

Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives Transcript

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Sermon entitled: The Promise Fulfilled – The Meaning of Pentecost

Date: 2 June 1991

Location: Stone Church, Toronto

Accession #: 2017-237

Date Transcript Completed: 23 August 2017

Rev. James D. Craig

Thank you, Brother Earl. I wish I had brought my yarmulke with me this morning. I would have put it on right at that moment. Earl has always kidded me about my beard. I told him I didn't do a thing. It just came by itself. It's those who shave it off who have to take action. Not only that, if I shaved it off my young kids wouldn't know me, so I don't dare.

In our seminar coming up we will be starting this evening. There will be three sessions in the seminar. This is the workbook for the seminar, Lifestream, the Holy Spirit and God's People. It is a Bible study book. There are thirteen lessons. It covers a mini-theology of the Holy Spirit in terms that are clear, we trust, that are concise and walks through the basic truths of the person, the work and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This particular book has been dubbed the official study guide for this year's emphasis on Prepared with Power for the Decade of Destiny, the ten-year evangelism thrust of our denomination, the PAOC. They will be available at the table for \$6.00 after the service. We encourage you to pick one up, even if you can't make all the sessions in the seminar, everything I am going to say and more will be in this book. Well, not everything, but you will certainly get the content of the seminar by purchasing the book and having it for future reference or study or however you may want to use it.

Also I have available this morning an order form whereby you may obtain messages on cassette tape. I have a number of other messages that I could share with you on cassette, particularly a message that has blessed many people on the genealogy of Jesus Christ. How many have ever heard a sermon on the genealogy of Jesus Christ? Most people don't preach from the 'begats', but the Lord has used this message and blessed it and we encourage you to pick it up. Another message I recently preached on the sovereignty of God ---

Many times in the things we experience and go through in life we wonder what God is doing. We sort of know that he is able to rescue us and yet when he chooses not to and we suffer and we struggle, then we get confused in terms of God's purpose for our lives. The sovereignty of God will help you understand that, and particularly I would like you to note as well a message on household salvation for those who have

family and friends who don't know the Lord, you need to know the promises of the word of God so very clearly you can recognize the mandate and the opportunity you have there to pray your family into the kingdom. That message will encourage you to do so. If you aren't able to purchase the tapes this morning, you can take the form with you and make use of it at any time in the future you wish to do so.

Let's take our Bibles and turn with me please to Acts, chapter 2, as we look this morning at the Day of Pentecost. We will read about the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church, the fulfillment of what the Bible calls "The Promise". Do you know the Bible has over seven thousand promises in it, but only one of all of those promises is called "The Promise?" Jesus Christ said in Luke 24, behold I am sending forth the promise of my Father upon you but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high. I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. And if we had the time this morning we would go back and look in Isaiah 44 and see the promise repeated there. We would see it once again in the classic Pentecostal text in Joel 2:28-29, the coming of the Holy Spirit. We can see it in the words of John the Baptist, promising that the One who was coming after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. And of course the promise repeated once again in the first chapter of Acts in the words of the Lord Jesus when he said that they were to wait in Jerusalem and very soon the promise of the Father was coming. Well, it finally arrived in Acts, chapter 2, so let's look at it quickly as we read from verse 1.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and

Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

That is the theme of my message this morning as we look at the Day of Pentecost, that very special and unique day in all of human history. We ask ourselves: what does this mean? What is the significance of this particular day, this day from which we take our name as Pentecostal people? Well of course the word Pentecost comes from the Greek word *pentecost* which means fifty. The Day of Pentecost was a feast time in the Jewish calendar, exactly fifty days after Passover. You have the Passover on the Friday and then the Sabbath celebrated on the Saturday after that. The day after that, the first Sabbath after Passover you had the presentation of the first sheaf of the barley harvest to the Lord. Exactly seven sevens later, forty-nine days, inclusive, which is fifty days, which happened to fall, by the way, on a Sunday, you had the celebration of the Feast of Pentecost. Tradition says it was the day that the Law was delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai, although scripture doesn't say that of itself.

But I believe there are at least five things this morning I would like us to take note of that occurred on the Day of Pentecost; five momentous things that God did on that one unique and particular day from which we draw our name and to which we look as our heritage. First of all there was an impartation of new life and power on that particular day. The spirit of God came upon the church in a mighty way.

