

Pentecost: Our Divine Encounter

May 19, 2024

Text: Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:1-4, 14-18

Pentecost: Removing _____

Pentecost: The _____ **of God's Presence**

Pentecost: The _____

1. **Most debates about speaking in tongues do not demonstrate God's love.** For the most part these discussions turn personal and defensive which militates against God's command that we love our neighbor as ourselves. We need to couch all our discussion about Pentecost and speaking in tongues with the grace and love of God Who desperately longs to give His Spirit to any of His people who will ask (Lk 11:13).
2. **Speaking in tongues is not outdated or unbiblical.** Those who insist that is not for today are stretching to make their point. Only strained, laborious interpretive schemes can impose such a notion onto the text of scripture.*
3. **Speaking in tongues is not a transcendental experience.** It is not weird. It is normal. It does not require you to resign control of your mind or indulge your emotions to excess. Speaking in tongues involves the conscious choice to invite God's assistance to transcend your linguistic limits. It is not a mystical trance-like trip beyond oneself.*
4. **Speaking in tongues is not a status symbol.** It does not make you more spiritual than others who have not experienced it. It is not a qualifier for participation in the Christian family or its ministry.*
5. **Speaking in tongues is not a substitute for spiritual growth.** Growth requires discipleship, study of God's word, spiritual disciplines, prayer, and fellowship with God's family. Speaking in tongues is one part of the whole.*
6. **Speaking in tongues is never the target.** We are not seeking to speak in tongues. We are seeking to give more of ourselves to God and to have Him clothe us with divine power to carry out His redemptive mission (Lk 24:49; Ac 1:8). Therefore, we must seek the Giver, not the gift.

*Taken from *The Beauty of Spiritual Language: Unveiling the Mystery of Speaking in Tongues*, by Jack Hayford, Revised and Expanded edition, 2018, pp.14-16

Helpful Resources

- *Gift and Giver: The Holy Spirit for Today*, Craig Keener.
- *The Beauty of Spiritual Language: Unveiling the Mystery of Speaking in Tongues*, Jack Hayford.
- *The Holy Spirit in the Bible: All the Major Passages About the Spirit: A Commentary*, John Rea.
- *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit*, Jack Deere.
- *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*, Gordon Fee.
- *What the Bible Says About the Holy Spirit*, Stanley Horton.

Life Enrichment

What about today's teaching challenged, disturbed, or encouraged you?

- What are some new things you have learned about Pentecost over the last four Sundays?
- To whom was the Spirit given in the Old Testament? Why do you think God limited the Spirit's presence to those people?
- How does God's promise in Joel 2:28-29 and its fulfillment in Acts 2:1-18 change the nature of His people and their ministry and mission?
- Why do you think it's important for God's people to be known for His presence among them?
- What is the American church most known for? How can we change to become a people of God's presence?
- Why do you think there has been such upset in modern times over "speaking in tongues?"
- How can speaking in tongues help modern believers?
- What are you planning to do to make certain that your life is consistently Spirit-led and Spirit-empowered?