

THE PENTECOST

ISSUE #12 MARCH 2007



THE PENTECOST



Hello again! This March issue of *The Pentecost* will deal with the spiritual food that Jesus Christ gives, and with the enlightenment that He shines on His Word. We will also look at the bravery of a great missionary to Canada's Arctic.

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THE FOOD WHICH ENDURES TO EVERLASTING LIFE

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

John 6:27

It has been an amazing series of days. Jesus Christ has been ministering in Galilee from anywhere between six to twelve months. He has been healing the sick and His fame has spread over the region. By the time we read the sixth chapter of John, a crowd of over five thousand has gathered around Jesus. This crowd has needs and that is why they have been following Jesus. Jesus sees their needs, especially their spiritual need for God. His disciples are with Him and He asks Phillip; "...Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" (John 6:5). Philip wonders how great the cost would be to provide for a crowd of this size. Although it seems insignificant, Andrew points out that there is a child there with five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus asks for these. He is about to work a miracle.

Jesus gives thanks to God and over five thousand people are fed from this miraculously multiplied offering that day. The crowd is amazed. Someone said, "...This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." (John 6:14). They were thrilled. Jesus healed their diseases. He gave them food and if He did it once, He could do it again. If they made Him king, He could set up the ultimate welfare state. They began making their plans. Meanwhile, Jesus slips away into the mountains. He is preparing a spiritual lesson.

Jesus' disciples leave in a boat for Capernaum. Jesus performs another great miracle and walks out to them on the water. Together they arrive on the other side of the sea of Galilee. Surprised that Jesus did not stick around, the crowd began searching for Him and found Him on the other side. They began asking Him when He came there, but Jesus wants to talk about something else. He says to them, "...Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him." (John 6:26-27).

The crowds had enjoyed the bread and fish and were wondering what was next on the menu. There was something on the menu. Jesus did have something for them, spiritual food. As much as they needed natural food, they needed spiritual food more.

This was Jesus' lesson for them. Would they eat it up?

There was both a rebuke and instruction in Jesus' words. The crowd wanted their natural desires satisfied, but Jesus was directing their attention inward. Their souls were being uncovered and their materialism was being addressed. Jesus had been ministering to them and they had failed to grasp the spiritual nature of His person and mission. They were fixated on material things or, as Jesus put it, *food which perishes*. It is folly to labor only for natural food and leave our souls empty. Jesus had preformed an incredible miracle when He fed the five thousand, but the crowd had failed to carry over the significance of the miracle into the spiritual. Now Jesus was helping them and spelling it out in an even clearer way. He was not just rebuking them, He was offering them something much greater than what they were seeking. He was offering them spiritual food.

Jesus tells them to labor for the spiritual food. They in turn ask Him; "...What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" (vs. 28). Jesus' answer is; "...This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." (vs. 29).

By this point, many were no longer interested in what Jesus was trying to say. They want, instead, to see Him perform another miracle. They refer to the great miracle of Moses' day when the Hebrew people were supernaturally supplied with manna (bread) in the wilderness. However, it was not time for a miracle. Jesus is teaching something crucially important. He tries again with these words; "...Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (vs. 32-34). With these words Jesus tells them that it is His Father, God, who gives the spiritual bread from heaven. Jesus Himself is this spiritual bread and the giving of Jesus to the world was a far greater gift than the manna that the Hebrews were given in the wilderness. He continues with these words; "...I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." (vs. 35).

By now, the crowd is offended. Jesus patiently labors with them. It is impossible to move on until Jesus' all important point is understood. He says further, "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." (vs. 48-51). Jesus Christ alone can give us spiritual life. That is because He is spiritual life and the giving of spiritual life required His sacrificial

THE MINISTRY OF JACK TURNER

Jack Turner, also known as John Turner, was born in 1905, in St. George, England, into a family of two older brothers (Arthur and Ted) and their mother. His father had died six months before Jack's birth, leaving Jack's mother a widow. Mrs. Turner and Jack's grandfather had a strong Christian influence over the boys' childhood and teen years. The Turner boys grew up to be respectable young men, yet without a personal experience with Christ, that is until 1925, when God broke through into their lives. In that year, a Reverend H.B. Green became the vicar of Felixstowe. Viewed as an extremist by many in the community, he invited a Mr. Reginald Naish to come and hold a series of meetings in St. Andrew's Hall. It was in these meetings that Jack accepted Christ, and his brother Arthur came to Christ not long after.

