

GET THE RED OUT!

You might have heard Pastor Steve mention in church yesterday (05/12/24) that it was the last Sunday of the Easter Season, which typically runs for 50 days. Waiting at the end of that 50-day period is Pentecost Sunday! One way we celebrate the changing seasons of the church is to change colors. While colors can have different meanings at different times, white is typically used for Easter. Isaiah tells us that “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow” (Chapter 1:18). The death and resurrection of Jesus celebrated on Good Friday and Easter Sunday symbolically turns our sins from a scarlet red into a pure white, like freshly fallen snow. White symbolizes purity, holiness, and virtue. As we leave the Easter season of white and enter the Pentecost season, it is time to get the red out!

Red represents fire and power, and symbolizes the presence of Almighty God, especially in the form of the Holy Spirit. It is the liturgical color for Pentecost. Most of us were raised in a main-line Christian denomination, whichever one our parents subscribed to. We went to church because that’s what we were supposed to do. Hopefully, at some point in time, we had our own “conversion experience”, which can take many forms. We may have accepted Christ during VBS, a summer gospel camp, a church youth group, a bible study, or maybe a Billy Graham Crusade. Whatever the event, we made a decision to accept Christ as our Lord and Savior and began our own journey, separate from our parents. Pentecost represents a totally different level of experience because it adds the fire and power of the Holy Spirit. You can accept Jesus as your savior and go to church every Sunday, and still miss out on the fire and power of the Holy Spirit. Our Christianity should not be just a mild sedation to make life more palatable, but instead, be an experience that drastically changes our lives and our church. The power that drives that experience is the Holy Spirit. He is not some vague concept or theoretical being. He is a vital part of the trinity, a living experience that deeply transforms our lives, as He did for the apostles on that day in the upper room. Can you imagine a tricycle or a tripod without one of its wheels or legs? It can’t function like it’s supposed to because there’s something missing. The same principle holds true concerning the Holy Trinity. Life without the Holy Spirit means there’s something missing.

The book of Acts is packed with examples of how the Holy Spirit transformed the lives of the early church, leaving many “walking, leaping, and praising God” (Acts 3:8). Consider this: the final words of Acts are not “The End”. It’s really more like “To Be Continued”! Continued how? Continued in the lives of believers like me and you, living out that power in our daily lives, yesterday, today, and tomorrow! May I suggest that as you get the red out for Pentecost this coming Sunday, come expectantly! Come with an open heart and an open mind, expecting a close encounter with the Holy Spirit. This is NOT just theory. It is living truth based on scripture. Check it out for yourself. You can find it in the second chapter of the Book of Acts.