

PERSONAL PENTECOST



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Baptism in the Holy Spirit and the Nine Supernatural Gifts



(Sample Chapter), the Introduction

Why the title, Personal Pentecost? Pentecost is fundamentally a profound personal experience related to the empowering of born-again Christians by an act of God, a second touch. We explore in this Bible study guide, progressing from being foreknown by God, as being one of us who will eventually become His child, to actually being born again, to also receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We can then walk in His power.

We also carefully examine the supernatural spiritual gifts the Lord has planned for all who believe in Jesus. Various denominations have wildly different notions about the Holy Spirit and His gifts. Irrespective of what you may have heard, there are exactly nine supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit which only born-again Christians can experience. The Charismatic Gifts will not “cease” operation until He comes again; so they are all in operation today!

Our Lord gave the John the “Revelation of Jesus Christ” a detailed “State of the Church” vision. The prophetic message begins with individual messages to seven contemporary churches of that day. However, most Bible scholars are of the opinion these “letters to the seven churches” are actually to be taken sequentially. I recently had a vision where the Lord ratified to me, the Laodicean church indeed represents the last epic church age. We have an open door to spread the Gospel.

The Laodicean church’s message is directed to end-times born again Christians. So at least some of us will be “alive and remain” on earth until He returns. The seventh message to the churches fits the modern Christian church well, we are only lukewarm not hot or cold. The Lord’s main complaint about us is that despite presenting us with an “open door” to spread the gospel, we are squandering that opportunity. That disappoints and disgusts Him. He likens us to a lukewarm drink.

A symptom of that, the critical ministry of His Holy Spirit has been completely discounted by the majority of born-again

Christians. Even those who do exercise the nine supernatural gifts, fail to follow explicit exhortations given us by the very Apostles themselves explaining the correct use of the gifts.

The first ancient church period began in 32 AD, back when the church was fresh and vital. It has aged ungracefully over two thousand years. It has become mired in carnal human traditions and fully accepts modern, spirit-limiting scientific perspectives and political correctness. As predicted by prophecy in Daniel, knowledge has been greatly increased. We have access to books, computer data and the internet to make raw information widely available to most of the world's population.

Wisdom has not kept up with the flood of raw knowledge. News is flashed around the world graphically creating spiritual and emotional overload. Images of starving children, horrible atrocities, and natural disasters we can see but do little to change have become mind numbingly common. Even when we contribute to feed hungry people or send medial aid, it is an uphill battle to make sure our funds are well spent.

There is prophesy end-times Christians will preform powerful supernatural works, that are sure to shakeup the status quo, much like the effect miracles and healing on the early church. There is also prophesy of a "great falling away" which is interpreted by some to refer to the pre-tribulation rapture of the church but alternatively could also refer to marginal, in-name-only Christians, who will quickly deny the Lord under pressure from the anti-christ.

It is the expressed will of our Heavenly Father that all of His beloved children receive His free offer of salvation. This to pay the penalty for our sin which restores us as holy and sets aside the curse of death. Becoming born again is a matter of faith, rather than a feeling or any visceral, tangible evidence. When we ask Him with whatever faith we can muster, simply giving our consent, He is faithful to do what He has promised. Our Lord is absolutely consistent and never wavers from His stated objectives.

It is profound foundational truth that Jesus Christ is a son of a mortal woman and also the only Son of our Heavenly Father. Jesus Christ is alive. He was bodily resurrected from the dead and is Himself God. The Son has been anointed King because He perfectly pleases the Father. His Kingdom will never end. Jesus loved us enough to willingly take the penalty for our sin upon Himself and then freely gives us His righteousness. He wants to baptize us with His Holy Spirit if we are willing. Jesus is the Word of Grace to all who trust Him.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are for all who trust Him. After we reach up to Him in faith to become born again, He reaches down to touch us and indwell us with His Holy Spirit if we simply ask Him. No groveling required. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is most often a second experience, separate from becoming born again, but we will “have it His way.”

Quench not the Spirit; 20 do not lightly esteem prophecies; 21 but prove all things, hold fast the right;
1 Thessalonians 5:19-21

Salvation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit are not the same. We must seek salvation first and then the baptism in the Holy Spirit to have all that God intends for us to have. Experiencing supernatural gifts only follows the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Knowing Jesus as Lord is only the beginning of having a full relationship with God, a life that is eternal. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not associated with water baptism.

