

Pentecost: A Pivotal Day in God's Master Plan (Go To Meeting) Norbert Bohnert

{Transcript begins at approximately 4 minutes}

It's so easy with everything we know knowledge-wise from the World of God that we know that things are going to get tough and that things will be to the point that we will begin to be controlled. We have to be careful that we understand that ***we know that the world is led by Satan!*** By the prophecies that we know and find in the Scriptures that we face turmoil and that Satan is very, very hard at work to destroy God's way and also more urgently trying to destroy God's people.

Prophecy will be fulfilled one way or the other and God is in control of that. We cannot do anything about what goes on in this world to bring us to the end-times. As time is going by and we know that the clock is constantly ticking.

Remember that we are part of this world, but we must pull ourselves out of this world with the calling that God the Father has given to each one of us personally. We, as the called out ones, have a job to do.

I want to take this time and caution you that whatever is going on and happening, we cannot control; we cannot control what's happening out there in the world. Yes, we should be aware of things that are going on, and be aware of the signs and actions that are taking place around the world. But that does not really matter what all these theorists and everything else that's going on.

We cannot do anything about what's going on out there in the world, but we can control what we should be doing toward our ultimate goal: ***being rewarded with the most awesome gift that one could ever imagine, that of eternal life!***

More importantly that leads to the Day of Pentecost, ***which represents being a firstfruit of God!*** That's an awesome thing that we must consider that we should be focusing our entire lives on that principle of being there, being one of those firstfruits, even in the troubled times that we are faced with.

Yes, the Coronavirus has affected us all! But all of it has basically been in a physical sense. Our foundation is much deeper than that. We must be careful that we do not base our Christian life on this very soul and get wound up and engrossed in all the conspiracy theories that are out there.

Let us remember a few basic things that we can come to learn in our daily walk with God. We

have to be careful and avoid foolish and unlearned questions.

2-Timothy 2:23: "But foolish and ignorant speculations reject, knowing that they engender arguments."

We should not ask them, and we should not answer them. Why? *The verse tells us that such queries are not... do not build up anyone.* They are to only generate disruption and fights amongst each other.

There is no usefulness or profit gained. There is no thoughtfulness undergirding these questions. We should be careful to avoid any generalities as much as possible. We are to avoid being wise concerning evil:

Romans 16:19: "...I desire that you be wise indeed concerning good, but innocent concerning evil."

Paul is moved by the Holy Spirit; preferred Christians are to have more insight into what is right and wrong.

We want to be careful to avoid gullibility. If we gain a reputation of doubting and questioning everything—as many conspiracists do—then who will believe us when we actually share God's Word with them? By that time we would have lost our credibility, which is exactly what is Satan's purpose in the first place.

Rather than having him put effort to discredit us, we do his job for him by disgracing ourselves. So, we must be very careful. We are to avoid walking foolishly.

Ephesian 5:15: "So then, take heed that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as those who are wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. For this reason, do not be foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is debauchery, but be filled with *the Spirit*" (vs 15-18).

We are admonished and we are filled with wisdom from the Word of God. The Spirit of God controls us.

Colossians 3:15: "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..."

We are to avoid the combative, striving heart attitude that exists when this occurs amongst people. One work of flesh is strife (Gal. 5:20). This

contrasts the fruit of the Spirit of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, etc. etc.

When the Holy Spirit governs a person's life, their inner man, the nine fruits mentioned in Gal. 5:20 will very evident in our lives. Conspiracy theorists are very often aggressive, ready to fight in a heartbeat because they are outraged. As Christians this should not be the case and not be true of us.

2-Timothy 2:24: "Now, it is obligatory *that* a servant of *the* Lord not be argumentative, but gentle toward all, competent to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting those who set themselves in opposition; if perhaps God may grant them repentance unto acknowledging of *the* Truth, and *that* they may wake up *and escape* from the devil's snare, who have been taken captive by him to *do* his will" (vs 24-26).

We should avoid defining that which is not God. In the conspiracy theorist's realm, the government or some other powerful entity is portrayed as seemingly omnipotent. Mortal men are presented as gods working behind the scenes to achieve some nefarious end.

