

Experiencing Pentecost

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to the Lord and being led by the Holy Spirit in order to experience the power and presence of God in our lives.

Duration: 1:19:58

Scripture: Ezekiel 36:26, Luke 11:28, John 14:15, Acts 2:1-4, Romans 5:5, Galatians 3:10

Topics: "Pentecost"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preparing oneself for Sunday service by getting enough rest on Saturday nights. He warns against engaging in long discussions with friends that may lead to exhaustion and falling asleep during the service. The preacher also highlights the significance of hearing and keeping the words of Jesus, stating that those who do so are more blessed than the womb that gave birth to him. The sermon concludes with a story about a boy who innocently waits for his friends at a mall, only to be approached by a seductive girl, highlighting the dangers of temptation.

Transcript

We also ask Lord that you would be with us. You have promised Lord that where two or three are gathered in your name, there you will be. We ask you to be in our midst and to bless us through your word.

Amen. You know that recently we were looking at the Easter story. Then the fortieth day after that, the celebration of his ascension.

Then the ten days after that when he sent his Holy Spirit. It being the day of Pentecost. Now I'd like to speak a little on the day of Pentecost.

Let's read first. From verse one. That's Acts chapter one.

Chapter two and we read verse one. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire and one set upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And they were dwelling in Jerusalem, Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when the sound occurred, the multitude came together and were confused because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear each in our own language in which we were born? Parvians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia and Persia and Perfilia and Egypt. And parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes. Cretans and Arabs, we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.

So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, whatever could this mean? Others mocking said they are all full of new wine. Actually, I should go on reading the complete text, but I've read enough already. I'm just going to highlight some of the points.

And we cannot expand too much, otherwise we would use up too much time. It says, when the day of Pentecost had come, what was the day of Pentecost anyway? In the Old Testament, in Exodus 34 verse 22, In Exodus 34 verse 22, it does refer there to the Feast of Weeks. And what does that mean, Feast of Weeks? In Israel, there is no such thing as a Feast of Weeks.

There is no such thing as a Feast of Weeks. The law that God instituted there was that when they plant food, wheat for instance, they should take the very first fruits of the harvest and bring it to the Lord's temple. Now that was the very day of Pentecost.

And they could bring what they wished to the temple. Now, on that day of Pentecost, that was the scenario. There were different people coming, bringing out of their abundance, or if they had little, whatever God had blessed them with, they were free to bring something symbolically of that harvest.

So the celebration of Pentecost was the day when a person would bring the first fruits, that little of the crop. There were also other ceremonies which went on at the same time. Finally, Then finally, Then finally, God engraved His ten laws on those tablets of stone while He was with Moses on the mountain.

And they had a celebration day regarding the receiving of the laws of God, the commandments. And so you found that these ceremonies flowed together. So there were those whom God had said, you bring the first fruits of your crop.

Let not a single man come to Me without something which he comes to bring before Me. Secondly, Later on, they also combined it with the celebration of the receiving of the ten commandments of God. Just see, it was on this day that the Holy Spirit was poured out.

It was a day of reaping, harvest. And they brought the harvest first fruits. But now, on the day of Pentecost when the Spirit came, it was also a day of harvest, but not of your crop or of your wheat.

But the harvest given by the Holy Spirit, and just see how on that day how tremendous the harvest was. Three thousand souls were reaped on that day. And just think, it was on this very day that Jerusalem was filled with Jews from all over, from every type and nation.

They would come there to bring their offerings. When the Holy Spirit comes, there is a harvest, souls are one. It cannot be otherwise.

If there is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and there isn't a reaping of souls, well, then it's something else. So Jews from all over the world, devout men were gathered there from Africa, from Europe, from Asia, from everywhere. And God the Holy Spirit works as He wishes to work.

He doesn't work in just one way. He works in many ways. We have the tendency to copy, and we see how God has worked among others, and we say, well, this is how it's to be done, and then we imitate what they've done.

