



P.O. Box 66540  
Albuquerque, NM 87193  
505.890.6806  
E-mail: [irm@liferesource.org](mailto:irm@liferesource.org)  
Website: [www.liferesource.org](http://www.liferesource.org)

**Presentation Transcript**  
**The Meaning of Pentecost**  
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In leading up to this presentation, it became immediately obvious that there is way more meaning than there is time to cover. So I think the title, *The Meaning of Pentecost*, is, perhaps, a bit ambitious. But we don't have to go anywhere until sundown and the sun doesn't set until 8:30, so we've got plenty of time. Right?

God has the tendency to fold meaning into meaning and add meaning to meaning until the complexity and depth of meaning is a bit overwhelming to our feeble, human minds. And when you really start thinking about the holy days, that is certainly true there. But we'll do the best we can and hope that He helps us.

The biblical festival that we call Pentecost today has had no less than five meanings over time. The biblical festivals are revelations from God about what He is doing with us. They are all about God's plan of salvation. Over time, God has revealed more and more to us about that plan as He does more and more with us. As He affixes each new meaning on top of the previous one, we learn more and more about what God has in mind.

The first meaning that we can look at – might not be the first historical meaning, but the one that we're probably most familiar with – is that it was a *harvest festival*. If you look in Exodus 34, and verse 18, it says:

**Ex. 34:18** – *Celebrate the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. Eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Abib. In that month you came out of Egypt.* Now Abib was the first month of the year.

Verse 21 says:

**V-21** – *Six days you shall labor, but on the seventh day, you shall rest, even during the plowing season and harvests you must rest.* So there were no allowances made for crop production and harvesting. They came to the festival and trusted that God would help them with their crops.

So they celebrated Passover and Unleavened Bread in the early spring, and then in verse 22, we read:

**V-22** – *Celebrate the feast of weeks with the firstfruits of the wheat harvest and the feast of ingathering at the turn of the year.*

So Pentecost came in late spring/early summer, when the winter crop – the smaller crop – was ready to be harvested. It says in verse 23:

**V-23** – *Three times a year all your men are to appear before the sovereign LORD, the God of Israel. I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your territory and no one will covet your land when you go up three times each year to appear before the LORD your God.*

Have you ever had that feeling, as you drive away from your house on your way to the Feast of Tabernacles for eight days, “I sure hope everything is okay here. Hope I didn’t leave the water running or leave a door unlocked. Hope the garage door opener shut the door all the way down. Hope no burglar discovers that we’re going to be gone this whole time” – that kind of thing? You don’t have to worry about that. There’s a promise of comfort associated with keeping the Feast. I’m not so sure about the garage door opener. That’s something that *we* can take care of, but we can’t do anything about burglars. But God can. So He promised them that while they were gone, nobody would steal land or their possessions. It’s all about taking God up on His promises.

So this was called the Feast of Weeks. And the idea seems to be a week of Sabbaths – or weeks – seven weeks – forty-nine days, plus one. When to start counting has been an issue historically. It’s interesting. We think they knew all of that way back when, because God gave them the law, but it wasn’t long before they got away from the original giving of the law of God and things became confused. But let’s read what it says in Leviticus 23:15.

**Lev. 23:15** – *From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. Count off fifty days, up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.*

Now the Sadducees of Christ’s time looked at counting from the first weekly Sabbath following Passover. That would be forty-nine days – seven weeks – and then the next day. So it always fell on a Sunday. The Pharisees, however, took the same verse to mean that you counted from the holy day – the Sabbath holy day – after Unleavened Bread. That would be the first day of Unleavened Bread. It seems clear to us that the Sadducees were correct, though I’m sure there are people who value being different more than they value being together.

Okay – the meaning: to gather all together and celebrate the blessings God gave them after their early harvest – a really happy time for them – and to offer sacrifices to show appreciation for what God had done for them, and, also, to solidify blessings for the next year. Show thanks to God and He returns it.

So another evidence that people have used to show that this had to do with a harvest festival is that the book of Ruth was set during the harvest. And the book of Ruth has been traditionally read on this festival day. It is interesting that the book of Ruth is about

how a Gentile became a part of the blood line of Jesus Christ. All racism and all exclusivism – which comes from the same place – is to be put aside. God is *not* an exclusivist and He is not a racist, and we are not to be either.

