

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES ARE NOT TRULY PENTECOSTAL

For a little while this morning I want to talk about a 20th century religious movement known as Pentecostalism.

I want to be careful not to misrepresent Pentecostalism and Pentecostal churches in any way, so in defining and describing Pentecostals I'm going to quote from a writer who is himself a part of the Pentecostal movement -- his name is Dale A. Robbins, and his books and articles are published by Victorious Publications, a Pentecostal publishing house.

a. In an article entitled, "What is a Pentecostal church?" Mr. Robbins gives a very brief history of Pentecostalism:

▶ "A Pentecostal church generally identifies with the long standing history, traditions and theological views of the Pentecostal movement which began to emerge throughout the U.S. at the turn of the 20th century. The origins of the movement are usually associated with a band of believers led by minister, Charles F. Parham. In a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, students and teachers, along with Parham, researched the book of Acts, searching for the source of the Apostle's great power and success. They all concluded that it was because of the events that began with the Day of Pentecost. After a thorough review of Acts 2,8,9,10, and 19, they concluded that the same experience was available to them. On New Year's eve 1900, the first student was filled with the spirit and spoke in tongues. Then on January 3rd, others including Parham received, igniting a rapid growing movement. The famed 1906 revival of the Azusa Street mission in Los Angeles was a derivative of the events in Topeka. From there, it spread through the U.S., Canada and abroad." ("What is a Pentecostal church?" From the book, "What People Ask About The Church," by Dale A. Robbins)

b. Elsewhere in that same article Mr. Robbins says: "A Pentecostal church takes its name from the Spirit's outpouring which occurred on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4. The primary distinction of a Pentecostal church is the belief that Christians can receive the same experience as the 120 did, of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in other tongues. In this same vein, the Pentecostal believes in the present day operation of spiritual gifts such as miracles, healing, prophecy, and other supernatural manifestations described in 1 Corinthians 12." ("What is a Pentecostal church?" From the book, "What People Ask About The Church," by Dale A. Robbins)

So, Mr. Robbins says: "A Pentecostal church takes its name from the Spirit's outpouring which occurred on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4."

But the reality is this: modern-day Pentecostalism is not found in Acts, chapter 2; and the events of Acts, chapter 2, are not found in modern-day Pentecostalism.

a. I'm saying: What happened on Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2, is not happening in Pentecostal churches today.

▶ What goes on in Pentecostal churches today is a caricature of what happened on Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2.

1. The miracles that occurred on Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2, do not occur in Pentecostal churches today.

Please read **Ac 2:1-4** ~ "When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. **2** And suddenly there came a **sound from heaven**, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** Then there appeared to them **divided tongues, as of fire**, and one sat upon each of them. **4** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to **speak with other tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

We read about 3 miracles in **Ac 2:1-4** -- not just one.

- a. Miracle #1: **"a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind . . . filled the whole house"** where the apostles were sitting (vs 2).
- b. Miracle #2: **"divided tongues, as of fire"** sat upon each of the apostles (vs 3).
- c. Miracle #3: **"they (the apostles) were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance"** (vs 4).
- d. But not one of these miracles occurs in the assemblies of Pentecostal churches today!

Devout Jews **"from every nation under heaven"** (vs 5) were in Jerusalem at that time for the Feast of Pentecost.

- a. In **vs 6** we're told that **"when this sound occurred** (this "sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind"), **the multitude came together."**
 - ▶ In other words: this **"sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind"** was so loud that Jews from all over the city came running there to find out what was going on.
 - ▶ Miraculous phenomena such as this occurred from time to time in the assemblies of 1st century Christians.
 - Another example: **Ac 4:31** -- **"And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."**
 - I'm not saying something like this happened every time 1st century Christians assembled together -- but the point is, it happened some times!!!
 - This simply does not happen in Pentecostal churches today! Never!
 - I have been living in Chattanooga for over 20 years, and there has never been an occurrence such as we have described here in Acts, chapter 2 ... **"a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind"** that filled the meeting place of a Pentecostal church and brought people from all over the community running there to see what was going on.
 - I have never heard of such an occurrence and I have never seen a report of such an occurrence in any newspaper or magazine or any TV news program.
 - I haven't heard of it, and it hasn't been reported, because it has not occurred.

Furthermore, I have visited the assemblies of some of the Pentecostal churches, and I have visited some of their campground revivals -- but I have never seen **"divided tongues, as of fire"** resting upon any of the Pentecostal preachers or any of the Pentecostals who claimed to be speaking in tongues.

- a. I have never seen such an occurrence ... I have never known anyone who witnessed such an occurrence ... and I have never seen a report of such an occurrence in any newspaper or magazine or TV news program.
 - ▶ I haven't heard of it, and it hasn't been reported, because it has not occurred.

Furthermore, when the apostles spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost they spoke real languages.

- a. The languages they spoke were *unknown* to them (they had not studied and learned to speak those languages) -- but the languages they spoke were *known* to those who heard them speak.
 - ▶ **vss 5-11** ~ **"And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. 7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, 'Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10**

Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs -- we hear them speaking in **our own tongues** the wonderful works of God.”

