



A Pentecost Perspective

Seven weeks after Easter, on May 23 this year, most Nazarenes will celebrate Pentecost Sunday. On that day, we will remember the early believers who, while gathered in an upper room, were being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).

What happened on the Day of Pentecost?

We read in chapter two of Acts: “When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place...They were all filled with the Holy Spirit...Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd...this is what the prophet Joel spoke about...‘Yes, even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will proclaim my message...’What you now see and hear is his gift that he has poured out on us” (Acts 2:1-33).

Arnold Airhart writes about this in *Beacon Bible Expositions* (1977, Vol. 5). He observes: “There is a true sense in which all the gracious dealings of God with mankind before this day were leading toward this climatic hour...With the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost, new privileges, blessings, and opportunities, hitherto only yearned after, were opened wide for all believers to receive...on the Day of Pentecost there began a human-divine relationship through the Spirit in which the very truth, power, love and life of Christ are now imparted to His followers, and this experience has been ever since the personal, collective, and universal birthright of the Church.”¹

¹ Arnold Airhart, “The Birth and Growth of Church at Jerusalem,” *Beacon Bible Expositions*, Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 5 (1977): 28, <https://www.whdl.org/sites/default/files/resource/bruce/9780834127029.pdf>.

Airhart continues “The day of Pentecost was, as we have noted, a day of beginnings. It was also a day of great grace when, as on the days of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Lord, God took yet another long redemptive stride of mercy toward us. But it was especially a day of fulfillment...the long-awaited day brought fulfillment to the believers’ prayers and faith. They had been tarrying in obedience to the Lord’s promises and commands...The “promise of the Father” (1:4) was being fulfilled as well as the word of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:11-12), and the numerous prophetic passages on the Spirit in the Old Testament.”

Pentecost and Trinity Sunday

Some Nazarenes living in world areas within the influence of Orthodox Christianity will celebrate Pentecost a week later on May 30, which is also known as Trinity Sunday. The focus will not just be on the ministry of the Holy Spirit but on our relationship with the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit coming as the believers’ Helper. “When, however, the Spirit comes, who reveals the truth about God, he will lead you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own authority, but he will speak of what he hears and will tell you of things to come. He will give me glory, because he will take what I say and tell it to you. All that my Father has is mine; that is why I said that the Spirit will take what I give him and tell it to you” (John 16:7-15, GNB).

Paul wrote to the Romans: “There is no condemnation now for those who live in union with Christ Jesus...if Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God...by the Spirit’s power we cry out to God, ‘Father! My Father!’ God’s Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God’s children...” (Romans 8:1-17).

This is certainly something to rejoice about whichever week we celebrate Pentecost.