



2020

Acts 2:1-4

“Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

NKJV



There are a number of significant events in the lives of both men and women that are written in red letters in their book of life. There is a time when the whole family waited with great joy and excitement on the birth of their first born child. A special time when once the little boy and the cute little girl have a grand celebration not only on their first birthday but also upon reaching the age of maturity, particularly their 18th debut. The occasion is always exceptionally held in abundance with all the merry making, gaiety and splendor.

But of all these important chapters of their lives nothing stands out far more sublime and wondrous than the eventual consummation of a long-planned affair of a woman on her wedding day. All the hard work, all the planning and preparation that were done beforehand comes to life right before their very eyes. An occasion of a lifetime when two people deeply in love now declare their solemn pledge of commitment to one another and enter into a sacred covenant with God.

It is also to be noted that

during the wedding proper, a few memorable moments stand out from among the rest. There is the lighting of the candle, the putting on of the veil. But by far, the most awaited part of the processional music when all turn their heads in one direction. For that one brief, dramatic moment in time nobody can afford to miss - the entrance of the bride. And that's the way it should be.

After all physical marriages are patterned after the marriage between Christ and the church. On that wedding, Christ will also draw attention to the arrival of the bride. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19: 7-8).

What am I talking about? What has this got to do with the occasion we are celebrating every year mind you, it has everything to do with it.

Pentecost reminds us that on this day, On the 50th day of the

count of the morrow after the Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, the church of God was born. No event in history could be more important to every person on earth. Acts 2 verses 1 to 4 tell us that " ...When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterances."

In this season of first fruits, this feast of Pentecost, let us allow our minds to dwell on how exalted we are to God. With all humbleness of spirit let us talk to our heavenly Father and ask Him to reveal to us, by the power of the Holy Spirit, just how special we are to Him.

Think and seriously consider just how unique we really are lifted up above all others. Remember, we belong to the generation of first

fruits, the first generation of the God family. That singular privilege alone is more than enough to uplift our soul in the midst of tribulation. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praise of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in time past were not a people-but are now the people of God: which hath not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10). Think on that and ponder! What a priceless jewel you are. A very rare commodity from among billions of His precious treasures in the universe.

Bear in mind that the heavenly gates symbolic of God's Holy Spirit was once closed to man because of sin. "So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3: 24). That is primarily the reason why ancient Israel failed to comply even with the physical requirements of the law because with the absence of God's Holy Spirit it would be hard if not impossible to obey the spiritual intent of the commandment. "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal sold under sin" (Romans 7: 14). In other words, we cannot keep the law without the spirit neither can we keep the spirit without the law. The two work hand in hand with one another because God's Holy Spirit - the most precious gift from God is given only to those who truly obey him.

In Acts 2: 36-38, the Apostle Peter further explained some basic requirements necessary before God's Holy Spirit can be availed of.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit joining with the human spirit opens our minds to the understanding of the coded book, the Bible. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things God has in store for us." God does reveal them to us by His Spirit that resides in us. Without God's Holy Spirit we will never be able to understand the real purpose of our existence neither shall we be able to know the incredible human potential inherent in us. God is reproducing Himself through man. This understanding alone is the greatest and the most precious valuable truth the first fruits can ever know.

How then can it be made possible, that man physical as we are can attain the spiritual plane that God is? In the book of John chapter 3, Christ unveiled a stunning truth about our spiritual birth. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In effect, Christ is saying, we can see the kingdom of God but only after we have been born again.

IF Nicodemus, a high ranking leader in the Jewish community was confused, how much more for the rest of the human race that have been purposely blinded for a very important reason. "How can a man be born when he is

old?" Nicodemus asked in verse 4. "Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Clearly, Nicodemus understood well the process of physical birth through the mother's womb. But what about a spiritual birth? "

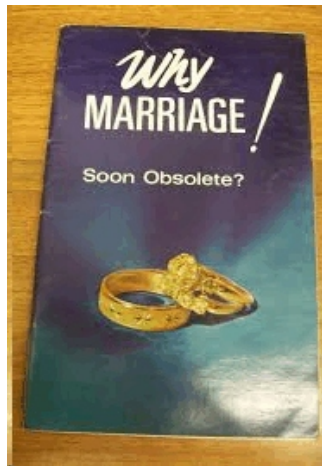
Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee; Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (verse 5). Our spiritual birth begins at baptism, when the Holy Spirit begets us. At that point in time we are now a child of God, yet unborn.