You know, the word *spirit* simply means breath. In most languages in fact, in the Greek of the New Testament, the word for spirit is the word *pneuma*, from which we get our word *pneumatic*, something that is run by air pressure. It means breath. In the Hebrew language the word *ruach* is the same thing. It means breath or life or spirit, depending upon the context. So in Genesis 2:7 the Bible says God breathed the breath of life, he breathed the *ruach*, the spirit of life into Adam and he became a living soul. In Ezekiel 37 you will recall the vision he has of the valley of dry bones and how these bones are brought together by the word of the Lord and flesh and sinew grows upon them and they stand up like a mighty army. But they are not alive. They are just like mannequins. There is no life in them. So he is told to prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, say to the wind, say to the spirit, thus says the Lord God, come from the four winds oh breath and breathe on these slain that they may come to life. The spirit himself is life. He brings life. He conveys life. He pours life into God's people. This happened in a unique and initiatory sense on the Day of Pentecost.

We think of John, chapter 3, where Jesus was conversing with the Jewish leader Nicodemus and explaining to him about the breath of God that goes wherever it wants to. We can't figure out where it is going next and you can't control it. It is sovereign. The spirit of God, the life of God who comes to live within us when we experience Pentecost, when we give our lives to Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within us, this is what happened on the Day of Pentecost. There was this impartation of a new life, a spiritual life, a life that was eternal.

Eternal life does not begin when you die. It does not begin when Jesus Christ comes back. It begins when you give your life to him. It begins when you accept his life by the Holy Spirit into your life, because you see eternal life is not just life that does not end. There is no reference particularly to the duration of it, but a reference rather to the quality. Eternal life is God's life. It is the life of the Creator of all things. It is spiritual life that comes to us, that comes within us when we give our lives to Christ. Uniquely on this particular day it was poured into the church, the life of God by the Holy Spirit came in a unique way upon the church. Also this life includes the knowledge of God, the capacity to communicate with him, to talk to him, to listen to him, to come into his presence, the privileges of access that we have enjoyed this morning through prayer and worship. All of these things are wrapped up in the coming of the life of God to the church when the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost.

This is the symbolism of the wind, the rushing mighty wind that they heard on that day. But you know wind also speaks of power and Jesus Christ promised the church that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them in Acts 1:8. We all know the text so well. Power would be given to them to accomplish the momentous task of proclaiming the gospel, starting at Jerusalem and not ending until it reached the ends of the earth, even as it is proclaimed to this very day. At this moment all around the world there are those who are proclaiming the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit that was first imparted to the church on the Day of Pentecost.

How may recall just a few weeks ago we saw the horrific pictures on television of the tornadoes that swept through Kansas? It was particularly interesting for me as I watched it, not only to hear the statistics of the damage and so forth, and unfortunately those who lost their lives, but particularly there was a television crew – maybe some of you saw those pictures on TV – in their car and they were looking across the Kansas cornfields at this funnel cloud. All of a sudden they came to the marvellous realization it

was coming straight for them. Quickly the footage jumbles and you can see the car door opening and they get in the car and speed down the highway, realizing they are not going to be able to outrun this thing because it is going so fast. They pull up to the nearest bridge underpass, fortunately there was one nearby, pull over the car near some frightened children and other folk already there, rush up as far as they can get up underneath the protection of that bridge. Fortunately the cameraman, having not lost his senses in the crisis of the moment, leaves the camera on. It is recording down the highway and you can actually see this thing come and pass right over the bridge and the grass goes flat and the incredible sound of the rushing mighty wind. That's power. That's the power that the Holy Spirit brings into our lives.

But it's not destructive power. It's not power that knocks down power lines and lifts up little houses and shatters them and takes people's lives. It is power that brings life. It's power that brings healing this morning as we prayed for the sick, believing that the power of the Holy Spirit that came upon the church on the Day of Pentecost is there to be released and there to flow out of us indeed in a life stream. That's why this title was chosen: the life stream of God. It comes to give us life and then to flow out of us, to convey the life and power of God to other people. That empowering that Jesus Christ promised his church has been given to us. We don't need to come for a fresh filling and a fresh anointing and to receive more power. Because if you are a born again Christian all of the power that created this universe in an instant lives within you because the spirit of God himself is there. When you have him you have all of his gifts, you have all of his graces, you have all of his wisdom and his knowledge and all of his power potentially is in your life, simply to be released that it may minister in the name of Jesus Christ.