It is as if the Creator God has no final say. It is ignored that He will allow sinful man to go only so far. The conspiracy theorist, lacking any real depth of Bible understanding, has no hope to offer the troubled souls whom he or she indoctrinates.

If a Christian entertains such ideas, as making government officials to be gods, then the unbeliever sees no purpose whatsoever in believing in one true God.

What I'm trying to convey to you is that all things aside and everything that is happening out there around us today, we cannot become engrossed in it. Not letting that become our distraction to the point of forgetting our mission. Our purpose in fulfilling our duty under the direction of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Satan would love nothing more than have us distracted to the point that we forget why we have been called by God in what we are to do. ***We must hold firm, hold fast, stand fast to the greater things of value given to us through God's Word, His way and His character!***

- we must set our priorities in order, *lest we become negligent*
- we must identify and retain valuable information, *lest we become conned*
- we must be zealous and informed, *lest we be not taken seriously*
- we must study, study the Holy Word of God, *lest we become superstitious and*

suspicious

- we must rest in God's peace, *lest distrust and hopelessness overwhelm us*
- we must be cognizant of the revelation of mystery, *lest we overlook the most important secret*

The fact is that the God of creation kept a marvelous secret until He revealed it through and by the Apostle Paul. It was done to outsmart Satan.

Romans 16:25: "Now, to Him Who has the power to establish you, according to my Gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery that in past ages has been kept secret; but now *is* made manifest, and by *the* prophetic Scriptures, according to *the* commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations unto *the* obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, *be* the glory into the ages of *eternity*. Amen" (vs 25-27).

We must be careful not to play into Satan's hand and take our mind and efforts off of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and God's plan! Let us be aware of what's going on about us, but more importantly, let's be strengthened:

- by what we have learned
- by the calling that God has given us
- by God's direction, guidance *and most of all*
- by the power of the Holy Spirit within us

To put our hands to the wheel and become a child of God, a firstfruit—the potential firstfruits—that Christ is going to work with.

Our path to salvation is dependent on what we do. We have to stand strong, stay in the faith and hope that God will not let us fall. Our future is our hands. I just wanted share that with you. I'd been thinking about it and hopefully it's of some value to you. With that said I'm going to get into the message, which has some bearing to this, as well.

We know that Pentecost is just around the corner and it shows that with God's Holy Spirit we will be like God. That's what I'm going to expound upon. Hopefully it will help prepare us for the upcoming Holy Day.

1-John 3:2: "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is."

That is an incredible Truth, lost on so many. We are privileged to know that Truth and understand it to its fullest.

When God gave His Holy Days, He gave us a layout of how His master plan for mankind was going to get worked out over the course of history. Each of the Holy Days that we find in Lev. 23 has an actual fulfillment on a special day, that appointed time that we speak of.

For example, even though Passover was kept by Old Testament Israel, it was not fulfilled until Jesus died on that Passover evening. That was when Passover was 'fully come.' All of the Old Testament Passovers only looked forward in type to the fulfillment of the Passover, the sacrifice of Christ.

In the same way Pentecost was given to Old Testament Israel. They had various names for it:

- Feast of Weeks
- Feast of Firstfruits
- Feast of Harvest

Acts 2:1: "And when the Day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day... [we know how to count to Pentecost] ...was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place."

Pentecost pictures the harvest of spiritual sons and daughters into the Family of God; thus fulfilling the plan of God. What was God's plan in the first place?

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.'"

That is what the intent was; to make man in Their image. Pentecost is the central day in the three seasons of God's Holy Days. It is the pivotal day in the plan of God. It is of utmost importance, the first major step in making man in His image. That's what occurs and is represented by the Day of Pentecost, when God pours out His Holy Spirit on mankind.

The fall Holy days only give us the final details of what God's plan is going to be and how it is accomplished:

- The Feast of Trumpets represents Christ returning and pictures the battles that will be.
- Atonement has to do with our reconciliation with God
- The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the thousand year Millennial reign with Christ

All of this, the thousand year Millennial reign of Christ is after the sons and daughters of God have been established on this earth.

- The Last Great Day pictures all of those who have not had that opportunity, have been brought into the plan of God. The Last Great Day pictures the new heavens and the new Earth.

God sent His Spirit at Pentecost and raised up the first of the New Testament Church of God.

