

## **PENTECOST CAN BE SUMMED UP IN ONE WORD... Acts 2:1-11 Sunday, May 23, 2021**

I think it's generally true that people are always looking to improve, **to change their lives for the better**. That's why there are so many commercials for diet and exercise products – lots of people out there trying **to change their appearance for the better**. A common way to get rid of your wrinkles today is BOTOX INJECTIONS! Just have this stuff injected into your face or your body, and that will take away your wrinkles for awhile. People are always looking to improve, **to change for the better**. Isn't that why people go to school? Isn't that why people go to conferences and seminars? Isn't that why people go to counselors and psychologists? **PEOPLE WANT TO BE CHANGED FOR THE BETTER.**

**WHAT IS IT ABOUT YOURSELF THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO CHANGE?** If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? Is it the way you look? Does it have something to do with your health? What about something to do with your level of expertise in your job? Maybe you are the best skate boarder on the block! **If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?**

**GOD IS INTERESTED IN CHANGE.** He's interested in changing you. Today is Pentecost Sunday, and as we take a look at what happened on Pentecost Day many years ago, we see that God changed many people's lives. And as we learn about these things, we will see that God is also interested in changing you - there are certain things about you that God wants to change. What are those things? And how does God plan to do that? **WE WILL FIND THE ANSWER AS WE STUDY GOD'S WORD.**

### **TWO (2) MAJOR CHANGES THAT TOOK PLACE ON PENTECOST DAY.**

**Change number one was what happened to the disciples.** If you are familiar with the Scriptures, you know that the disciples believed in Jesus as their Savior, but they were still very confused about all kinds of different things. They still didn't fully understand Jesus' mission, why he had come to earth. They were still wondering if Jesus would be an earthly king. They were confused, and as a result, **THEY FOUND THEMSELVES TIMID IN THE LORD'S WORK.** They weren't confident about sharing the Gospel with others. How could they be, if they didn't fully understand it?

**But then Pentecost came.** The disciples were together, when the sound of a blowing wind came down from heaven. What seemed to be tongues of fire settled on their heads. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in foreign languages they had never learned before. A crowd gathered, people from all over the world, and that crowd listened as the disciples preached the Gospel. The Apostle Peter stood up and addressed the crowd – he gave a beautiful sermon that God the Holy Spirit inspired him to preach, a sermon that converted 3000 people in one day.

**Do you see the changes that took place on Pentecost?** No longer were the disciples confused. Now they understood the plan of salvation completely. No longer were they timid. Now, they were confident, speaking publicly. **Look at Peter** – two months earlier he was so afraid that he denied Jesus three times. Now he was speaking to the crowd with confidence and understanding that he had never had before.

**REMEMER, I MENTIONED THERE WERE (2) CHANGES ON PENTECOST.** There was another change that took place on Pentecost, and you could argue that this change was more spectacular than THE FIRST CHANGE, THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE DISCIPLES. **The second change is: After Peter preached his sermon on Pentecost, 3000 PEOPLE BECAME BELIEVERS AND WERE BAPTISED.** We don't know much about these people. We do know that Jerusalem was packed with people, because of the Festival of Pentecost. *Back then, Pentecost was an agricultural festival – God had told the Jews to gather in Jerusalem 50 days after Passover to celebrate the harvest. Jews from all over the Roman empire came. 3000 of them who were not Christians, who did not*

believe in Jesus Christ, were changed that day. Their whole way of looking at God, at themselves, at the world, at eternal life – everything had changed. The Holy Spirit was the one who converted those 3000 people that day. Now these people knew how to get to heaven. Now they knew that they were at peace with God. Now they knew that Jesus was their Savior.

**PENTECOST CAN BE SUMMED UP IN ONE WORD, AND I BELIEVE THAT WORD IS: “CHANGE.”**

*We see the change that took place in the disciples, and the change that took place in those 3000 people.*

**OUR WORLD NEEDS CHANGE!** There are so many people who do not believe in Jesus Christ, who do not know how to get to heaven. And there are so many Christians who are like those disciples were before Pentecost – confused, weak, timid. **We need the Holy Spirit to come to us, and change us.**

**OUR PROBLEM IS, WE DON'T THINK WE NEED TO BE CHANGED.** “I’m alright the way I am,” we say to ourselves. “What do I need to change about myself?” The answer is, a lot. Yes, it’s true, we are Christians, but we still have sinful habits that we don’t want to get rid of. We still have moments when we are selfish. We still have moments when we completely misunderstand what God is telling us in the Bible. We still have moments when we fail to share our faith because we’re too timid. It is true that we are Christians, that we are going to heaven, **IF SO, WE STILL NEED TO “CHANGE.” TO BECOME WHO GOD WANTS US TO BE.**