That is not good. Let the Holy Spirit work as He wills. Now, some state a doctrine out of this and say, well, it proves that if the Holy Spirit comes, there must be the speaking of tongues.

That was not the only way in which the Holy Spirit worked. He worked in many ways on that day. Now, a certain Christian once testified that when he received the Lord, he felt the cleansing inside him just penetrating him all over.

And another Christian hearing this said, well, I don't know. I didn't experience it in that way. I didn't have that feeling.

And so that Christian was deeply troubled and began to pray earnestly that they wanted to also experience that deep cleansing in exactly the same way as the other one had. Another person in praying earnestly for the Holy Spirit's fullness was on his knees. And then when the Holy Spirit did fill him, he was lying down.

And another Christian seeing that also lay down. No, we're not like that. We're not apes that we copy other apes.

Then it's only a man-made manufacture. If you just take one little bit out of the Bible and you say, I have to have it like that. Some say Some have taken that remote text of David who danced for joy in that certain circumstance.

He did dance for joy, jumped for joy because the Lord was there. But now you find it swept through the churches. There's dancing on the chairs and they take it as a teaching.

Without God, they are now dancing. Or jumping. Like if a sheep jumps, the next sheep thinks it must jump too.

And so we imitate each other like sheep. You become like an empty drum. It's evident that there's nothing inside.

If you just dig a little bit deeper and ask them, well, why do you teach this? And this particular teaching, they say, well, I heard somebody else teaching it. Even though it's not from the Bible, but they heard it from someone else. You might ask a person about an experience they've had or something they've done.

And you inquire a little bit. And they say, well, I watched that person. They had that experience and so I did the same.

When the Holy Spirit comes, he comes and works as he wills. Just as he wishes. So we need to be very soft and pliable regarding God in this aspect that we say, Lord, I don't want to limit you.

I don't want to put barriers around you. I want you to work as you wish to work. But the one feels the Lord leading in the one way and the other in a different way.

And I thank God today because they have both got married and done it differently as they felt that they should do. But there are some basic principles which they did adhere to, biblical principles like not

messing around with each other before marriage, or flirting around, or sending flirtatious SMSs. And you parents, you watch out, you give cell phones to your children so easily you don't know the things that they see, that they flirt with, and the pornography that they can see through their cell phone.

They can see wicked movies on the cell phone as well, and they can flirt by proxy via the cell phone. Now there was a certain Mozambican here these days, and a certain person asked for his cell phone, he gave it, he looked and looked, and looked through his emails, and found a horrible email that he had sent a message, an SMS to one of the schoolgirls here. So that person, he took him to my office, said I found his cell phone, he's been phoning He admitted that these things were bad which he had sent the school, and she said yes, she had got them.

Now how is such a thing possible? This school, the name of it is Serve the Lord. If you don't want to serve the Lord, then go. So he said, please give me the second chance.

So he said, how often have you been here? He couldn't speak much English or any Zulu, but he could certainly flirt in these languages. You'll find a person, may not know German, but they know a phrase like Ich liebe dich, and they can flirt and do evil in the little bit which they do know. Oh, please give me a second chance.

He knew that phrase in English. So I asked him how often he had been here. He said, I've come once before, and then I was able to come a second time, and this is my third time.

He said, Thomas, you've had a first, second, and third chance, and here you come to this place, and you woo one of our schoolgirls, you are really mischievous. It was true. He said, Thomas, your Kuluma is Portuguese.

It was towards evening, and I called with Thomas Mapanga, one of our coworkers who can speak Portuguese. I said, now translate for me, and you tell him that this very evening he's going to be sent away, and he took him to Stanger, and all the way he said, oh, I've done such a bad thing. He was very upset, and I say, rather cry about sin before you've done it, not afterwards.

When the devil is still tempting you, then you cry. Then you come and say, pray for me. Then you come and say, pray for me.