So, for the first time—in a great and magnificent way—God poured out His Spirit on many people. It was not just the 120, but on the 3,000 and the 5,000. Then down through the centuries many others have been called. Notice at the end of:

Acts 2:1 "...they were all with one accord in the same place."

These brethren have been preparing themselves for this day. Jesus Christ had given them many, many hints and clues that, in fact, something enormous and big was going to take place.

Let me make a point here that is not explicitly stated in Scripture, but we know it is true: All those who received God's Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost day were repentant. Before that they were called of God and they had accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Without these steps of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, no one can receive the Spirit of God.

God does not bestow His Spirit on the unwilling, but only on those who are willing to be righteous.

Acts 1:15: "And in those days, Peter stood up in *the* midst of the disciples (now, *the* number of names together was about a hundred and twenty)..."

This gives us a general idea of how many people were there. There were not 3,000 or 5,000 there. Of the many, many that Jesus healed, most of them were not there. Jesus healed way more people than 120, but they were not followers of Jesus Christ and they did not believe in living their lives as He taught.

Acts 2:2: "And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting."

What an awesome experience that would be! Up until this time, man—without God's Holy Spirit—did not understand the spiritual workings of God and the way that He works in an invisible way through His Spirit.

This day is going to have the manifestations of physical things that will help the disciples and those who are in the New Testament Church to understand that this is not a regular Feast day.

Something really big and important was going to take place.

When this was being written, and probably penned by Luke, there was probably exceptionally good understanding of what that sounded like. It was not just a little breeze blowing as we read in v 2. It was not just like someone dropping a utensil on the floor, **but a mighty rushing wind, jut like the place was going to come apart at the seams with much force!**

There is this sound and light spectacle that is associated with this great miracle that occurred at this time.

Verse 3: "And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and sat upon each one of them."

The words given are difficult to describe what actually appeared to them. I've often wondered and tried to understand what is meant by "...divided tongues as of fire..."

It was not fire, because if it were it would have said *tongues of fire*, but it says it was "...**as** of fire..."—*like fire!* So, it was something that was different and it was somehow split, not solid. We don't know if it was vertical, horizontal or if it was spread out broadly.

This word 'tongue' carries the connotation of different languages. This is the exact same word that we will see in a little while when we find out that they received the gift of foreign languages. So, there is this split languages/tongues; what was it? *It was something that was the cause of great excitement.*

"...and sat upon each one of them" (v 3). God was indicating that this was not some kind of broad based thing, or that it was a general kind of thing where you could tap into, or not tap into. It individually came to each one of the people there.

Just like when you and I were baptized, and hands were laid upon us, God's Spirit came upon us, each one of us individually.

Verse 4: "And they were all filled with *the Holy Spirit*; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim."

This we understand, but the world is so confused about this. They just spoke in other foreign languages, and they spoke perfectly so that the people who knew those languages could understand them. God's Spirit works differently in different people.

It says in 1-Cor. 12 that all of us are given

special individual gifts. They are different and vary greatly. They are for the profit of everyone! We are not to say, on the other hand, that we have this great gift that puts us above everyone else. No! ***The spiritual gifts given are for the profit of everyone!*** For anyone to hoard their spiritual gifts would be blaspheme! That is missing the thing that God intends for us to use for the benefit of the entire Church.

Verse 5: "Now, *there were many* Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when word of this went out, the multitude came together and were confounded, because each one heard them speaking in his own language" (vs 5-6).

This is talking about outsiders sharing: 120 disciples and mixed brethren speaking in foreign languages that heretofore did not know what was being said. So, people were in Jerusalem from all over the Mediterranean and distant lands keeping the Feast of Pentecost.

Let's see what God said about the Feast of Pentecost. This is a verse that we know, but having meat in due season tells us that we should go back and establish on this day the directions and the meaning of this particular Feast day.

Leviticus 23:15: And you shall count to you beginning with the next day after the Sabbath, beginning with the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete.... [the count to Pentecost] ...Even unto the day after the seventh Sabbath you shall number fifty days. And you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD. You shall bring out of your homes two wave loaves of two tenth parts. They shall be of fine flour. They shall be baked with leaven; *they are* the firstfruits to the LORD" (vs 15-17).

