

PARACLETE

ADVOCATING FOR THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

Volume 6, Issue 3

May 2023

It's Time for (Another?) Pentecost

By Dr. Don Bierle, FaithSearch President

There will be agreement in nearly all Western church calendars that May 28 is **Pentecost Sunday** – fifty days after Passover. Jesus stayed on earth after His resurrection for forty of those days (Acts 1:3) before He ascended to His Father. Just before He left, He told His followers, “*And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high*” (Luke 24:49).

A little over a week later Pentecost happened (Acts 2), and the Christian Church was born. Three years earlier, John the Baptist introduced Jesus,

And I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, “He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remain upon Him, this is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.” And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God” (John 1:33-34).

The **message of the resurrection, forgiveness, and Holy Spirit power** from on high burst upon believers in the Roman world so significantly that by the



The arrival of the Holy Spirit is often represented by a descending dove, as in the baptism of Jesus (Luke 3:22).

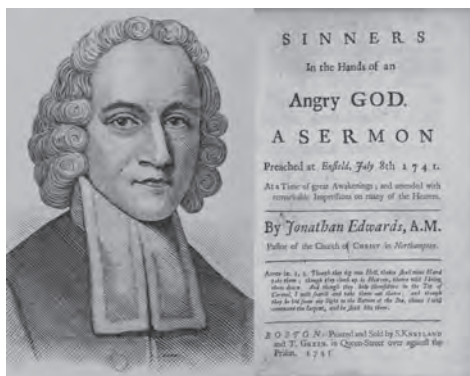
end of the first century, Christian influence extended from the Empire’s eastern to its western fronts. The testimony of hundreds of thousands in the century following Pentecost was figuratively like the blind man whom Jesus healed, “...whereas I was blind, now I see” (John 9:25).

A Proven Track Record

The impact of Holy Spirit revival is always characterized by an overwhelming sense of the holiness and presence of God, repentance, and great joy. There is a desire to live holy lives, participate in worship services and Christian fellowship, and to evangelize the lost. Many sense a call to full-time ministry or missionary service.

America has a rich history of Holy Spirit revivals yielding results similar to those at Pentecost in the first century. The so-called **First Great Awakening** in America (1730s to 1760s) yielded the beginning of seminaries, more formal training of pastors, and a church planting movement. The **Second Great Awakening** (1790s to 1830s) sparked the establishment of Baptist and Methodist churches throughout the American frontier and brought social reforms. There was also the **Businessmen’s Revival** (1857 to 1859) impacting thousands,

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The 1741 sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” by Jonathan Edwards is regarded as a significant impetus to the First Great Awakening. (Public domain.)



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IN THE NEWS

Quiz Time

(Answers on Page 2)

- What is the **tallest** living tree in the world?
- **How long** does it take a single snowflake to fall from a cloud to the earth?



Minnesota IN THE NEWS

Going with the floe

Last November, hundreds of fishermen on Upper Red Lake in northern Minnesota nearly joined the fish they were there to catch! Ice broke from the shoreline to **strand them on an ice floe** with no way to get back to land.



Ice fishing cabins on a frozen lake. (Photo by Pierre Jarry.)

Thanks to cell phones, 911 calls alerted state and local agencies of the emergency. Drones found the closest point between the shore and the floe and a temporary bridge was constructed to allow the thankful fishermen to **walk back to land**.

Source: World Magazine, January 14, 2023, page 23

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(Another?) Pentecost

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which brought financial resources to Christian ministry. The **Azusa Street Revival** in Los Angeles (1906 to 1915) generated the Pentecostal and charismatic movements represented by millions yet today. The 1960s and '70s spawned the **Jesus Movement**, which launched hundreds of churches (highlighted in the 2023 film *Jesus Revolution*).

It's Been a While

Are we due for another great awakening? **Only God knows the future** (Isaiah 46:9-10). What we do know is that it may be the only remaining hope for America. The increase of apostasy and lawlessness are prophetic signs of the end (2 Thessalonians 2:1-10; 1 Timothy 4:1-2). The influence of the Church and Christian believers is declining in America.