Okay, so that's one meaning – the meaning of harvest festival. That is what Israel was told to do when they came out of Egypt. What would be another one? Well, let's go to Genesis 8, and verse 13. This is in the account of Noah and he is on the ark now. It says:

**Gen. 8:13** – *By the first day of the first month – what month would that be? That would be Abib, right? – of Noah's six hundred and first year, the water dried up from the earth. Noah then removed the covering from the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was dry. By the twenty-seventh day of the second month, the earth was completely dry. So they were watching this from the first day of Abib all the way through to the twenty-seventh day of the second month – or almost to the third month. Then God said to Noah, "Come out of the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and their wives, and bring out every kind of living creature that is with you – the birds, the animals and all the creatures that move along the ground, so they can multiply on the earth, and be fruitful and increase in number upon it." So Noah came out, together with sons, his wife and his sons' wives, and all the animals, and all the creatures that move along the ground, and all the birds – everything that moved on the earth came out of the ark, one kind after another. Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and taking some of the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, and said in His heart, "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. Never again will I destroy all living creatures as I have done."*

So there was a book that appeared after Christ, among the Jews, called *The Book of Jubilee*. It's a historical account of all the festivals. It asserts that Noah's offering, that he made, was made on Pentecost, because that would have been one of the things that they think about – that it was in the third month. They were two thousand years closer to that event than we are, so maybe they knew something we didn't know. It also says in this book that Abraham and Jacob made offerings on this day, as well, though there is no biblical proof. But what it does show is what the Jews, shortly after Jesus' time, believed about the day. They believed that it was a biblical festival that had been in existence long before Moses, and that they had just forgotten about it while they were in captivity in Egypt, and they relearned it from God at Mount Sinai.

Exodus 19 is where our next meaning is going to come from. And that is that the Jews, of Christ's time and later, believed that the law of God was given at Sinai on the Day of Pentecost. It's a Jewish tradition. Now, if that's true, then the holy day was not just a harvest festival to celebrate God's gift of a good harvest, but, if you'll think about what that means, it also includes the idea that these days are tied to God's plan for His people. The law was given to Israel as a part of a covenant with God, right? So He was working with them. He had a plan and He was working it. So, if you believe that the law was given on Pentecost, then you can see that that day is tied to the significance of the plan of God.

Now we come to the New Testament. This is pretty interesting. I want to read you Webster's – Marion Webster's *Dictionary, the Eleventh Edition* – for the word *Pentecost*.

*Shavat: a Jewish holiday observed on the sixth and seventh of Sivan in commemoration of the revelation of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, called also Pentecost.*

So you don't have to go anywhere beside Webster's to find that out. Then the second definition is:

*A Christian feast of seventh Sunday after Easter, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, also called Whit Sunday.*

Well, they got the meaning correct, but the way to figure the date wrong – unless.... Does Easter always follow Passover? Doesn't always, does it? So, a Christian festival.... In Webster's *Dictionary*, it says that Pentecost is a *Christian* festival! Did you get it? Amazing, isn't it?

Now, let's go to Luke 24, and verse 44, and let's read what Jesus said that built up to what Tanya read in Acts, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

**Lk. 24:44** – *He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms." Then He opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And I am going to send you what My Father has promised. But stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.*

Okay, so that's in Luke – right at the end of the book of Luke. Now let's go to Acts 1, and verse 4, where it is recounted by Luke:

**Acts 1:4** – *On one occasion while He was eating with them, He gave them this command, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised, which you have heard Me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."*

Then in Acts, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter, and verse 1:

**Acts 2:1** – *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place with one accord, and suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. And all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.*

Okay, so God chose which day He wanted to send the Holy Spirit. Right? He picked it. Which day did He pick? He picked Pentecost – clearly. So what had formerly been an Israelite and a Jewish festival, was now, by God's choice, a Christian observance. I mean,

that's what we're shown right there. What He is doing here is He is starting to interact with them in a more intimate way than in times past. They actually have the mind of Christ – that's what Paul calls the Holy Spirit – the mind of Christ or Christ in you. So this is a very, very amazing thing that has happened here.

Okay, so that's the fourth thing. Then the fifth meaning that we can – that's been added – to this day is that God chose to bring to birth the church on the Day of Pentecost. It's the church's birthday, because the Holy Spirit in people's hearts is what determines who a Christian is. And until that time, that hadn't happened. So that is the founding of the Church of God.

So let's think a little bit about what the church means. I'm not going to go too long on this, but just to think about it a little bit. The church is the way that God nurtures us and causes us to grow spiritually. Paul said, referring to the church as Jerusalem above, that she is the *mother* of us all. So this is a day to think about the importance of the church, the church's purpose, the church's work and our part in it, because *we* make up the church.

