



## “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:3) Pentecost

Celebrate presence of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, calling us to renewal through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Pentecost Sunday is a day to celebrate hope, a hope evoked by the knowledge that God through His Holy Spirit is at work among His people. It is a celebration of newness, of

recreation, of renewal of purpose, mission, and calling as God's people. It is a celebration of God's ongoing work in the world. Yet, it is also a recognition that His work is done through His people as He pours out His presence upon them.

It falls on the seventh Sunday after **Easter**, the 4<sup>th</sup> of June this year.

While there are other references to Pentecost in the New Testament (e.g. 1 Cor 16:8), it is most significant in Acts 2 and the

familiar scene of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those in the "upper room." The New Testament writers associate the events of Acts 2 with Pentecost, and relate it to the prophecies of Joel 2 and promises of Jesus (Acts 1:8). In both, the emphasis is on empowerment through the Holy Spirit to enable the people of God to witness to Jesus the Christ. Pentecost represents God's gracious, enabling presence actively at work among His people, calling and enabling them to live out in dynamic ways the witness of being His people.

The New Testament readings include Acts 2, as well as John 14:8-17, 16:5-15, 20:19-23, all of which carry through this theme of God enabled mission in the world. The Epistle reading from 1 Corinthians 12:3-13 emphasizes the gifts of the Spirit that enable God's work in the world.

This focus on the church's mission to the world, and the enabling presence of God through the work of the Holy Spirit in the church to empower that mission should provide a powerful impetus for churches, especially those in the evangelical traditions, to recover this season of the church year. There is tremendous opportunity to use this sacred time to call people to renewal through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.



## Youth Testimony

*The following is transcriptions of the testimonies given by the participants of the Life in the Spirit Seminars Young Leaders' Workshop III. The workshop, sponsored by KSC for the Youth Ministry Team, was held from May 5th to the 7th, 2006 at Mt. Index Cabin Center, Washington. the young leaders came from Florida, North Carolina, Alaska, Vancouver Canada and Tacoma WA.*

### I have a duty now

Joseph Ji, Denver, Colorado

I have been through probably less than most people when it comes to life. Since I was a young boy I used to wonder why I went to church. I simply followed my parents to church and did as I was told at church. I never really thought or pondered about the meaning of faith or why I was in church every Sunday. When I started to grow older I stayed the same. I went because I had to and believed what they told me to believe and never questioned anything.

After my first Holy Spirit seminar I started to see and reflect on the resurrection and god's love. I started to believe God's unconditional love caused Him to give up his only son. Despite this, I continued to sin and I still didn't realize what God had really done for us.urch and what not. I still felt that I didn't realize what God had really done for us.

The unconditional love of our father is so great but I didn't realize that even through the many retreats that I have come about through the years. This retreat made me realize something new. It opened my eyes to readily

reflect on what salvation is and what God's love means to me and everyone else.

This retreat I believe has brought upon me a new life. I have everyone in this room to thank that for. The forgiveness of my sins by the cross was always a blur but I feel that since Jesus died for my sins I have a duty now. This duty I have recognized through this exact retreat has to be done with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' Spirit is always around us. And in believing that I think I will myself with the help of His Spirit develop and help people into salvation. I believe that is why I was called to this retreat and why I will have to fulfill this task. Thank you.

### He has unconditional love for us

Helen Sa, Vancouver Canada

When I was in grade 10, I used to go to church not for my faith but to meet with my friends. I did not believe in God but because my parents were Catholics, I regularly attended mass. I had trouble accepting God because I needed proof that he existed.

In high school, I rarely listened to my parents. I never understood their traditionally Korean perspective on treating females and males differently. I was expected to come home by 11 and I was not allowed to sleep over at friends' house while my brother was allowed to do so. I rebelled against their rules because I saw them as irrational and unfair. I would sneak out when they fell asleep and in the morning, just before they woke up, I would crawl back through the window.