Mr. Armstrong said on page 225 of his book *Mystery of the Ages* that "water baptism is the initiatory rite to the start of being born of the spirit." (Verse 6), however, tells us that our spiritual birth is not yet complete at baptism. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." When born physically, we come from the womb of our mother. When born spiritually, if dead, we are resurrected back to life by the Holy Spirit of God in us. If alive, we are instantaneously changed from mortal to immortal- a spirit being when Christ comes in due time for the saints. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jesus said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whether it

goes, so is every one that is born of the spirit" (John 3: 7-9). Here the wind which we cannot see is compared to the spirit which we can become before we can possibly enter the spiritual realm of the kingdom of God.

Take note of what Mr. Armstrong wrote in his booklet *Why Marriage! Soon Obsolete?*



ship of marriage and, family' life, except humans who are potential heirs of the God's family."

"God is more than one Person. Mr. Armstrong went on to say. There is only one God - but that God is a family of more than one divine Person - having the Father at its head - Jesus Christ as His divine son - those converted up to the time of Christ's coming in power and glory as Christ wife (presently members of the Church of the first born) and those converted and changed to divine immortals afterward during the millennium as the divine children of that union."

Man, the Master's noblest work of art in his physical state is not yet complete. You and I have been designed by the Supreme Master Potter to experience the greatest life change of all- our glorified change from physical to spiritual. God is working out His purpose in man in dual stages. We

might as well say, we were born to be reborn. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming" (2 Cor. 15:22-23).

"But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool. That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthy and the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: And as the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say Brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality" (2 Cor. 15: 35-36,44,47-50,53).

Pentecost reminds us also that today is not the only day God is saving the world. "No man can come to Me except the Father which hath sent Me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). Down through the endless flow of time, the rest of humanity is in darkness waiting for the spiritual birth of the sons of God. It is a biblical fact that only those whom God calls and draws to Him can be convened and become part of God's Church of the firstborn.

But having a part in the congregation of the first fruits entails a considerable measure of responsibility. The promised reward to would be over comers will not

simply be given in a silver platter. We have to work it out with fear and trembling, performing the task for which we have been called and support His end-time work through tithes, offerings and prayers in bringing about to the world the good news of the soon coming kingdom of God.

Put it always in remembrance that the hardships, the pain and sufferings we experience in the pursuit of our incredible dreams are nothing compared to what the Apostle Paul have undergone during his ministry. "I am more in labours, more abundant in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwrecked, a night and a day I have been in the deep" (2 Cor. 11:23-25). "In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in peril by my own countrymen, in peril by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watching often. In hunger and thirst, in fasting often. In cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concerns mine infirmities" (2 Cor. 11: 26-30).

I am not saying that we have to be the kind of stuff that the Apostle Paul is made of but just the same read that again to embolden if not inspire us and consider how we

pale in comparison to what the Apostle Paul have gone through. Near the end of his life, the Apostle to the gentiles said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished



the course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me and not to me only but unto all them that love His appearing" (II Tim. 4: 6-8).

We must understand that of all people we alone have been extended this vast wealth of spiritual knowledge about the law. With God's Holy Spirit in us we have the responsibility to reflect the embodiment of the true God we profess to know. We are the tangible reflection of who and what God really is in embryo. A God who made the supreme sacrifice of dying on the stake in behalf of sinful humanity because that's what He is, a God of love. Can there be love greater than to lay down one's life for another?

It's Pentecost once again. Time to reflect and meditate whether the bride that we are meant to be are now ready to-walk down the aisles with our husband, Jesus Christ. "Let us be glad and rejoice and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness-of saints" (Rev. 19: 7-8). Are you prepared to take that one giant step-of a life time - an opportunity no one else on earth had been given for all eternity? Yes, the wedding ceremony-is about to begin.

Will you be there as the bride ready to be married to Christ or merely as an invited guest to the marriage supper of the Lamb. You have been called, you have been - chosen. Christ expects you to be there marching down the aisles as His bride with tears of joy on your face because you know the meaning of it all. "To him that over-cometh will I grant to sit with Me in MY throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with MY Father in HIS throne.- (Rev 3:21).



Pentecost, what a glorious vision of hope! ☞

Romeo Samudio

Deut 5:7-21== 10 commandments

 "Thou shalt have none other gods before Me. 8 Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth:9 Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me,10 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.11 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.12 Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. 13 Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work:14 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day 16 Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.17 Thou shalt not kill. 18 Neither shalt thou commit adultery. 19 Neither shalt thou steal. 20 Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.21 Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant."

