



ALL ONE IN CHRIST

THE UNITED CHURCH OF ZAMBIA

MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

2023 PENTECOST SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE

UCZ THEME: UNDERSTANDING THE TIME AND WHAT TO DO-

1CHRONICLES 12:32

SUB-THEME: RECEIVE THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

READINGS: JOEL 2:28-29, ACTS 2:1-21, LUKE 24:44-49

INTRODUCTION

The celebration of Pentecost derives from the Jewish harvest festival called Shavout which was one of the three major festivals (Deuteronomy 16:16). During this festival, Jews gave thanks to God for what the land had produced and for what their labour in the fields had yielded. For the Christian church, the day of Pentecost marks fifty days after Easter Sunday and marks the end of the season of Easter.

It is a major feast when Christians remember how the disciples received the Holy Spirit after the ascension of Jesus. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit rested on certain specific persons within a nation but at Pentecost, the Spirit rested on the people as individuals. In a deliberate and dramatic way, Pentecost was a reversal of the curse of Babel.

We have been given a mission to preach the good news of Jesus Christ so that people may find the forgiveness of their sins in him. However, we can't do it in our own strength. As we seek to understand the times and what to do, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to empower and guide us.

BIBLE EXPLANATION

In obedience to Christ's command, the disciples had remained in Jerusalem and on this Pentecost day were gathered together in worship. Suddenly, there was a sound like roaring wind which the whole city heard. Tongues of fire settled on each one of the believers. This was in fulfillment of the scriptures about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Why tongues of fire, we may ask? Tongues are a symbol of speech and the communication of the Good News. Fire symbolizes God's purifying presence which burns away the undesirable elements of our lives and sets our hearts aflame to ignite the lives of others. That the Holy Spirit came down on all the believers symbolizes that God's presence is available to all who believe in Him. And because a large crowd had gathered from all over the Mediterranean world, there was an international audience but, amazingly, all the people heard in their own languages what the disciples were speaking. This perplexed the crowd who wondered what all this meant; others ridiculed the believers that they were just drunk. This is because Galileans were considered uneducated and poor speakers and yet here they were speaking eloquently in other languages.

POINTS FOR REFLECTION

1. **God speaks to you.** Child of God, no matter who are, what you have done, what language you speak, God speaks to you. Don't let the distractions of life make you miss His word. Put down that phone, switch off that TV or radio; be alone with Him; open your mind to the Spirit. It's only when you have truly heard that you can spread His message other people. Make time to read and study God's word. Are you willing to listen to what God is saying to you?
2. **People will misunderstand you.** Spreading the gospel is not easy. People will misunderstand you; they will mock you, laugh at you and call you all sorts of names. They will accuse you of things you don't know anything about. People will despise you but keep on witnessing to God's love. Be bold and courageous. Stand on what you know and spread the love of God.
3. **The Holy Spirit empowers and guides us.** There are many challenges we encounter in our mission like rejection, opposition, inadequacy and others. We need the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. We should avoid the mistake of doing the work in our own strength or experience.
4. **We need to have faith in Jesus Christ to receive the power of the Holy Spirit.** We must recognize our emptiness. We must recognize that we don't have the resources in ourselves to do what God desires nor to live a godly life. We must be open to the prompting and guidance of the Spirit. Rely on the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit and not just your own power. Our effectiveness, growth and productivity depends on the power of the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

Brothers and sisters, the Holy Spirit gives us wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and the fear of the Lord.

The Spirit guides us in our decisions and protects us from physical harm and spiritual danger. He can calm our fears and fill us with hope. He gives the power of discernment. He gives us power, love and self-discipline. Have you received

the power of the Holy Spirit? Your life, your work and your results show if the power of the Spirit is at work in you. Receive the power of the Holy Spirit.

We can't go out on our own. We can't do the work in our own strength. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing we can say or do without the power of the Spirit. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. May God bless us all, AMEN.

**THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE TO THANK
REV. MARTIN SAKALA -TRINITY CONGREGATION- MBALA CONSISTORY
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FOR PREPARING THE 2023 PENTECOST SUNDAY SERMON OUTLINE

**FOR ANY FUTHER DETAILS GET IN TOUCH WITH THE MISSION &
EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT ON THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS-**

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