



A Pentecostal Experience

by Jean Easley

The first recollection I have of understanding the meaning of the term "Pentecostal" was in the Denver Wax Museum. Mother and I were spending a few days of sightseeing in my home city where she enjoyed the diversion from her normal life in Iowa. Though I don't recall exactly, I think she must have obtained a copy of a Pentecostal magazine at church during her visit, and that unusual term was emblazoned on its front.

Because I had received literature from a local church myself and had been curious of the term, "Pentecostal," I took this opportunity on seeing her magazine (as we took a breather from our walking) to inquire as to its meaning. She responded that it had to do with the baptism of the Holy Spirit and speaking in unknown tongues.

I asked her, "Do you do that?"

She said, "I have."

A simple statement to be sure about the experience she had had, but it was a beginning of what would be one of the most thrilling experiences of my life.

I was not saved at the time of that discussion, but I would be before too many more months would pass (see A Telephone Conversion on our website).

When I was saved, I immediately felt the call to ministry. In fact, I knew before being saved that if I were to ever be saved it would mean a whole change of life for me, perhaps full-time ministry. It just so happened that the church where I settled after I was saved was starting a full-time Bible institute. So, I abandoned my career and enrolled for ministerial preparation five weeks after I came to know the Lord.

Right after I was saved, I visited Christian friends who invited me to their church. I visited one service but felt it was not lively enough compared with the little Pentecostal church I was also trying. I chose the smaller Pentecostal church from others because of the "life" it offered, its penetrating music, and its loving people. I also wanted to work for God, and I thought this would be a better place to do so because they needed me.

These friends who had invited me to their church did not believe in the Holy Spirit baptism. In fact, they went so far as to say it was of the devil. I wasn't sure about that because of my Mother's testimony; but, in any case, I now knew a God who could keep me from falling into some cult or error. I determined that I would ask the Lord to show me the truth or fallacy of the Pentecostal message.

It was only a week or two attending services in the home church before the pastor made an altar call one Sunday evening for anyone wanting the baptism in the Holy Ghost to come to the altar. I went praying.

The Lord honored my seeking heart and let me see and hear the elderly sisters of that church to pray in the Spirit in that altar that evening and many subsequent times. When they prayed in an unfamiliar tongue, my heart was so drawn to it and my mind stated flatly, "That's God, and I know it!" I knew no mortal could formulate the sounds I was hearing! They were heavenly sounds, and I longed for that experience!

Over the next few months, I became a regular at the altar, seeking the baptism. I wish it would have come easier for me. But I really fulfilled the Lord's command to "tarry at Jerusalem," before I was endued with the power from on high. I received all the normal statements of encouragement; i.e. "hold on," "let go," "give up," "give in," and "yield"—all to no avail. Still I waited. I became very desperate. I was also a little indignant that I had to wait so long, so I waited a little longer. I wish it were easy to explain why some go through so easy and others tarry so long, but I have no explanation. As one does in desperation, I did all that I knew to do.

Then one evening, since I had tarried so long and was so miserable in my wait, I must have needed the help of a kind preacher. I am so thankful for his words. He had been present during much of the time I sought for the baptism. In wise words from the Lord, he said, "Jean, just yield to the Lord. If you go home tonight without it, you may never get baptized in the Holy Ghost!" I was crushed. I was utterly devastated by the thought that I may never have the experience for which I longed. It was at that moment that somehow I "yielded" one more time and went through to a glorious baptism! Praise God!

The experiences I have enjoyed in the Holy Spirit since that day—at many altars, during worship times in a variety of churches, in church basements on missionary itineration, in my own home, on the mission field in a multitude of villages—I wouldn't exchange for all the riches in the world. Pentecost is life to me. I still shun lifeless churches and encourage others to seek the baptism in the Holy Ghost. I believe that the Holy Ghost baptism makes life worth living on earth. I can't imagine living without the power of the Holy Spirit for witnessing and for living the Christian life.

Joel prophesied, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28-29). Peter said of the initiation of the church with the coming of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...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 2:16, 39).

If you are a believer and you have not had this experience, I suggest you find a Pentecostal altar somewhere so that you miss out no more!