

# Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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## What Really Happened At Pentecost?

by Dan Trygg

“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; <sup>17</sup> that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.”

John 14:16-17

“Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.”

Acts 2:33

“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, “‘From his innermost being (belly) shall flow rivers of living water.’”’ <sup>39</sup> But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

John 7:37-39

The language about the coming of the Holy Spirit can be confusing. Jesus said it was necessary that He leave. If He did not depart, the Holy Spirit would not come to them. “But if ever I might go, *I will send Him to you*” (Jn. 16:7). This seems pretty clear, until you look into the surrounding context, all part of the same conversation. In John 14:16, Jesus said that *He would ask the Father, and the Father will give to them ... the Spirit of truth*. Just ten verses later, He says that *the Father will send the Spirit* in Jesus’ name (14:26). A chapter later, Jesus says, “*I will send [the Spirit] from-alongside the Father.*” He is the Spirit of truth who “comes-out from-alongside the Father” (15:26). Then, in Luke 24:49, *after the resurrection, Jesus says, “I am sending-forth (apostellō) the promise of My Father upon you.” How does this work? Why the confusion? What does this all mean?*

**Part of this is the mystery of God Himself. There is a lot we don’t understand about Him.** We only know what He has told us, or revealed to us (Deut. 29:29). For example, *Jesus used similar language when He talked about His own relationship to the Father.* Jesus said that the Father loved (phileō) the apostles, because they loved (phileō) Him, and they had come to believe that *He “came-out-from alongside God”* (Jn. 16:28). He went on to say, “*I came-out-from alongside the Father* into the world; again, I leave-away-from the world and I go to/towards/with the Father” (vs. 29). **On 23 occasions in the book of John, Jesus mentions that He was “sent from the Father”** (4:34; 5:24,30,37; 6:38,39,44,57; 7:16,28,33; 8:16,18,26,29; 9:4; 12:44,45,49; 13:26; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5). **In addition, there are three other passages where He speaks of how He came-out-from God** (8:42; 13:3; 17:8). In 8:42 there is a strong, repeated emphasis “*out-from the God I came-out-from* and I am here. For I did not even come from Myself, rather *that-One sent-Me-forth* (apostellō)”. In 13:3, it says, “Jesus, ...knowing that *He came-out away-from God*, and He was going-away to the God”. Finally, in 17:8 Jesus prayed concerning His followers, “and they have recognized that truly *I came-out-from You*, and they have believed that *You have sent-Me-forth* (apostellō)”.

**That whole mystery of how God operates is beyond us. God is infinite; we are finite.** He is *not* corporeal or material; we *are* corporeal, living within a time-space, physical body. He is *spirit* (Jn.4:24); we are *of flesh*. We don’t really even understand what all *that* means (at least, *I don’t*). **About all we can intelligently say is that He is very different than we are. It is important for us to understand the limitations of our knowledge. What do we know?** There is a person called the Father, ...and He is God. There is a person called the Word, who existed eternally, but was born into this world as the man we call Jesus, ...and *He* is God. There is a person called the Holy Spirit, ...and *He* is God. And, ...there is only *ONE* God. Theologians, in their attempt to put those pieces together, came up with the term “trinity” to explain this, ...a combination of the word for “three”, and the word for “one”, ...a “tri-unity”. It could be even *more complicated* than that, however. Revelations 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6 speak of the “seven spirits of God.” Is this just a literary device? Is it using a “number of completeness” to refer to the Holy Spirit? Is it referring to seven angelic beings, or are there other “aspects of the God-head”? We can *speculate*, but we really don’t know. There seem to be distinctions within the God-head. The Father seems to be the Source and Originator of things (I Cor. 8:6), the Word seems to be the channel through which the Father’s will is expressed and revealed (I Cor. 8:6; Jn. 1:1-3,14-18; Heb. 1:1,2), and the Spirit seems to be the One who makes known and effectively performs the purposes of God (Gen. 1:1; Psa. 104:30; Jn. 14:26; 15:26; 16:13-15). **What we do know is that God loved us enough to send the Eternal Word to our planet, ...to live as a human being, to die for our sin, to reconcile us back to God, ...and He desires to transform us by the power of His Holy Spirit dwelling and operating within us.** As we live by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit, people will recognize the presence of Jesus in us. This brings glory and honor to the Father.