**HOW DOES A PERSON CHANGE HIS SOUL?** You can’t do it by trying to be a BETTER PERSON. That’s like saying that there is something wrong with my car, but I’ll try to change that by being a better driver. **You need someone to work on your engine, your soul.** But the thing is, your soul is too complicated for you to fix yourself. You need someone to fix it for you. **And that someone is the “HOLY SPIRIT.”**

**But how? On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came directly to those disciples.** Today, he could do that if he wanted to, **but in the Bible, he tells us that he works in a different way.** He no longer comes with the loud sound of a wind, or with what looks like tongues of fire, or with the ability to speak in foreign languages. **That was a one-time event.**

**Today, the Holy Spirit comes to you through the quiet, humble preaching of the Word.** On the surface, it doesn’t look like anything spectacular. But on the inside of you, all kinds of changes are taking place. And when we combine the Word with water, we get **BAPTISM.** What happens at a baptism? Once again, on the surface, it doesn’t look like anything spectacular. But we know **from what God tells us in his Word that in baptism, the Holy Spirit changes a person, causes a person, even a little person, to believe in Christ.**

**And what happens when we combine God’s Word with BREAD & WINE, as Jesus did on the night he was betrayed? Once again, it doesn’t look like anything spectacular, but it is. Because as we partake of Christ’s actual body and blood in this Sacrament, the Holy Spirit changes you. He strengthens your FAITH. HE increases your love for Christ and your love for one another.**

Do you want to be more confident? Do you want to be more at peace with God and yourself? Do you want to be less confused about the Bible? Do you want to understand it better? Do you want to be able to share your faith more naturally, more confidently? Do you want to be able to live the way God tells you to live in the Bible? **Do you want to change your soul for the better?**

**THEN ALLOW THE “HOLY SPIRIT” OF GOD TO “CHANGE” YOU—TO DO WHAT THE SPIRIT DOES.** He did that in a miraculous, unusual way on that first Pentecost. Today, he does it as you spend time hearing the Word, as you see a baptism, as you take the Lord’s Supper – that’s how the Holy Spirit changes people, changes you, turning you more and more into the Christian that God has made you to be. **HE CHANGES YOU FROM THE**

**INSIDE OUT... SO THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO TAKE GOD'S "LOVE" AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS THROUGH... HIS, "WORD" HIS "BODY" AND YES, THROUGH... HIS "BLOOD." AND IT IS IN THE SHARING OF JESUS AND HIS WORD, HIS BODY AND HIS BLOOD THAT WE DRAW CLOSE TO HIM AND SAVE OTHERS FROM A FRIGHTFUL DEATH...LIKE WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED IF IT WASN'T FOR THE ANGELS IN THIS STORY....**

"In 1949, a father of a family had just returned from the war. He said that on every highway you could see soldiers in uniform hitchhiking home to their families. The thrill of the reunion with his family was soon overshadowed by his Mother's illness. There was a problem with her kidneys. When he arrived home, the doctors told him that she needed a blood transfusion immediately or she would not live through the night.

His Mother's blood type was AB negative, a very rare type. In those days there were no blood banks like there are today. No one in the family had that type blood and the hospital had not been able to find anyone with that rare type. The Doctor gave their family little hope. My Father/Son decided to head home for a little while to change clothes and then return for the inevitable good-byes.

As he was driving home he passed a soldier in uniform hitchhiking. Deep in grief, he was not going to stop. But something compelled him to pull over. The soldier climbed in but the heavy-hearted father never spoke. He just continued driving down the road toward home. The soldier could tell he was upset as a tear ran down his cheek.

**The soldier asked about the tear.** It was then he began telling the stranger that his mother was going to die because the hospital couldn't find anyone who could donate AB negative blood. Then he explained that he was just heading home to change clothes. That is when he noticed the soldier's open hand holding dog tags that read AB negative. **The soldier told him to turn the car around and head back to the hospital.**

**The mother of this story lived until 1996, 47 more years.** To this day the Father & Family doesn't know the name of that soldier. **The returning Father wonders if that stranger really was a soldier or if he was an Angel in Uniform."**

**Whether angel or soldier, God had provided the right blood to save that grandmother from dying.**

At communion, we remember the shedding of blood that saves us from spiritual death. God has provided the perfect blood--the blood of Jesus- to save each of us who will believe, because "without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness—THERE IS NO LIFE AFTER DEATH" –**THERE IS NO OPPORTUNITY FOR CHANGE!!!**  
**CHOOSE HIS BLOOD... AND CHANGE WILL FOLLOW! Amen.**