Here is the part of the offering in the Old Testament days of Pentecost. What are those offerings going to do? *They're going to point eventually to the Church!*

You and I have one major difference from Jesus Christ. If we look at the offering that represented Jesus Christ, we will see that it was 'fine flour mixed with oil.' Jesus Christ had God's Holy Spirit—oil—without measure!

But we come from a different source. We have sin, leaven! Notice that it says that the loaves "...shall be baked with leaven..."—*representing sin!* Yet, because of the cleansing power of Jesus Christ, of His blood and His Spirit, the people that these loaves represent are the firstfruits to the Lord.

Jesus Christ is the Firstfruit to the Lord. Then we are put into that same category under

Christ. The people of the Old Testament could not grasp those things. Brethren, *we are rich* to understand these concepts given to us.

Verse 21: "And you shall proclaim on the same day that it may be a Holy convocation to you. You shall do no servile work *therein*. *It shall be* a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations."

That means we come together and we keep this day Holy, and we do not go out to work like a regular day. As we continue reading, we will see that there are some remarkably interesting instruction from God. God has concern for others. We have had, all too often, in God's Church a concept that we have been called into God's Church and that makes us incredibly special and better than the people out there in the world.

Yes, it is a blessing! A certain blessing that God has chosen each one of us individually. But this way of thinking that we are much better than those in the world is a very dangerous way of thinking.

Verse 22: "And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not completely reap the corners of your field. And the gleaning of your harvest you shall not gather. But you shall leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God."

Here we see the heart of God expressed. Look at the mind of God! We are going to cover this verse because God says that we will be like Him. We find here that God is concerned for the weak and the needy.

Notice that here in these instructions for this Holy Day He refers to an agricultural element, that of the field and its harvest. The Feast of Pentecost is a harvest, and ultimately it means the harvest of those who have God's Holy Spirit.

The harvest that we are looking for is having your incredible human potential fulfilled: ***being in the Kingdom of God!***

Jesus Christ is the God of the Old Testament and is talking about a real physical harvest. Today when you see a big tractor pulling a big implement, sometimes over 25-feet wide, when you get to the corner of the field and make a turn it automatically leaves a little of that corner untouched. You cannot get over there with the equipment.

That's why I think it says that 'thou shall not make clean riddance of the corners of the field.' He is saying that there are places where the grain is going to fall over there between the trees or close to the ditch, and He is instructing us to leave them, to leave it there. Right there you can get a picture of

how God thinks and reacts. He cares about the poor and the stranger.

Jesus Christ is not so far off that He cannot be touched with our feelings. He does feel our infirmities, and we are told that very clearly throughout the Scriptures.

Exodus 19:17: "And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. And they stood at the base of the mountain."

The people were scared to go near Mt. Sinai, because they heard the rumblings of God and saw the lightning and everything. They were terrified, fearful. It was quite a spectacle. Again, God was emphasizing that there was something extraordinary going on.

Verse 18: "And Mount Sinai was smoking, all of it because the LORD came down upon it in fire. And the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the sound of the trumpet sounded long, and became very strong, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice" (vs 18-19).

This must have been quite a sight; there was something big and new that was going on. God is punctuating the day, emphasizing that He was doing something incredibly special. He wanted to accentuate, to draw attention to what He was doing.

He could have called Moses off to a quiet place and given him the Ten Commandments, but then Moses would have had to get the people's attention. This way it was much more effective! Everyone was at attention whether they liked it or not.

God gave the children of Israel His Law on this Day of Pentecost. This may be disputed, but God does do things at an appointed time, a specific time.

When Jesus Christ was baptized by John, He did not need to be because Christ had no sin. He did it so that all righteousness would be fulfilled; that is how God works. He always does the right thing at the right time. So, God gave them His Law!

There's a remarkably close connection between God's Law and how God is; it shows clearly how God is. We shall be like Him, and we need to understand God's Law. That's the basis of everything!

God's Law is Who God is! It's got to be a natural part of us, as well. We will naturally not kill or steal. Our nature *then* will be of a spiritual nature. It is now not of a spiritual nature. For those of us who are led by the Spirit of God have that blessing

that God has called us amongst all the world to be part of that Pentecost, the firstfruits of Christ.

Brethren, this world does not know or believe the Ten Commandments of God in general. The intent of the commandments of God is to help us to become like Him; we are to become like God!