**What was the significance of the Day of Pentecost?** According to the Torah, there were three feasts that were to be observed each year. Jewish males were to go up to the Temple in Jerusalem for the Feast of Unleavened

Bread (Passover), the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and for the Feast of Booths (Day of Atonement) (Deut. 16:16). The Feast of Weeks happened 50 days after the presentation of first fruits (beginning of the barley harvest – Lev. 23:9-15), offered on the Sunday after Passover. **The significance of the Feast of Weeks was that this was the time the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, and they received the Law from God. It also represented the beginning of a new harvest, the beginning of the wheat harvest.** The bread of Passover was *unleavened* bread, but the bread offered at Pentecost was a “first fruits offering” of two loaves of *leavened* bread, representing the expanding leaven of the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:33). The significance of “first fruits” is that it signifies the dedication of a much larger harvest. **The focus of Passover was that the blood of an unblemished lamb would mark the people of faith, so that the Destroyer would pass over their houses, and this event initiated their deliverance from slavery.** The focus of Pentecost was to commemorate that the land was set before them, and they were to take possession and eat of the good of the land. Pentecost was the initiation of the wheat harvest, the most important staple crop of the year. ***Pentecost was like the starter’s gun in a race. From the time people returned to their homes after Pentecost, the focus was to get in the wheat harvest, until it was all gathered in.***

**What happened at Pentecost in Acts 2?** Peter spells it out for us. Jesus, having ascended into heaven, asked and received from the Father the Holy Spirit, which He then poured out upon the Church. So all those seemingly conflicting statements of Jesus sending, and the Father giving, actually fit together quite well. The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father, *and* He was sent by Jesus. This was a changing of the guard, so to speak. **Jesus’ ministry here was accomplished. He had come to be the ultimate Passover Lamb.** His blood was shed to cover us, so that we would escape death. His sacrifice was a better sacrifice, because He was a better priest, who offered His own blood once for all. He instituted a better covenant, based upon better promises (Heb. 7:19,22; 8:6; 9:23). His sacrifice was a once-for-all sacrifice, and He would save to the uttermost those who trust in Him (Heb. 7:23-27; 9:12; 10:10). His resurrection was the first fruits of a much larger group, all those who will come to trust in Him (I Cor. 15:20-23). Nevertheless, Jesus said it was to their advantage that He leave and the Holy Spirit come (Jn. 16:7). **The Holy Spirit came to *expand* the freedom purchased by Jesus.** He came to indwell the believers, to be the new covenant “law upon their hearts” (Jer. 31:31-33; II Cor. 3:1-3). He came to transform and empower the people of God to live lives of victory and freedom (Gal. 5). He came to reveal to us what Jesus purchased for us, and make it real and applicable in our lives (Jn. 16:13-15). He came to make our lives reveal the nature of God to others (II Cor. 2:14-16). He is the One who will equip us to be adequate as servants of the New Covenant (II Cor. 3:5,6). He will give us boldness, and even will give us what to say when we are called to testify about Jesus (Acts 4:31; Mk. 13:11). And, He makes preaching powerful and effective, convincing people of their need and of the truth of the gospel (Jn. 16:8-11; Acts 6:10).

**The Spirit of Pentecost is the Spirit of Harvest.** When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, there were people present from virtually every country and nationality of the known civilized world of that day. The Spirit kicked off the new harvest with a bang, bringing in over 3,000. Many of these brought the message back with them to their homes in other lands, and the nations of the world were sprinkled with the leaven of the Kingdom of God, right from the beginning. **The focus of the Spirit is *outward*, desiring to spread the message to other people, other families, other communities, other nations. To walk with the Spirit, we must be in agreement with His heart and purpose.** He will *give us* His passion, if we will allow Him to open our hearts and minds.

**The key to the ministry of the Spirit is that He comes to dwell *within us*.** *That is the difference between the operation of the Spirit before Pentecost and what happened afterwards.* Jesus said as much, “...He abides *with* you, but will be *in* you” (Jn. 14:17). Jesus had spoken of the Spirit at the Feast of Booths in John 7. *That* feast was to commemorate God’s provision for the Israelites during their wilderness wandering. **They commemorated God’s provision of water in the wilderness,** each day filling a golden pitcher with water from the pool of Siloam, and bringing in triumphal procession through the city streets to the temple. On the last day of the feast, they did *not* do this, symbolizing the entry of Israel into the land of promise. It was at *this* moment, when this rite would have been observed, that **Jesus stepped forth and proclaimed, “if anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink, and out of his belly will flow rivers of living water”**, ...a reference, John says, of the Spirit (7:37-39). **It is not enough to *know* about Jesus. You have to *come to Him and drink* in order to experience His rejuvenation and refreshment.** You have to follow Him to walk in His light. ***Note where the Spirit is.*** When a person comes to drink of Jesus, **the Spirit is released like a river flowing out from inside them, ...out from their belly.** The picture is of the water gushing forth from the rock in the wilderness, bringing life, vitality and quenching thirst. **This could not happen until Jesus was glorified, John says. However, it is available to us now! Don’t miss out on the life-giving power of the Spirit! Come to Jesus, He is the Source.** As we come in faith, **the Spirit rises up to meet us. He gushes forth with power and life to make us new and enable us to do what we could never do by ourselves.** He comes to soothe our hurts, cleanse our wounds, refresh our thirst, and carry us where we could never go on our own.