The witness that Christ called the disciples to bring is a witness of life. It was a witness to communicate to the world that God had overcome death. God had overcome sin. And now there was salvation and forgiveness and eternal life available. So through the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to demonstrate through signs, wonders and miracles that Jesus Christ is alive. When people see a lame person walk and see a dead person rise again and they see cancers disappear at the mighty name of Jesus, it convinces them, it causes them to realize that he indeed is alive. He's not just a historical figure, a teacher who was once crucified and put in a grave somewhere and we don't know where he is today. But he is alive and well on planet Earth and doing his work of showing God's love and mercy to people through his mighty works.

So there was a tremendous impartation on the Day of Pentecost of God's life, of God's power.

Secondly, there was a dedication that took place of a new temple. This was symbolized by the tongues of fire that came and appeared. There are two senses in which the temple of God was inaugurated in a new way on the Day of Pentecost. Do you know on two other occasions in the Old Testament the fire of God fell at the inauguration of a new temple? A temple is a place where God dwells. A temple is a repository of God's presence. When the tabernacle was dedicated, first of all, the fire of God fell and consumed the offering and gave witness to God's divine blessing and favour and acceptance and the coming of his presence to dwell in the midst of his people in that tabernacle, that unique place they had constructed where his holy presence might dwell in the midst of his people.

On a second occasion when the temple of Solomon was dedicated – it was dedicated three times because it was destroyed and rebuilt twice – the fire didn't fall on the rebuilt buildings because originally the fire fell the day Solomon dedicated the temple. God demonstrated his presence, God demonstrated his blessing and his approval upon the actions of his people and came in personal presence to live on that piece of geography that is sacred to this very day and that much blood has been spilt over unfortunately. There is much to be done and much will happen in the days to come on that one rectangular piece of ground on a hillside in Jerusalem overlooking the Kidron Valley, looking across to the Mount of Olives, the temple where God said his name would be placed.

So the fire came as a symbolic way of demonstrating his presence, his power and his approval upon what his people were doing.

The same is true on the Day of Pentecost. As we look at the original language when it says there appeared tongues of fire, distributing themselves and resting on each one. First of all there was a single flame that appeared and then individual flames were resting over the heads of each and every believer who was there on that very special day. Both the Jews and the Gentiles believed that somehow fire around the head was a symbol of God's favour and approval. So it was on this day. And through the fire symbol God dedicated the temple of the church of Jesus Christ, first of all in a collective sense. Ephesians, chapter 2, tells us that we are the dwelling place of God, collectively, all of us, or yu'all as those of us from the South would say. We don't have a plural inclusive. You can't tell the difference between you and you all in the way we normally

speak. But the church as a whole, all of the body of Christ, is the dwelling place of God by his spirit. And God was inaugurating a new temple on the Day of Pentecost, the temple of the church of Jesus Christ, the body of Christ, that which conveys and carries forth his gracious presence into all the world, even to this very day.

But secondly in an individual sense as well God was inaugurating temples of the Holy Spirit because every person who knows Jesus Christ in a personal way has the spirit of God living within them, has God alive within them, and they are a temple. 1 Corinthians 6:19 reminds us of the fact that we are individually personally the temples of the Holy Ghost because he has come to live within us.

So on that momentous day two thousand years ago almost, the Day of Pentecost, we find the inauguration of the temple of the church of Jesus Christ and of the temples of the Lord Jesus Christ, the temples of God, even individual believers.

