

**DATE: 4 JUN 2023 | SPEAKER: PS ERNIE SONG | TOPIC: REVISITING
 PENTECOST | SCRIPTURE: [ACTS 2:1-41](#)**

SPIRITUAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the sermon discussion, cell members will:

1. Understand and recognise the significance of Pentecost, of having the Holy Spirit in us.
2. Put our relationship with God first, before anything else in life.

SERMON SUMMARY

On the day of Pentecost, fire came upon the disciples (symbolising the presence of God). And from that moment on, the presence of God lives in each believer as we are now the temple that hosts the Holy Spirit. The primary treasure of Pentecost is God's presence with us forever. We need to return to our first love – treasuring His presence in our lives.

SERMON RECAP

To fully understand the significance and heart of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#), we need to revisit the historical context of Pentecost. The typical focus of Pentecost is to look at it as God endowing believers with power from on high through His Holy Spirit. While that is true, if you look at Pentecost from its historical roots, a very different picture comes out.

1) The Origins of Pentecost

- Pentecost is also known as the Festival of Weeks ([Leviticus 23:15-22](#)). It is to celebrate the first fruits of the wheat harvest. All able-bodied Jewish males travel to Jerusalem to attend the feast and offer sacrifices.
- The Location of Pentecost
 - The location where Pentecost happened ([Acts 2](#)) is most likely at the Eastern steps of the temple, where all the men came at 9am ([v.15](#) – 3rd hour of the day) to enter the temple to offer their sacrifices. This is the most viable place where Jews from all over the land and of surrounding nations would have witnessed the disciples speaking in tongues and recognising their own native language spoken by the disciples.
 - The Eastern steps are also surrounded by many purification pools for the men to purify themselves before entering the temple ([v.41](#)) making it the most accessible place for the disciples to baptise the 3,000 men who were saved.
- Along the way, the Festival of Weeks became known as Pentecost, and subsequently the Jews begin to observe Pentecost as commemorating the giving of The Law on Mount Sinai (50 days after Passover).
- The symbols present at Pentecost in [Acts 2](#) were wind, tongues and fire ([Acts 2:2-3](#)). All of these are used in the Old Testament to indicate the presence of God. However, our tendency when approaching Acts 2 is to focus on the Tongues symbol and to miss out on Fire and Wind.

2) Background to Pentecost: Sinai

- At creation, God was with man in the Garden of Eden. But sin caused men to be separated from God's presence. Consequently, the presence of God was no longer on earth until the time of Moses, when God's presence manifested as a burning bush on Mount Sinai ([Exodus 3:2](#)).
- After the Exodus, Moses brought Israel back to the mountain of God – Sinai. God revealed Himself to Moses there and renewed His covenant with Israel. But Israel worshiped the Golden Calf when Moses delayed in coming down from the mountain. Subsequently, God did not want to go with Israel into the Promised Land. Moses interceded for God's presence to be with Israel ([Exodus 33:15](#)), and the Lord relented.
- The presence of God from the time of Moses onward was confined to the Tabernacle.

3) Background to Pentecost: The Temple

- David desired to build a house to host the presence of God. But God determined that his son, Solomon, will be the one to build the house ([2 Samuel 7:12-13](#)).
- After Solomon built the temple, fire came down to consume the sacrifices ([2 Chronicles 7:1-2](#)), symbolising that the presence of God has entered.

4) Background to Pentecost: The Time of Christ

- When Christ came, the presence of God was still in the temple ([Matthew 23:31](#)). But strangely, Jesus went around forgiving sins. That is because Jesus was God.
- Whenever Jesus went, the presence of God is there. God's presence is in the temple, but also in Jesus ([Matthew 23:21](#)).
- In Christ, heaven and earth meet. The temple (the presence of God) and the sacrificial system (forgiveness of sins) became unnecessary because God is with us – in the person of Christ.
- But Jesus ascended to heaven after His resurrection making the temple the only place left on earth that hosts the presence of God.

5) Pentecost

- At Pentecost, the presence of God came (fire) and entered the believers.
- Because of Christ, God has now deemed us holy enough to host his presence.
- The impact of Pentecost:
 - The restoration of man's spirit to God's Spirit. We are connected to God directly once again (without the Temple and priests) and He brought our spirits to life. ([v.42-43](#))
 - The restoration of man's heart for each other. It restores our ability to relate to one another in a way that honours God ([v.44-45](#)).
- Pentecost was God restoring man's ability to love Him (The Great Commandment), and to love others (The 2nd Greatest Commandment). The Holy Spirit was given to change who we are so that we relate correctly with God, and we can relate correctly to one another.