Knowing that we know all of those Ten Commandments and what they represent, I will move on to:

Exodus 20:18: "And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking. And when the people saw, they trembled and stood afar off. And they said to Moses, **'You speak with us, and we will hear. But let not God speak with us, lest we die'**" (vs 18-19).

They did not want God directly talking to them. They were fearful. The people were afraid and did not want anything to do with God directly speaking to them. It was just too powerful!

Verse 20: "And Moses said to the people, 'Do not fear, for God has come to prove you and so that His fear may be before your faces, so that you may not sin.'"

Moses speaks to the people and tells them that God is just trying to get their attention so that they could start living according to His Law. That was to be the basis for living their lives.

There we have the Old Testament account of the Feast of Pentecost. Let's us turn to a time that is about three and a half years after the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

Christ had died, been buried and resurrected after three days and three nights in the grave. We would think that the apostles would be fairly knowledgeable at this point, having been instructed by Jesus Christ day and night for all that time.

Luke 24:44: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that **all the things** which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the Prophets* and *in the Psalms* **must be fulfilled**.'"

You see that God has a plan and He is not giving and is not doing things haphazardly. The Feast days clearly show us what is fulfilled. Jesus said that '*every detail that you find in those three area of the Bible concerning Me will come to pass; they will be fulfilled.*'

These three divisions of the Bible all work together, and we are taught 'a little here and little there.' All three of these areas told of Jesus Christ and what He would do.

Verse 45: "Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures"—*all tied together with the coming of God's Holy Spirit at Pentecost!*

When we were called, brethren, the same thing happened. God's way began to make sense to us, because before that it was strange, unheard of. We started to think and reason as God does. It is the working of God's Holy Spirit within us that makes us to start to think and reason and be like He is.

Verse 46: "And said to them, 'According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from *the* dead the third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For you are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but remain in the city of Jerusalem until you have been clothed with power from on high'" (vs 46-49).

Verse 50: "Then He led them out as far as Bethany; and He lifted up His hands *and* blessed them. And it came to pass *that* as He was blessing them, He was separated from them and was carried up into heaven" (vs 50-51).

Have you ever thought what this was like the apostles standing there with Jesus Christ? Remember how they felt when Jesus Christ died and they grabbed Him by the feet and held onto Him and didn't want to let Him go. To see Jesus Christ departing like this must have been emotionally devastating to them.

Verse 52: "And after worshiping Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen" (vs 52-53)

They *knew* that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and that He was God! They did stay in Jerusalem and were fasting and praying and repenting. How do we know that? *Because they had received the Holy Spirit and they had repented!*

Verse 44 again: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the Prophets* and *in the Psalms* must be fulfilled.'"

Jesus told us that the Old Testament is broken up into three basic parts. There is nothing mysterious about this. A little child can count to three.

Jesus said, 'Verily, I say unto you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.'

We are to 'down to earth'; the Word of God described in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms presents us insight into the mind of God, the actions of God and the character of God.

We even see the personality of God when we have these things that God says. It's like when He says, 'Do not go out there and just pick out every last grain of the field.' We see that God is generous, caring and compassionate, and it gives us good insight into the thoughts and depths of God.

When He mentions the Law of Moses, that tells us:

- how to relate with God
- how to relate with each other
- how to relate to the society around us

God's Laws are not harsh; that's what the Protestants tend to think and teach. It is not too harsh and burdensome. The God of the Old Testament—Jesus Christ—was not harsh. The entire universe operates under perfect law. More than anything the Law defines what God has establish, what works and what does not work.

Just take the simple law of gravity: If there was not gravity we wouldn't stay on the earth planted to the ground. With spiritual law terrible consequences would definitely take place.

Matthew 11:30: "For My yoke *is* easy, and My burden is light."

What is it that makes us like God? *Some people misquote Gen. 1:26 and say:*

We are in the image of God already! We do not need changing because Jesus Christ did it for us; we do not need to do anything except to be true to our human nature and true to our carnality.

That is a totally false gospel!

It says that ***we shall be like Him!*** But not yet!