There is a logical and literal interpretation of the Bible from which we can understand basic fundamental doctrine regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Bible must be the conclusive authority on every issue. We seek to understand the demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives according to the authority of literal Scriptural context. Since we want what is really of God, we must sort out the truth about God and His Holy Spirit according to His written Word.

The nay sayers who have never heard the Lord's voice themselves are the very ones who tell *you* that you can't hear His voice either. Will you listen to faithless men or listen to what the Lord our God tells us directly in His written Word?

The Lord's warming up the lukewarm Laodicean end-time church will have a profound effect. Turning up the power levels of the supernatural gifts is certain to have an effect on modern, casual Christians. The yet-to-be-fulfilled prophesy of Joel 2:28 states that just before the great last Day of the Lord, there will be a final outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh.

Super-natural gifts of the Holy Spirit are reserved strictly for born-again Christians. There isn't a single example in the Bible of a non-Christian exercising New Testament charismatic gifts. This logically means some Christians will still be on the earth when the final outpouring of the Holy Spirit occurs. Christians are the focus of the event when the power of the Holy Spirit will fall upon all who are born again.

And it shall come to pass afterwards [that] I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. 29 Yea, even upon the bondmen and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. 30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 31 The sun shall be changed to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah comes. Joel 2: 28-31

I confess, I am more a teacher than an author. This is my first book. My writing, I am told, is conversational and I tend to repeat important points to make sure they are well communicated. Moving my teaching style to the printed page makes repeating things tedious, instead of helpful.

Hopefully, over time, the manuscript can be cleaned up to avoid these issues. Please submit Scriptural references to correct my doctrine you think in error and contact me to assist my editing via the associated web site <PersonalPentecost.com/contact-us> My chosen publishing service at this point is Amazon's publish-on-demand system which allows me to continuously fine-tune the manuscript's text file incrementally. I also solicit the nomination of more ideal Scriptural references that fit a particular paragraph.

I am but a layman attempting to teach practical things I believe the Lord has shown me. I have heard thoughtful Bible teaching from well known pastors and teachers for over fifty years. There are also things He has shown me personally in my own study of His written Word and profound things He has shown me directly.

The Bible simply understood, is in three core parts:

1. Our Heavenly Father demonstrated His absolute holiness in the Old Testament Scriptures.
2. Jesus demonstrates He is the Word of Grace In the Gospels.
3. The Holy Spirit demonstrates the Power of God in the rest of the New Testament.

We are on sound ground teaching biblical authority on the things of the Holy Spirit since the Holy Spirit Himself inspired the writers of the Bible using these very gifts. In searching the internet, many luminaries of the faith have written scholarly books examining the ancient Greek text. Greek is the language in which the New Testament was originally written. Some scholars have expounded on the history of the church in regard to the manifestation of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural gifts.

Good and respected pastors, teachers and many others have all presented their *personal perspectives* on the Word of God and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. However, there is also a lot of wrong information, some of it directly defying Scripture intermixed in this vast body of material! I respectfully submit that there is far more disagreement than consen-

sus on literally every conceivable issue regarding the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to understand rampant clueless speculation as to the practical operation of the supernatural gifts from those who have never experienced any of the gifts themselves. They think no one can be empowered by these gifts since they expend their faith to deny the power of the Holy Spirit is available to anyone. Evangelical cessationists, who have never exercised any of the nine gifts themselves categorically dismiss the testimony of those who have personally experienced them as mistaken.

Even those who experience the gifts also disagree about a lot of issues. My perspective is practical, for personal application, rather than scholarly. The Lord knows my heart and I submit this book as an offering to Him. The Bible is the only true authority. Hopefully, I can fill in some gaps in what readers already know. I also offer some material beyond what has been written by others in a scholarly manner. Whatever I propose that goes beyond what is actually written in the Bible, is for readers to judge and determine for themselves whether it is a valid revelation from the Lord or not.

I believe I have heard the Voice of the Lord and visions and spiritual dreams which I share herein. The extra-biblical material is my best effort to accurately communicate what He has shown me.

Many of us grew up in more than one denomination. Over time we were likely taught more than one perspective on the Holy Spirit in various venues. My parents began as lifelong Methodists and eventually became disenchanted with the trend toward more liberal doctrine in their local church. Many of my extended family are still Methodists, but attend more fundamental local churches. As a child, my family tried the Lutheran Church as well as the Episcopal Church where our family doctor was also the pastor.

