

31 May 2020 Dennis Gallaher Pentecost Brings Discipleship

Every generation of Christianity reaches a turn in the road where discipleship becomes the goal and focus of the church. Discipleship is simply becoming like the Master - the plan Jesus laid out for us in the great commission.

Matthew 28:19-20 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* A disciple will demonstrate their life in Christ as real and possible. This is the promise that Jesus gave - of progress, of power, and of His presence. Pentecost is about these three.

Passover marked the Jews' release from slavery and the giving of the rule book of life for the Jews. It's the same for the church - the sacrifice of our Passover lamb, Jesus, is our release from the slavery of sin. The first Pentecost marked the great beginning of the harvest of souls that Jesus intended after the Holy Spirit came. Pentecost marked the day when Christians who believe in Jesus receive the power to obey through the power of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit enabled us to obey God with all of our hearts. Pentecost is the beginning of discipleship.

Today, do Christians set their eyes on being disciples? There is a contentment that has settled into the church of Jesus that is dangerous, where convenience is more important than commitment. Self-care and comfort have become a daily goal rather than servanthood and sacrifice. The church is to be the gathering point of disciples and making disciples. Do we honor the commitment of **Hebrews 10:25**? *not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*

What does it mean biblically to be a disciple of Jesus? What should come out of Pentecost Sunday? Being a disciple of Jesus is a key element of living a life of power in the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 The Parable of the Sower

The sower and seed are the constants in this parable; they do not change. Many of us are called to be sowers. The seed is God's Word. The soil is not constant - there are four kinds:

- The soil beside the road - identifies the life lived outside the boundaries of God's love and call and falls away.
- The rocky soil - identifies those with no ability to go deep and the seed falls away when trouble comes.
- The thorny soil - identifies the cares and the riches of this world so that the seed of God is choked out.
- The good soil - hears and obeys God's Word and produces the fruit of God's Word in a life.

Discipleship is based on these three voices being in unity. Discipleship takes place when all three of these are in unity - those who speak the Word, those who hear the Word, and the one who gives power to the Word.

The disciple must hear the Word and it is the one thing that is not constant. The disciple has to have an ear to hear - an ear accustomed to the Word of the Lord no matter the environment or the voice.

The one who speaks the Word must speak God's Word and not their own. The Holy Spirit empowers the Word and quickens the Word to produce change. That is discipleship. Discipleship is about changing our lives and we can't do it without the seed of the Word and without the empowering of the Holy Spirit. That is Pentecost. It is about change; it is about obedience to a different voice; it is about hearing through ears that are tuned to the life and power of God; it is about the Holy Spirit quickening change.

"Quickens" is a word that comes from "life." Life comes quick. The Holy Spirit wants to do a quick work in us. Compare nature and the normal processes of healing and decaying. The church has neglected the word "quickened." God wants to come and do a miracle in our lives today.

Jesus' model of discipleship was:

- the Word
- hearing the Word
- obeying the Word
- receiving the power of the Holy Spirit who will do a quickening work in us

We must listen to the Word of God with a heart of obedience and humility under the power of God's Word.

- God speaks
- My heart hears
- I choose to obey what God says to do with power from the Holy Spirit

It is as real now as it was on Pentecost. Peter is changed; he preaches, and 3000 people come to Jesus. Jesus wanted this empowerment for His church.

How does Pentecost bring discipleship?

How is contentment in the church dangerous?

What are the three voices of discipleship?

Is there an area of my life that needs that quickening power to change?