Hebrews 8:10: "'For this *is* the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days,' says *the* Lord: 'I will give My laws into their minds, and **I will inscribe them upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.**'"

He is making that covenant already with the Church of God. We are the sons and daughters of God. God's words don't have to be out there on the doorposts or carved in stone. ***It's going to be ingrained into each one of us!***

1-John 5:2: "By this *standard* we know that

we love the children of God: when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome" (vs 2-3).

That defines how we love each other. Not stealing, killing, bearing false witness, or committing adultery. That is how we know that we love the children of God. It is different than the love of this world.

- it is not too hard to not kill
- it is not too hard to worship the true God
- it is not too hard not to bear false witness

IF we have God's Spirit working within us! But without God's Spirit it is difficult!

Christ said that the Prophets speak of Him; that is how we know about the plan of God. As this also tells us about what God was thinking at the time. The Prophets told us things that were going to take place and how they were going to take place.

Then Jesus Christ mentions in the Psalms about the tenderness of Him. It shows us the humanity of Jesus Christ and His feelings for us. We are to become like Him and we need to know what He is like if we are going to become like Him.

Our natural body tells us to do the things that Satan would have us do. Naturally and carnally we do not do the things that are pro Jesus Christ. We don't do that by the nature and carnality that we have.

In the Psalms we see that God understands our emotions. We even see God pictured as having emotions. And He shares His emotions and feelings with us. In the Psalms we read about God's approachability so that we can know God.

So, when Jesus was speaking to the disciples, He told them about those three parts. But now we also have the New Testament. How much more blessed can we be. We have the Word of God in the actions of Jesus Christ.

Romans 11:33: "O *the* depth of *the* riches of both *the* wisdom and *the* knowledge of God! How unfathomable *are* His judgments and unsearchable *are* His ways!"

God's wisdom is going to help us know God! God is leading us into this knowledge by His Spirit, and that is what this Day of Pentecost pictures.

Verse 34: "For who did know *the* mind of *the* Lord, or who became His counselor?"

We do not tell God what to do, but God is showing us what He is like so that we can be like

Him. They went up to the Mount of Olives; Luke wrote about it after Jesus Christ died.

Acts 1:2: "Until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by *the* Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; to whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, being seen by them for forty days, and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God" (vs 2-3).

In those 40 days, Jesus taught them a lot about God, how He thinks and how He operates. He was explaining repeatedly about the Kingdom of God and trying to get their minds straight. Brethren, we shall be like Him, but let us watch how difficult and hard it is, even for the apostles who were talking to Jesus Christ first hand, face-to-face. There was so much of it going way over their heads, and they were just not getting it.

Verse 4: "And while *they* were assembled with *Him*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me.'"

The promise of the Father was the Holy Spirit that came on Pentecost. Jesus was giving them a big clue as what was going to take place. But Jesus Christ was giving each one of them a choice. He did not say, 'By all means be at the church/synagogue.' There was a separation going on even then as to whether they were going to obey Christ. He left them a choice. Five thousand did not show up, just 120 were there.

Verse 5: "For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days."

He did not nail it down and left a little bit, not specific, but the apostles were still very confused.

Verse 6: "So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You restore the Kingdom to Israel at this time?'"

That is what they were still looking for. They were thinking physically, and they wanted Him to make a great and powerful nation so that they could walk all over everybody else and collect the taxes, as they did in the days of Solomon.

Verse 7: "And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority.'"

Jesus did not even explain at that point how different that life as a Christian was going to be, compared to what they had been living all their

lives. This was still very much a time of 'survival of the fittest'! but Jesus Christ was bringing a new way of life to His followers. Life as a Christian was going to be so different from worldly kingdoms that had towered over the people. He did not explain it to the apostles. Because without God's Holy Spirit to open their mind, they could not have understood it. These people would not have had the book of Revelation for another 70 years.

Verse 8: "But you yourselves shall 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 unto *the* ends of the earth. And after saying these things, *as* they were looking at *Him*, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Now, while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them, Who also said, 'You men of Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven'" (vs 9-11).

Matthew 24:27: "For as the light of day, which comes forth from *the* east and shines as far as *the* west, so also shall the coming of the Son of man be.

It's going to be visible and spectacular when Jesus Christ comes back. It's only with the help and working of God's Holy Spirit that we shall be like Him. That is the only way that we can attain to our incredible human potential. This day—Pentecost—pictures us becoming like God. Let us understand that this is God's total purpose in creating mankind in the first place.

