

GROWING IN GOD PODCAST



GIG301 – Prepare to Receive the Holy Spirit

Hello, and welcome to this podcast. I am glad you could join me today. As always, I appreciate you coming back again to see what things the Lord is giving us to present. Also, I would appreciate it if you would go to our website, hargraveministries.org, and see the blogs, the study guides, and all that is available. See what we are doing in Israel to support the land and the people there, and be with us as we are on this journey to grow in God.

Today I want to talk about the Feast of Pentecost, which is coming in just a few days from the release of this podcast. We do not need to spend a lot of time in it, but I really want to create an anticipation and a sense of preparation for this feast. Many will be looking at the time of Pentecost as a celebration of the beginning of the Church, the launching of the Church, but to me there is something much deeper that I am believing for. This is not just a story of what happened with the apostles back at the ascension of Christ, this is much more than that; this is an event, this is something that we should anticipate walking in and experiencing ourselves in our own lives.

It is important to me that we take the Bible with that attitude, that we are always looking for what God has opened the door to and have that be an experience that we walk in. We are not just reading the Scriptures as a bunch of stories about other people; we are reading them as examples of what God has opened the door to and prepared for us to walk in ourselves. And I believe Pentecost is such an experience. It is something that we should look to as part of our growing in God to mature into His sons.

I want to start this at Acts the first chapter, verses 2-8.

Until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

This was the time period following the resurrection. It was a time period being counted by the Jewish people, because there is no set date for Pentecost other than the fact that we count from the waving of the sheaf of the first fruits at Pesach, at Passover, to come to this date of Pentecost. But what I really want us to understand is that Pentecost was something that the Lord told the disciples to prepare for. He said, "Do not leave. Do not start wandering off." He was getting ready to ascend to the right hand of the Father, and they were not just to go back to Galilee, or go back to their lives, or whatever. He told

them to go back to Jerusalem. It was approximately ten days from the time of His ascension to the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the one hundred twenty when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, so there was this direction that Yeshua gave to His followers, saying, "Get ready. There is something that is going to happen and you need to get ready for that event."

This is what I want us to get out of this podcast, that there is an event which we talk about when we say, "the Day of Pentecost," or when we say, "the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." It is an event, it is a happening that we are to prepare ourselves for. We are not just looking to rehearse historically what transpired for them, or to say, "This is when the Church age began." We are saying, "It is Pentecost, and it is time for us to prepare ourselves for this phenomenal event, this historic time, that when Christ ascended to the right hand of the Father, then something was made available to the believer." What was made available was this tremendous outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 19-20, Paul says, "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body." We see the importance that Paul was placing on this event. He was saying, "Look, you now are the temple." Before they were not the temple. The believers were not the temple, the disciples were not the temple of the Holy Spirit. And now he is saying, "We are a temple." You are not the temple, not the only temple; you are a temple. The Holy Spirit, when He is poured out, can be poured out upon multitudes in all lands around the world. At some point we see that the Holy Spirit is poured out upon all flesh, which is a tremendous event that we look forward to being part of, the experience of that reality of the coming Holy Spirit. But at this moment, what they were looking for was the Holy Spirit falling upon them, infilling them, dwelling within them in a way that had not happened. The Holy Spirit had not been given, because Christ was not yet glorified and had not yet ascended to the right hand of the Father. (John 7:39) So whatever experience the disciples had previously with the Holy Spirit, this on the Day of Pentecost is something different. We see that He did breathe on them and say, "Receive the Holy Spirit," so there had been encounter with the Holy Spirit. But this on the Day of Pentecost is an indwelling of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God coming upon us, and according to Paul, we are a temple of that. In other words, the Holy Spirit does not come and go; He resides, He dwells, He lives within us. That was the thing that was unique about Christ: when He was baptized, it said that the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove. It descended, and it remained. (John 1:32-34) In other words, it did not come and go from Christ. When Christ was baptized in the Holy Spirit, when He was filled with the Holy Spirit by the Father, the Spirit came upon Him, within Him, and it remained; it did not come and go. Our experience with the Holy Spirit is not something that just comes so that one day we have it, and the next day we do not feel the Spirit so much, we are not aware of it, it is not something that is real to us in our experience. No, that is not the way this is. That is one of the great differences when we talk about the encounter with the Day of Pentecost, when we talk about us having the Pentecost experience that the disciples had, that the one hundred twenty had, that thousands had following that. It is something that is not just, "Oh, I was waiting on the Lord, or I was praying, I was worshiping, and I felt the Holy Spirit and the Presence of the Lord." No, what we are talking about is an event that is life changing. It is an event where the Holy Spirit is poured out upon you, and within you, and surrounding you, and it remains. You become the temple, the housing of the Holy Spirit in you.