My family was quite regular in attending church. I was the eldest of five kids who were lined up like a row of baby ducks on a close-to-the-front pew every Sunday morning, sand-

wicked between our parents. The slightest giggling, talking, or excess energy exhibited was swiftly punished with my dad's arm quietly slipping up stealthily behind us kids heads along the back of the pew to flick the offender(s) on the back of the head. A muffled "thump" sound, reminiscent of thumping a ripe watermelon, immediately changed the demeanor of the rowdy child struggling valiantly to not cry out. The kids in the congregation greatly anticipated a three-gong tone from the organ to signify the very formal Sunday morning service was finally over. These preachers preached on and on about things that bored us kids to tears. I learned virtually nothing significant about the Lord until junior high school.

My parents finally decided upon a Baptist church when I was in about the 7th grade. The church held a week-long revival featuring evangelist Merv Rosell. I struggled all week to not submit to the Holy Spirit's conviction to repent and become born again, although I somehow knew I eventually would come to the Lord. After the final eighth meeting, on a Sunday morning, I was just about out the door when my mother literally grabbed the back of my shirt collar and dragged me back face to face with the very large evangelist.

My mother told him I was ready to pray with him to be born again, which was an exaggeration. She really put me on the spot since I was under considerable conviction of the Holy Spirit but still trying to flee. The evangelist walked me back to a prayer area and sat down to discuss "my decision". After some discussion, he said "OK, let's pray," and then he abruptly knelt down. In that moment of time my resolve to not become born again crumbled, as I knelt down next to him and my resistance the Lord melted completely away. Then I asked Jesus into my heart and made Him Lord. I was born again at thirteen and began to ravenously absorb Scripture.

What seemed to me to be obvious contradictions between Scripture about the Holy Spirit and the gifts, compared to the realities of our Baptist church perplexed me. It seemed to me the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the gifts were strangely absent. Portions of Scripture about the supernatural gifts of the

Holy Spirit given after Jesus resurrected were skimmed over rather than explained. I actually grieved I was born out time, when the gifts of the Holy Spirit were no longer available. That is the doctrine of disbelief called cessation.

I was 3 months old when Israel became a nation again, so the promise of being in the terminal generation when Jesus returns is mine. As her first born male child, my mother dedicated me to the Lord, since she had read about doing that in the Bible.

And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. 1 Corinthians 15:8

As young teenagers, my brother Ron and I went only once to a small Pentecostal church in Shawnee Kansas where the gifts were exercised. It was a Sunday evening and we were sitting in the very back row, just observing. The twenty-five or so mostly older members were very courteous to us (as in polite). But they were also completely oblivious to us as they suddenly all babbled away in tongues without an interpretation into English or any explanation as to what was happening. We quietly giggled uncontrollably at the spectacle with no idea as to what was going on. My brother and I agreed afterwards that they were completely nuts and we never went back.

If therefore the whole assembly come together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and simple persons [perhaps meaning untaught] enter in, or unbelievers, will not they say ye are mad?

1 Corinthians 14:23

It would be twenty-five years before I finally understood what was really going on that night. How profoundly helpful it would have been for me at that young age to have had teaching or even an explanation given to help us understand what was going on. Had we been taught in that initial Pentecostal service about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the exercise of the gifts, we would not have been so repelled. Most profoundly, I could also have lived my Christian life with the

spiritual advantage of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts twenty-five years sooner!

A Baptist Bible College I attended taught the false doctrine of cessation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church today as established fact. No alternative to modern cessation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit was even mentioned as potentially genuine. My professors in fact delighted in humorously ridiculing “country bumpkin Pentecostalism”. That perspective fit my personal experience at that time, due to my own first encounter with Pentecostalism going sideways.

Cessation turns out to be a thinly plausible excuse for holding a doctrine of disbelief in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This false teaching holds that we should not expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be exercised today because: take your pick a. the apostles died or b. the written Bible has been published. More about the doctrine of cessation of the gifts will be explored later in greater detail.

Eventually, the Lord crushed that false doctrine by speaking to me directly, which is my hope and prayer for those who read this book. After I heard His voice personally, I knew beyond doubt that cessation was completely wrong. Hearing the Lord’s voice and seeing Him in visions is quite persuasive evidence that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are still available to us today. I don’t imagine my writing per se, will change the hearts and minds of those who read this; my only hope is to at least open up the possibility to my readers, so the Holy Spirit can do the heavy lifting in changing your hearts and lives.