Reverend Green liked to preach salvation but, along with this, he extended a missionary challenge to his church. Jack and Arthur were two who sensed a calling, acted upon it, and answered this challenge. They enrolled in the B.C.M.S. College, in Bristol, for missionary training.

In 1927, a Canadian Bishop came to the college and spoke of the outreach work being done among the Canadian Inuit. Jack and Arthur felt drawn and made plans to go. In 1928, Arthur finished his studies and moved to Baffin Island. He would serve there for the next twenty-five years.

Jack continued with his studies back home and finished pharmaceutical and theological college in 1929. In June of that year, he headed to Canada with another prospective missionary, Harold Duncan. Jack was ordained and the two boarded the Nascopie as it launched out on its once-a-year journey to the northern outposts of Canada's Arctic.

The Nascopie traveled up the coast of Labrador and into Hudson's Bay. An Inuit Christian joined the missionaries to teach them the Inuit language. Jack and Duncan disembarked from the ship at Pond Inlet in northern Baffin Island.

The Inuit in Pond Inlet were thrilled to have Jack come. Jack and Harold built the mission house and their first church service was held in their attic. The thirty-one Inuit who showed up comprised almost the entire trading station.

The missionaries settled into arctic life, enduring months of darkness, frost and bitter winds. Much time was spent shooting and trapping food. Inuit frequently came to them with gifts of skins, seal meat, ptarmigan and fish.

Jack moved from Pond Inlet to a place called Pangnirtung and then back again to Pond Inlet. Between October 31, 1938 and May 17 1939, Jack conducted a missionary tour of approximately 3000 miles throughout Canada's Arctic. He journeyed by dogsled, at times coming to ice barriers which were impassible. One entry in his diary tells of Jack getting completely lost in a snow storm, only later to be found by an Inuit.

In the first year of WWI, Jack came home on furlough for some months. Here he became attracted to a woman named Joan Hobart and they began a relationship. Jack returned to the Arctic and communication was made difficult since mail was only delivered once a year. Jack tried to make arrangements for marriage, but the mission board said no. The Bishop thought the Arctic was too difficult a place for Joan to be. Eventually, arrangements were worked out. Joan received Jack's message: *Permission granted, bring ring, cake and wedding dress.* Based on that, she made her way out by ship on the once-a-year sailing into Canada's Arctic. Now, four years after Jack's furlough in England, Joan and Jack were married. They eventually had three daughters.

In his diary, Jack talks about some of his converts and those whose lives were touched by his ministry. An Inuit named Pewatok was one who came to faith and was baptized by Jack. He was a hunter and a traveling companion. The things he learned from Jack he shared with other Inuit. Another Inuit, this time an elderly woman named Dorcas, is mentioned repeatedly in Jack's diary. She too came to faith and expressed her heart for Jesus. Jack records the joy and gratitude that Jesus brought to her. An Inuit girl named Lydia from Jack's church in Pond Inlet testified that everyday was special to her because, now, for the first time, she knew about the Bible and prayer. A man named Cornelius Nuturak said that Jack would teach them about a beautiful place called heaven. During his eighteen years in the Arctic Jack revised the Inuit New Testament, translated parts of the Old Testament and translated most of the Book of Common Prayer.

Unfortunately, the Turners' story takes a sad turn. One day, having come back from a hunting trip, Jack saw a girl struggling with a heavy load of ice. He went to help her and, as he did, his loaded rifle slid off of his shoulder. The gun went off and shot Jack in the head. He was not dead when Joan found him, but unconscious. A message was sent by radio to the Canadian government, requesting help. Jack was paralyzed, but could see, hear and speak. It would be four days before a Hudson's Bay official could get to them and begin making arrangements for help. A team of four paratroopers, one being a doctor, was flown in and got to Jack eleven days after the accident. It would be six weeks before they could safely move him by air to the better facilities of Arctic Bay. The day came, and Jack led a group of Inuit in prayer before he was carried onto the plane. He was eventually moved to Winnipeg where, for three weeks, doctors tried to save his life. On December 9, 1946, Jack died in the hospital. In the margin of Jack's Bible were found these words:

Come ill, come well, the Cross, the Crown, The rainbow or the thunder,

I fling my body down For God to plough them under.

Jack didn't know what lay ahead of him when he accepted the call to be a missionary back in the mid 1920s, but someone had brought the gospel to him and now he must take it to others. He had to answer Christ's call to go to the ends of the Earth and he did go, quite literally, to the earth's arctic end. He went with the good news of the gospel. He went with a testimony. He went at the price of his life. He went with faith in his heart and that faith spread to Inuit whom he loved.

