

When the Spirit Falls

Two weeks ago, we were focusing on Jesus Christ who gathered with His disciples outside of Bethany and gave them His last commandment:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”. Matthew 28: 18-20

This Pentecost morning let us put two images next to each other from the Bible. Both are showing us the same persons but in different situations.

According to the first description, we see the disciples outside of Bethany as they surround Jesus Christ, who is ready to leave the visible world. He is telling them that He is returning to the invisible world and the disciples have to continue the mission He started. They have to make disciples of all nations. Jesus is lifting his hands blessing them. Then Jesus disappeared.

In those moments, the disciples were so shocked that they could not even move. They were looking around and waiting for something, maybe for a miracle. Some of them were hoping that Jesus would come back in a few minutes, or maybe a few hours, with a heavenly crowd and something different would happen.

They could not picture their life without Jesus. Jesus was EVERYTHING for them. He was their leader, the counsellor, and the comforter. They were standing there waiting. They didn't want to leave.

This is why two angels appeared and said to the disciples: **“Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)**

After the angels disappeared, the disciples returned to Jerusalem, and they stayed together in Jerusalem, in a hidden place, being afraid still of Romans and Jewish leaders. They were afraid that the Pharisees and the Church's leaders would persecute them just because they followed Jesus. They were waiting for something unknown. Jesus told them to “wait in Jerusalem” until the Holy Spirit will come and will fill them with His power.

They recalled the commandment they received from Jesus: **“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you”. (Matthew 28: 18-19)**

But at this point, they were not able to act according to this commandment. This was the first image.

The second image - Today we read that, on Pentecost Day, the Holy Spirit came onto this earth, and fell on Jesus' disciples. They were filled with an indescribable power. In a few seconds, the Holy Spirit changed their feelings, their tempers, and their minds. In this second picture, the same disciples, who were hiding in a room, now are standing in front of a huge crowd, sharing the good news about Jesus Christ, the God and Saviour.

What happened in between these two pictures? It was Pentecost. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and the Spirit prompted them into action.

Now let's see how the Holy Spirit can change you and me today.

- Before Pentecost, the disciples were fearful people; now they became brave.
- Before Pentecost, they were quiet; now they are loud.
- Before Pentecost, they did not know how to talk about Jesus; now the Holy Spirit gave them the right words.
- Before Pentecost, they did not talk about Jesus because they were afraid of being killed; now they worry about those who have not hear about Jesus, and would die without knowing Him.
- Before Pentecost, they cared only about themselves; now they care about others.
- Before Pentecost, they did not share what they knew about Jesus; now they are happy to share the Good News and to lead others to Jesus.
- Before Pentecost, they were hesitant, about what to do; now they are confident.

How were they changed?

By the power of the Holy Spirit, who is equal with the Father and the Son, who is a Living and working person. This power rested upon them, and changed them, and used them to continue the work that Jesus started on this visible earth.

The Holy Spirit helped the disciples, not only to understand Jesus' commandment, but also to act according to His will.

Without any kind of fear, they started to talk about what they saw, heard and witnessed during those three years when they were with Jesus.

They were not afraid of anybody or anything, and they wanted to share the good news of salvation with everyone.

They opened peoples' eyes, ears, minds and hearts to hear, to see, to understand and to accept the love of God. This is the miracle of the Pentecost. This is what the Spirit did and this is what the Spirit can do today in us and with us.

Although Jesus Christ it is not visible for our eyes, we can see how He acts and talks to us in this earth through the Holy Spirit. This is how He wants to transform all of us today. This is how He wants to make major changes in our hearts, in our behaviour, in our actions, in our vision and in our faith. This is how He wants to build bridges between people and this is how He wants to make us be blessings in other people's lives.

Please compare yourself to these two images from above and tell God in which one you see yourself.

My dear beloved, you know the crucified Jesus. You, too, were standing many times under His cross, praying and praising Him. You know the resurrected Jesus. You are filled with joy that Jesus is a living and loving Saviour and this faith gives you hope in the present and in eternity.

But before the Holy Spirit falls on you, you are incapable of fulfilling the commandment received from Jesus to “Go and make disciples of all nations”. We cannot start this mission if we are missing the Holy Spirit’s power. We won’t be able to talk about Jesus and to lead people to the Saviour because, without the Holy Spirit, we don’t have wisdom, faith and courage. We might feel loved by God, but we don’t have the courage to talk about this happiness. We might experience some inner peace and joy, but we cannot really share these with others. We cannot change our own lives and our behaviour from INSIDE. We all need this power from OUTSIDE.

There are people who call themselves Christians, who attend the services almost regularly, but you have a feeling that something is missing from their lives. Based on their actions, it seems that they are Christians in name only.

- They like to complain about the Church, and other members.
- In winter time, they didn’t go to the church because it was too cold, in the summertime, it was too warm.
- The service was too long.
- They did not read the Bible because it was too complicated for them.
- They did not pray regularly because they did not know how to pray.
- They did not have the desire to grow in faith and to make more positive changes in their lives because they were satisfied with themselves.
- The Christians in name only argue with God about how much they have to pray, praise and share, and they like to argue about God’s commandments.

Today I am encouraging you to open your heart for the Holy Spirit, and ask Him to come, to fall upon you. Ask the Holy Spirit to counsel you, to encourage you to, to empower you with Himself. Do not ask only for His gifts. Ask for Himself to come upon you and to work in you as He was working in thousands of people in Jerusalem on the very first Pentecost day.

Those fulfilled with Spirit are renewed from above, or as we call it based on Jesus’ words “born again” or “born from above” and they are asking their Lord again and again: “Lord what do you want me to do?”

During this Pentecost we have two options:

Option 1

- We can just remember that, 2,000 years ago, God sent His Holy Spirit for His disciples. During challenges, we will worry again as before and we will collapse under pressures.
- Remember we can **remain untouched** by the Holy Spirit, and we can go home as we arrived, without making or experiencing any changes.
- We will see others’ sins and others’ weaknesses but we won’t see ours.

- We will expect people to forgive us but we won't be able to forgive.
- We will make commitments to make serious changes in our lives but we won't be able to change.
- During the funeral, we will see only the open grave and the casket or the urn but we won't see God's Kingdom.

Option 2

We can ask God here and right now to give us the Holy Spirit and to change us as much as He changed the disciples.

May the Lord bless me and bless us all today with His Holy Spirit and with all the blessings the Holy Spirit can give us. Amen