It also seemed strange to me that the Holy Spirit, given by the Lord to call all men unto Jesus, was minimized by design at the supposed “evangelical” Bible School I attended. I was further disenchanted when the dean literally forbade Bible students to attend the Billy Graham evangelical meetings in Kansas City, where thousands were saved. I went to hear Billy Graham anyway, and even took the counseling course several weeks before the event. I prayed with several people to receive Jesus as Lord on the infield of the Kansas City baseball

park those ten evenings in September 1967. As many as 53,000 people came in a single night, and thousands prayed to be born again.

Fast forward twenty-five years, and I'm attending my first Maranatha Concert where it was announced there was going to be an afterglow service up front after the concert crowd cleared the room. There had already been an altar call where many young people went forward to pray for salvation in the prayer room. I stayed, expecting a sing-along campfire sort of afterglow, but what I got was something profoundly different!

After some singing, Tom, the worship leader, asked if anyone who was already born again wanted prayer for more power in their Christian life. A number of people went up around the stage. A young man named Tim walked up and stood beside me. He gently asked if I would like to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. I gave my consent for the Holy Spirit to come upon me, while not understanding as fully as I do now. Tim gently put his arm around me and told me to pray out loud asking Jesus to please baptize me in the Holy Spirit. In that moment, I set aside my previous notions about the Holy Spirit and simply prayed out loud, "Lord Jesus, please baptize me in your Holy Spirit." Tim immediately went on to pray with someone else and I returned to my seat thinking nothing much had happened. That was Saturday evening.

The very next day I was presenting an open house in Mission Viejo. It was a slow Sunday afternoon and I stood in front of a large picture window of that vacant home with warm sunlight beaming in upon me. I noticed a brilliant red rose just on the other side of the glass. I looked at it closely and marveled at the intricate beauty of the blossom. I spontaneously began speaking out loud in prayer to the Lord. "Lord, the beauty of your creation is amazing; how glorious and wonderful you are. You are my God and I worship you." I abruptly stopped myself as I suddenly realized something was profoundly different about my prayer. I knew something really had happened the night before which was a whole lot more significant than I had realized.

Exactly a week later, I heard the Voice of the Lord driving home from that same vacant house (which I eventually sold). I was praying out loud to the Lord while driving north on Interstate 5; and suddenly I heard the Voice! He spoke to me and I knew it was the Lord. I had been born again for twenty-five years and had prayed countless times. But the Lord had never answered my prayer by directly speaking to me. This time He distinctly addressed something about which I had just prayed. I was having a first hand conversation directly with the Lord!

I became an afterglow junky and learned a lot quickly. Particularly helpful were the Friday night believer's meetings. At that time there was an afterglow service on Thursday, Friday and sometimes Saturday evenings. I have since found additional things on my own that the Lord has shown me in the Scriptures over the forty-odd years since these events. He has taught me a lot through the operation of the gifts in my own life.

He has also shown me interesting things about the gifts that I don't recall ever being taught by men. I submit that when personal experiences confirm what the Scriptures teach, that grows and supports faith. Any experience that seemingly conflict with Scriptural conventions are not worthy of consideration, as far as doctrine is concerned.

It has been nearly forty years since that night the Holy Spirit came upon me. After walking with Jesus for sixty years, I am still a wretched sinner saved by the unmerited grace of God. As I maintain, the exercise of the gifts is not dependent upon or proof of, our holiness; but rather the gifts demonstrates the faithfulness of God to minister powerfully to the church through well defined supernatural means. I have been blessed to experience a number of the gifts over the years. I share herein what I have learned, hoping to enhance the spiritual lives of people like me, who are just seeking to know the Lord Jesus on a deeper level.



1. Pentecost, the Holy Spirit Descended

Jesus' death as the actual sacrifice for all sin for all time, was fulfilled on the very day lambs were sacrificed for Passover, about 32 AD. The next high holiday in the Jewish calendar is Pentecost. The Jewish High Holidays each prophetically foretold actual fulfillment by the Son. The only exception to the rule of fulfillment by the Son, is that God, in the form of the Holy Spirit, descended upon the early church, fulfilling the Jewish Pentecost celebration. This is when the baptism in the Holy Spirit was first given to believers.