Along with that, it says that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own. So part of what we are saying, "Let's be prepared," is that we should be prepared for a different life. We should be prepared for a new way of life where we are not our own and where we do not direct our lives as we have, where we do not just live our lives according to our own desires or passions or will. We now realize that the Holy Spirit, who is in us, who we have from God, has come to dwell within us to lead us, to guide us, to direct us. We are not our own any longer. And I think that is worth taking some time in waiting upon the Lord and preparing our hearts for, to say, "Lord, I am preparing my mind, my thoughts, my being, to be now directed and indwelt by You in a way that my life changes." This is a life-changing experience, but I think that we do not look at it that way many times, we do not anticipate it; I do not know that we teach it this way in church anymore, as opposed to just saying, "Hey, let's celebrate the history of the beginning of the Church Age." The Church Age really should be called the Age of the Spirit. It is not the Church Age. We are not celebrating an event that started the Church, we are celebrating the event where God Himself places the Holy Spirit, His Spirit, within us to own us, to direct us. We are not our own any longer, but we are now the temple. This is something that is life changing.

Our salvation experience, our walk with God, it is to be life changing. And I think it is part of the problem that we have when we do not anticipate that level of experience. It is great if we say, "Oh, Pentecost is church, and now we go to church, and we just enjoy ourselves at church." I mean, a lot of people enjoy the band and the show and all that goes on. No, that is not what this is about. This is about the fact that God's Spirit is going to be poured into your life. You are now going to be the housing and the temple for that Spirit, and He is going to be the One who owns you, who directs you, who abides in you and with you, always and constantly. Our salvation experience, our walk with God, our revelation of Christ, our revelation of the Father, is to be something that changes our life – our way of life, how we think, what we do. We are to be led now by the Spirit, not led by our own thoughts and will and desires.

So I think it is worth taking a few days to really go before the Lord and find out, "Is there any resistance in me? Is there any way in which I am not really opening my heart to the completeness, the thorough reality of what it is to be the temple of the Holy Spirit and to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in me so that I am no longer my own person. I want to be willing, I want to be open, I want to be asking."

We ask, Father, that You pour into our lives Your Holy Spirit, that You become the One who leads and guides us through our life, and that this becomes our reality.

I want to look at Galatians chapter 2, verses 20-21. It says, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God..." You know the word faith – what does it mean? Faith is the substance of the thing. So you could say, "The life I now live in the flesh I live by substance in the Son of God..." What is that substance? The substance is the Holy Spirit. "The life that I now live I live by the substance of the Holy Spirit in me." So it continues, "...who loved me and gave Himself up for me. I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly." This is something that we realize, that Christ came for. He said in John 17 that He was going to be in us and with us; that He and the Father would come and They would take up their abode in us, with us. The Holy Spirit would come and dwell in us. This idea of Pentecost is getting right down to the very foundational reality of what it is to call ourselves believers, to call ourselves Christians, to say that we have the experience of salvation in Christ. It is this reality of Them indwelling us.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 says, "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are." Think about this. He is repeating what was said in 1 Corinthians 6. "Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" These are heavy, heavy statements, let them impact us. Let us sit before the Lord and say, "Lord, let this literally be a life-changing revelation to me, that I am a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in me."

"If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are." If you are a believer, if you have received Christ into your life, if you have opened your spirit to receive the Holy Spirit into you, then that is what you are: you are a temple of God, and the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you.

These are very, very heavy statements, and they are very much the reality that we should have as believers in Christ. The power of this is something that must come alive to us as we believe in it.

I want to go to Romans the eighth chapter, and I will start with verses 10-11. It says, "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you [this is the Holy Spirit], He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." He is going to give life to our mortal bodies. We talk about the resurrection of Christ being our reality, and that is what is being spoken of here. If we are a temple of the Holy Spirit and He dwells in us, then through His Spirit who dwells in us, God is ministering life even to our mortal bodies.

Verses 12-16,

So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God... [see, the Spirit does not just indwell us for no reason; the Spirit indwells us in order to lead us, to direct our lives]. All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.

We experience this indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And as we do, as we become this temple of the Holy Spirit, then the Spirit Himself is testifying to our spirit, to our divine being that we are, having this human experience. "The Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are children of God." We wake up to who we are. We begin to cry, "Abba! Father!", so that we can grow and mature into the fullness of Christ that dwells in us. This is the purpose of it, and this is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

So I encourage us to take the time that we need to prepare ourselves for this phenomenal experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which is to be our reality.

Amen.