

Acts 2:1-4
Fire and Wind
WRCoB 5.28.23

The song we just sung was written for Pentecost.
By Robert Robinson in 1758.

When he was a small boy his father died
And in 18th Century England without no social welfare

He was sent to apprentice under a barber
At the age of 10-years-old.

He got mixed up with the wrong crowd

They decided to make trouble at a revival meeting.

The preacher was George Whitfield
One of the leaders of a major spiritual revival
Called the Great Awakening.

He preached this text.

1

**O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee
from the wrath to come? (Matthew 3:7).**

But instead of creating a disturbance
Robinson left the revival himself deeply disturbed.

Over the next three years
Robert Robinson was haunted by Whitefield's message.

And then, at the age of 20, he wrote
“I made peace with God.”

Two years later in 1758
He wrote the song, “*Come Thou Fount,*”
In honor of the birthday of the church.

This is the power of the Holy Spirit!

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Today we recognize Pentecost, a Jewish holiday
Commemorating the first-fruits of the harvest.

As the name suggests
It is fifty days following the Jewish holiday, Passover.

Along with it being a Jewish holiday
Christians recognize Pentecost
As the birthday of the church.

This particular Pentecost, then
Was fifty days following the crucifixion of Jesus.

After Jesus resurrected
And was witnessed alive by his disciples
And more than 500 individuals
Jesus ascended into heaven.

This took place 40 days after Easter

Jesus told his disciples to go to Jerusalem and wait.

When the day of Pentecost arrived
The disciples were together in one place.

Below their window the celebration was in full swing.

But the disciples' minds were not on the festivities.

With one mind and one purpose
They waited on the Lord!

~~

What followed
Was something they'd never experienced before
And never would experience again.

The Spirit had them speaking in such a way that
People from 15 different ethnic and language groups
Understood what they were saying.

The Spirit so empowered them
That the very same Peter who denied knowing Jesus
Not once but three times

Now stood in the balcony before the crowds
And preached with fire and wind in his voice.

The people standing below his window
Were amazed and were cut to the heart.

They asked the disciples

2

What shall we do?

3

Acts 2:38 NIV Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Luke sums up what happened next in verse 41;

4

Acts 2:41 CEV On that day about 3,000 believed his message and were baptized.

Something was a stir in Jerusalem.

~~

God’s Holy Spirit is a consuming fire.

It was in the fire of a burning bush
That God first spoke to Moses.

It was a pillar of fire
That led Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness.

It was John the Baptist who claimed he baptized with water
But someone was coming who baptized
With Spirit and fire.

It was Paul who wrote that a person’s life’s work
Will one day be revealed by fire.

And it is in the Book of Revelation
That the damned are cast into a lake of burning fire.

Frederick Buechner describes fire.

5

It has no shape or substance. You can't taste it or smell it or hear it. You can't touch it except at great risk. You can't weigh it or measure it or examine it with instruments.

6

You can never grasp it in fullness because it never stands still. Yet there is no mistaking its extraordinary power.

An out of control fire can sweep through the land
 Burning everything in its path
 Destroying forests, home and even towns.

And yet, before the advent of electricity
 We heated our homes and lit our lanterns with fire.

We can't live without it.

Fire is as necessary to life as breath.

~~

God's Holy Spirit is wind.

RUAH is the Hebrew word
 That means wind, or spirit, or breath
 Depending on its context.

Like fire, wind can be quite destructive too.

One needs to only look as far as the
 Tornadoes and hurricanes from last summer.

But like fire, wind is essential for life.

It is the air we breathe.

7

John 3:8 NLT The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

~~

Years later, the composer of *Come Thou Fount*
Robert Robinson
Lost his Christian zeal and faith.

While on a trip in a stage coach
A fellowship passenger started singing his song.

He tried to stop her from singing it.

But she continued to sing until she finished.

Turning to Robinson, she asked him
What he thought of the song.

8

He responded, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."

9

Gently, she replied, "Sir, the 'streams of mercy' are still flowing."

He was deeply touched by her words.

And consequently, his faith in God was revived
By the very song he composed many years previous.

God is likened to wind and fire.

In their gentler forms

They are life-saving and life-giving elements.

In their stronger more harsher forms

They are extremely powerful and quite dangerous.

They are both descriptions of what took place

On that very first day.

Wind filled the entire house

And flames like fire

Extended over the disciples' heads.

And life on earth has never been the same since.

10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmweXyEeoBw>