

Pentecost

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] of Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel. In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophecy. Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women will pour out my Spirit in those days.

[2 : 11] They will prophecy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below. Blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

And everyone who calls in the name of the Lord will be saved. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Sir, I'm a registered...

Sir, Congressman, I am not a registered Republican. I'm a registered conservative. You are a shill for the Republican Party. It's not ready to go, Chris. It's not ready to go by the president's own admission.

Can I read your list? Roy in a blatant character assassination. John, in your interview... Sarah Palin's character. And the public thinks that she's not worthy of that, at least in some terms. And that's the way it is.

June 2, 2019. Anybody remember who said that? Walter Cronkite. Yes, a few remember when news was news. When we would turn on the news to get information and learn about what was going on in the world and not hear people arguing and fighting and complaining about each other.

[3 : 25] Seems like the world's confused. In this passage, we have the apostles in the upper room. And the Holy Spirit comes upon them like a mighty wind.

And flames appear on them like tongues of fire. And they're filled with the Holy Spirit. And they go out into the streets where there's pilgrims gathered from all over the world. Different countries.

Different languages. And they start to speak. And they speak a language that everyone seems to understand. And in the sixth verse of this chapter, it says...

When the people heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment. Because each one heard their own language being spoken. Or in other words, a crowd came together, but they were all confused.

They didn't know what was going on. They were jumbled together. Different people. Different ideas. Different backgrounds. Different agendas. That's how it feels nowadays, doesn't it?

- [4 : 28] I mean, as a country, we're not really one people. We have all these separations. We struggle to have a culture together. Even our families struggle to find a place that holds them together.
- I don't know when all this change happened. I was trying to think if there was an event or a date or something that made it occur. I think it was sort of gradual. Things happen like that, you know.
- About a month ago, I was wanting to watch the news. And so I put it on Channel 2. But it didn't show up on my TV. So I just changed it to Channel 7. Didn't think anything of it.
- About a couple weeks ago, I was watching the news at 11 o'clock. And I put it on Channel 2. That didn't work. So I put it on Channel 4. And that didn't work either. But Channel 7 worked. So I was okay. And somewhere along the line, I said, wait a minute.
- Maybe there's something much more wrong here than I realized. So I started checking. And I found out I didn't have Channel 2, Channel 4, Channel 6, Channel 8, Channel 10. My wife was complaining she'd turn on the TV.
- [5 : 31] And it would take her a half an hour before it would actually show a picture. I think something's wrong. I think we have a problem. But it snuck up on me.
- And I didn't notice it. Things like that happen. And they happen to people too. There were five brothers who grew up in the city of Buffalo. They grew up on the waterfront on a place called the Topap between the railroad track and the canal.
- They lived in a shack. They really didn't have much. There was no running water. For heat, they would scrounge around the city and find wood that they, scraps that they could use to heat their house.
- They were poor. But they were happy. They were five brothers that you couldn't separate. They were big, burly men. They even started a rowing club.
- And they actually competed for the Olympics. They were together. A war came along. When they came back from the war, Dad didn't live on the towpath anymore.
- [6 : 38] He had moved to a house in the city. And one of the brothers went to California. Another to Salt Lake City. They started getting married. Two of the brothers went to work for the Buffalo Fire Department. One stayed working in the ranks.
- One rose up into the officers. The older brother went his way. And little by little, things just weren't the same.
- They didn't see each other as much. It says that the people came together, but they were perplexed. They didn't understand. They were off target.
- They were broken. They were confused. In many ways, they were empty people. Because in life, their perspective had gotten out of focus. God gives us a focus that is designed to give us a reason to live this life so that we can also live the next.
- Because the purpose of this life is to get to the next. I mean, ultimately, in the end, that's what's going to matter. Because eternity is a lot longer than any of our lives will be here.
- [7 : 48] A lot longer. And a lot better. The natural order of things will fall apart. It says, I will show wonders in the heavens above, signs on the earth below, blood and fire, billows and smoke.
- The sun will turn to darkness, the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. Everything we've been concerned about, everything we worry about, all the stuff we work on, all the things we put hours and energy into will be gone.
- In a moment. Gone. Gone. We don't live like that, though. We live as if these things we have and the stuff we get and accumulate is the most important.

Those five brothers were close. We'd get together from time to time and we'd see our cousins and we'd have family together. Until one day, it just stopped.

We never saw our cousins again for 20 years. They just vanished from our lives. We never really did understand, as children, why it happened.

[8 : 58] I found out later on. That when my grandfather died, he left a will. And in the will it said that each of the four brothers would get a chunk of money. And the oldest brother would get the house and everything in it.

Now I suspect, knowing Uncle Walt, he wanted the chunk of money more than the house. But since that's what he got, he told the other brothers, everything in that house is mine, including the pictures hanging on the wall of your family.

Don't go near it. That was it. Family never saw each other again. Because of some money and some stuff that no longer even exists.

It's fascinating, isn't it? God calls us to live towards a priority that will never go away, an inheritance that will never disappear. In Isaiah, it talks about that new creation.

See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create. For I will create Jerusalem to be a delight, and its people a joy.

[10 : 07] I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people. The sound of weeping and crying will be heard in it no more. Before they call, I will answer.

While they are still speaking, I'll hear. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and the dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy. They will neither harm nor destroy.

On all my holy mountain. Amazing world. Where we don't argue, we don't fight, we don't bicker. Where even a wolf will not eat a sheep.

The peace of God. It's so important to be on the right side of glory. Today, Emily and Lexi, Eliana and Courtney and Caitlin, and the rest of their class came to make a decision.

To make a commitment to Jesus Christ. That they will not only live their life here, but they will live their life for all of glory.

[11 : 12] But that requires a total change. Romans says to us, Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires, but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.

The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. God is calling us to something totally different.

A totally different way of looking at the world, of looking at life, of looking at our priorities. When things are broken, what do you do?

I call a guy. I mean, now sometimes it's a gal, but in this case it happened to be a guy. You ever call the cable company? What happens is, you get on the phone with them for a couple of hours, and you just keep pressing zero, and zero, and zero, until you get a real live person.

Because they want to send pings and all kinds of stuff to you. So I finally got an appointment with the cable guy, which of course didn't mean anything. You know, so he shows up quite late.

[12 : 21] He says, sorry, but the last calls took me a little longer than I expected. He said, what's your problem? So I told him what my problem was. He came in the house. He went in the basement. He said, has anybody been here since Adelpia owned this place?

Now you may not know who Adelphia is. They're the cable company before the cable company that the company, you know what I'm talking about. He said, this needs a total redo.

It's going to take a couple hours. I'm like, what? I mean, I got things to, what? He says, no, I'm going to totally redo it. Starting at the pole.

I'm like, okay. So he actually started a cable from the pole. Brought it all the way through my house. Went in the basement. Put in some gizmo that he plugs into the wall that like supercharges my cable.

I'm like, really? This is cool. Rewired my house. A total, complete makeover. And now I get channel 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10. And my wife's TV turns on when she turns it on.

[13 : 23] What a concept. It took a whole different way of doing things. And that's what God calls us to. Not a tweaking.

Not an adjustment. Not an occasional consideration. A total, complete makeover. A radical change.

We need to call a guy. And that guy's the one we've been talking about the last six months. His name is Jesus. In verse 21, it says, And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Not just for the world to come, but in this world as well. A radical redirection. A heart change. In chapter 2, in verse 36, it says, After Peter got up and preached a long sermon, longer than mine are, It says, Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. I want you to think about what that means to these people hearing this. The guy that you think is completely wrong, The one who you decided is so bad, so much on the other side, That they should be executed, Is now in charge of the universe.

[14 : 45] Whoa. So when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter, Oh my gosh, what do we do? What do we do? How do we get out of this one?

We've got ourselves in total, complete trouble. And Peter answered them. He said, Repent.

And be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, For the forgiveness of sins. Repent simply means to turn around. You've got to totally change your direction. You've got to go in a different way. You can't keep going the wrong way, expecting better results.

You've got to go a different way. Completely different. Be baptized. We're going to baptize some of our young people this morning. We baptized some in the service earlier. Those went all the way in.

Totally flooded. And we don't heat the water. We did bless the water. But we don't heat the water. They'll remember that day.

[15 : 46] The day that they made a decision to totally change the way they're going. Do things different. In the name of Jesus.

Bring that back up. Bring that back up. There we go. For the forgiveness of your sins. Your brokenness. To take away all your brokenness. All your pain. Everything wrong with you.

And then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Which is a promise for everyone. Everyone. Including your children. And your children's children.

