

Confused
Genesis 11:1-9
June 5, 2022

Pentecost, what can you tell me about that incident? You were reminded of it earlier when Acts chapter 2, verses 1-21 were read. They, the Apostles were all in one place, and this sound, like a mighty rushing wind came down from heaven and filled the entire house. Then what we all have a picture in our minds came about, tongues of fire appeared on them and rested on them. With that, all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance.

These were common guys, like you or me. They begin to speak in languages the people from all sorts of nations were hearing, in their own language. This was a surprise for them as they were in the Hebrew city, Jerusalem and these Galileans, commoners, were speaking in their native tongues. Not just one or two other languages, but all sorts of different languages, at least 14 or 15 telling the people there for the celebration that as Joel, the Old Testament prophet prophesied, the Spirit would be poured out on all people Jew, Gentile, slave and free, young and old, sons and daughters, all people from everywhere and they shall prophesy.

The people there that day heard from the Apostles as they spoke in the languages of the people there. They heard of the mighty works of God and what could be mightier than that God came to earth in the form of a man and then lived the perfect, sinless life and then went to the cross to shed His blood for all creation which was under the bondage of sin and gave them freedom, eternal life for all.

This is the section of scripture that we all think about when we think about Pentecost. All these people from many nations, Jewish believers came to give thanks for the abundance the Lord provided them, a great celebration even though they were used to not understanding Hebrew but came to worship God any way. It was a little like the days when I grew up, where in the Catholic Church Latin was still in use in the service on Sundays. Not too many farmers, if any understood the Latin being used in the service like Hebrew was in the temple at the time.

Catholics came and worshiped God, bringing their tithes and offerings. Yet, they didn't understand what was being said by the priest.

The people on Pentecost did not understand what was being said and they came in thanksgiving to God for how He blessed them. They came from far away to give

thanks and celebrate with others, from other nations. They had a commonality that had no physical boundaries, they came as one in the Lord.

You may be thinking, Pastor, why are you dwelling on what happened thousands of years later? The incident at the tower of Babel was not about the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues but was about a curse it would seem. Everyone is there, in one accord, building a tower. All humankind together to work together to accomplish this task. Yet the Lord has a problem with it. What is the problem? What did God tell Noah when he came off the Ark? After He said He would not bring about a flood of destruction again, God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. . ."

Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. If you think about those words of command, what would you expect would happen with the offspring of the families of Noah's three sons? They would scatter out and fill the earth over time. They would make it to the land bridge and take boats across the ocean and would fill the earth as we see today. But what did they do? They didn't disperse but as a people of the same language, they as one migrated from the east and found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. They said: vs 4 "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, **lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.**" **Lest we be dispersed.**

They were all relatives. They had grown up together. They each had their skills and worked well together so why mess it up by splitting up? I know this is conjecture but think about it, why would they disobey God and stay together if it weren't good for all of them? They were a well oiled machine. Even the Triune God said, vs 5b-7 "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech."

Could they coordinate to continue building with a bunch of different languages? No. All construction would have to stop. All those various talents, split up. No, the command to Noah and his family was going to be accomplished even though the Lord had to step into this world had have His will done.

Can you imagine the mass confusion? We don't know **how** the Lord scattered them. I have always thought that He moved them like Philip after baptizing the Ethiopian Eunuch but I guess He could have given them the desire to look for another

place in the world to dwell. Yes, with various languages there would be some problems between people who were different from each other that we still see today with different skin colors, different cultures and different languages.

God brought confusion when with Pentecost, it seems He was not using language to confuse but to bring together, something He told the Israelites they were to do, bring the faith in Him to all peoples.

Confusion in order to scatter but once scattered, to bring back together in Him. Seems a little odd and yet how many times does God work with the odd, work with confusion in order to have His will done, in the world and in our lives?

Today we seek to work with people of all walks of life and talents to get things done. We may not be building a tower up to heaven but in doing the job you do, especially if it take multiple people to get it done, it may require different people with different skill sets. So what happens if you don't have all the skill sets needed to get the job done? There is some confusion as to how the job is going to get done, even if it will not be quite the job that it would have been if that one or more persons were part of the team.

Everyone needs to be on board. They each need to communicate with each other and the one who is in charge so that the job can get done.

We this day need to try to bring together people who have differences. Those in that plain, they had it all together. They worked together but because God did what He did, we today are trying to bring people together to get them all, not to a plain but to heaven. We are to coordinate with Jesus who provides for us daily, not only for our needs but for those He puts into our lives. He watches over our lives, using us and our talents to build relationships, using commonalities, needs and talents together to shine the light of Him to all.

We struggle to put it all together. We look for ways to deal with those who don't know Jesus so that they will really listen and that the Holy Spirit would work through us to change their hearts to see their need for a Savior, the Savior, Jesus Christ.

There is so much confusion in the world. The devil the world and our own sinful nature work against us and yet Jesus continues to use us, for our benefit and His.

God didn't want to have to confuse their language but He did. He couldn't have them disobeying Him even though, if they had obeyed He could have used that to bring about a better world. He didn't let that sin stand, no, as He did Adam and Eve, He punished that sin by sending them out of the garden and having them to live in a world

tarnished because of their sin. It was like the phrase, “They made their bed, so let them lay in it.” They learned that it was they who brought in all on the world even though each person from that point on would sin and would be a sinner from conception as David understood and wrote about. (Ps 51)

Each of you are dealing with that problem in your lives. Sin, it affects all. Yes, the Lord has bought you at a great price, the price of the shed blood of Jesus. He loved you so much, in spite of your sin, to come down from the perfection of heaven to be here for you.

Are you confused yet? Why would He do such a thing. What is there in you why He would do that? You are a sinner. You just don't quit. No, you fight it and yet, you never conquer it. Yet, He continues to use you, to love you, to look forward to your presence with Him forever in a place He is preparing for each of you.

He, the one who knows all, who is all powerful, who can be in all places at one time has made you, yes you, a part of His plan to get the word out. You all have different talents, have come from different backgrounds, have all sorts of different experiences and yet He has brought you here, to this congregation to learn to bring the Good News of Jesus to your world.

The world you are going to is confused about what is going to happen when they die. So many think they are going to be graded on their own scale. They look around and see so many who are worse than themselves and think God is going to look at them and the work they do, some of which may be out of this world, are thinking the Lord will surely look at them and say, “Your In”.

Then there are others who look at themselves and see they aren't worthy, like the Lawyer in the parable Jesus taught who knew he wasn't good enough and threw himself on the mercy of Jesus.

Confusion is out there. You are not confused. You know all who believe and are baptized will be saved. You believe. You have been baptized, so you will get to be with Jesus forever in the place He is preparing for you. You may be confused as to how to tell others but you are not alone, no, the Holy Spirit lives in you.

The Lord dispersed but now, through the Holy Spirit is bringing back together because of His Son. You get to be a part of it. Let us all celebrate this Pentecost that He has chosen us to bring His Good News to our world.