

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PENTECOST

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Important changes took place on the day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church. The way of salvation was not changed, always having been by grace through faith. But the relationship of the Holy Spirit among the people of faith changed in important ways which are unique to the church age. An awareness of the historic significance of the Day of Pentecost helps us to appreciate important distinctions in God's historic plan of redemption.

I. What didn't change: the way of salvation.

Way of Salvation (unchanged at Pentecost)		
Element	Before Pentecost	After Pentecost
Man's Condition	spiritually dead, totally depraved ²	spiritually dead, totally depraved ³
Means of Regeneration	born of the Spirit ⁴	born of the Spirit ⁵
Object of Faith	God	God
Basis of Salvation	blood of Christ ⁶	blood of Christ ⁷
Requirement of Salvation	by grace through faith ⁸	by grace through faith ⁹

II. What changed: the ministry and relationship of the Holy Spirit with believers and the role of believers in God's historic plan of redemption.

Divine Program: Role in Redemptive History (changed at Pentecost)		
Element	Before Pentecost	After Pentecost
Content of Faith	progressive revelation of a coming redeemer ¹⁰	Jesus Christ <i>the Redeemer</i> ¹¹
Expression of Faith	follow the Mosaic law, offer animal sacrifices ¹²	follow the law of Christ, practice the sacraments, walk by the Spirit ¹³
Holy Spirit Baptism	not yet given ¹⁴	yes, body of Christ ¹⁵
Relation to Spirit	comes upon, fills, ¹⁶ taken ¹⁷	indwells, seals ¹⁸
Spiritual Gifting	as needed, individually ¹⁹	all believers ²⁰
World Evangelism	no ²¹	yes ²²
God's Dwelling Place	within Holy of Holies ²³	within believers, the church ²⁴
Priesthood	Levites ²⁵	all believers ²⁶
Jew/Gentile Separation	Mosaic Law ²⁷	one <i>new man</i> ²⁸

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- ² Gen. 2:17; Jer. 17:9; John 3:3
- ³ John 3:3; 1 Cor. 2:14; Col. 2:13
- ⁴ John 3:5,10. "Whatever salvation was wrought in Old Testament times was wrought by the Holy Spirit..." Lewis S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1976), 6:74.
- ⁵ 1 Pet. 1:3, 23; 1 Jn. 5:1
- ⁶ Gen. 3:21; Ex. 12:13; Lev. 17:11; Isa. 53:10
- ⁷ Mat. 26:28; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:9
- ⁸ Gen. 15:6; Hab. 2:4
- ⁹ Eph. 2:5-8; 2 Tim. 1:9
- ¹⁰ Gen. 3:15; 15:6; 22:14; 49:10
- ¹¹ John 1:29, 36; 1 Cor. 5:7
- ¹² This is but one example of works resulting from saving faith (operative after the giving of the Law at Sinai). The expression of faith differs in various dispensations.
- ¹³ Rom. 8:1, 4-6; 1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 5:16; Gal. 6:2
- ¹⁴ Mat. 3:11; 16:18; Luke 11:13; John 7:38-39; John 14:17-20; John 16:7; Acts 1:5,8
- ¹⁵ Acts 2:2-4; Acts 11:15-16; Rom. 6:3; 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13, 27; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:2-6; Col. 1:18
- ¹⁶ Num. 24:2; Jdg. 3:10; 6:34; 1S. 10:6; 19:20; 2 Chr. 15:1; 20:14; Luke 1:67
- ¹⁷ 1S. 16:13-14; Ps. 51:11
- ¹⁸ John 14:16; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13
- ¹⁹ Ex. 31:3; Num. 11:17, 25; Jdg. 3:10
- ²⁰ 1 Cor. 12:7,11; 1 Pe. 4:10. Gifts given at Christ's ascension, Eph. 4:8-12
- ²¹ Mat. 10:5-6; I Mat. 15:24. Israel was to be a holy nation and demonstrate the reality of Jehovah as a nation, but never was given the Great Commission of the church.
- ²² Mat. 28:19-20
- ²³ Ex. 25:8, 22; Num. 7:89; 1 Sam. 4:4; Isa. 37:16
- ²⁴ 1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21
- ²⁵ Ex. 28:1; Luke 1:5
- ²⁶ 1 Pe. 2:5-9; Rev. 1:6. "Old Testament priests *were Levites*. New Testament priests *wear levis!*"
- ²⁷ Post Sinai.
- ²⁸ Rom. 11:25-26, 32; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Gal. 3:28; 6:15; Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:11. "There are no longer any special qualifications like nationality. All such barriers have been removed.." Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 1038.