So he went away and was sent away as a direct result of his flirting through a cell phone. And now I also have a cell phone, and I don't even know how to get these bad pictures which they talk about, and I thank God for that, and I need it, and I'm accessible, I can be phoned wherever I'm traveling in the world. The pity is that you get these things, and it can be used for good, it can be used for evil as well.

Now you need to be very careful, especially you parents, regarding what your children have. I want to be a child regarding evil. A certain boy came to me.

I thought I was going to ask him to speak, but let me speak on his behalf. He said he needed to get something at a Peter Meritsburg shopping mall. You know how you get these huge big places like Gateway? Well, this mall in Meritsburg.

He got a lift and they dropped him there, and they said, you buy what you need to buy, and we agreed to meet at a certain time at this spot. He looked and found what he was looking for, was finished very quickly, before the others came, and then he went and sat on a bench because he was now waiting for those who

had given him a lift to arrive. He said, as you're sitting there on the bench, just innocently waiting, the next thing, a girl seats herself there seductively and said, oh, I'm sorry I'm late, you've been waiting for me, I'm ready for you now.

And he was totally bewildered, he didn't even know that there is such a thing as a slut who can just throw herself at a boy like this. He said, well, who, what, and then he began to realize, as she continued to suggest things like going to a place to sleep together, that this girl was actually flirting with him. He was so shocked, he was so stunned, it's really a matter of Sodom and Gomorrah.

And he said, well, what, and then he began to realize, as she continued to suggest things like going to a place to sleep together, that this girl was actually flirting with him. And I say, it's such a pity for you if your children have got to go out far away and be there because it seems like the devil just snatches them up and he swallows them, it is evil out there. And then we should not be astonished if God chastises a person in such a harsh way.

For God has said, you shall be holy as I am holy. Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. If you live in a promiscuous way, you're just going to invest it in your children and they'll be immoral as well.

If you live in a promiscuous way, you're just going to invest it in your children and they'll be immoral as well. It is a marvellous thing to get married in purity. I looked at one of the cards sent by one of the guests at the double wedding and it was so beautifully written where this person said, I was so astonished at the wedding to see you joined.

It was awesome at the wedding to see your hands being joined together, husband and wife being brought together and that's for the first time. And God will bless your marriage, it will be a dream, it will be better than anything you can imagine forever. It will surpass your wildest dreams.

What an awesome thing if God takes the hand of the one and takes the hand and he brings them together. It was just written so beautifully, expressed in such a wonderful way. I asked the children for the card that I can have a copy because I've never heard it expressed so wonderfully.

I'd love to travel and go from country to country and preaching this and speaking about this type of theme because it is such a marvellous thing. God does it when he brings people together. And so here in Jerusalem there were devout men meeting together, they'd come from all over the world.

Bringing their gifts, bringing their harvest first fruits to God. For God had declared that I don't want a single person to come before me without something as an offering to me, whether it is big or small. How amazing.

Now it is also still a tradition in quite a few mainline denominations, also in some churches in South Africa where they have Harvest Thanksgiving Sunday. And so the people bring all sorts of vegetables and fruit or there might be a basket for those who want to bring money, they want to express their thanks to God. A little boy in one of these events saw the people going to the church and he said, Oh God I don't have anything, no harvest, no money, nothing to offer you.

What am I going to do? He said, Oh God I don't have anything, no harvest, no money, nothing to offer you. What am I going to do? This boy had a sudden bright idea and he just rushed to the front to the surprise of everybody in the audience and he got into this basket, this offering basket. He said, Lord I have nothing to offer you, I give you myself.

That is a sermon in itself, it's amazing. And so here were devout people, Jewish people coming from all over on the day of Pentecost. Now it was on that day as they were gathered together in that place that God came down from heaven with a mighty sound.

There came a sound from heaven as if it was of a mighty rushing wind. Now all these devout Jews were here in Jerusalem and they heard this noise and wondered what was going on. And there was no wind in the city.

