Harmonizing Pentecost

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This weekend is Pentecost. A very special day in the plan of God. And a day that is packed with much meaning for us today.

- Pentecost = count 50
- Feast of weeks = 7 weeks counted from the wave sheaf offered on the day (Sunday) following the weekly Sabbath during the days of Unleavened Bread.
- Feast of Harvest = the spring harvest of barley and wheat, compared to the fall harvest
- Feast of Firstfruits = again tied to the first harvest, of the things that ripen first.
- Tradition of the 10 commandments being given on Pentecost
- The New Testament receiving of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost
- Jesus being the First fruit from the dead
- We being the spiritual First fruit in God's spiritual harvest at the first resurrection

Specific Purpose of this Message:

Today I want to first look at the different aspects of Pentecost, and, second, harmonize those different aspects into one cohesive whole.

Need:

I do not want us to be confused about the meaning of this day. I don't want us to be bewildered regarding its purpose and what we should be focusing on as we celebrate it.

Before we begin, some principles from scriptures to keep in mind:

FIRST, God is the one who determines when and who to "call" and at what time to open their understanding of His truth.

> John 6:44 NLT - For no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up.
> …
> John 6:64 NLT - But some of you do not believe me." (For Jesus knew from the beginning which ones didn't believe, and he knew who would betray him.)
> John 6:65 NLT - Then he said, "That is why I said that people can't come to me unless the Father gives them to me."

SECOND, God has an "order" in which He is calling people into His truth…
(Which is also revealed in His plan)

1 Corinthians 15:20 NKJV - But now Christ is risen from the dead, [and] has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
1 Corinthians 15:21 NKJV - For since by man [came] death, by Man also [came] the resurrection of the dead.
1 Corinthians 15:22 NKJV - For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.
1 Corinthians 15:23 NKJV - But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those [who are] Christ's at His coming.

> Revelation 20:4 NKJV - And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then [I saw] the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received [his] mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
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> > Revelation 5:10 NKJV - And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth."
>
> Revelation 20:5 NKJV - **But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.** This [is] the first resurrection.
> Revelation 20:6 NKJV - Blessed and holy [is] he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

1 Corinthians 15:24 NKJV - Then [comes] the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

THIRD, We do NOT know when Jesus will return. Ie we can not say it will be on Pentecost or on Trumpets or any other day.

> Matthew 24:36 NLT - "However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

Matthew 25:13 NLT - "So you, too, must keep watch! For you do not know the day or hour of my return.
Mark 13:32 NLT - "However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

FOURTH, we only receive a small portion of the Holy Spirit now, like earnest money on a purchase.

2 Corinthians 1:22 KJV - Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

2 Corinthians 5:5 KJV - Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing [is] God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.

Ephesians 1:11 KJV - In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:
Ephesians 1:12 KJV - That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.
Ephesians 1:13 KJV - In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that **holy Spirit of promise**,
Ephesians 1:14 KJV - **Which is the earnest of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Earnest = G728 = ἀῤῥαβών arrhabṓn, ar-hrab-ohn'; of Hebrew origin (H6162); a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest:—earnest.

From Outline of Biblical Usage:

I. an earnest
   A. money which in purchases is given as a pledge or downpayment that the full amount will subsequently be paid

John 14:16 KJV - And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

John 14:17 KJV - [Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.
John 14:26 KJV - But the Comforter, [which is] the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

So just as the Holy Spirit works with us to see the truth and lead us to repentance and baptism, so likewise the Holy Spirit, although just an "earnest" amount is sufficient to help us achieve the goal of living in a manner pleasing enough to God to grant us eternal life, where we become wholly spirit.

FIFTH, Pentecost comes in sequence after Passover, the Wave Sheaf Offering, and Days of Unleavened Bread and builds on the lessons of those Holy Days.

Passover = Jesus being beaten and crucified that we can be healed and our sins forgiven. He paid the price for OUR sins.

Wave Sheaf = Jesus has been accepted as that offering, with all power given to him.

Days of Unleavened Bread = we see the importance of coming out of a sinful life, and the need to live a life WITHOUT sin. God and Christ expect us to live lives of obedience to their law.

