge...

*Hebrews 10:24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works...*

These 120 were in one accord: all had the same spirit and the same theology. They didn't know much, but what they knew they were yielded to and convinced of. If we are to experience Pentecost we must establish a pattern of unquestionable obedience.

*Acts 5:32 ...the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

Obey: (Greek) *pi-tharkh-eh'-o*, To be persuaded by a ruler, to submit to authority; to conform to advice.

What is implied here by the term obedience? Obviously, in a general sense, we are to submit to the Word of God: the unholy are always exempt from partaking of God's Spirit. But, in a more specific sense, it speaks of quick and thorough obedience to the often spontaneous promptings of God. Likewise, we must fear to miss, learn to be led, and cultivate a sensitivity to God's Spirit. My children get my attention when they congregate and say, 'Daddy, we just want to listen...' Every command of God is coupled with God's promise of the supply fulfilling grace. Grace is the divine means whereby the impossible becomes possible. What we cannot do, God enables us to do, if we will only yield to His voice, or Word.

*Revelations 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life...*

Peter will never receive the power of the Holy Ghost to walk on water unless he first obey the command, 'come'. Obedience sets the tone for greater usefulness...

*Luke 16:10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.*

## THE VESSEL MUST BE PREPARED

*Acts 2:1a And when the day of Pentecost was fully come...*

Fully Come: (Greek) *soom-play-ro'-o*, The accomplished time.

Pentecost was no casual, or random spiritual occurrence. Pentecost didn't haphazardly come to these 120 folks. It was the right time, the right place, but also the right vessel, a prepared vessel. Think of the divine hand of God in their history. Their paths had personally crossed with the Master's. They were awestruck by His gracious Words. They were apprehended by the power and authority of His doctrine. They were captivated by His miraculous works. They were humbled by His holiness, broken by their own failures and mishaps, and stunned by His brutal death. In essence, they were brought to utter spiritual exhaustion by the extremes of Christ being crucified, then risen, and finally ascending.

*Mark 2:20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.*

Pentecost in those 120 was a culmination three-and-a-half years of heart-rending, heart-searching humility. Indeed, they could say without fear of contradiction, "we are gathered for such a time as this." Like them, we must believe we are where we are because of God's providential destiny. It is not enough to be willing and yielded, the vessel must also be prepared. To be willing and yielded are mere attitudes of heart, but preparation requires time, patience, and continued faith. Harvest time can never come apart from planting, cultivation, and patience.

*Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

Are we resolved to patiently do the will of God, regardless of the cost? We will trust God as He allows us to endure the most trying and exposing of spiritual situations for His greater end?

*Jeremiah 18:4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.*

That O.T. type, the brazen vessel, had to be scoured, rinsed, and cleansed before it was ever to be used. As the Body of Christ, God's chosen vessel to reveal Christ, are we determined to settle for nothing less than true Pentecost?

*Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God...*

–B.W.