

Pentecost Sunday

Texts: Acts 2:1-21; John 14:23-31; Genesis 11:1-9

May 24, 2026

## **The Gift of Peace**

Pentecost Sunday: ***What is today all about?*** I know the simple answer centers around that wonderful day when the Holy Spirit empowered the disciples to proclaim God's Word to everyone in their own tongue/language. The Holy Spirit worked the miracle that enabled ordinary, simple men to proclaim the Gospel in foreign languages, and as a result of this, over 3,000 people were brought to repentant faith and the life-giving waters of Holy Baptism. ***Pentecost in a nutshell.***

Now, while the nutshell answer is certainly correct, the simplicity of it can lead us to overlook a very important point. We're told that the Holy Spirit gave these men "power from on high." Knowing what we know, we automatically ***assume*** that this is referring to the ability to speak a different language. While I certainly don't want to take away from the power of this heaven-sent miracle, ***there is so much more to it than simply and suddenly becoming fluent in a different language!***

I want you to think back fifty days earlier to Maundy Thursday and the Last Supper. Your Lord Christ promised these same men on the very night He was betrayed that even though He was going away, He was going to send them the Holy Spirit. He was going to leave them with and give to them **His peace**. To be sure, it wasn't a peace like the rest of the world gives or understands. This wasn't a peace that simply consisted of everyone getting along or playing nice or feeling "happy" and content. No. He was giving to them ***His peace***; a peace that surpasses all human understanding. And keep in mind: ***This peace that Christ was giving to them was pointing to and flowing forth from His cross; His all-redeeming sacrifice.***

This takes us back to Pentecost Sunday. Like they had done immediately following Christ's death, the disciples on this particular Sunday are gathered together, laying low and hiding behind locked doors out of fear. Just ten days earlier Jesus had ascended into heaven, disappearing from their sight. From their vantage point, they were now left all alone and on their own, ***and it still wasn't exactly safe/popular to be a follower of Jesus; definitely not in Jerusalem.*** As I said, I have no doubt they were, once again, huddled up behind locked doors out of fear and uncertainty. They had no control. Nothing was working out the way they had planned or expected. Locking the door was the only thing they could control (or so they thought).

This is where the Holy Spirit finds them. This is where the Holy Spirit bursts in and "gives them power from on high." Folks: That power from on high wasn't merely the ability to speak a different language. ***It was the power of***

*salvation for all who believe.* It was the power of the Good News of Christ crucified and resurrected. It was the power of Christ's peace; peace that knows and holds fast to this cruciform truth, no matter the circumstance. This is why we're told that Peter and the apostles were "lifting up their voices" and boldly proclaiming the Law/Gospel Truth of Christ. ***They weren't afraid anymore.*** By God's grace, through the working of the Holy Spirit, they were finally able to understand what the mission and ministry of Christ—the life, death, and resurrection of Christ—was really all about, ***and what it meant for them and for all children of Adam.*** Through the God-given gift of faith, they truly had that peace that surpasses all understanding. They now had the power, confidence, and ability to ***boldly and unashamedly*** proclaim Christ crucified. People mocked them and ridiculed them. Plenty of people in that crowd dismissed what they heard, chalking it up to drunken foolishness. None of that mattered. The threats of danger and harm; the foolish opinions of sinful men, none of that mattered anymore. Empowered and enlivened by the Holy Spirit, these once quiet and afraid men now couldn't help but lift up their voices and proclaim the whole Law-Gospel Truth of sin and the salvation known only in the crucified and resurrected Lord of Life. I mean... what was the worst you could do to them? Mock them? Slander them? Beat them up? Kill them? Make them wake up in heaven? That's all you got?!

And here's the thing for us to remember today: Their peace—the peace of Christ Jesus; that Holy Spirit-wrought powerful peace from on high—***is also our peace today.*** The very same peace that Christ gave to the apostles ***He gives to us.*** The very same Holy Spirit, who brought and bestowed this peace—this confident joy of faith in Christ—comes to us today ***to do the same exact thing.*** Now, I know that some of you will disagree with this. After all, the Holy Spirit isn't working the ***exact same way*** today as He did then. Look around. There's no great rushing tempest of wind. There are no fiery tongues or foreign languages. There aren't great masses of foreigners and outsiders flocking to be a part of us and our worship. "*What must we do to be saved?*" I mean... many of our own don't even bother to show up.

So... from this perspective, then, you're right. The Holy Spirit ***isn't*** working the same miraculous way today that He did on that first Pentecost Sunday. And yet...that very same and unchanging Holy Spirit ***still*** comes to us today and works in us and on us the very same peace of Christ He gave to those apostles so many centuries ago. Look no further than right here [*the altar*]. Behold! The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ***Here is Christ, right where He tells you to look; right where He promises to be—in His Word and in His sacraments.*** His peace—His absolution—is spoken to you. You hear it in your ears. ***It's real.*** Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Look to this rail. Look to these elements. Look and listen. "*Take and eat. Take and drink. As often as you do this, remember what I have said. This is My*

*body. This is My blood. Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of all your sin.*” What peace we have as we come before the Lord of heaven and earth, and with angels, archangels, and all the company of heaven, receive these gifts and offer up our sacrifice of thanksgiving to Him! It is beyond all understanding. It’s a peace that is known only in the **humility of faith**. Once you understand this holy peace, it’s crazy to think how anyone wouldn’t want this as often as they could receive it. ***I mean... who would willingly turn their nose up at this... Jesus and His peace?***

And God has given you this peace. It’s yours. Consider the Spirit-wrought power from high that is your Holy Baptism. It is here in these simple waters that Almighty God Himself brought to you His blood-bought victories over sin, death, and the devil. *“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His.”* Folks: We already know how the story ends. Christ lives, the victory is won. Christ lives, and so shall I. I’m a baptized child of God! I’ve been baptized into this victory. ***What’s the worst you can do to me?*** Gossip about me? Complain? Make fun of me? Fire me? What’s the worst you can do to me? Make me wake up in heaven? **That’s all you got?!** Folks: By virtue of your baptism into Christ, ***this is your reality too***. This is your peace, and it’s a peace that can **never** be taken from you.

So... whatever circumstance you find yourself in, whether you’re healthy or ill, or suffering, or rich or poor or depressed or grieving or all alone (or feeling all alone, like no one else knows/understands)...whatever...***you belong to Christ***. You’re not alone. You’re never alone! Baptized into the Almighty, you are the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Almighty God dwells in you. You bear the name of Almighty God on your head and your heart, marking you as one redeemed by Christ the Lord, ***and nothing and no one can ever take that from you***.

I pray that this unwavering, unfailing, and unconditional baptism peace of Christ Jesus—this Spirit-wrought power from on high—guards and keeps your hearts and minds in Him, now and into all eternity. I pray that this powerful peace from on high shows itself in all that you say and do. Go forth in the powerful Gospel peace of Christ. Go, and in your going be unafraid, unashamed, and at peace.

**In the name of Jesus...AMEN.**