

You don't have to have lived in Oklahoma your entire life to know about the Oklahoma wind. When you move here like I did you quickly learn that's one topic people always can talk about. Just last week the wind again reminded us that it blows where it wants when it wants. Over these last couple of weeks the Oklahoma wind has spun itself into a couple dozen tornados causing major destruction all over the state. 70 mph winds drove hailstones into homes like meteors last Sunday afternoon causing roof damage across a wide swath of our city. The Oklahoma wind strikes again.

It was a different kind of wind the disciples experienced when they gathered ten days after seeing their friend and Lord ascend into heaven. It wasn't the kind of wind that destroys. It wasn't the kind of wind that knocks trees over. It wasn't even the kind of wind that moves curtains. The disciples only heard the sound, but a violent sound it was. It certainly got their attention. If they thought this was going to be any old Pentecost celebration they were wrong. This one they would remember for a long time.

You may not have even realized it was Pentecost walking in here this morning. It's not like Pentecost is a major holiday on everyone's social calendar. You may even wonder if Pentecost matters at all since it was really an Old Testament festival. We hear about some interesting things happening on that day but they don't seem to pertain to us at all. We didn't have any great and violent wind or speaking in tongues when we started. But look at the second lesson closer and you'll see that Pentecost is important for your spiritual life.

**The Pentecost Wind still blows
In unsuspecting people
With unexpected results**

We heard the last message Jesus spoke before he became invisible in the gospel. **"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, he will testify about me."** Jesus knew that as he disappeared from their sight the disciples would get worried all over again. Questions would start to swirl and they would wonder if everything Jesus said was true. So the Holy Spirit was on his way to clear up any misunderstandings they may have and also give them power to testify to what they had heard and seen.

But how long would they have to wait? And how would they know that the Holy Spirit was working? They waited two days after Jesus ascended, then three, four, and five. A week passed by and they began to wonder if anything would ever happen, or maybe it already did and they missed it. Then on the tenth day after they last saw Jesus and fifty days after he rose from the dead the Holy Spirit came blowing in a big way. **"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."** The Holy Spirit had arrived and not one of them missed it.

While the violent wind sound was howling the flames started spreading. Each received what looked like a little lick of fire above their heads. The Holy Spirit has been described in wind and fire for many centuries. Zeal for the Lord is described as being on fire for Jesus. That's the Spirit's work. The gospel blows where and when God wills. That's the Spirit's work. But the Spirit was working in these unsuspecting people even greater things because the disciples started speaking in tongues. Not gibberish nonsense ecstatic speech. This was actual foreign languages.

That Pentecost Wind is still blowing today. Don't expect that when it blows in your life you'll be able to speak in languages you hadn't previously learned. That was a first century gift for first century people. In your life the Holy Spirit blows with sprinkles of water in baptism and the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. He's working in your life through the printed word and the sung word and the memorized word. Where the Word is, the Holy Spirit is. From him through Christ you're receiving again as if for the first time the forgiveness of your sins. When parents forgive their children for mistakes and misjudgments, when children forgive parents for being nosy and embarrassing situations, when one member forgives another there the Pentecost Wind is blowing.

The disciples weren't the only unsuspecting people there that day. **"There were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language."** These people originally were from all over the world, but because Jerusalem was the place to be they lived there full time. Many probably never again heard the language they grew up with. So you can imagine how shocked they would be at hearing their native language spoken for their ears to hear.

If you suddenly had the ability to speak in Japanese or Mandarin or Russian when you woke up this morning maybe you can appreciate the miracle these unsuspecting people were experiencing. The disciples had not studied these particular languages from all over the world. Yet they spoke them fluently. But the greater miracle wasn't unschooled disciples speaking in foreign languages. It was what they spoke. These disciples of Jesus were, **"declaring the wonders of God..."** The Pentecost Wind blew in with unexpected results. God promised that he loved sinners so much that he sacrificed his only Son for them. No amount of following rules or regulations would ever make them perfect enough to satisfy God. Jesus had to do it for them. They would never offer enough to please God so he would let them into heaven. Only through Jesus' blood would anyone be right enough with God to get in. The unexpected results are that it counts for all people, those there that day, and those here today where the Pentecost Wind still blows.

It's easy to not appreciate plumbing until you don't have it for weeks. It's easy to not think about your hips working until they need to be replaced. It's easy to forget about your roof until hail puts holes or dents into it and it needs fixing. It's easy to not think about how Christ died for you when that's all you've ever known. The results almost seem expected. But I know there are people here today that don't think that way, or at least haven't always thought that way. The assurance wasn't there for them. Part of their life was lived thinking God hated them or was out to get them. For some the thought that it was easy to receive full and free forgiveness was completely unexpected. How could God just be expected to accept them for how rotten they were? Forgiveness or heaven would only come through hard work on their part. But the Pentecost Wind still blows with unexpected results.

It was a miracle but when Peter finished his sermon three thousand people came to faith. Even more important for us was how Peter connected the prophet Joel speaking about Judgment Day with what was going on that day of Pentecost. **"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."** As far as God is concerned once a person comes to faith in Christ for that individual Judgment Day is as good as done. Believers in Jesus, Judgment Day will be a breeze for you. God already sees you as perfect because of Jesus. The Holy Spirit has connected you with everything that Christ is and everything that Christ did. That means his death is yours, his resurrection is yours, and heaven will be yours someday too. It may be unexpected but it's true.

This weekend has been a little breezy. The Oklahoma wind is blowing pretty strong. Today we celebrate Pentecost and the Pentecost Wind is blowing pretty strong as well. The Holy Spirit is coming to unsuspecting people like you who realize Pentecost does mean something. Your soul belongs to God by a miracle he did. Christ changes your life and he changes lives through you as well. Those are unexpected results. So let the wind blow today. Let it remind us of the Pentecost Wind of the Lord blowing in our hearts winning unsuspecting people to Christ and leading to unexpected results.