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PRAYER IS THE SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
 Unuttered or expressed;
 The motion of a hidden fire
 That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
 That infant lips can try;
 Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
 The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice
 Returning from his ways,
 While angels in their songs rejoice,
 And say, "Behold, he prays!"

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
 The Christian's native air,
 His watchword at the gate of death
 He enters heav'n with prayer.

James Montgomery (1771 1854)

Christian Hymnal, Moundridge: Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, Gospel Publishers, 1976.

ENLIGHTENMENT PART 1

What does the word *enlightenment* mean to you? Webster's Dictionary defines it as *the act of enlightening or the state of being enlightened*.¹ Enlightenment is God revealing Himself and His truth to men and women.

God's holy Word was committed to writing, beginning with the prophet Moses. Moses was followed by other prophets whose revelations were spoken and written. Old Testament prophets were followed by the greatest of all prophets, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The things spoken by Jesus Christ were brought to the memory of His disciples, eleven of whom, in the Church Age, became known as apostles. The apostles, and certain others, gave us the Gospels, along with epistles for newly formed churches to read. It is this material which has come together in the Bible and has been passed down to us through martyr's hands.

The Bible is a spiritual book, penned by spiritual men. The writings of the prophets and apostles come together in this great work. What makes their work great is not their genius but, rather, their inspiration and enlightenment. If God inspired and enlightened them to write the Bible, then we need Him to enlighten us to understand it.

The concept of enlightenment comes straight from Scripture. In Ephesians, we read:

But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." (Ephesians 5:13, 14).

Here, light is said to be a revealer of all things and it is Christ Who gives this light. There are two kinds of light for us to consider. Natural light is the rays of brightness which come from objects such as the sun, a candle or a flashlight. Spiritual light is something different. It is truth itself being revealed to us in our deepest understanding. This is what the Bible is talking about here. It is Christ Himself who pierces through our darkness and confusion with His truth, enlightening us on how to see ourselves, how to live, and how to know and follow God in this life.

Truth and light can also be spoken of as wisdom. Again, it is the Bible calling us to receive wisdom. In the poetic language of Proverbs wisdom is personified as a woman. We read:

*Wisdom calls aloud outside; She raises her voice in the open squares.
She cries out in the chief concourses, At the openings of the gates in the city
She speaks her words: How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity?*

For scorers delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge.

Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you;

I will make my words known to you. (Proverbs 1:20-23).

Wisdom is actively seeking to be known. There is a spirit of wisdom which can be poured on us, and her words may be known. If this is true, then why is there so much confusion in the world? It is because men and women fight against wisdom. They resist it. They hate knowledge. They love simplicity, and scorning. There is a simplicity of faith which is a good and positive thing. That is not the simplicity that the Bible is talking about in this scripture. The simplicity referred to here, in a negative sense, is a willing ignorance of God's truth and will. Many men and women today don't want to know God's word or will. They are therefore hard of sight for God's light to reach them, even though it is shining from Christ, and hard of hearing for the voice of God's wisdom to penetrate them, even though wisdom is crying in the open squares.

Jesus said of Himself; "...I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6). He is the way for us to walk. He is the truth for us to believe. He is the life for us to experience. The learning which comes from Jesus is far greater than that which can be gained from natural man's understanding and work. Philip Jacob Spener said that human ingenuity and the illumination of the Spirit of God "are as far removed from each other as heaven is from earth."²

Why is spiritual light and wisdom so far above human faculties and reason, and why can't man naturally understand it without God's help? Charles Finney explains in these words:

*The difficulty lies in the subject. The Bible contains the gospel, as plain as it can be made. That is, it contains the signs of the ideas, as far as language can represent the things of religion. No language but figurative language can be used for this purpose. And this will for ever be inadequate to put our minds in real possession of the thing themselves. The difficulty is in our ignorance and sin, and in the nature of the subject. This is the reason why we need divine illumination, to get any available knowledge of the gospel.*³

Are we saying here that the scriptures are too complex for simple people to understand? No, in fact, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew people were instructed to teach God's law to their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-7) and Jesus gave His instruction to simple people (Matthew 11:25, 26). It has nothing to do with spiritual

¹ Noah Webster, *The Webster's Unabridged International Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: The Publishers Guild, Inc. 1976), 604.

² Philip Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*. Translated by Theodore G. Tappert. (U.S.A.: Fortress Press, Reprint 1964), 57.