We've spent over two years on a series on Church Health, where we detailed – in more detail than we've ever done – what the church means. So I'm not going to go in that direction today, but...something that is very important. The other thing is – when you think about this – the New Testament observance – wouldn't you think the fact that God *chose* this day, and it's the church's birthday, and the Holy Spirit comes on this day...wouldn't you think that that ought to tell us something about the biblical festivals? Wouldn't you? What could it possibly be? I mean, it's so obvious it is amazing! Jesus Christ tells us that the church is His *bride*.

When people get married, you can see them looking at each other all gah-gah eyed, you know, and they're just so in love. At that time, that person that they are marrying is the most important person in the world. And Jesus Christ tells us that He has that kind of love for His bride. There's a deep connection between Christ and the church. Would it, then, not be obvious that the Feast of Pentecost is *about Jesus Christ*? It's about His bride. And by starting the church on Pentecost, it became a New Testament church observance with New Testament significance. It has to do with the *relationship* between us and Jesus Christ. We don't have time to delve into the evidence of that, but we're going to do that later.

All right. We've seen, so far, that Pentecost was kept in Israel as a harvest festival, that the observance has been, in history, associated with the patriarchs. It meant, to the Jews, the day on which the law was given. It's the birthday of the church in the New Testament. And it was the day on which God gave the Holy Spirit, which is the law in our hearts. Right? So there is the connection between the law and.... Thinking about the significance of the law and the law in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, I'm going to make a statement about the significance of the holy days. Every Old Testament event had a typological significance to the New. Let's look in 1 Corinthians 10, where this principle is explained. Paul said:

**1 Cor. 10:1** – *For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. Do you*

remember what that was about in Exodus? There was a cloud that God was in that guided them and they all passed through the sea dry-shod. Right? Then he says an *amazing* thing in verse 2.

**V-2** – *They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They were baptized. So he’s likening our going under the water of baptism to what those people went through. That was a commitment for them. When they stood there and they saw the big walls of water on both sides and place to walk through that, all they could think about was what happens if it closes back up while I’m in the middle? So there was a measure of *faith* and *commitment* that had to be taken at that point to even go forward. So, do we see the significance there? That’s the point he is making. And he said:*

**V-3** – *They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them. And that Rock was Christ. Now, if you’re an observer of the New Testament Passover, you know that we are to eat the body of Jesus Christ – that’s the food – and we’re to drink the blood of Jesus Christ on Passover – that’s the drink. So he’s likening the manna that they ate and the water that came out of the rock – that God gave them – to Christ’s body and blood.*

Then he adds, in verse 5, to make his point:

**V-5** – *Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them. Their bodies were scattered over the desert.*

So there’s the principle. Every Old Testament event can be tied to a picture of what God is doing with us in the present. Now let’s take a specific example of that. Let’s look in 1 Corinthians 5, verse 7. This is talking about the Passover. It really bothers a lot of Christian people that the Passover lamb the Israelites slaughtered the night they were to be taken out of Egypt is actually a picture of Jesus Christ.

**1 Cor. 5:7** – *Get rid of the old yeast, that you may be a new batch without yeast, as you really are, for Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the festival, not with the old yeast – the yeast of malice and wickedness – but with bread without yeast – the bread of sincerity and truth.* There it is. Passover – that they kept – is also deeply entwined with the significance – the meaning – of God’s salvation plan through Jesus Christ.

Another example: Hebrews 9. I’m not going read it, but Paul is explaining, with a word picture here, the sacrifices made in the temple on the Day of Atonement and shows how they all connect to Christ. And verse 11 says:

**Heb. 9:11** – *When Christ came as High Priest of good things that are already here, He went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle – that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by the means of blood and goats and calves. He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. So all the things that they did in the Old Testament - in the temple and the tabernacle – were pictures of what He was going to do when He came and about God’s plan. So when we keep Passover and Unleavened Bread as Christians, we know that there is new meaning*

associated with those things that have to do with Jesus Christ – Christ’s death and sacrifice and then His commitment to sanctify us by taking the sin out of our lives.

So the biblical festivals all have spiritual significance for New Testament Christians. They are not a random smattering of disconnected holidays. Each one has a specific meaning and it is placed in the calendar in a specific time. And that has meaning as well. And each one fits with all the others to portray God’s plan. So they are a form of communication between us and God – word pictures for us to understand. Keep them and be enlightened. Ignore them and remain ignorant. That’s the message that we receive.

Well all this detail – this book learning – that’s all good stuff, right? But at LifeResource Ministries we strive never to forget that *learning* is only as good as it changes our behavior and our thinking. So what does all this mean in our everyday lives? What’s the point of it? What does God want us to take from it? How does it make us more godly?