Everyone that the Lord calls on. It's a total change. An entirely different direction. A whole new world.

What are you doing? Sometimes princess. Sometimes. You just have to take a risk. No. What just happened?

[16 : 49] What? Is this?

A magic carpet. Do you trust me? What did you say? Do you trust me? Yes.

Yes. I can show you the world.

Shining, shimmering, splendid. Tell me princess. Now when did you last? Let your heart decide.

I can open your eyes. Take you wonder by wonder. Over, sideways, and under.

[17 : 58] On a magic carpet ride. A whole new world. A new fantastic point of view.

No one to tell us no. Or where to go. Or say we're only dreaming. A whole new world. You know, some people think that the story of Aladdin is about a magic lamp.

Or about a magic carpet. But it's not. It's about someone who's been living in a small little world. It's a wonderful little world. But they're not aware that there's an entirely larger world around them.

And she has her eyes opened up to the possibilities that she never imagined. That's what God offers us. An entirely different way of seeing life.

God changes our whole way of looking at things. Some people would say that's impossible. Someone said to me, how do you have that clip? It's still at the movies. Jesus, we can do impossible things.

[19 : 00] With YouTube. But this actually is a more powerful impossible thing. Jesus was talking to some people and he said, with people, a lot of things are impossible.

But with God, say it with me. All things are possible. All things are possible. Things we can't even imagine. And it talks about it here. It says, in the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will preach. Your men, young people, will have visions. Your old people will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days.

And they will be preachers. God is opening up possibilities that we can't even imagine. We don't generally think that young people have any vision.

We assume that they haven't lived long enough to know enough. But God can open up their hearts and their lives so that they can see things and know things through the revelation of God that even people who have lived for two lifetimes wouldn't know.

[20 : 08] Because God can speak to their hearts. God can change the lives of old people that think dreaming is done. I don't have any time to dream. Because God reminds us that we'll live into eternity so we always have dreams.

There's always possibilities that we didn't think were possible. God makes it possible for even people who are poor. Servants and people we wouldn't think have anything to say to our culture.

That they would have a place to actually lead. My grandfather came to this country by jumping off a boat in New York Harbor. That makes him an illegal alien.

He got his citizenship. But the grandson of a poor man with nothing that lived in a shack on the waterfront of Buffalo is your pastor.

God can take us from a place that we can't imagine to a place beyond our imaginations. God wants to do something with you and your whole class today.

[21 : 27] Today, something more amazing than you can imagine. God has a dream. For each one of you. And it's a special dream.

Beyond what you've even thought that God could make. But the thing is, it doesn't just change us. When we change, it changes our whole world.

You see, in the first verse of this passage that you heard read, it said, When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. They were all of one court. They were all of one mind. They agreed with each other.

They learned to put aside all their differences. They didn't agree on everything. But they were together. And the power of God poured out on them. If you read the Bible, what you'll find is, is that good people of Christian faith and good people with the Holy Spirit inside of them will agree on one thing and on another thing that seem like they're complete opposites.

Because, you see, God can dream beyond our logic, beyond our thinking, beyond our ability. Just because we can't get our head around things doesn't mean God can't get the world around it. God does amazing things to bring people together.

[22 : 39] This story is about the undoing of the story in the Bible we call the Tower of Babel, where God split out the languages of people. In this one, they come together with one language. Can you imagine that there's one language we could all understand everywhere?

All together. All together. They share the same spirit. The same blood of Christ and so their family. And we shouldn't fight with family.

It hurts. It hurts more than us. It hurts the generations that come after us. I was walking through Boulevard Mall. Anybody remember Boulevard Mall? I was walking through Boulevard Mall one day.

At this point in time, I was probably about 25 or so. And my wife and I are walking through and I see this fellow that looks a lot like my father, but it's not my father. And as he came close, I said, Uncle Ed?

He said, Tommy? That's how he remembered me. I was only six years old the last time he saw me. And all of a sudden, all of a sudden, we started having a secret relationship with my aunt and uncle.

[23 : 50] My uncle Ed and my aunt Dean would come over to read to my daughter Autumn, who was a little girl at the time. Aunt Dean loved to read stories to her. And we'd get together, but we never told my parents because we didn't want to get a fight going, right?