The third thing that happened on the Day of Pentecost is that we find the proclamation of a new message, a new message for the first time was proclaimed on that momentous day. This is symbolized for us by the speaking in other tongues, the Pentecostal sign, as it is known so well that occurred. This was the dawn of a new era of communication, a reversal of Babel, a reversal of the confusion that came when man's power and pride was lifted up and the result was confusion. On the Day of Pentecost we find God's power descending and the result is supernatural understanding, supernatural ability to communicate, communicating in languages they had never learned. In this particular case what is known as xenoglossia, speaking tongues that were known and knowable languages but they were not known to the speakers. Many times speaking on tongues is a heavenly language. It's not an earthly language. It's not a tongue you can get a Berlitz course to study. But on the Day of Pentecost they were speaking in the tongues of all of those Jews who had gathered together for the celebration of the Passover and they would stay over for a time on their pilgrimage, probably a once in a lifetime experience, the diaspora of Jews all over the world would come together maybe once in their lifetime. They would save up and come to Jerusalem, celebrate the Passover, stay for Pentecost and so forth. They were gathered together. And as we look at the geographical list that I read earlier at the beginning of my message, you will find there is a representation of all the known world there. There are fifteen groups that are mentioned and they represent all the known areas of the world at that particular time. So in a sense we have a reversal of Babel taking place on the Day of Pentecost. We have God coming in a new way to

communicate, to make himself known through the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring a message that could not be understood in any other way, a message that has to come by the revelation of the spirit of God to the hearts of individuals who need to repent, who need to accept Jesus Christ and then can come to them a personal knowing relationship with God the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit when he comes to dwell within us.

We notice in the Old Testament when the spirit of God comes upon people so often they begin to communicate, they begin to prophesy and so we find the spirit of God falling on Saul and he prophesies. The saying goes forth: Is Saul also among the prophets? It is repeated in the Old Testament. We find on a particular occasion that Moses called upon the Lord to distribute of his spirit upon the elders that he might have help in the work of governing the people of God. There were seventy of them that were supposed to be gathered together but two were missing. Eldad and Medad were in the camp but when the spirit of God came upon those elders, even the two that weren't there began to prophesy in the camp. The spirit of God inspired divine communication from their mouths. So it was on the Day of Pentecost; an inauguration, a proclamation of a new message communicated with divine power symbolized by the speaking in other tongues.

This new message is the elevation of the name of Jesus Christ. It is the proclamation. As Peter says it in his sermon that followed on the Day of Pentecost, on that same day, he says in verse 22: Men of Israel, listen to these words. Jesus, the Nazarene, a man attested to by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through him in your midst, just as you yourselves know, this man delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by hands of godless men and put him to death. But God raised him up again, putting an end to the agony of death. And then verse 36 says this: Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

And for the first time in a sense we know that Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom. But the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ for the first time on this particular day is preached and is communicated.

As a result we find, fourthly, the inauguration of a new age has begun: the age of grace, the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. We find the beginning, verse 16 says, of the last days, that period of time that is known as the

last days, and it says this what was spoken of by the prophet Joel. It shall be in the last days, says God, that I will pour forth of my spirit upon all mankind. The Day of Pentecost is when that began. We think we're living in the last days today. As Pentecostals now for about seventy, no about seventy-five or eighty years, we have said that this last day outpouring of the Holy Spirit has come and it started at Azusa Street or perhaps in Topeka, Kansas before that and it has spread literally all around the globe to the point where there are literally several hundreds of millions of people who are Pentecostal Christians, full of the Holy Spirit, who have seen the fulfillment of the promise of the pouring forth of God's spirit.

But if you read your Bible carefully I've got news for you. The last days have been going on now for two thousand years, for two thousand years. It was the Day of Pentecost Peter was talking about when he quoted the promise of Joel and he said this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. I will pour out of my spirit upon all mankind in the last days and your sons and daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. That's why so many preachers claim to have visions because that makes them young, you know. If they have dreams they're old. Visions are popular for that reason. (Laughter) Okay. Just take note of that. I'm throwing that in for no charge at all.

But we have this fulfillment and the beginning of the last days. Now for some folks that creates a dilemma. They say well now wait a minute. Last days. The immanency of Christ coming. But two thousand years along how do you reconcile those two things? How do you put them together? Well, let me suggest something to you. There is an illustration that I have found so helpful in trying to understand what God means by the last days. Keep in mind of course that with the Lord a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day. Given that fact, if we think of time moving towards the culmination, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the age that we are now in will end and we have the age which is to come, which the scriptures speak about, the time of Christ's reign upon the earth for a thousand years in power and glory and righteousness and the chance for the world to see what the kingdom of God is really like.