We learned, on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread, that Unleavened Bread – that festival – is about God sanctifying us individually. And this day is about God sanctifying the church. It’s the bigger picture of it. But what does that mean for us individually? Well, let’s go back in time to that first Pentecost and see what there is for us to learn. Let’s go to Acts 2, and verse 1. We read this already, but let’s read it with another purpose in mind.

**Acts 2:1** – *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.* Let’s imagine that we were in that group. Let’s imagine that we are Jews who have kept Pentecost all our lives. Well, that would be one reason that we would be there, right? Because we’ve done that all our lives. But we also might be there because we’ve been promised something new – right? we read those scriptures – and we suspect that it might be today, because there isn’t another festival in sight for months. And He said that it was just going to be a few days. So sure enough, they were sitting there and:

**V-2** – *Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.* That would rock you, wouldn’t it? Pretty exciting! *And what they saw seemed to be tongues of fire that separated.* Here’s this big – I see it kind of like a – column of it coming through the ceiling and then it divides up and lands on each of them. It comes to rest on them. But it doesn’t burn anybody. *And all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues – or languages, as it says – as the Spirit enabled them.* So, as promised, God gave them power that they had not had before. Let’s read a bit more.

**V-5** – *Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.* Why? It was Pentecost! They came to keep the feast. *When they heard this sound a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked, “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? How then is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?” Parthians, Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya near Cyrene – he got really specific here about who were there – 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 each other, “What does this mean?” Well, they are getting ready to get their answer!*

**V-13** – *Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They’ve had too much wine!” Well, that was Peter’s opening and, boy, he flipped through that like gangbusters. It says in verse 14:*

**V-14** – *Then Peter stood up with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you.” Well, that’s an answer they wanted to hear, wasn’t it? Talk about cogent. “Listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk as you suppose. It is only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out My Spirit on all people, your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on My servants – both men and women – I will pour out my Spirit in those days and they will prophesy.’”*

And then skipping down to verse 21:

**V-21** – *And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Men of Israel, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through Him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you, by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge, and you, with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross. But God raised Him from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him. Whoa! Verse 36:*

**V-36** – *Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. That was the punch line right there. And when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Many other words he warned them and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” And those who accepted his message were baptized and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

So on the Day of Pentecost the church went from one hundred and twenty people to three thousand – right out of the chute. Quite a sermon! Of course, he had some back up. They say context is everything, right? He had context.

Okay, so what can we learn from that? Well, one of the things that I’d like to point out to you is that on this day *everybody* was involved. Everybody was involved in a very powerful way – not just in observing, but in actually being a part of what happened. That sermon Peter gave would have gone over like a submarine with screen doors if they hadn’t seen the Holy Spirit and heard the noise. Right? And who got the Holy Spirit? Everybody. They were all a part of creating the context for that event. They were all involved in something powerful that caused the church to grow. They were all involved in proclaiming the truth. And Paul tells us that that is the pattern for us today. God gave



the Holy Spirit so that we can participate in the work of the church if you think about what spiritual gifts are. That's what that's all about. It's a way that God gives us – through the Holy Spirit – to all be involved *directly* in doing something to cause the church to become stronger.

How many times have you read the book of Leviticus? The place where all the holy days are mentioned in the same chapter? I want you to turn to the first verse. We won't have to read very far.

**Lev. 23:1** – *The LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the Israelites and say them, ‘These are My appointed feasts – the appointed feasts of the LORD – which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies.’”* Did you ever notice that before? You are to *proclaim*.

What does that word mean in modern day English? Webster's again: 1A) To declare publicly, typically, insistently, proudly or defiantly in a speech or writing, to announce. 1B) To give outward indication or show. 2) To declare to be solemnly, or officially, or formally. 3) To praise or glorify openly or publicly, to extol as in “proclaimed the rescue workers' efforts.” See, it's been there all along – even in the Old Testament. We are to proclaim the biblical festivals.

I want to read you something. I want to give you some encouragement about that. One of the books that I used to help create the historical part of this sermon was *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. I read the article called *Pentecost*. They did an excellent job of detailing all the meanings of Pentecost down through the ages with a lot of scriptural support and historical support. They quoted Acts 2 with the disciples waiting for the Holy Spirit, just like we read. Then it says at the end, “On the other hand, all attempts to understand the Christian Pentecost as the festival of the new revelation as distinct from the Jewish Pentecost as that of giving of the law must be regarded as mistaken. The story of Pentecost in Acts 2 bears *no* relation to the Sinai tradition, nor can the Christian Pentecost be derived directly from the Jewish.”