- b. This simply does not happen in Pentecostal churches today!
- ▶ The “tongues” spoken by Pentecostals in their churches today are not real languages -- it is nothing more than gibberish.
 - ▶ Kildahl: *“Glossolalia in current usage is not the type described in Acts. In the past the ability has been claimed for some early Christian missionaries, but today there are no verified instances of a tongue speaker having a foreign language at his command which he has not learned by the usual means.”*
 - ▶ Samarit: *“Over a period of five years I have taken part in religious meetings in Italy, Holland Jamaica, Canada and the United States. I have observed old-fashioned Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals, I have been in small meetings at private homes as well as in mammoth public meetings. I have interviewed glossolalists (tongue speakers) and I have tape record-ed and analyzed countless samples of tongues. In every case, glossolalia consists of strings of meaningless syllables made up of sounds taken from those familiar to the speaker and put together more or less haphazardly. The speaker controls the rhythm, volume, speed and inflection of his speech so that the sound emerges as pseudo-language -- in the form of words and sentences. Glossolalia (tongue speaking) is language-like because the speaker unconsciously wants it to be language-like. Yet in spite of superficial similarities, glossolalia is fundamentally not language.”*

And beside these 3 miracles (the sound as of a rushing might wind ... the tongues like fire ... and the speaking in tongues) there were other miracles (real miracles) done that day through the apostles who had been baptized in the Holy Spirit.

- a. **Ac 2:43** ~ “Then fear came upon every soul, and **many wonders and signs** were done through the apostles.”

2. The teaching of the Holy Spirit concerning miraculous spiritual gifts is ignored by Pentecostal churches today.

The Holy Spirit, through the apostle Paul, made known to the Christians of the 1st century that miraculous spiritual gifts were not intended to continue until the end of time -- when they had served their purpose they would cease.

- a. Jesus promised the apostles that He would send the Holy Spirit to guide them into “all truth” and give them perfect insight into “the mystery of Christ.”
- ▶ **Jn 16:12-13** ~ “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.”
 - ▶ **Eph 3:1-5** ~ “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles - 2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:”
- b. The purpose of the miraculous spiritual gifts was to confirm the apostles and prophets of the 1st century as God’s messengers and the words they preached as God’s message.
- ▶ **Heb 2:3-4** ~ “how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was **confirmed** to us by those who heard

- Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?"*
- ▶ *2Cor 12:12 ~ "Truly the **signs of an apostle** were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds."*
- c. But when the "all truth" promised to the apostles was finally and completely revealed, there was no further need for the confirming miraculous gifts, and they ceased -- just as the Holy Spirit said they would.
- ▶ *1Cor 13:8-10 ~ "Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away."*
 - Notice: "that which is perfect" not "He who is perfect"
 - "that which is perfect" refers to the final and complete revelation of the will of Christ ... "the perfect law of liberty" (Jas 1:25)
- d. Furthermore, the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, given to the apostles through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, were given to others through the laying on of the apostles' hands -- so the miraculous gifts would die out with the passing of the apostles.
- ▶ *Ac 8:14-19 ~ "Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, 15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, 'Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.'"

 - Note: "receive the Holy Spirit" means "receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit" (see Ac 19:1-6)*

Pentecostal churches also ignore the teaching of the Holy Spirit concerning the use of miraculous spiritual gifts in the assemblies of the church.

- a. "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev 3:13).
- ▶ *1Cor 14:26-33 ~ "How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. **Let all things be done for edification.** 27 If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, **each in turn**, and **let one interpret.** 28 But **if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church**, and let him speak to himself and to God. 29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. 30 But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. 31 For you can all prophesy **one by one**, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. 32 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 33 For **God is not the author of confusion** but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."*
- b. When I have visited the assemblies of Pentecostal churches I have seen no evidence that they had ever heard or read what the Holy Spirit has said in *1Cor 14*.

3. The plan of salvation given by Peter and the other apostles on Pentecost in Acts, chapter 2, is perverted by Pentecostal preachers today.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter and the other apostles preached Jesus and His resurrection from the dead to a multitude of Jews who had participated in the awful events that led to Jesus being crucified.

- a. In vs 36 Peter said: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
- b. The "sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind" and the "divided tongues, as

of fire” resting upon each of the apostles, and the miraculous ability of the apostles to “speak in tongues” combined to convince many of the Jews that the Lord’s apostles were preaching the truth.

- c. So, in vs 37, they cried out: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”
 - ▶ That is a vitally important question.
 - ▶ That is the most important question anyone could ever ask.
 - ▶ That is the question every alien sinner must come to.
 - ▶ And the answer must be in strict accordance with God’s will.
- d. But Pentecostal preachers do not, and will not, give the answer Peter gave.
 - ▶ vs 38: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

Conclusion.

Pentecostalism is a religious movement that began at the turn of this century.

- a. It is not from God ... it does not truly honor God ... and it will not bring anyone to God.

But Jesus and His apostles began a religious movement in the 1st century that is from God.

- a. And you can become a part of it by rendering obedience to the true requirements of the gospel.
 - ▶ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says”
 - Mk 16:16 ~ “He who **believes** and is **baptized** will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
 - Rom 10:9-10 ~ “. . . if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and **believe** in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one **believes** unto righteousness, and with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation.”
 - Ac 2:38 ~ “. . . **Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; . . .”