You know, God is going to have a chance, God is going to have an opportunity to show mankind how wonderful things are when he has his way totally, when he has his way completely. Because in the millennium, in that thousand-year literal physical reign of Jesus Christ upon the planet, set up from Jerusalem, everything that God has ever

wanted will be done. His word will be obeyed. He shall rule the nations, the scriptures says, with a rod of iron. All men shall have the opportunity to see what glory and what blessing and what strength and what joy and what wholeness throughout all of creation will come about when God's word is obeyed. That's the age to come. But before that we are in this present time. If you think of it as moving towards that moment when the culmination comes, when the age of God's kingdom would begin and for many, many thousands of years we have been moving in a straight line. It's almost like walking across the street towards the curb and the curb going this way represents that crossover from this age into the age which is to come. It represents the coming of Jesus and you're getting closer and closer and closer to the curb. When you get to the Day of Pentecost all of a sudden we turn sideways and start to walk parallel to that curb. We walk alongside of it so we are only ever one step away from the coming of Jesus. We are only ever one step further to go and then his kingdom will be set up. And yet we have been walking parallel for two thousand years. We are still in the last days. We're still only that far away because at any moment Jesus could come. Paul testified to it. The early Christians, in a sense, spent half their time looking over their shoulder for Jesus to come. They had a saying. Maranatha. Even so Lord Jesus, come. Maranatha. It was a common thing they said because they were looking, they were expecting any moment to see the clouds come apart and Jesus Christ returning in power and glory.

That has been the expectation of the church. It has been lost sometimes through poor theology but regained in most recent times in the understanding of biblical prophecy and the application of proper literal principles of interpretation to the word of God. But the opportunity has been there for two thousand years during this age of grace, during this time when people at any moment may turn to God through Jesus Christ, have their sins forgiven and have the Holy Spirit come and live within them.

There is so much more we could say on this point, the inauguration of a new age, but we must move on.

Finally, to our last point, the presentation of a new opportunity. The Day of Pentecost was first of all the impartation of new life and power. It was the dedication of a new temple and temples of the Holy Ghost. It was the proclamation of a new message: the word of salvation through faith alone in Jesus Christ and the inauguration of a new age where the Holy Spirit would be allowed to work out the purposes of God through the church and to have his pleasure until Jesus returns.

The Day of Pentecost represented for the very first time the presentation of a new opportunity. In verse 38 Peter said repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The opportunity arose for the first time to be saved in the name of Jesus, to receive the Holy Spirit in his person and to allow him to flow forth in his fullness from our lives, the opportunity to receive the life and power of God, the wind and the fire, into our lives that we might accomplish his purposes and perpetuate the supernatural ministry of Jesus Christ as he called us to do. The opportunity to know God in a personal way, to have a relationship with him, for him to be as real or more real than your spouse, than your children, than your parents, than the dearest person on this planet to you, that's what God can become. That's what Jesus Christ can become. That's what the Holy Spirit can become when he comes to take up residence in your life. This new opportunity that was presented for the very first time on the Day of Pentecost, to know God's blessing, to know God's favour, to know God's love, the Holy Spirit has been given, the scriptures say, to shed forth God's love in our hearts, to convince us. Because you know so easily we get down on ourselves, don't we. We know that we fail. We know we are unworthy. That's okay. It's all right to be unworthy. If you thought you were worthy, you wouldn't be worthy, if you take what I mean. It's only the unworthy that need apply for grace because grace is God's undeserved favour and blessing and forgiveness and mercy to those who could never deserve it. Thank God we all qualify! Amen? We all qualify this morning. There's not one of you sitting here that doesn't qualify for the grace and mercy of God because it's free and it is given to the unworthy. We can know that through the Holy Spirit who will come to take up residence in our lives when we give our lives to him. We can walk in that blessing. We can walk in that favour every day because he has come to stay. He has come to remain. And he came for the first time on the Day of Pentecost.