³ Charles G. Finney, *Lectures To Professing Christians*. (Springfield: World Library Press, Inc. Reprint 1998), 413.

truth being more complex than natural truth. It has to do with a person's heart being childlike and humble enough to come to God and receive enlightenment. There are some portions of the Bible which are more obscure than others. However, they are not less obscure to the intelligent person than they are to the unintelligent person. Both persons stand on equal ground and both need God to enlighten them with His spiritual truth.

The one who comes to the Bible with the intention to obey and follow its teachings is usually the one whom the Lord will enlighten to its truth. God is not interested in feeding our intellect as an end in itself. He does delight in sharing His truth with those who want to obey it.

When God's child or a true seeker comes to Him in prayer, God opens their understanding to higher things for the purpose of faith and instruction. Jesus' disciples had left everything to follow Jesus. Jesus commented on the spiritual discernment that His disciples now had, and contrasts this with the spiritual dullness of many of His listeners:

...Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. 'For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 'Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 'And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. (Matthew 13:11-17).

Jesus' disciples received His light and now were seeing and hearing things that even prophets and righteous men from other ages had desired to see, hear and know. All spiritual light comes from Jesus and His Father. The Apostle Peter says to the Christian readers of his epistle:

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,

through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:2-4).

Here, we see that the power of the Lord Jesus, through knowledge of Him, has given Peter, and others, all things that pertain to life and godliness. This includes exceeding precious promises, through which one can be a partaker of the divine nature. This is enlightenment.

It is a foretaste of heaven to have God's word alive in our hearts, not just stored in our heads. To have it alive in our hearts guiding the way we see and live, coupled with the strong witness of the Holy Spirit that we belong to Him, is a foretaste of heaven, indeed.

So what do we do? The Apostle James tells us to ask God for wisdom:

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5).

Friend, do you have faith to believe that God will supply wisdom and will enlighten our submitted hearts, which desire to obey Him? Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, enlightenment comes from You. Give to me Your light. Forgive me for resisting Your truth, what little of it that I know. Remove my dullness of heart and my hardness of hearing. Open my eyes. I want to repent and obey. Give sight to my soul. I want wisdom's voice not only to be in the open squares or the gates of the city but I want it on the inside of my heart. Pour on me the spirit of wisdom and make Your word known to me. Show me things that prophets and righteous men have desired to know. Show me what I need first and then let me understand the higher things. Through the knowledge of You, let me have all things that pertain to life and godliness. I lack wisdom, Lord. I am asking for it from You. Amen.

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atonement death and resurrection. He is the master of the storehouse, the administrator of the Kingdom, the dispenser of spiritual food.

The crowd becomes more quarrelsome and murmurs the question; "...How can this *Man* give us *His* flesh to eat?" (vs. 52). Jesus addresses them further; "...Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." (vs. 53-58).

Jesus said that "He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." This spiritual hunger is satisfied when a person receives Jesus. They will never need to feed off of the teachings of other religions or philosophies, trying to find peace. This does not mean that they will not find themselves yearning for an ever increasing closeness with Jesus. They will want more and more of a revelation of Him.

Friend, have you eaten this spiritual food? Have you eaten the food which endures to everlasting life? Have you received Jesus? You may or may not be religious. You may even have witnessed a great miracle, but have you eaten the flesh and drunk the blood of Jesus Christ? This means more than partaking in a communion ceremony. Have you repented and received Jesus into your life, and is Jesus living in you? You can't nibble at Jesus; you have to swallow Him whole. The

crowd tried to nibble at Jesus. They liked the part about Him healing them and giving them bread and fish. However, there were things about Jesus that they didn't like, and they didn't like hearing everything that He said. You have to swallow Jesus whole. Are you willing to accept His Lordship over your life? Are you willing to receive His correction and His blessings both? This spiritual food is not trite. It came at the price of Jesus, the Son of God, dieing on Calvary's cross. He was whipped. They placed a crown of thorns on His head. His flesh was torn and now we partake of it by faith. Did the crowds that day realize how much Jesus was offering them when He said; "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me."? Friend, I pray that you realize how much Jesus is offering to you. The crowd turned away from Jesus and His incredible, costly offer of spiritual food. That same offer is being made to you. Won't you pray with me:

Jesus, I need what only You can give. I see that I need spiritual food. I need You in my life. I see my face in that crowd of five thousand. For too long I have been like them. I have been accepting You in part and rejecting You in part. This is not what You meant when You called me to eat Your flesh and drink Your blood. I eat by believing. I eat by surrendering to You. I do so now, in simple faith. May Your life now fill me and give me an active spiritual heart to love You and to love others. Amen.

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