

**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran
Church**

**Sermon by Pastor Anthony
E. Schultz**

May 20, 2018

The Coming of the Holy Spirit:

The Day of Pentecost

Year A Evangelical Heritage Version®

Joel 2:28-29



²⁸After this, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. ²⁹Even on the male servants and the female servants, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

People of God, rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Old Testament believers in the LORD – the Great I AM – the Holy One of Israel who changes not – the same yesterday and today and forever – celebrated Pentecost. They called it the Festival of **Weeks** – the Festival that came 50 days after Passover – the **Feast of Harvest** – the **Day of Firstfruits** – the giving thanks to the LORD for the first harvest of grain! There is built into all people – a part of the natural knowledge of God – that a person give thanks for the abundant harvest of plenty. We do it in November – half way around the world from Israel. We plant in the spring and harvest in the autumn. They plant in the autumn and harvest in the spring. We have turkey – dibs on the giblets – mashed potatoes and gravy! We have sweet potatoes with melted marshmallows – how often do you get to put

marshmallows on your vegetables? We have green bean casserole—cream of mushroom soup and little onion crispies on the top and dinner rolls with raspberry jam (psssst. Little seeds caught in your teeth) and pumpkin pie or even genuine venison mince-meat pie! In Israel they celebrated the grain—the daily bread—kill the fatted calf (ribeyes on the grill) and pour the sweet wine and celebrate. They brought to their Heavenly Father the first and the best—the finest and the sweetest—the first fruits! When we realize that all we have and all we are—are gifts of our Heavenly Father—we will always give back to Him the best of everything! We give Jesus our ♥ and our life! Today—Pentecost Sunday we say:

Thank You, Jesus, for the Holy Spirit!

I. The Holy Spirit changes ♥s

II. The Holy Spirit changes lives!

Again, if the first person you met in Heaven introduced himself as the prophet Joel—would you know what to say? If you go in the Church Library/or better yet our Publishing House Bookstore—you could check out The People's Bible Hosea, Joel, Amos written by my friend Prof. Paul E. Eickmann. There is a black and white painting of Joel by a man named James Tissot—1835 to 1902. The picture of Joel is one very angry looking guy. His face is so dark you can hardly make out the features—but his whole expression is extremely dark and angry—like the machine at the carnival—where you put in 25¢—and this angry man with a turban's eyes flash and the machine spits out a fortune! That's what Joel is painted to look like. Sometime **God's Word tells us what someone looked like**. God's Word says **Joseph** was “well-built and handsome!” Genesis 39:6b. Concerning David's 3rd son Absalom God's Word says **In all Israel there was not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance as Absalom. From the top of**

his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him. Whenever he cut the hair of his head – he used to cut his hair from time to time when it became too heavy for him – he would weigh it, and its weight was two hundred shekels (that is about 5 pounds) by the royal standard. 2 Samuel 14:25,26 But God’s Word doesn’t tell us what Joel looked like. His name Joel means **the LORD** – the Great I AM **is God**. Joel was the son of a man named **Pethuel**. Joel does not mention Israel – the Northern Kingdom. He preached and taught about Judah, Jerusalem, Mount Zion upon which the Temple was built. God’s Word doesn’t say who the King was. Since God’s Word has **Hosea, Joel, Amos** – one after the other--it might well be Joel preached between Hosea and Amos – that would make **King Jeroboam** king up north. Joel talks about priests and elders as leaders of the land but doesn’t mention a King. **Jehoiada** the priest took the lead in placing the Judean **boy-king Joash** on the throne. Some people think Hosea, Joel and Amos are grouped together because much of **their messages overlap**. You would have to read all these books more than once to know and notice that! Does Jesus expect His people to read and study and learn God’s Word? Yes He does! That’s why it’s so very valuable to come to TSL – to go to Lakeside and Luther Prep and Martin Luther College and the Seminary and to come to Sunday School and to come to Bible Class – and to simply read your Bible at home and your *Meditations* and *Forward in Christ* – and to pay attention to **The WELS Connection** to know what’s going on in God’s Word!

If you read your Bible – all the time – you would not be surprised to see the picture of a giant locust. Plagues of locusts still happen today in Asia and Africa. “The female desert locust lays eggs under the sand in ‘pods’ of about 100. There may be as many as 100 pods per square foot. When the insects hatch, usually after rain, they ‘cover the face of

the ground' so you can't see the soil! Hatching can continue for days – so there are 1,000 grasshoppers per square foot at the same time! The little bugs each about ½ inch long immediately start to move – looking for something to eat! Locusts live for weeks – maybe months. They shed their skin 5 times – gradually growing wings – until they are 3 inches long – with 4 inch wing spans. They move in swarms. **A swarm can number a billion insects and 100 swarms** may be part of the same plague. Each locust can eat his own weight each day. You can only imagine the destruction Joel wrote about! The locusts came as a fierce discipline from the LORD. Then the armies of their enemies would come – a plague even more fierce as the LORD calls His people to repent! The whole scroll of Joel is only 3 chapters long.

The call to repentance is for everyone. The Holy Spirit inspired Joel to **call the elders first** – men with grey whiskers and white hair and wrinkles and eyes that had long squinted against the bright sun. These were men who **should have known better** – and did from their long years searching the Scriptures. And yet like the Apostle Paul they would have admitted: **The good things I want to do – I don't do and the bad things I don't want to do – this I keep on doing. What a wretched man – who will rescue me from this body of death?** We know to say, **Thanks be to God – He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!** After the elders – **he calls the drunkards** to wake up and weep. It is a daily struggle if a person is addicted to alcohol or drugs or opioids or any substance/thing. It is a struggle every day – one day at a time! Only Jesus can make us strong enough – one day at a time – to overcome any addiction! Joel preached **Despair, you farmers, wail, you vine growers; grieve for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field is destroyed. The vine is dried up and the fig tree is withered; the pomegranate, the palm and the apple**

tree – all the trees of the field – are dried up. Surely the joy of mankind is withered away. The farmers would grieve – not because they were any more sinful than their neighbors. But the farmers would be among the first to see the bitter harvest of their sin – as the plants withered and the crops were spoiled – and ruined because of their sins. The priests were to put on sackcloth – the scratchy rough cloth – as a very visible outward sign of their sadness for their sins! Joel wrote: **“Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your ♥ and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing...**

Again hear the LORD’s powerful Gospel promises! **28 After this...** Simon Peter quotes Joel in the powerful sermon he preached that special “Thanksgiving “ sermon – our second reading today. **After this...** **After** Jesus was made flesh – born into this world to redeem us. After Jesus’ sacrifice to redeem us – in these end times – the final days before Judgment Day we have this powerful Gospel promise! **I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.** The Holy Spirit was not a new concept to Old Testament believers! **Dreams and visions – not a new concept.** Can you think of heroes of faith who had dreams? Jacob! We have special Bible/confirmation classes. We tell a Bible story – then color with crayons/markers a picture of that Bible story while we review the law and gospel aspects of that Bible history! Right now we are coloring Jacob’s Ladder! Remember...Jacob stole the “birth right” from his twin brother Esau! Jacob thought he was all alone that night – when the

Holy Spirit showed him in a dream – a ladder/stair way going up into Heaven – with angels going up and down with the LORD at the top of the stairs. **The LORD said: “I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”** Genesis 28:13b-15 After something like that – could you ever – I mean ever be afraid? You saw a vision of the Almighty! You know for a fact what angels look like! The Great I AM – tells you face to face – I will always take care of you and keep all these Gospel promises! **Surely God is my Salvation. I will trust in Him and not be afraid. The LORD is my stronghold – my sure defense. He will be my Savior!** Joseph had dreams. Abraham had dreams. Solomon had dreams! Isaiah had dreams – the angel with tongs and the hot coal to touch his lips. Ezekiel – had an incredible vision of heavenly creatures with four faces – the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox and the face of an eagle – and wings and hands and legs and feet like a calf – like polished bronze! Daniel had visions – remarkably similar to what the Apostle John saw and wrote about in Revelation! Always these dreams and visions from the power of the Holy Spirit give faith, courage, comfort and hope that will not disappoint – to God’s people by grace alone!

²⁹Even on the male servants and the female servants, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. When the Holy Spirit fills your ♥ to overflowing with the Gospel you cannot help but tell other people

about Jesus – you can’t! When I buy Dragon Fruit and Plantains and Prickly Mellon at Pick n’Save and they ask why are you buying one of each of these funny fruits – I tell them they are for children’s devotion to talk about Jesus! When I buy a bunch of Oreos – *double stuffed* – and they ask if I’m having a party I tell the Piggly Wiggly checkout person they are for visits to *visitors* at St. Luke’s! When I visit people in the Hospital I thank the nurses for taking care of Jesus’ sheep – this one or that one! When I walk through 2 Sisters after Bible Class and people say, “What are you doing here?” I tell them Bible Class – and give them a copy of the readings for Sunday. When I go to Kwik Trip I tell the workers that Mr. Steve Loehr – one of the Company Managers is my friend – his brother was my member at my last Church! When I meet people walking their dog I stop and ask them their dog’s name – and say of all of the animals Jesus made – what a powerful blessing puppies are. And then as they walk away I say, “God bless you!” When I meet people with those baseball hats that say they are a veteran I tell them, “I owe you a debt of gratitude I will never be able to repay. Thank you in Jesus’ name for your service to Savior and Country.” I have neckties with Bible Verses on them. People ask about my tie in the elevator and I tell them about Jesus! That’s not to mention all the times where you come across something/anything that isn’t right and you stop and try to improve it – if you can’t *fix* it. When there is trash – a genuine hazard on the road – somebody needs to stop and carefully safely get it out of the way. I have stopped more than once when there is something in the street – that little people shouldn’t have to see. Almost any situation is an opportunity for anybody – full of the Holy Spirit – to point to Jesus! When you do – know that Jesus will bless your humble, gentle, faithful Gospel effort to say, “Thank you, Jesus!”



Amen!
To God alone all glory!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Anthony P. Schmitt", is enclosed in a light blue rectangular box.