Finally, there is an opportunity to be forgiven, an opportunity to obtain eternal life, an opportunity for the God who never forgets anything to forget your sins. Isn't that amazing? God knows everything. He knows everything actual and possible. He knows everything that has ever happened and everything that will happen because he lives outside of time. He created time, in fact. He sees the whole picture. He's like someone watching a parade with powerful binoculars from the CN Tower. You and I who are down on the street only see one float or the 48th Highlanders or the next float going by at a time. From the tower you can see the whole parade from the beginning to the end. The parade is time. God sees the whole thing. He knows everything. He knows what

you had for breakfast this morning. He knows the thoughts that were going through your mind at work this week. He knows the struggles that you had today and this week and the things that are happening in your lives. He knows the ways you have failed him and indeed the ways you will fail him in the future. But there's an opportunity this morning for the forgiveness of Jesus Christ to be yours, for God to wash away your sins and to remember them no more. It is something that he chooses to do, something that he will do. But even more exciting than that, to come and to live within you, to be a real person to you, to be someone that you know who is with you all the time, someone who is gentle, someone who is loving, but someone who is so powerful.

Isn't it exciting, Christian, to realize the God who made the universe lives in you this morning? He lives in you this morning. He lives in you this morning, the one who made the world lives in you this morning. Isn't that exciting? As you face the challenges of life, as you face the challenges of walking with Jesus Christ in a world full of garbage today, and it seems to get worse and worse everywhere we look. But the God who made the universe lives in you this morning. That's why we sing that song "Greater is he that is in me than he that is in the world." How much greater is he that is in us.

So we see this morning the Day of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit. We see new life and power imparted to the church. We see a new temple and temples dedicated to the Lord. We see a new message of salvation through Jesus Christ proclaimed. We see the inauguration of the age of grace when whosoever will, at any time, may come and receive forgiveness. And then the presentation of a new opportunity, an opportunity indeed I would like to continue to extend even this very morning to those who may be under the sound of my voice and you've never accepted Jesus Christ. Perhaps you accepted Christ at some point or you are a new believer but you are just not sure. You're not sure. You know you failed the Lord this week and you just wonder whether there's any hope. Let me tell you something. God doesn't give up. Do you know that? God does not give up on you. The Bible says even when we are faithless he is faithful because his faithfulness goes far, far, far beyond ours. He has chosen to place his love upon us and when we accept Jesus Christ he takes us seriously. Even if we stumble and fail and go back to the mud and get up again and fall down and get up and fall down so much you think you're on an elevator because you are up and down so much. God is faithful. He has committed himself to you. When you came forward or whatever opportunity you had you gave your life to Jesus Christ, he said, "Right, you're mine. I place my name upon you. I put my seal of the Holy Spirit

upon your life. I'm not letting go, folks. I'm not giving up on you. I'm going to continue to work in you no matter how much you stumble and fall and fail and are discouraged or are miserable or have problems in your life, I am not giving up on you."

Maybe you need to hear that this morning. Maybe you need to come and just spend a little time in the Lord's presence, allowing the Spirit of God to reassure you that you're his, that he hasn't given up on you, that he is still working in you to fulfill his good purpose and his good pleasure, even unto the day of Jesus Christ when all the remaining work to be done will be done in a twinkling of an eye as we are transformed into his image.

Can we stand this morning? We sang that lovely little chorus, if you need it in your hymnbook its number 250. Come Holy Spirit I need you, come sweet spirit, I pray. Come in thy strength and power, come in your own gentle way.

Just before we sing it I want to extend an opportunity for those who have never accepted Jesus Christ in a personal way, you want the spirit of God to come and live within you. In a sense you want to have your own Pentecost when God comes to live and you have new life and power through him. I would like to take just a moment and turn to the person next to you, turn to the person beside you and ask them if they need to come and accept Jesus this morning. Offer to come with them. Everyone, without exception, if you would please just do this right now. Turn to the person beside you and make sure they know the Lord. Make sure they know. Maybe it's your wife or your husband, somebody you love, but it could be a stranger who is in church this morning, a guest, a visitor. Turn to that person and ask them as we begin to sing this song, I invite you to bring them forward. There will be counsellors who will come, and pastors, to minister to them, pray with them and lead them to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, let me give you this opportunity, if you are discouraged this morning, how many know that some mornings we get discouraged? Oh, praise God there are at least six of you who are like me. That's good. (Laughter) That's great. You need to be encouraged this morning. You need to come and let the Holy Spirit minister to you. Amen? You need to come and sense his presence once again and his joy and his love and his acceptance and his forgiveness. Come as we sing. Come if you need to accept the Lord. Come if you just need to be encouraged in your spirit as we sing on this chorus.

--- Leads singing

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