

Friends of the Center

When the Spirit Repairs What Babel Destroyed

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place... and all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:1-4)

There is something extraordinary about Pentecost that we need to rediscover. Much more than a moment of spiritual ecstasy, Pentecost is heaven’s response to the confusion of Babel. In Genesis 11, we see a human project built with arrogance and self-sufficiency. A people, speaking one language, decide to build a tower that reaches the heavens. But heaven is not impressed by human constructions. God comes down and confuses their languages. Where there was unity without divine purpose, division was born.

Centuries later, the Holy Spirit descends again—this time not to confuse, but to restore. Once again, languages take center stage, but now each person hears *“the wonders of God in their own language”* (Acts 2:11). It is a miracle of reconciliation, of listening, of understanding. It is the birth of a new people, formed not by geographic borders, but by the living presence of God dwelling among us.

Today we also feel the deep wounds of separation. We are divided by language, by culture, by visible and invisible walls. Families live scattered. Children grow up among languages they do not yet understand. There is confusion. There are cries. There are hearts that cannot understand each other.

But Pentecost is still God’s answer. The Holy Spirit still descends. And when He comes, He heals, unites, and transforms. He empowers us to be one Church, even with many cultures, stories, and languages. He repairs what Babel destroyed.

At Pentecost, the Spirit works in four powerful dimensions that are still relevant today:

1. God intervenes in history.

It is not we who climb to heaven with our religious efforts. It is God who comes down to us with His grace. The promise of Jesus was fulfilled: *“you will be clothed with power from on high”* (Luke 24:49). That power is neither political nor institutional. It is the power of a Presence that dwells within us. God is not distant—He is present and active in our lives.

2. God restores communication.

In a world of polarized discourse, the Spirit brings understanding. Where there is noise, He brings listening. Where there is division, He plants communion. The Spirit works in the heart, because *“out of the abundance of*



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the heart, the mouth speaks” (Matthew 12:34). What was spoken in tongues that day in Jerusalem was what heaven had placed inside: the proclamation of God’s greatness.

3. God converts hearts.

The first sermon after Pentecost was not marked by rhetoric, but by anointing. Three thousand hearts were broken by the message and asked, *“What shall we do?”* The answer remains the same: *repent, believe, and receive the gift of the Spirit.*

4. God forms communion.

What Babel separated, the Spirit united. In Acts 2:42–47, we see a living community that prays, shares bread, worships, cares for the needy, and grows in love. The Spirit builds a Church not defined by walls or labels, but by surrender, compassion, and presence.

Today, as we look at so many realities of pain and disconnection, we must remember: the Spirit still breathes. He breathes over homes, over communities, over weary hearts. He breathes over those who weep in another language, but with the same faith. He breathes over us so that we may be one body.

In Christ, we are one body.

In Christ, what Babel separated, the Spirit unites.

Amen.

– Rev. Dr. Rafael Viana