Pentecost has great significance because that is the day when God and man are joined together. The loving Father is no longer separated from His children. That is the beauty of Pentecost.

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." – [Romans 8:15 \(ESV\)](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **Our mobile phones have connection bars on the top to indicate signal strength. Typically, five bars indicate strong signal strength. How many bars (1-5) would you give to your connection with the Holy Spirit? Share the reasons why.**

Leader's Notes

How connected are we with the Holy Spirit? If we have a weak connection, it may mean that we have the wrong perception of the Holy Spirit.

Most of us think of the Holy Spirit as a “force”. But the Holy Spirit is a person. What does that mean? As with any other person, to be connected with the Holy Spirit, we need to cultivate a relationship with Him.

Assess your relationship with the Holy Spirit. Have you neglected Him? Do you treat Him as ‘lesser’ than God and Jesus? How do you improve your relationship with Him?

Resources

[The Holy Spirit – Person or Force?](#) By Chip Ingram

[What Christians Need to Know about the Holy Spirit as a Person](#) by Crosswalk

Transition

The Holy Spirit is God’s presence with us. It is a privilege that only Christians have – so we should not take it for granted.

2. **Read John 16:7. These are the terms that are used for the Holy Spirit in the various translations: Advocate (NIV, NLT, BSB), Helper (NKJV, NASB, ESV, BLB), Counsellor (Holman, CSB), and Comforter (ASV). Read the Amplified (AMP) version of the verse and discuss how you can honour the Holy Spirit in the various roles He plays in your life according to this verse (AMP)?**

Leader's Notes

“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor – Counsellor, Strengthener, Standby) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him (the Holy Spirit) to you [to be in close fellowship with you].” – John 16:7 (AMP)

Most of the time, we dishonour the Holy Spirit by doing things that grieve Him. Read this article on how we dishonour the Holy Spirit: [Honoring the Holy Spirit \(spiritualtheology.net\)](#). We ignore His promptings, and we allow our focus to be taken away by worldly distractions.

Discuss with your cell how we can honour the Holy Spirit instead, and what we can do to improve and build our relationship with Him.

Resource

[How to Develop Your Relationship with the Holy Spirit](#) by Charisma

Transition

Make it a point to be aware and attuned to the Holy Spirit every day. Build into your lives habits that can cultivate an acknowledgement and connection with the Holy Spirit each day.

3. **Pentecost restored man’s heart for each other, to relate to one another in a way that honours God. How can our cell be a blessing to those in need because of the Holy Spirit in you?**

Leader's Notes

When God gave us the Holy Spirit, it is to change us from within so that we can relate rightly with God and with man. God's heart is for His children, and if we prioritise our relationship with the Holy Spirit first, then we catch God's heart. Ministry will overflow out of that relationship.

Think about what you or the cell have that another person in need needs from you/the cell. What can we give to others? You can consider setting aside one day a month to serve in RL Cares or participate in an RCS initiative.

Closing

Our ministry should overflow out of the relationship with our Father. If not, we are serving and doing as orphans. Let us return to the beauty of Pentecost – God's presence with us forevermore. And let us live out of that reality.

WORKS

Consider dividing the group into micro-groups for a deeper time of sharing as well as praying for the following items:

1. Sermon Application

- Pray for us to open our ears, hearts, and minds to the Holy Spirit.
- Pray for us to hunger and prioritise our relationship with Him.

2. World

- Pray for good weather in Singapore during this hot season.
- Pray for the tense situation along the straits of Taiwan.
- Pray for peace in the Russia-Ukraine war and in the US-China conflict.
- Pray for peace in the Gaza strip (Israel) as violence erupts between Israel and Islamic Jihad.

