

Holy Spirit, Pentecostal Life – Eph 1:13-14 and select passages

Pentecost Sunday 2025

Introduction – Pentecost was the day, the 50th day of Resurrection Sunday, recorded for us in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on all nations prophetically and symbolically in the giving of the languages of those nations to the apostles to preach the wonderful works of God. From there, Jerusalem, the gospel was to go forth in the power of the Spirit to Judea and to Samaria and to the ends of the earth, even to Woodinville in the 21st Century.

We are “Trinity Church” because we hold to the doctrine of the Triune Godhead. We come to the Father in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit and we worship all three persons of the Godhead – and we worship one God. We are not “Pentecostals” in the way that term is used in modern parlance, but we are “born-again, Spirit-filled” Christians. We are Spirit-filled people, for we are the descendants and fellow-recipients of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church of Jesus Christ, just as He promised (John 16:5-15). One of the results of the Holy Spirit coming to the apostles is held in your hands now (the completed New Testament, along with the Old), and the same Spirit testifies to us of His truthfulness - convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. The Holy Spirit testifies to our spirit that we are children of God so we can cry out “Abba, Father” (Rom 8:16). James Jordan calls the Holy Spirit, “the great matchmaker.” And it is this same Spirit who leads and guides the church in true Pentecostal (or Spirit-filled) living. This is a life that comes from above, that transforms us from the inside out, and that is all a gracious work of God. Pentecostal life brings forth Pentecostal living, as a brief survey of Ephesians reveals.

Pentecostal Sealing (Eph 1:13-14) – This verse (and the whole of the New Testament teaching) stands in stark opposition to the idea of a second-baptism of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit is the work of your regeneration; He opens the ears, changes the heart, and transforms the person fundamentally as a new creation. Faith is the supernatural indication of the seal of the Spirit. A seal was a personal sign of the owner upon that which he had received or was sending. While it is true that having the Holy Spirit provides a seal for us, it is first a seal declaring that we are His – we are owned by Him. So, we are not simply sealed by God’s Holy Spirit; we are sealed for God by His Holy Spirit. Water baptism expresses this truth, declaring God’s possession and ownership of us

In addition, the Holy Spirit is a guarantee. In ancient times, the “*guarantee*” was the down payment, or pledge, securing the claim to the article in question. This certainly teaches us the doctrine of the assurance of our salvation. But from God’s perspective, it guarantees to Himself before everything else that He has laid claim on the object of His love, “*His purchased possession*” which always remains His “*until the redemption.*” This final redemption is pointing to the final resurrection (Rom 8:23, Eph 4:30). In giving us the Holy Spirit, God is promising us our final inheritance while also declaring His future, final and complete right to His own inheritance as well. We will be saved, we will persevere; He will preserve, He will complete His redemption, and all of it will be “*to the praise of His (gracious) glory.*”

Pentecostal Access (Eph 2:18) – Reconciled by one Spirit of peace, Jew and Gentile both have access to the Father by this one Spirit. There was a wall of separation between the Court of the Gentiles and the rest of the Temple with a warning sign that no Gentiles could cross over with the threat of death. This is probably the place where Paul was wrongly accused of bringing Trophimus, the Ephesian, into the Israelite portion of the Temple (Acts 21:27-29). The sinful nature of man (both Jew and Gentile) had allowed these distinctions to create enmity and hostility between nations. But this was God’s point as well. Christ not only broke down the wall between man and God, He also broke down the wall between Jew and Gentile. With no other Mediator than Christ, the Spirit teaches us and leads us to draw near to the Father with the boldness of children in whom God delights (Heb 4:16).

Pentecostal Building (Eph 2:19-22) – God’s purpose in this is to build a House for His name. By God’s Spirit, dead stones are made living stones (1 Pet 2:5), Jew and Gentile alike, built together to be a temple of the Spirit. We are His building materials and He, the Master Builder, is the One doing the building. This has always been God’s plan as His Spirit has revealed (Eph 3:5-6).

Pentecostal Strength (Eph 3:16) – In accordance with those riches, Paul asks the Father to strengthen believers with might through His Spirit in the inner man. The strengthening of our inner man is necessary to contain the staggering gifts that will follow (vv17-19). The inner man is the regenerate man, the new heart, the person being fitted out for glory. It is not enough that we receive the gifts that he will ask the Father for – we must be fitted to hold them – and we cannot do this. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. And this is something which is not done once and for all; it is something we are renewed in daily (2 Cor 4:16) and corresponds to the daily life we live in Christ.

Pentecostal Living – Spilling out of this Pentecostal Life is Spirit-filled living. Therefore, by means of the Spirit, we are commanded to –

Keep the Unity of the Spirit (Eph 4:3-4) - One of the great testimonies of the Christian faith is that we can live with one another, that we can love one another, that we can keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This is how they will know we are the new humanity, that we are Christians. This has application for churches and denominations, but also for family relationships.

Grieve Not the Spirit (Eph 4:30) - The Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, like electricity. He is not some sort of spiritual juice or power that makes us go. He is a Person, in His own right, one member of the triune Godhead. When we rebel against God's ways, it grieves Him (Isaiah 63:10). And on either side of this verse we see the kinds of things we do that grieve Him: lying, unshackled anger, stealing, nasty language that tears others down, bitterness, quarrelling, evil speaking, and malice.

Bear the Fruit of the Spirit (Eph 5:8-10) – Instead, as children of light, we are to reach into the basket of fruit the Holy Spirit has given us, partake of it, use it, and give it away (Gal 5:22f). Apples come from apple trees because that is their nature. The fruit of the Spirit comes from Spirit-people because that is their new nature.

Be Controlled by the Spirit (Eph 5:18-21) – When the Spirit first fell at Pentecost, those watching the apostles wondered if they were drunk. We are not to be “controlled” by such substances, but we are to be “controlled” “filled” “overcome” with the Spirit and one of the first places that shows is that we have a song in our heart that has to come out; we can't control the praise to God that comes out of our lips from overflowing hearts.

Make War with the Sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17) – This is the Word of God and it is an offensive weapon “*mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*” (2 Cor 10:4). The Spirit-filled Word of God is powerful to save.

Persevere in Prayer in the Spirit (Eph 6:18) – To pray “*in the Spirit*” is to pray this Word of God, to agree with the Word of God in prayer, to be in line with the Spirit who has said these things.

You were saved by grace through faith, and this was a work of the Holy Spirit. It was not simply a transaction that took place between you and God. It was the work of a Person sent at Pentecost to the church to accomplish the work for which Jesus died and rose again. He has built and is building a dwelling place where we dwell with Christ and Christ dwells in our hearts. Cultivate that fellowship with the Holy Spirit and the fellowship we enjoy with one another by the Holy Spirit. Bear, partake of, use, and share the fruit of the Spirit. Make war with the Spirit against the flesh with the Word of God. Use the particular gifts of the Spirit given to you to serve the body He loves. And join with the Holy Spirit in declaring that Jesus is Lord and King of all and that every knee will bow and confess as much. To summarize it all, Paul says in Galatians, “*walk in the Spirit.*”

Dave Hatcher – Pentecost Sunday, June 8th, 2025