



God the Holy Spirit

PENTECOST SUNDAY

John 16:7-15 Acts 2:1-41

May 31, 2020

Pastor Dave Bolte

IT WAS 9:00am ON SUNDAY MORNING ... 120 people had gathered with the Apostles to worship the Lord. It had been 50 days since Jesus rose from the dead. 10 days earlier, Jesus ascended into heaven. He told His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for a gift He would send to them. They would be “*clothed with power from on high*,” Jesus said. They had no idea what He meant by that, but they waited anyway.

At 9am on *Pentecost Sunday*, a *powerful sound of wind* thundered in the sky above Jerusalem; it caught everyone’s attention --- it is described as a sound of a “*mighty rushing wind*” --- a sound, but no wind --- the loud sound falls from heaven and lands on one single house --- the exact place where the Apostles were worshipping!

Then there was the fire – *tongues like fire* – not fire itself, but fire-looking wisps on top of each person as they were filled with the Holy Spirit and praised God.

The wind and the fire --- these Old Testament signs of God’s presence signaled that God was indeed present, working among His People in a new way --- God was at work through the *Holy Spirit* on Pentecost Sunday!

The Holy Spirit is the 3rd person of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is God. The Bible gives the *Holy Spirit* divine names, divine works and attributes, and divine glory and honor. The *Holy Spirit* is a Person of the Triune Godhead, not simply the “love” of God nor a symbol of His “power” as the false teachers claim! **The Holy Spirit is the 3rd person of the Holy Trinity ...** equal to the Father; equal to the Son.

In the Nicene Creed we confess:

I BELIEVE IN THE Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son together is worshiped and glorified.

The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son: The Holy Spirit is God; the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

One of the main works that the Holy Spirit does is to **create, nourish, sustain, and strengthen faith** in your heart, so that you can believe in Jesus as your Savior. In fact, the New Testament teaches us that *no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit* (1 Cor 12:3).

Martin Luther summarized it like this in the Small Catechism:

I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctifies and keeps me in the one true faith.

[Explanation of the 3rd Article of the Apostle's Creed, 1991 SC page 144]

God the Holy Spirit works through the Word of God and the Sacraments to create, nourish, sustain, and strengthen faith in your heart. On that first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was working through the Word to create faith in people's lives --- the Book of Acts teaches us that **3,000 people** came to know and believe in Jesus Christ that day. Those people were then baptized, and God forgave their sins.

That same Holy Spirit worked through the Word and the water of Holy Baptism to create faith in your heart and forgive your sins:

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the HOLY SPIRIT**, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:4-7

You have been washed clean by the Holy Spirit and made new through the forgiveness of your sins! *If you have faith today, it is because of the Holy Spirit!* He worked in your life to bring you to faith – your “faith story” is His work in your life!

The Holy Spirit continues to work through His Word and the Sacraments in your life today to nourish, sustain, and strengthen your faith. Let me highlight two things about the Holy Spirit at work in your life:

First, **The Holy Spirit is described as your “Advocate”.**

John 14:16-17 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth

This promise is repeated 3 times in 3 consecutive chapters in the Gospel of John¹! This word “Advocate” means companion, comforter, defender. **It has the idea of someone who comes along side of another to aid him;** just as Jesus walked alongside the disciples in His life; now the Holy Spirit walks alongside you during your lifetime. God is with you every moment of every day. The Holy Spirit comes alongside of you – forever. He is your “Advocate”!

What that means for you is that the Holy Spirit comes along side of you to **nurtures and sustain** your faith through His Word and the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

- + comes alongside of you to **guide and direct** you as you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- + comes alongside of you to **strengthen and uplift** you each day
- + Comes alongside of you to **comfort and encourage** you in every trial and burden
- + Comes alongside of you to give you **courage, boldness, and zeal** in the faith
- + Comes alongside of you to make you a **Biblically Literate, Doctrinally Sound, Mission Minded and Passionately Engaged Disciple**

Your **maturity and wisdom** in the Christian faith
comes from the work of the Holy Spirit
through the Word and Sacrament!

¹ The other two times are:

John 15:26 "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—He will testify about Me.

John 16:7, 13-14 But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.

The **Holy Spirit** is your "**Advocate**"; your companion, comforter, and defender.

The second thing to note about the **Holy Spirit** is that He lives and dwells within you. The Bible speaks about this in many and various ways --- but they all mean the same thing: the **Holy Spirit** actually lives and dwells within you! Here is a sample:

Led by Spirit
Baptized by Spirit
Sanctified by Spirit
Empowered by the Spirit
Filled with the Spirit
Sealed by the Spirit

Helped by the Spirit
Bear Fruit of the Spirit
Gifted by the Spirit
Born Again by the Spirit
Renewed in the Spirit

All of these terms and phrases means the same thing: ***The Holy Spirit dwells within you, He is always present in your life, and He is at work in your life to nourish, sustain, and strengthen your faith!***

The Holy Spirit sanctifies you: He sets you apart to live a strong Christian life and to hold to the truth of God's Holy Word!

Because the **Holy Spirit** in your life, you desire to live a holy and Godly life; you long to worship the Lord and obey His Word; you seek out ways to help and serve other people, you boldly confess His Name in all places; you eagerly and passionately use your gifts in the Kingdom of God. The **Holy Spirit** sanctifies you: He sets you apart for holy living!

Today we celebrate **Pentecost Sunday**, and we thank God for revealing the **Holy Spirit** to us through Holy Scripture. **The promise of Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit, the 3rd Person of the Holy Trinity, is always with you and at work in your life, so that you can live as a disciple of Jesus Christ! AMEN!**