

Explaining Pentecost to Children



Who likes birthday parties?!

What do you bring when you go to a friend's birthday party?

You bring a gift!

Well, today, we celebrate Pentecost.

Pentecost means 50 because it was fifty days after Passover,
when Jesus was raised from the dead.

The Gift God gave actually caused the birthday of the Church!

Do you know what that gift is?

The Holy Spirit.

Remember, God is Father, Son & Holy Spirit.

So in a way, God gave himself to us as a gift.

Now here are some symbols of the Holy Spirit.



The Dove - When Jesus was baptised, John the baptist saw the Holy Spirit come and land on Jesus like a dove.



The Flame - The tongues of fire at Pentecost.

Pentecost is a day we celebrate every year as a church.

It is when the Holy Spirit was given to all Christians.

The Holy Spirit teaches us, guides us, comforts us, protects us and lives in us.

We can learn to hear his voice and know his presence over time.



It is considered the Birthday of the Church - not just our church but the whole church around the world!

Reading: 1 Corinthians 2:6-16

⁶We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. ⁷No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹However, as it is written:

“What no eye has seen,
what no ear has heard,
and what no human mind has conceived”—

the things God has prepared for those who love him—

¹⁰these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. ¹¹For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹²What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. ¹³This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. ¹⁴The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. ¹⁵The person

with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments,¹⁶ for,

“Who has known the mind of the Lord

so as to instruct him?”^[d]

But we have the mind of Christ.

The Holy Spirit



(Flame, Babbit, Minnesota Lutheran Church)

The dove descending breaks the air
With flame of incandescent terror
Of which the tongues declare
The one discharge from sin and error.

The only hope, or else despair

Lies in the choice of pyre or pyre—

To be redeemed from fire by fire.

(T.S. Eliot - *The Four Quartets, Little Gidding, IV*)

Whenever we talk about God we are talking about a mystery.

In a sense, we can only use analogy or symbols when talking about the Trinity.

Only the person of Jesus provides us with a tangible physical form of God.

When dealing with the Father and the Holy Spirit, we are dealing with mystery.

Just as a reminder, a theological mystery is something we know is true,

But we do not know how it is true.

In other words, there is no empirical scientific test that can be performed.

Theological mysteries are approached by faith where reason runs out.

And so we are going to approach the mysteries of the Holy Spirit as revealed by Scripture.

3 Things About the Holy Spirit

3 Acts of the Holy Spirit

3 Responses to the Holy Spirit

Very Trinitarian!

Three Things About The Holy Spirit

This is not a complete list but some things you should know about.

The Holy Spirit is a Person



(Rublev's Trinity Icon)

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity

He does not have a gender although we traditionally have used a male pronoun for him.

This is because we have no personal pronouns that are neutral in most human languages.

Our pronouns are inadequate in describing God.

Only Jesus is clearly gendered because of his humanity.

The Holy Spirit is God.

Our God is One & Three

We Can Neglect Him



(Cover of Francis Chan's book, *Forgotten God*)

1 Thess 5:19 - "Do not quench the fire of the Holy Spirit."

This affects the way we interact with God & his presence.

It affects our prayer and Spirituality.

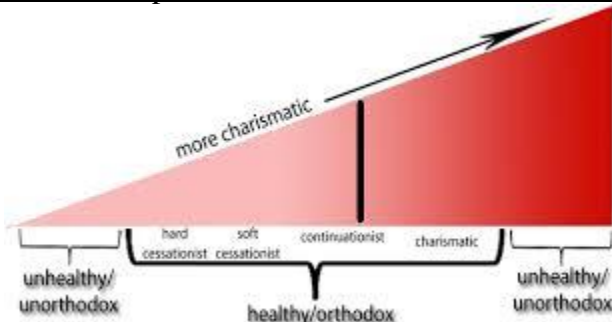
We pray to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

The Father and Son are present to us through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is always with us.

We can ignore and be ignorant of the Holy Spirit but doing so imperils our Christian Life.

There is a Spectrum of View About the Person of the Holy Spirit



(C. Michael Patton)

The Greek word *charisma* simply means "gift"

Extremes are erroneous.

Cessationists believe there are no more signs or wonders.

They are like the Sadducees of Jesus' time - there are no miracles.

Rationalists, materialists - all that exists is what I can see or prove.

Cold and rationalist, suspicious of experience and imagination.

There is no Biblical basis for this belief.

Hyper-Charismatics go overboard in spiritualizing everything.

They see angels and demons in everything.

Everything is either miraculous or demonic.

Although they do have a point in regard to the reality of the invisible spiritual realm,

They can go overboard.

Tend to be anti-intellectual, emotionally based.

Experience often trumps good Biblical understanding.

Unhealthy obsessive pursuit of the gifts.

We understand but disagree with these extreme approaches.

We believe the Holy Spirit is active and alive today - we believe in miracles.

We test the spirits with discernment and corporate accountability.

We encourage the exercise and development of spiritual gifts
and listening to the Holy Spirit.

We are within a Charismatic Continuationist spectrum.

Our church tended towards contemplative charismatic practice and expression.

Three Acts of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit does many things so this is not the totality of the work of the Spirit.

This is just 3 things we should be aware of.

The Holy Spirit is Present at Creation and Throughout the OT



Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.
Genesis 1:1-2

The Holy Spirit Turns us Towards God - Essential to Salvation



No one comes to Christ except by the work of the Holy Spirit.
We are the messengers but he is the one who awakens the heart of a person to God.
He does the work of repentance.

John 3:5-6;8

“Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁸The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

[1 Cor 2:6-16]

Exercise:

Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in the heart of your friends and family.

Pray for wisdom to know when, how and what to share.

You are the instrument of the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation.

You invite people into the Kingdom and the Holy Spirit opens the door.

It is always surprising.

It is always a miracle when someone turns to Christ.

The Holy Spirit Lives in Us



1 Corinthians 6:19

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?

Romans 8:26-27

The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

Three Things You can do to Interact with the Holy Spirit

Pray/Ask for the Holy Spirit



This is what Jesus teaches us.

Luke 11:9-13

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

We desire the giver not just the gifts.

Exercise: Ask in Prayer for the Holy Spirit. - Pray for the Spirit over one another.

Be Attentive to the Holy Spirit



Be Aware of and Listen to the Holy Spirit

Be Open to the Holy Spirit

Listen to the Holy Spirit

This is why we pray.

This is why we read Scripture.

It is the Holy Spirit that illuminates and opens Scripture to us.

Devotion is not mere and act, it is a way of being.

We don't "Do" devotions. We have devotion.

It is a noun, a state of being.

Listening prayer, lectio divina, meditation, contemplation are all forms of listening.

Be expectant.

Exercise: Listen in Silence

Use Your Gifts!



Romans 12:6-8

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Christ does give us gifts through the Holy Spirit.

It's like getting a present and just not opening it - that's just dumb.

It disappoints the giver.

In particular, we are not given frivolous gifts.

Every gift has a reason.

So open your gift!

Know what your gifts are.

Everyone has different gifts.

We all work together as one body!

Talk about them.

Seek them out.

Test them out.

It requires faith.

There are gifts that are talent or personality based that are always with you.

Preaching, teaching, caring, intercession, service

There are gifts that are given for a particular reason for a particular point in time.

Tongues, prophesy, knowledge, healing, prayer.

Exercise: List your gifts and how you can use them. Offer them back to God.



St Aloysius' church in Somers Town, London