3. Opportunities for Outreach

- Ask the Lord to bless us as we step out to reach a pre-believer.
- Ask the Lord to grant you opportunities to reach out to a non-believing loved one, friend, or colleague this week as we seek to mature in Christlikeness.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Digital Bulletin: rlc.sg/bulletin

- 1. Current Sermon Series.** This Pentecost Sunday, join us on a seven-week journey to discover seven distinct traits of the early church that will provide fresh revelation of how God wants to empower us as His river flowing outwards. May the lives of the first disciples inspire us to be the church that continues to advance the Kingdom of God and reveal Christ in our generation!
(*Sermon titles subjected to change*)

- 28 May : A Beautiful Mission
- 04 Jun : Revisiting Pentecost
- 11 Jun : A Loving Community
- 18 Jun : Ministering in Jesus' Name
- 25 Jun : Boldness: Holy Audacity
- 02 Jul : True to God
- 09 Jul : Unstoppable

2. **22nd Annual General Meeting. Sun, 11 Jun. 11.30am. Victory Chapel.** A gentle reminder to all Leadership Members of RiverLife Church to attend our 22nd AGM. If you are unable to attend, kindly submit your completed proxy form at the Information Counter (Level 1) on Sun, 4 Jun or to the church office by Fri, 9 Jun at 2.30pm. *Associate Members are welcome to observe the proceedings.*

3. **RiverLife Kindergarten 2024 Enrolment Now Open.** RiverLife Kindergarten is a Christian preschool that nurtures joyful learners. Registration for 2024 is now open.
 - Playgroup (born in 2022 from 18 months onwards)
 - Pre-Nursery (born in 2021)
 - Nursery (born in 2020)
 - Kindergarten 1 (born in 2019)
 - Kindergarten 2 (born in 2018)

For enquiries, please call 6511 4168 or email us at office@riverlifekindergarten.org.sg. Visit our website at riverlifekindergarten.org.sg to find out more about our programmes and curriculum.

4. **Alpha Course. 1 July – 16 September.** If you have questions about Christianity that you are seeking answers for, we invite you to join us for Alpha - a series of interactive sessions that explores the basics of the Christian faith.
 - For More Information: rlc.sg/alpha
 - To Sign Up: rlc.sg/join-alpha

5. **SPYCES - Spiritual Parenting of Young Couples (Online). 2 – 5pm starting on 2 July. Cost: \$10.** SPYCES is a series of 5 online sessions where parents in the same season of life can come together to fellowship and build friendship with one another. You will also learn from the Bible how to journey with your children and your children's children in the days ahead. Registration Link: rlc.sg/spyces (Closing Date: 25 Jun 2023).

6. **RiverLife Kindergarten is SPARK Certified!** RiverLife Kindergarten has obtained SPARK certification for 6 years from the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA). We rejoice with our principal, Oi Leng, and her team! May God continue to use RiverLife Kindergarten for His glory.

7. **An Invitation for Parents with Youths in MegaLife.** Dear Parents, You're invited to join us on Sat, 17 Jun from 9.30am to 12.30pm at MegaLife Camp to worship and pray with your child / children as a family. Kindly RSVP online at rlc.sg/mlc-parents.

8. **Serve with RCS Children's Camp.**
 - Tue-Wed, 13-14 Jun 2023 9am to 4pm, RCS Centre 102 Rivervale Walk #01-54 Singapore 540102
 - As a camp volunteer, you will:
 - Befriend children (aged 7-12) from the community
 - Facilitate small group discussion and activities
 - Affirm child for growth in relationship, participation and good behaviour.
 - Sign up to serve here: tinyurl.com/kiperkidsvol

9. **Church Calendar Highlights**
 - *Quarter 2*
 - Bible Equipping – Acts: 26 & 28 May, 2 & 4 Jun
 - Children's Camp: 8-10 Jun

