

Title: “The Drumbeat of Pentecost”

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Acts 2:1-8

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Service Readings: Gen. 11:1-9, Acts 2:1-21, John 14:23-31

The floodgates were opened; the message poured out. The apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit had a single focus, a single task: get the word out about Jesus the Christ. They couldn't afford any delay. This message had to be sent immediately to every man, woman, and child who would listen. Everyone must know who Jesus was and what Jesus had accomplished.

Message:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

2 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. 6 And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?” 8 And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

The floodgates were opened; the message poured out. The apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit had a single focus, a single task: get the word out about Jesus the Christ. They couldn't afford any delay. This was a message that had to be sent immediately to every man, woman, and child who would listen. And also to every man, woman, and child who wouldn't. The apostles knew that this news was too important to fall on selective ears. *Everyone* had to hear it. And this is what motivated their actions, what drove them into the crowded streets. They had a message that *everyone needed to hear*. Everyone had to know. Everyone must know who Jesus was and what Jesus had accomplished. This news was too important to keep private and too urgent to be delayed. Indeed! The Holy Spirit even agreed because he translated in real time to those who were listening. He didn't wait for someone to do that for him later. No! This message had to go out and it had to go out now! Everyone must know. Everyone must know. This was the drumbeat of this first New Testament Pentecost. This is what drove the apostles out of the room that morning. It is what later helped motivate and encourage them through their trials and persecutions. Beneath every church they established, every message they preached, every baptism they performed, there was this very drumbeat that kept them moving. Like a bass drum in a band, it is what provided the tempo for their movements that day and for the rest of their lives. This was this drumbeat of Pentecost: *Everyone must know.*

Peter is the first to share this message with the world. He's the first to bring the news to those who have gathered. He says:

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know — ²³this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it ... ³²This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

These words fell on upon the ears of all who had gathered that day. It mattered not their native tongue, their social or economic status. It mattered not the sins of their pasts. It mattered not their current god. All that mattered was that they heard the words that Peter and the other disciples spoke. All that mattered was that they heard the message of the death and resurrection of Jesus. And it mattered because the salvation of each and every person depended upon hearing this message. And every second they delayed another person might die without hearing this transformational news. Every second counted because everyone must know.

This was the drumbeat of that Pentecost and it is the drumbeat that continues on, 2000 years later. It is a beat that drives the message out into the world; a beat that transforms the lives of those who receive it: This Jesus was delivered up by God. He was crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men and was raised to life, defeating sin and death. He is now exalted and pours out the Holy Spirit for the salvation of all who believe. But here's the thing. You can't proclaim it if you don't believe it. You won't proclaim it if you don't feel compelled to, if you don't feel the drumbeat. And so the question that I have for you this morning is this: Can you feel it? Are you motivated by it? Has your life been transformed by this message?

Maybe another way to ask is this: are you with the crowd or are you with the disciples? It's okay if you see yourself in the crowds, needing to hear this message. Maybe you've heard it but continue to struggle with believing that this message was meant for your ears. That is a fine place to be. It is a place where your ears are open to God's Word and you are allowing him to work in your soul. If that's you, then listen closely because you will hear the faint beat of Pentecost. God is for you. Jesus died for you. Believe it. Receive it. Your sins have been willingly paid for by Him. Continue to hear this message, continue to hear God's Word. The beat will grow within you.

But maybe you are with the disciples. You are scratching at the door to run out into the world and proclaim this message because you can't keep it contained, can't keep it secret. There are people's eternal lives on the line and they need to hear what Christ has done for them. They need to know before it is too late. For you, the drumbeat is loud and it propels you forward to live a life that is a reflection of Jesus. You get it. You understand it. You know it. And everyone else must know, too.

But what if you find yourself in neither place? You don't see yourself in the crowd nor with the disciples? What if you can't hear the drumbeat of Pentecost any longer? What if it has flatlined?

For you, I would remind you of your journey through Lent. On Ash Wednesday you received a mark on your forehead and you heard these words: “remember that you are dust and to dust you shall

return.” This was how you entered into the season of Lent. You entered by remembering your own mortality, a mortality imposed upon you because of sin. Death was your destiny; sin, your vehicle. And the journey was 46 days long. And during that time the focus was personal. It was a time for reflection and meditation. The sermons pointed you inward toward yourself, encouraging you to consider your own sins and your own need for Jesus. The passages that we read on Sundays didn’t contain messages of proclamation like we read today. They were much heavier, much more subdued. They prepared you for Holy Week. They prepared you for the death of Jesus. And they did more than recount those events. Lent was supposed to be a time when you gathered your own sins and felt the weight of them. It was supposed to be a time when, with mixed emotions, you saw Jesus willingly take your sins and suffer the punishment for your behalf. *Lent is supposed* to be a time of introspection. *It is supposed* to be a time when the drumbeat is intentionally subdued and maybe even stopped as the weight of your own sins press against it and you find no story to tell and no motivation to tell it.

But this is not where Lent is supposed to stop. It is not where Lent is supposed to leave you. It is also supposed to be a time of anticipation. The words you heard on Ash Wednesday, “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return” begin to weigh less, begin to feel lighter, as you view Jesus on the cross during Good Friday. For you know that come Sunday morning those words will no longer have any power over you. Sin will no longer have any power over you. Death will no longer have any power over you. Come Sunday morning *everything will have changed*. Come Sunday, that drumbeat will be overpowering within you; it will be fighting to break free just like the disciples in the locked room. Come Sunday you will remember once again what Jesus has done for you, what Jesus has done for everyone! Jesus has died for the sins of everyone! Jesus has conquered death for everyone! Jesus has defeated death for everyone! And everyone must know! Everyone must know. Can you hear it? Can you hear the drumbeat of Pentecost? Can you feel it? Let it motivate you to go out into the world and live a life that reflects this sacrificial life of Christ. Go out with the message because everyone must know!

Please pray with me.

Lord,

On this Pentecost Sunday, you poured out your spirit into the hearts of the disciples and the drumbeat began. They couldn’t be contained and your message couldn’t be contained for it fell on every ear. I pray that this morning that you once again pour out your holy spirit on our lives, also. I pray that we would more fully understand what you have done for us and that we would be motivated to not let anything stand in the way of us proclaiming your work through the words that we speak and the lives that we live.

Amen.