Now, for that statement there was no evidence whatsoever. In fact, there was a whole article of evidence showing that that isn't correct! Evidence to the contrary! It's kind of like a declarative statement, “Thus saith *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*.” So we wonder what kind of mental gymnastics the author had to perform to come up with that statement after he had already proved just the opposite. It's like that in all of these things that you read. It's always that way. The whole world needs to know about these days. The whole world needs to know about them. They can study them, but they don't understand what they are for. I mean, they were altogether with one accord on the Day of Pentecost. Why? They were waiting for something that God was going to do.

You can be sure that when your Christian friends ask you about why you keep these days, if you clearly know *why* you observe them, they will also have to make all kinds of gymnastic movements internally to make excuses for themselves, because all the evidence supports observance. You don't have to be afraid to do what they did in Acts 2. You can proclaim with enthusiasm.

I've been practicing on my friend Roger. He's not religious, but he is curious. He says, “Tell me about these festivals you keep.” So that's my chance to proclaim, right? So I

have to be ready for that. And so do you. I wouldn't explain this to somebody who went to church every week the same way – maybe I should start thinking about doing it that way – but I say, “There are seven annual festivals in the Bible. They were first observed in the Old Testament. You know them as Jewish holidays – Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Atonement, that sort of thing. They were observed in the Old Testament as harvest festivals, but they were also observed in the New Testament with new meaning.” My friend, Roger, about that time will say, “Why doesn't everybody else keep them then?” And I say, “Well, about a hundred years after Christ died, the Roman Empire began persecuting Jews and Christians. And everything associated with Judaism was suspect. And since Christians and Jews looked a lot alike – because they were keeping all the same days – the church shifted away from the biblical festivals and the weekly Sabbath to avoid persecution and to appeal to the Roman populace. They wanted more Christians, so they had to make it *easier* for them. So that's what they did. We think the original faith would not have caved into that pressure, so we do it the way they did it back then.” My friend, Roger – he's a techno junkie, like I am – so I said, “Roger, you know that there are a gazillion iPod knock-offs, right?” “Yeah.” “But you know that the original is still the best, don't you?” He said, “Yeah!” I said, “Well, that's how I feel about the original Christianity as practiced by the early church. There are many imitations, but there is only one real deal. And that's the faith and practice that Jesus taught the apostles and that they taught the church. And I'm all over that.”

Let's keep reading. Acts 2. There's something else to learn here. Verse 42:

**Acts 2:42** – *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship – the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone who had need. There was a big famine going on then, so rather than let the poverty that they were all suffering grind everything to a halt.... It kind of reminds me of our society today – right now – we're in a real trough here in our economic situation. Donations are down to our ministry and to others, too. A lot of people are losing work. People are worried about it. These people didn't let that bother them. What they did was, they all got together and pooled what they had, because that was something for the time then present – a problem they were dealing with. Verse 46:*

**V-46** – *Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts – so they had house churches and they also went to the temple – praising God and enjoying the favor of all people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

So they not only had the gifts of the Holy Spirit to be a successful part of the church – so that they had something to offer – but they were dedicated to staying together in unity of mind and spirit. They had something else from the Holy Spirit, as well as a spiritual gift – as well as a physical manifestation of this Spirit coming down on them. There was something else that happened to them that was a lot quieter. We can read that in Galatians 5, verse 22.

**Gal. 5:22** – *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace – the fruit of the Spirit, by the way, is different from the gifts of the Spirit. A gift that you get is something unique that*

God gives you to help the church. *All Christians are to bear this fruit of the Spirit, because that is what the Spirit causes to happen as we are sanctified. ...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control – against such things, there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.*

So this kind of power that came from God helped them to be kind and tolerant. And it prevented them from seeking to be exclusive and spiritually superior to other people. So that's how they were able to do this – that we read about in Acts 2 – this unity of the spirit that they had.

During Unleavened Bread we saw that that festival is about personal sanctification – God's effort to remove sin from us and make us more like Him. Pentecost shows how that effort manifests in the church and what it means in the church context. History and the present tell us that, without God, we really are not very good at being united. And while we love to talk about being unified and humble, the record of history, including right up to this very minute in the Church of God, shows otherwise.

So Pentecost, like all the biblical festivals, gives us a joyful celebration that keeps us atuned to God's overarching plan and intent. And at the same time, it also points out where we need to go personally – what we need to change and do – so that we're walking the walk while we're also talking the talk.