If there would be a huge storm over the whole city they would have stayed where they were. They would have gone into their houses. But it was quiet, there was no wind.

But they heard the sound of that wind that came down from heaven at a certain place. And that was where the disciples had gathered. Only they! And they all came to see what's happening there.

Otherwise they wouldn't have come. Thousands thronged around. They wanted to see what was happening inside there.

It hadn't happened where they were. They wanted to see what marvel this was inside this room. They were astonished, shocked, wondering what is this.

As you get church bells that are rung so that people know it's time to come to church, God rang his heavenly bells and assembled all the people together. Jesus was getting them ready to spread the gospel to the uttermost ends of the world. He got them firstly together before he sent them out.

And when they came and looked, they saw tongues of fire. These would seem to be as tongues of fire, of different tongues of fire upon each disciple. Upon their heads without their hair burning.

This is the same fire This is the same fire which caught Moses' attraction as he looked and he saw this burning bush and the bush was not consumed. He drew closer and saw it was God. This is the same fire which caught Moses' attraction as he looked and he saw this burning bush.

This is the same fire which caught Moses' attraction as he looked and he saw this burning bush. Moses was so astonished he just gazed at the sight. And then a voice told him, take off your shoes Moses for this is holy ground.

That bush was not burned, was not consumed. And here again at Pentecost, the burning fire, that same fire of God upon them and in them. The marvels, the miracles that happened at Pentecost.

Like a tongue of fire. The fire of God upon these people. This is what we find in the Bible.

It should cause us to stand in amazement that we are astounded at God's power and what He can do. The people looked at this marvel and saw the tongues of fire upon them but they were not burning, their hair wasn't burning. So when the Holy Spirit came, they did not shut him out.

They didn't exclude him, they welcomed him. He was received into their midst and God came upon them, upon their heads. And that was no trouble for them for they were completely open for him and they said Lord come in.

They were in an attitude of surrendering to the Lord and saying Lord here I bring myself to you. Have you received Pentecost? Do you know what it is to surrender to the Lord and to receive him? Not to limit him

but to be completely open for him. Now they spoke in the different languages.

They spoke in Greek and Hebrew but this time they could speak in the languages of the Asians, of the Africans, of all the languages that were there. These were not the tongues of angels as it speaks of in another place but the tongues of the nations. None of them decided for God and said I insist that I want to speak a Mesopotamian language.

Or I want to speak a Parthian language. No, as the Holy Spirit worked as he willed. The people there were awestruck.

They said but these men we know them. They are from Galilee. Here we can understand our own language from our own country.

This is an astonishing thing and they heard these men praising God, speaking of the wonderful works of God in their languages. They were not talking about the fashion or holding a discussion on how to float successfully. No, they were speaking of the mighty works of God, each one in a language that the people could understand.

And at the end of verse 4 it says as the Spirit gave them utterance. As the Spirit. Not their own desires, not the lust of their flesh.

Many are led by the lusts of their own desires and flesh but not the Holy Spirit. They were led by the Spirit and the Bible says those that are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. If you are led by the Holy Spirit you won't gossip.

You won't be sexually immoral. You won't defile yourself. You are led by God's Spirit and those that are led by His Spirit, those are the children of God.

Not those that are led by other things. Not the cheap Christianity we have in this world. Superficial, exclaiming we are filled with God's Spirit.

Saying we are baptized in God's Spirit. And what we do is the opposite. That's blasphemous.

That's not a sweet odor to God. He closes his nose because of that awful, evil smell that comes out of your mouth. Being stubborn, pig in it, stiff necked, wanting your own way.

You speak about being filled with the Holy Spirit and you don't even know what Pentecost means. Have you got to the place where Pentecost is? I don't know where you are spiritually. Have you arrived at Pentecost? When that day fully came, has that day fully come in your life? Or are you a person who just does and leaves what he wants, his desire, his own? That is idol worship.