So we were secretly meeting with our relatives so that we could just have the blessings of being with each other. I don't know what happened, but somewhere in the next few months, I don't know if my father found out we were getting together.

I don't know if I said something to him or asked him a question. All I know is one day we were having a party, celebrating something in my parents' backyard, and we came to the house and we looked in the backyard and under a tent, there's the five brothers.

All five of them. Sitting in the backyard, drinking a beer together. They're German. I mean, that's what they do. As if nothing ever happened.

They didn't apologize to each other. They didn't talk it through. They didn't figure it out. They didn't decide who was right or wrong. They just remembered they were family.

[24 : 58] And family shouldn't fight with each other. It's not worth the destruction that comes for generations after generations. You know, if you really had a magic lamp where you could have three wishes, when you're young, you might dream that you'd have a bazillion dollars.

Or maybe you'd be famous and on America's Got Talent or something. Maybe you'd wish that you'd have a bunch of friends or you're super smart. But if you get to my point in life, every one of those precious dreams and wishes would be about somebody in your family you love.

You know that. That's what we would wish for. That's the new world we're looking for. Where we can come together.

And not argue and fight with each other. But remember we have one Lord, one God, one story, one destiny. And one history. His story. See, when things are broken, you call on a guy.

And in this guy it says, All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. That doesn't mean it's what we do. It's what God does in us.

[26 : 13] Because with us it's impossible. We'd just fight. We'd argue like those people on the TV. But with God we can get past that brokenness. And live in possibilities we can't imagine.

Confirmation is an invitation to God's power. It's God's power coming upon us. Confirmation is an opportunity to open our hearts to God.

Today, Charlie and Lily came to do that. So did Aiden and Maddie and Rachel.

They came because they felt that it was important to make a decision today to turn around and walk the way God has called them and calls each of us as well.

In our church we have something we do when we gather for this family reunion we're in today. We turn to our God and remember that we're broken and we need fixing.

[27 : 25] We call a guy. We call it a prayer of confession. And if you're willing, I'm going to invite you to join us this morning. Dear God in heaven. I have sinned.

I have sinned. I've broken your heart. I've broken other people. Forgive me, Lord. Change me, Lord.

Pour your Holy Spirit upon me. That I might live in your love and in your peace. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Amen. And God has been waiting for you to do that all day. For some, he's been waiting your entire lifetime. He's always been ready to pull the brokenness out of your life.

To toss your sin away. He's just waiting for you to turn towards him. He loves us. Not because we're good.

[28 : 27] Because he's good. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. But it doesn't end there.

It says, all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. Filled with the Holy Spirit. Not just a little weenie kind of presence, but an overwhelming power.

They use wind. And they use fire. That's what we use to generate power, isn't it? A power that God can give us beyond abundance. And God gives to us, each and every one of us, today.

And God calls Alexis. God calls Jacob. Jason.

You can call me Ron. Ben. And Connor. And Kylie. And all of the ones that have come here today.

[29 : 34] For that. Did I get everybody? You know they're sitting up here going, What about me? What about me? God means each and every one of you have a new life starting today.

Because God has a purpose and a design and an intention for each of you to receive his power and his presence.

That's what we're here about. You're going to have some wonderful grand moments in your life. Some of you are going to have wonderful moments where you fall in love and get married. Others of you are going to graduate or get a wonderful job or have great successes and celebrations.

But there is not a decision you make in your life that's more important than the decision you make today to let the power of God more powerful than anything in the universe enter your lives.

That's why we're here. Because that spirit calls us together. Because just as we can love these young people enough to show up on a Sunday morning when we have other things to do we can love each other through that same spirit of God who calls us to be part of the largest family that ever existed.

[30 : 58] You know, Christians have two billion brothers and sisters around the world. And imagine how the world would change if we start treating each other like brothers and sisters. Now I know. I squabble with my brothers and sisters.

But in the end we give each other a hug. And we love each other. I think it's been amazing how this church has lived into that. I think it would be more amazing if we could share that with the entire universe and create a whole new world.

God is calling all of us to bring that spirit that power into the world and into the lives of everyone around us. May God bless you.

May God fill you with his spirit. May God work within your life that you might feel the power the strength the wonder that only God can give. May God turn your life around. May God turn your life towards him.

That you might have the wonders and the miracles and the blessing that only God can give. God is peace. Amen. Amen.

[32 : 32] Amen. Amen.

Amen.