- Youth Camp: 15-18 Jun
 - Cell Revival Night (Fridays): 30 Jun, 8-10pm @ Worship Centre
 - **Quarter 3**
 - Young Adult Camp: 7-9 Jul
 - 32nd Anniversary Weekend: 26-27 Aug
 - Bible Equipping – Leviticus: 15 & 17, 22 & 24 Sep
 - Cells Prayer Night #2: 29 Sep
 - **Quarter 4**
 - Equipping Series: 17 & 19, 24 & 26 Nov
 - Christmas Outreach: Dec
 - Cells Prayer Night #3: 29 Dec
10. **YA Gatherings (For Young Adults in their 20s). First Saturday Every Month, 5pm-8.30pm Victory Chapel (Level 1).** The YA Gathering is a space where young adults can get together to connect and build community. This gathering is made up of two components – Community Conversations & Communal Dinner – both with a focus on relationship building and life conversations. If you are currently in a cell, register your attendance with your cell leader. If you are currently not in a cell, do register online: rlc.sg/YAgathering-apr-reg.
11. **RiverLife Prayer Meetings.**
- *RLC Prayer Room.* Tue, 8-9.30pm, Victory Chapel. (Online: rlc.sg/rpr-watch)
 - *Wed Night Prayer Meeting.* Wed, 8pm – 9.30pm, Victory Chapel.
12. **9M Ministry.** The 9M Ministry provides prayer support for expectant mothers on their 9-month journey of pregnancy. Sisters-in-Christ who are fellow RiverLifers are assigned as Prayer Buddies to walk alongside mums who sign up to receive prayer support.
- Receive Prayer Support: rlc.sg/9m
 - Provide Prayer Support: rlc.sg/serve
13. **Global Hunger Fund.** This fund will go towards RLC’s mission partners to help their local churches and communities gain access to food amid soaring costs. Refer to the Digital Bulletin for more details.
14. **Missions Microsite.** Discover how you can go, give and pray for the nations. Let's make a difference in the nations together! For more information, visit rlc.sg/missions.
15. **RiverLife Cares Opportunities.** Signup: <http://rlc.sg/serve-rlcares>
16. **Call for SuperLife Volunteers.** If you have a heart for children and a desire to disciple them in their spiritual journey, come be a part of the SuperLife team. Sign up at rlc.sg/serve. Immediate needs:
- *SuperLife Primary Teacher* (Serve twice a month. Facilitate small group discussions after each Bible lesson, connect and pray with the children, be involved in SuperLife Ministry events, etc.)
 - *Special Needs Chaperone.* (Serve twice a month. Provided 1-1 support to children with special needs and help facilitate an inclusive environment between children with and without special needs.)
17. **Technical & Production (TAP) Ministry Recruitment.** The TAP ministry comprises five teams – audio, graphics, lighting, sound and video – and they all work as one in partnership with the Holy Spirit to support an atmosphere that allows the congregation to encounter God. We are now opening up recruitment for this ministry. If you desire to take the next step in your walk with God through starting to serve, we invite you to sign up to explore serving in one of the five TAP teams. You may sign up online at rlc.sg/serve or refer to our digital bulletin for more details.

18. **Bible Reading Plan.** The church has provided 3 undated Bible Reading plans that will serve as a resource for those who wish to follow a Bible Reading plan. Link: rlc.sg/brp
 - 2 Year Chronological Bible Reading Plan.
 - 3 Year Bible Reading Schedule (Alternating readings between Old and New Testament passages)
 - Redemptive Historical Bible Reading Plan (At your own pace, focusing on the redemption story)

19. **RiverLife Podcast.** The RiverLife Podcast allows you to listen to RiverLife content anytime, anywhere! The link to go to is rlc.sg/podcast or simply search '**The RiverLife Podcast**' on Spotify.

20. **Spiritual Growth Resources.** We have put together a curated list of recommended resources for the RiverLife family. These resources (books, articles, podcasts and videos) are recommendations for the various spiritual growth stages as you seek to grow deeper in the River of God this year. You can access them at rlc.sg/resource. This list will be continually populated throughout the year.

21. **Prayer Ministry.** If you require prayer ministry for any issues you face (eg. fear, worry, etc), you can sign up for RLC's RTF ministry: <https://bit.ly/rlcrtf>

22. **Testimony.** If you have a testimony to share, you can write to us at stories@riverlife.org.sg to share with us your testimony as an encouragement to others.

23. **Stay Connected with RLC.** Follow us to stay updated on latest church news and happenings.
 - **WhatsApp Broadcast:** Text 'Subscribe' to 8923 1939
 - **Telegram Channel:** t.me/RiverLifeChurch
 - **Facebook & Instagram:** [@riverlifechurchsg](https://www.facebook.com/riverlifechurchsg)

GIVING LINKS & QR CODES

ONLINE GIVING TO MISSIONS

Donate digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200100806DTNO.

Interbank Transfer

UOB Account 450-309634-4

Kindly indicate "Missions" in your transaction reference.



ONLINE GIVING TO RIVERLIFE CHURCH

Contribute your tithes and offering digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200100806DSCB.

Interbank Transfer

RiverLife Church Bank Account: DBS Autosave 029-902431-0

Bank Code: 7171 / Branch Code: 029



ONLINE DONATION TO RIVERLIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES

Donate digitally:

PayNow

Log in to your bank's existing mobile banking app. Scan this QR code on the right OR enter UEN No. 200711586WDON

Kindly indicate your NRIC No. under the Bill Reference to qualify for tax deduction.