1-John 3:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God! For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him.... [we are the sons of God] ...Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be; but we know that when He is manifested, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is" (vs 1-2).

Even with all the understand and the removal of fear, all the blessings and all the good things that God has given us, putting His mind and laws into our heart, a great change is going to come, and we shall be fully like Him.

What a blessing to even know that! We will see Him as He is. We do not think as God does. We have way too much carnality in us and we don't think like that, yet.

Isaiah 55:8: "**For My thoughts are not**

your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,' says the LORD."

What does that tell us? *That we have a long way to go!*

Romans 8:6: "For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace."
We must be like Jesus Christ:

- giving
- loving
- sharing
- forgiving
- kind
- gentle

Relating to God and to our fellow man! That is so critical! We should not be using our power and influence over others. We should not be taking advantage, but living like Christ lived!

Verse 7: "Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*. **But those who are in the flesh cannot please God**" (vs 7-8).

Very straight forward. We have a lot to overcome, but Paul gives hope and tells us:

Verse 9: "However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

This is a picture of this day of firstfruits. Jesus Christ the First of the firstfruits. We are part of that same resurrection with Jesus Christ. We are not there, yet.

God has given us these Scriptures, writing and teachings. He has given us the New Testament apostles, and He has given us evangelists, pastors, elders and teachers. It tells in Ephesians why He did that.

Ephesians 4:12: "For the perfecting of the saints, for *the* work of *the* ministry, for *the* edifying of the Body of Christ."

That's what it's all about! We are not like God, yet. But with God's Spirit we can become more like Jesus Christ. Each day, each month and each year we should becoming more like Jesus Christ and letting the Spirit work within us.

Ephesians 5:9: "Because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth; proving what is well pleasing to the Lord" (vs 9-10).
We are not there, yet!

Colossian 1:8: "Who has also informed us of your love in *the* Spirit. For this cause we also, from

the day that we heard *of it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthily of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light" (vs 8-12).

What an opportunity we have just to know this! We are not there, yet! This is what we are to be while we are on the face of the earth among our peers.

- we must love one another
- we must be patient with one another
- we must be faithful to one another

We read how we are to act toward each other:

2-Peter 1:7: "And to Godliness, brotherly love; and to brotherly love, the love *of* God. For if these things exist and abound in you, they *will* cause you to *be* neither lacking effort nor lacking fruit in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But the one in whom these things are not present is *spiritually* blind—so short-sighted *that* he has forgotten that he was purified from his old sins. For this reason, brethren, be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure; because **if you are doing these things, you will never fall at any time**" (vs 7-10).

You and I, brethren, must have a permit, a pass, to be eligible and go into the Kingdom of God.

Verse 11: "**For in this way, you will be richly granted an entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**"

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. We have an earnest of our inheritance with God. We re given this time with the power of God's Holy Spirit so that we shall be like Him. That is the promise of the Father. That is what the Day of Pentecost is all about. ***The Day of Pentecost, the pivotal day in the plan of God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Timothy 2:23
- 2) Romans 16:19
- 3) Ephesians 5:15-18
- 4) Colossians 3:15
- 5) 2 Timothy 2:24-26
- 6) Romans 16:25-27
- 7) 1 John 3:2
- 8) Acts 2:1

- 9) Genesis 1:26
- 10) Acts 2:1
- 11) Acts 1:15
- 12) Acts 2:2-6
- 13) Leviticus 23:15-17, 21-22
- 14) Exodus 19:17-19
- 15) Exodus 20:18-20
- 16) Luke 24:44-53, 44
- 17) Matthew 11:30
- 18) Hebrews 8:10
- 19) 1 John 5:2-3
- 20) Romans 11:33-34
- 21) Acts 1:2-11
- 22) Matthew 24:27
- 23) 1 John 3:1-2
- 24) Isaiah 55:8
- 25) Romans 8:6-9
- 26) Ephesians 4:12
- 27) Ephesians 5:9-10
- 28) Colossians 1:8-12
- 29) 2 Peter 1:7-11

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Galatians 5:20
- 1 Corinthians 12

NB:bo
Transcribed: 3/29/21

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