

“The spiritual work of Pentecost” March 14, 2017

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4)

Today I'd like to speak to you about the spiritual work of Pentecost that happened in the upper room. After Jesus' crucifixion, the disciples were very depressed and lonely and they were wondering whether God was alive.

One hundred and twenty of them gathered in the upper room and prayed; when they prayed, an incredible miracle occurred. At that time many people came to that upper room; they all came from different countries and areas and they all spoke different languages. The incredible thing was that each of them found that the disciples were speaking their own language!

Even the people who normally could not speak a certain language were able to speak that language, and even though they were strangers, through the speaking of tongues they were able to relate to each other. They spoke as they were directed by the Holy Spirit and they did as they were told. This was a miracle. People were able to hear God's words in their own language even though they could not speak those languages.

Those who were sinful were judged, and those who repented were received. With God there is no excuse; those who were righteous were recognized as righteous and those who had sinned were judged according to their actions. They were filled with awe and fear and they lived according to the way they were directed by the spirit.

People at that time lived by the spirit. There was nothing impossible for them because God guided their every step. Some people in this situation felt great hope, but others were very worried and afraid because they knew that they had committed sin, and they were wondering what would happen to them.

When we believe what happened at Pentecost 2,000 years ago, we believe that God is alive, and that He fulfills our prayers. When we look at the Old Testament which preceded this, we see that many amazing things happened there as well.

At the time of Elijah, when the king did not follow the commandments there was a period of three years and six months when no rain fell. But when Elijah prayed, “God, what are we going to do, there is not rain, please let it rain!” then immediately the rain began to fall. Through that, people at that time could see that God truly was alive, and that He performed incredible miracles.

But when the people worshipped idols such as King Ahab did, God would punish them. So Elijah said to King Ahab, “Let's see whether your god is alive or my God is alive. Let's test it, and see whether your sacrifice or my sacrifice is accepted.” When the king's prophets of Baal tried to offer, Elijah said to them, “Choose one of your ox for yourselves and prepare it, and I

will chose my ox and we will offer both of them and see what happens.” So the prophets of Baal made their offering, but no matter how much they prayed nothing happened.

When Elijah prayed for the fire to be lit under his altar, fire actually came down from heaven, but what we see though is that the fire was burning but the altar was not burned. When people saw this, they were amazed and many people came and followed him.

In this way God showed the people that He was a living God; people could see this with their own eyes. So we must understand that these things actually happened and God really is alive. When a righteous person prays, God answers that prayer and performs His miracles through that person.

We need to know that throughout history there have been times when God has filled people with His Holy Spirit and has performed miracles, and that God is still alive and He is still performing his works of the spirit today.

Elijah also raised the widow’s son who had died. The spirit had already left that body but still Elijah was able to raise that son from the dead. We can see from these records that God truly is a Living God and that He performs miracles. He has done that in history and He continues to do that today.

People who were with our True Father in the early days told me that it was normal for Father to pray even twelve hours a day. He would shed so many tears during his prayers that his eyes would be swollen. The works of the spirit do not come about automatically; they come about based on our incredible sincerity and dedication. Father would pray for something until it was accomplished. Until it was accomplished, he would keep praying for it, and he would cry out to God in tears.

St. Augustine also prayed with such tears that it was like rain falling. Jesus also prayed often, and as he prayed, he would call out to God as his father. He would call out with his sincerity and dedication and the people around him saw his relationship of father and son with God. We see one place where Jesus fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. Due to the people’s lack of belief in him, Jesus performed this miracle to show them the power he was able to command. Jesus prayed to God, “Not my will but Thy will be done.” Jesus would discuss important matters with God and important decisions he had to make, and we have to learn from that. We have to do the same. He prayed with the faith, “If I pray, it will be done; I know it will be done” and this is how he educated his disciples.

Many times people say, “Oh I don’t know how to pray” or we say, “I don’t think God is going to answer my prayers. Does He really hear my prayer?” But Jesus had the absolute faith that God would hear his prayer and this is the kind of faith that we need, as well. Let’s have the confidence, the conviction, and the faith that God will accomplish what we pray for, and that He will answer our prayers.

In Ephesians 3:20 it says, “Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.” This is the kind of faith that we need. Prayer is not difficult. It is a dialogue with God, and just as you are dialoguing with someone you know, you can talk and discuss with God. **That is how you pray, and when people pray with sincerity and earnestness, God will answer those prayers.**

I want to point out that when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he prayed. He also prayed over Jerusalem as he was on his way to the cross. God is our Father, and He cares for His sons and daughters far more than fathers in this world care for their children. That is the God who is behind us; that is the God who is supporting us. Let’s be confident and let’s have faith in God’s ability to work through us.

Thank you very much.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmK1lhtzcE8>