Some think the revival beginning in February at **Asbury University in Kentucky**, may be the beginning of another Great Awakening. Only time will tell its lasting impact. What it has demonstrated is an existing hunger in people for greater spiritual reality. Hughes Chapel on campus holds 1,500 people but at times 2,000 people waited in lines several blocks long to get in. The university opened additional campus buildings to accommodate the overflowing crowds. The small community of **Wilmore, KY** (population 6,000) welcomed as many as 70,000 visitors.



At the end of the regular chapel service at Asbury University on February 8, students stayed to continue worship. They stayed *and stayed*—for two weeks! Tens of thousands of people from around the world came to join them. (Photo courtesy Hudson Graves.)

These worshipers came from across the country and even internationally to gaze at—and experience—the “fire” of the Holy Spirit burning there. It has spread to young people in other universities as well, particularly among **Generation Z** (people born between 1997 and 2012)—who are regarded statistically as the most irreligious generation in American history. And yet...




An engraving by Gustav Doré depicts the baptism of Jesus, with the dove descending. (Public domain.)

Pray for Another “Pentecost”

Joseph Castleberry, president of Northwest University, is praying for an important lasting result: “The next generation of ministers usually comes from revival. And with few men from the millennial or Gen X generations entering ministry, the average American pastor is now fifty-four years old. We desperately

need a new wave of ministers to rise up, and revival is our best hope for that.”

It is interesting that when John the Baptist introduced Jesus (John 1:29-34) he identified Him as the one who “*baptizes in the Holy Spirit*” (v. 33). The grammatical construction is a “present participle” which means the action is timeless, ongoing. **Jesus gave the indwelling Holy Spirit at Pentecost in the first century, and He is still baptizing in Holy Spirit power today.**

Pray that He will have mercy on America and bring widespread spiritual revival across this land – **beginning with us!** 

Sources: *World Magazine*, March 25, 2023, “Praying for Revival,” pp. 58-61; *New Testament History and Survey* Vol. 2, Dr. Don Bierle, chapter 2; *The Economist*, February 25, 2023, “A Christian college in Kentucky has experienced a religious awakening,” accessed April 25, 2023, through Hennepin County Library.


Minnesota IN THE NEWS



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Year-around Roughing It. In Duluth, Minnesota?

For more than three years, **fourteen-year-old Isaac Ortman** hasn't slept in his bed. This Minnesota teenager has camped out continuously (“weathered”?) in blizzards, thunderstorms, and **minus 38-degree nights**. Why? “It’s just fun!” His bed varies from a packed snow quinzhee to a hammock.

This summer, Isaac will attend a Boy Scout jamboree in West Virginia and also visit Washington, D.C. While there, he says he hopes President Joe Biden will **invite him to sleep on the lawn of the White House.** 

Sources: *World Magazine*, February 25, 2023, “Sleeping Streak,” page 25; “Minnesota Boy Has Slept Outside For More Than 1,000 Nights, No Matter The Weather,” Jan Wesner Childs, Weather Channel News, February 09, 2023 (<https://weather.com/news/news/2023-02-09-boy-sleeps-outside-1000-nights-minnesota-isaac-ortman>, retrieved April 25, 2023.)



A quinzhee shelter made from a pile of snow. (Public domain)

IN THE NEWS

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Quiz Answers

1. A giant coastal redwood named **Hyperion** is over **380 feet tall**. That is longer than a football field and about the height of a thirty-five-story building!

Source: *Answers in Genesis* (Kids Answers), Oct-Dec 2022, p. 29



Smith Tower
Seattle, WA
Built 1914
38 floors

Hyperion
Coast Redwood
(*Sequoia sempervirens*)

2. It takes **about an hour** for most snowflakes to fall to the earth.

Source: *Answers in Genesis* (Kids Answers), Jan-Mar 2023, p. 15

The **FaithSearch** Paraclete is published by **FaithSearch** International, an interdenominational, donor-supported, 501(c)(3) organization, based in Edina, MN, USA.

FaithSearch is a member in good standing of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.

