

Pentecost

Greeting and Opening Prayer

Hymns of Worship

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Devotional Summary: "Pentecost"

Ps 85:10 (NKJV) Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.

There was a meeting at the cross of Christ. The culmination of the plan of salvation worked out in the history of man from beginning of creation - God fully revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ - men professed that He was the Christ - the Son of God.

On the cross, the **truth** in Christ Jesus (as opposed to the deceitfulness of mankind), and the **righteousness** of God in Christ Jesus (as opposed to the wickedness and pride of man hiding behind a facade of rituals and rules)

accepted on man's behalf the **judgment** of a sovereign, regal, almighty God

and the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, was accepted by the Father

releasing the **mercy** of God upon all who believe on the person and the work of Christ Jesus that we might enter into a personal relationship with Him in heavenly, glorious **peace!**

Truly, at the cross, Mercy and truth met together! ...righteousness and peace have kissed each other!

Joh 3:16 (NKJV) For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

And this meeting of truth and righteousness with mercy and peace in God-the-Son on the Cross brought into the realm of man another meeting which we celebrate on the Day of Pentecost!

Joh 17:3 (KJV) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

On the day of Pentecost another wedding took place - the mercy and peace of God brought into man's world the **hope** of a new life - a life of endless fellowship with our Creator in everlasting joy and love.

Col 1:27 (KJV) To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

HOPE - we do not hope for what we have, but for what we do not yet have! One of the strongest enemies of our faith is the day-to-day grind of living in this world. To be born from above by divine intervention in our life should produce a graphic change in our

circumstances...right? Well, there is a huge change in who we serve and what we believe, but the world we live in has not changed yet. That day is still to come. Also, we enter into a relationship with God in all His perfection and purity and we have all sorts of bad habits and wrong ways of thinking that He must gently, patiently work out of our lives. So, there is a great need for us to hold on to the truth of God's delivering power in the face of progress that often seems all too slow. Allow me to use the following story to illustrate:

One Step at a Time

When I got old enough to feel my oats and set out on my own, I started making my own choices. I wanted to go to the beautiful, snow-covered mountains that I heard everyone talking about. I thought I could see them way off in the distance. But, some folks tried to tell me I would get lost if I set out by myself. I needed someone to lead and guide me. Only One knew the way; His name was Jesus. That thought was foolish to my pride. I was confident that I could find my own way. How could Jesus know better than me what was right for me? Nobody and no thing could stand in my way. I was tough and I was smart.

Well, I set out alright. And though I had a fair picture in my mind of what the mountaintops looked like, I eventually lost the possibility of catching sight of them in the forest around me. I kept going. I knew I was good enough for the task.

As I trudged along, I began to wonder if I was walking in circles. And I could not see the edge of the woods anymore. In fact, things looked more like a jungle now. I thought I heard something buzzing near my path. I stepped off what I thought was the trail to see what was making the funny noise and my foot tromped smack in the middle of a hornets' nest. I ran as fast as I could, screaming as loud as I could. I didn't care which way I was going as long as I kept the hornets at bay.

Then I saw a clearing to the left and headed for it. "Maybe I'll find rest there" I thought. Well, the clearing was a lions' den. Big ones, with big teeth and big claws and they jumped up when they saw me with a very hungry look in their eyes. Off like the wind again was I!

I saw smoke. A village! Oh, finally, civilization. I stumbled into the circle of huts, out of breath and hardly able to talk. The lions held up and crouched in the edge of the underbrush. The natives did not speak my language. They had spears and knives and blow-guns with a sticky, smelly substance dripping from their darts. I swatted at the hornets swarming around my head, hoping they may have some mosquito netting. Then I saw the big black pot just as a spear thudded into the tree right beside me. Cannibals!

Arms flailed and torn by thorns and bushes, heels kicking up mud, blinded by terror, deafened by my own howling and cries, I tore off into the ever deepening jungle.

Before I knew it, I found myself in a deep, deep swamp. I felt my knees sinking into the mud and muck - quicksand! A huge viper snaked his body through the slime in my direction. The lions roared, snapping their jaws at the edge of the jungle. The cannibals whooped and gnashed their teeth, drawing up on the edge of the quicksand pit throwing spears and shooting darts at me. The hornets still swarmed around my head. My legs ached, my arms bled, my head swirled, my heart pounded. Now up to my armpits in quicksand. I knew, at last, I was hopelessly lost!

Just then, I looked up with a face distorted by agony and despair, and there, just through a

small break in the overhanging trees, I thought I saw snow on a mountaintop!

To the top of my lungs I cried, "Jesus! Jesus! Come and take me to the snow-covered mountaintop!"

Instantly, He stood beside me walking on the quicksand! He held His strong hand out to me...I took His hand with great thanksgiving. The lions howled with fear and disappeared. The cannibals turned and ran in terror out of sight. The snake slithered off into the brush. The hornets stopped swarming and the mud beneath my feet became firm. We were walking out of the slime together, me and Jesus!

What joy - unspeakable joy and sweet relief! What security - peace beyond explanation. What firm love I felt in the grasp of His merciful hand. What affection there was in the sound of His voice. Oh, I would follow Him now! He has saved me!

We walked for some time. Through the jungle. Under the great canopy of trees and vines. Around the pools of stagnant water and through the thick underbrush.

A hornet buzzed across my face. I heard a lion roar. Off in the distance, I saw the smoke from the cannibals' fire rising slowly above the treetops. We walked and walked for some time.

I looked up into His kind and patient face and said, "Jesus, thank you for saving me,....but....I thought you were going to take me to the snow-covered mountaintop."

With infinite understanding in His all-knowing eyes, He said, "I am. Hold my hand. Walk with Me...one step at a time."

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Our Savior has entered into a relationship with us on a long-term basis. He is committed to stick with us and walk with us through thick and thin. Our hope of an eternal home in Heaven rests on His abiding presence in our hearts. He knows the way through the wilderness. All we have to do is follow Him...one step at a time! This is the power of Pentecost - He lives within us to guide and comfort and teach and deliver and heal and encourage and love us. Yes, the truth is that we still see the need for a lot of changes in our lives. The truth is that things still get messed up and the world treats us unfairly. BUT...praise God, we are farther along than when we started because of His mercy. Praise God for the HOPE that His presence within us brings - that we will make it to the end in the victory of His righteousness and peace in our lives. Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

Closing Hymn

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Prayer Requests and Corporate Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Recessional

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