This one particular night I snuck out to meet my friends and I ended up at someone's house to drink. I didn't know that person but I went anyways. There were seven of us and by 3 am, everyone was either drunk or slightly intoxicated. One of the friends I was with asked the owner of the house for his car keys. Four other people, including myself, wanted to go with him. When we got in the car we found that the driver didn't have a license. I should have known God was trying so hard to stop me from going for that drive but in the state that I was in, all I cared about was going for that quick drive to clear my head so I ignore him. Five minutes into the drive, we were going down a hill and we were going too fast. The car spun a couple of times and we sailed over the median. Everything was in slow motion up to the point when the car actually crashed. When I realized that the car had finally stopped, I saw that that passenger side of the car was wrapped around a pole, the side I was sitting on. My friends and I came out of that car without a scratch or a bruise on us. After we had crashed, we didn't know what to do since we were under the influence and we didn't have a licensed driver. So, we abandoned the car and we ran.

At that time, I just thought I was the luckiest person to survive such a serious accident without any injuries. It wasn't until later in my life that luck had nothing to do with me surviving but it was God who had saved me. Now, when I think about that night, I had abandoned him and rejected his callings to me; and even after all the sins I had committed that night, God forgave me. No matter how many times we sin against him, He forgives us because we are his children and he only has unconditional love for us. Through this experience, I've learnt God's existence, love and his power.

## **We are precious in His eyes**

Un-sung Hwang, Orlando, Florida

When I first came to U.S.A., I did not know any English, except the alphabet and simple sentences, such as "How do you do?" "My name is..." or "I'm Korean." My pronunciation was bad, and classmates made fun of me so I

felt very discouraged to speak. Throughout the elementary school and Jr. High school, I did not speak at all unless I really had to or was forced to.

In Jr. High, I could not go to cafeteria because I was afraid to sit alone. But my mom always packed lunch for me everyday. I did not want her to know that there was a problem in my social life, so I used to take my lunch to restroom and eat it there. Afterwards I would go to the library where I did my homework and read books.

But although I was alone, I always felt God's presence with me. I talked to Him, and He listened. He was my best friend to comfort me when I was having a bad day, and He



protected me from all harm. He surrounded me with His love, so that although I was alone I felt loved, and always had hope in my heart that clouds will pass one day, and so it did.

I do not need to see a special sign or miracle to believe that God is alive. I look at all the people that God has given me now, and they are the living proof that He is a living God who listens to my prayers.

Now, I realize that God had granted me the time of silence and loneliness to make me a stronger person, and also to bring me closer to Him.

He put me through a tunnel, so I can see brighter light. When I was reading the Bible, I came across a passage where God said, "I will never leave you; I will never abandon you." (Hebrews 13:5) This verse describes what God's love means to me.

Even at the time when everyone ignored me, I was precious in His eyes, and He wished my true happiness. And He loves not only me, but also each one of us this way.

## **Understanding the weight those words carry**

Teresa Cho, Orlando, Florida

I received my religious education at my catholic elementary and middle schools. I don't know whether it was their teaching methods or their lack of passion that disinterested me, but I began to grow a deep apathy towards my own religion - particularly when it came to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, through which I was supposed to have gained my salvation.

"He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. [Peter 2:24]"

As significant as that verse is, it never had any impact on me, and subsequently had no affect on my life, my thoughts, or my actions. I knew the story, I knew the verse, and I knew the meaning of those words, but I couldn't, for

the life of me, relate it to myself in any way, or even begin to imagine the significance of His sacrifice for all of us.

Hollywood changed this all for me; more specifically, Mel Gibson Opened my eyes - through his portrayal of Jesus in "Passion of the Christ." I could finally SEE what Jesus went through for us, how much he suffered for our sins.

We all know why he sacrificed himself for us, but how many of us actually FEEL his pain? Up until that point, I had yet shed a single tear for Jesus - Jesus, who had given up his life to save mine!

Watching the movie, I started crying uncontrollably, because it was at that point that I realized what the Son of God had gone through for my salvation. It was then that such words as "I love you. I love you all so much," from Jesus actually carried meaning for me, for the first time in my life.

Now when I hear the words "He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. [Peter 2:24]," I can understand, in my heart, the weight that those words carry.