The different aspects and names of Pentecost

- It is a Feast that celebrates the spring harvest.
  Exodus 23:16 NKJV - "and the Feast of **Harvest**, the firstfruits of your labors which you have sown in the field; and the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you have gathered in [the fruit of] your labors from the field.
- It is a feast of firstfruits
  Exodus 34:22 NKJV - "And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the **firstfruits** of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end.
- It is called Feast of Weeks
  Deuteronomy 16:16 KJV - Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the **feast of weeks**, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

Leviticus 23:15 KJV - And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; **seven sabbaths** shall be complete:
Leviticus 23:16 KJV - Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number **fifty days**; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD.

- <u>It is called Pentecost with emphasis on counting 50 days</u>
  Acts 2:1 NKJV - When the **Day of Pentecost** had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. (See Lev 23:16 above)
- <u>It is also the feast day on which the Holy Spirit was given</u>
  Acts 2:2 NKJV - And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.
  Acts 2:3 NKJV - Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and [one] sat upon each of them.
  Acts 2:4 NKJV - **And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

How do we harmonize these different aspects of Pentecost? Or do we just focus on one of them and not pay much attention to the others?

First, we know that the symbolism of the spring harvest - the firstfruits is that of the saints that are part of the first resurrection at the last trump.

James 1:18 NKJV - Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Revelation 14:4 NKJV - These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from [among] men, [being] firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

We also know that we need to become like God the Father and Jesus Christ if we want to become part of Their family, to be part of the first-fruits. We need to be truly righteous and holy.

To do that we NEED the Holy Spirit!

Acts 2:16 KJV - But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;
Acts 2:17 KJV - And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, <u>I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh</u>: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Holy Spirit received through repentance and baptism:

Acts 2:37 KJV - Now when they heard [this], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?

Acts 2:38 KJV - Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one** of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
Acts 2:39 KJV - For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call.
Acts 2:40 KJV - And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
Acts 2:41 KJV - Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls.
Acts 2:42 KJV - And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Obedience was and is expected

Acts 5:29 KJV - Then Peter and the [other] apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.
Acts 5:30 KJV - The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.
Acts 5:31 KJV - Him hath God exalted with his right hand [to be] a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.
Acts 5:32 KJV - And we are his witnesses of these things; and [so is] also **the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him**.

Given by laying on of hands of the ministry

Acts 8:14 KJV - Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:
Acts 8:15 KJV - Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:
Acts 8:16 KJV - (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)
Acts 8:17 KJV - Then **laid they [their] hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.**
Acts 8:18 KJV - And when Simon saw that **through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given**, he offered them money,

We need the Holy Spirit to overcome our sinful nature

Ephesians 4:21 NLT - Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him,
Ephesians 4:22 NLT - throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception.
Ephesians 4:23 NLT - Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.
Ephesians 4:24 NLT - Put on your new nature, created to be like God--truly righteous and holy.

The Holy Spirit is the HELPER we need in order to achieve true righteousness and holiness to be in the family of God:

Luke 10:25 KJV - And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?
Luke 10:26 KJV - He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

Luke 10:27 KJV - And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.
Luke 10:28 KJV - And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

We need God's Holy Spirit to love as God does.

1 John 5:1 NKJV - Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.
1 John 5:2 NKJV - By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.
1 John 5:3 NKJV - For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Philippians 4:13 NKJV - I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

John 14:16 NKJV - "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--
John 14:26 NKJV - "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.
John 15:26 NKJV - "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.
John 16:7 NKJV - "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Conclusion

So for us on Pentecost we focus on both - the plan and role that God has called us to be as His firstfruits, the spiritual first harvest into His family AND the gift of the Holy Spirit which He gives us that makes it possible for us to be obedient to Him and overcome sin, which we couldn't do without it!

How amazing His plan is! And what blessing it is to have His Holy Days to remind us of His plan each year.

Additional Resources

God's Holy Day Plan: The Promise of Hope for All Mankind
https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/bible-study-aids/gods-holy-day-plan-the-promise-of-hope-for-all-mankind

Pentecost Resources Links
https://ucg-mt.org/pentecost/pentecost-resources/