You do your own thing. You haven't yet got to the day of Pentecost when that time had fully come. You are still living in your own world, doing your thing.

You haven't yet got to the day of Pentecost when that time had fully come. Have you come to that point of utter surrender before God? Now these people were from different places. They had come and when God worked, it wasn't as they had expected him to work.

They didn't ask for a noise from heaven. It wasn't a tornado that they had predicted or said would happen. But when it happened in that local place, they came from all around to see what had happened.

But now let me leave that point. I've expanded a lot on it. Let me go to a second point.

It's already one o'clock. Let me go to two. Shall I speak till two? Is your posterior sore? It is good because they were also, it was also the ceremony where they were remembering and giving thanks for God sending his commandments.

He engraved them into those tablets of stone and gave it to his people. These two things go together when God is at work, when there's Pentecost. When you think of this, what comes to you automatically? My mind runs to Ezekiel.

36 verse 26. Who doesn't know it? Where he says, I will no longer write my commandments and engrave them on stone. I will write them into your hearts.

The hearts of flesh. Into the hearts that are soft, not onto hardness like rock. Where it says, I will give you a new heart and put a new seal on it.

I will put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you'll keep my judgments and do them.

There's another text, we don't have time to look at it, where it says when he comes he will work inside them so that no one will have to go to his neighbor and say, do this, do that, because the law itself will be written inside them. What a blessed day. What a blessed person who has experienced Pentecost in his whole life.

Where God has engraved his law into our hearts, nobody needs to tell you, don't do this, don't do that, do this. They'll do it because God has engraved it into their soft hearts. They are obedient.

What blessedness. And how many of those that claim to have experienced Pentecost live according to that rule? How many? It's like 1 Corinthians 13, we can do everything, give everything, but if we haven't got love, we just make a tingling sound. There's nothing in it.

Nothing in it and nothing behind it. An empty shell. Are you a child of God? Make double sure.

If you are led by other things, by your own self or your idols, then it continues to say in verse 28, that then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers. You shall be my people and I will be your God. The Bible says He pours out His love into our hearts by His Holy Spirit.

The Bible also says He gives His Spirit to those who listen to Him, are obedient. Are you a child of God? Make double sure. If you are led by other things, by your own self or your idols, then it continues to say in verse 28, that then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers.

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You shall be my people and I will be your God. Are you a child of God? Make double sure. If you are led by other things, by your own self or your idols, They'll be so intoxicated, they'll be so drunk.

They'll have to be pushed home. They weren't speaking like the drunk. I know a drunk person.

Are there some alcoholics or have been drinking in the past? Oh, they like to talk. It sets their tongue loose. And they like spiritual things.

They like to talk about godly things. I know a drunk person. Are there some alcoholics or have been drinking in the past? I know a drunk person.

Are there some alcoholics or have been drinking in the past? Not half, not just a piece. That's not good. We're not speaking about the shabin or the pub or the bar.

Do you understand or don't you? Didn't you sleep well last night? On Saturday nights, sleep well, sleep early because remember you're getting up for Sunday. If you visit with your friend, don't end up in long discussions so that you come to the service the next day and you fall asleep. I know a drunk person.

Are there some alcoholics or have been drinking in the past? Oh, they like to talk. It sets their tongue loose. Shall we bow our heads and we sing and pray? Lord Jesus, we ask you that your word would penetrate and go into the very depths of our hearts.

Work, oh God, in a mighty way that the believer in our midst would arrive at that day of Pentecost. There where you can work freely in their lives. That there'd be nothing hindering you, no blockage, but that you would work so that your will would be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Lord, work that this service wouldn't be just in vain and useless to us, but that each one would hear and understand and know what you are saying. Lord, in those who resist you in the mockers, Lord, let them go in their own mockery. But Lord, those who believe in thee, Lord, keep them.

That the day of Pentecost would arrive in their lives, that you can use them to spread the gospel to the uttermost ends of this earth. Amen.

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