



# Sunday Q&A

Your Faith in Focus

## TODAY IS A BIG DEAL

### Is Pentecost really as important as Christmas and Easter?

*Today we read about Pentecost's place in the Paschal Mystery. Youth minister Chris Mueller explains that Pentecost's role in that mystery makes this feast more important than it might seem.*

#### The Third Great Feast

Yes, God came. He lived as a human. He died for our sins. He conquered death, rose to new life, and returned to heaven. Incredible! But once he is in heaven, aren't we basically in the same situation we were in before he came? If the story ends at the Ascension, we have no way to live our new life.

Christmas and Easter change reality, but they are not enough. They are only part of the story. God did not come to save us and then leave us. He planned something greater.

Jesus says as much in John's Gospel. At the Last Supper, Jesus teaches the disciples that something new is going to happen. Another Person is coming. This Person is so crucial that Jesus tells the apostles that it is better for him to leave so this new Person can come.

I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7)

Wrap your mind around *that!* Christmas is a big deal. Easter is a big deal. Jesus is saying that the coming of this next Person is a big deal, too—big enough that Jesus tells the apostles he needs to go so the Advocate can come. Right before his Ascension, Jesus talks again about this.

And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:4–5)

Before returning to heaven, in essence, Jesus tells the apostles, "You are not done yet. Go wait for the Holy Spirit." So, they go to Jerusalem and wait. At Pentecost (the Jewish feast celebrating the giving of the Law), the unexpected happened:

And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:2–4)

# The Fire of the Holy Spirit

The Advocate had arrived. God, in the Person of the Holy Spirit, had come. Just like Christmas celebrates the coming of Christ, Pentecost marks the arrival of the Spirit. At Christmas, we celebrate that God has come for us. In Pentecost, we rejoice that God has come to dwell within us.

Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost are the three great feasts of the Church. Without the third of these, we would still be distant from the Lord. Through the coming of the Spirit, we are made members of Christ's family, and in the Spirit, we are able to cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4:6). Pentecost is important. Celebrate this great thing that God has done for us.

## Ponder and Pray

- What do I think it means for Jesus to say, “It is better for you that I go” (John 16:7)? What does that say about the importance of Pentecost?
- How do I see the action and presence of the Holy Spirit in my life?

[illegible]

## Make It Your Own

Pray to the Holy Spirit this week. Here is a prayer that you can say daily when you wake up in the morning. On the lines, write about what it means to you.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,  
and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created,  
and you shall renew the face of the earth.

*Let us pray.*

O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful  
by the light of the Holy Spirit,  
grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise  
and ever rejoice in his consolation.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Dive Deeper

To read the full article on  
Pentecost, scan the code

or visit the URL:

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/2018/05/16/christmas-easter-and-pentecost-are-equal-in-importance/>

