

The Path to Usefulness

A.W. Tozer

I. Introduction. (Acts 2)

A. Pentecost.

B. A controversial message; you cannot please everyone.

II. Discovering the abiding elements in Pentecost.

A. There is no repetition of Pentecost, but a perpetuation of Pentecost.

1. There is no contradiction.

2. Pentecost did not come and go, but it came and stayed.

B. Some things went and some things stayed.

1. The external elements were variable; the internal elements are essential.

a. God does not care very much for the external.

1) Therefore it may be variable.

b. There was a great number of people.

c. There was a sound of a rushing wind.

d. There were tongues of fire-the shekinah presence-that sat upon their foreheads.

e. They spoke in tongues.

2. What cannot be repeated?

a. The physical collection of all the church.

1) The number of Christians became too large to gather them all.

2) An ecumenical (representative) council could occur, but not all Christians could gather again.

b. The sound of the rushing wind.

1) No one in history has recorded this sound again.

c. A visible fire.

d. Many languages without an interpreter.

3. They were not repeated because they were external.

4. If these things were necessary to the church's life and if it was never repeated, it must have ceased to exist the day that it was born (or the day that those present had died).

C. The things that are perpetuated.

1. The Holy Spirit's coming to believers.

2. The conviction of sinners by the Holy Spirit-a moral ability.

3. The imbuing of power by the Holy Spirit.

a. It means the ability to do something.

b. You shall receive ability to do.

D. The teachers and other Christians have scared us out of what the Holy Spirit gives us today.

1. The fact is that Christ was born-He was incarnated.

2. Thousands have felt the effects of this who have not experienced that fact.

E. Evangelicals have a heritage that they have not taken advantage of.

1. To accomplish the works of Shakespeare we would have to have the spirit of Shakespeare.

2. To be children of God and accomplish His works, we have to have the Spirit of God.

a. The church is called to live beyond her abilities.

b. Every Christian is called to live a life of miracles.

3. The body of Christians is carnal.

a. It cannot be cured by sermons.

b. The Church of Christ must finally be confronted by the fearful majesty that is God-the Holy Spirit does this.

c. Our degraded tastes depart at the Spirit's presence.

d. He bestows upon us a new attitude.

4. The Holy Spirit is our teacher.

5. The Holy Spirit is our illuminator.

F. We can contain all of God that we can contain.

1. Deity is among us.
2. There is a Celebrity in our midst.
3. He comes to bring light, maturity and power to our hearts.

III. Conclusion.

Application questions.

1. What elements of Pentecost are not repeated and what elements are perpetuated? Why is there a distinction?

2. Why is it essential that the Christian take advantage of the effects perpetuated at Pentecost?

3. What was your reaction to the message? What place does the Third Person of the Trinity have in your life? How will you take advantage of the effects of Pentecost in your life, even today?
