

On the First Day of Pentecost of the New Testament God sent the Holy Spirit and the New Testament Church began. Why?

To answer this question we need to start with the reason why God created human beings.

Genesis 1:26-27 [NIV] *“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”*

There is one thing about this original statement of God you may have overlooked.

God’s original Plan was to make humans in His image and in His likeness, but He only at this time created them in His image **not** His likeness.

“*Image*” – The Hebrew means resemblance or shadow, not the real thing.

“*Likeness*” – The Hebrew means more than resemblance, a son or manner – two for one – talking about character.

This is the first indication that God was creating a family.

The Father/Son relationship is introduced to us later in scripture.

1 John 4:16 [NIV] *“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. **God is love.** Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.”*

God is love, and love demands an object to be loved.

Notice what John continues to tell us.

1 John 4:17 [NIV] *“In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, **because in this world we are like him.**”*

We can confidently face the judgement day of God if we complete God’s original mission to become “*like him*”.

How do we do this?

John 14:8-9 [NIV] *“Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”*

Jesus Christ is the exact likeness of the Father, so our goal is to become like Jesus Christ, to become a Christian. [Christian means “*a little Christ*”].

How do we do this?

Where do we find the definition of a Christian?

Romans 8:9-11 [NIV] *“You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. **And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.** But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”*

The whole reason for humanity is given to us in these three verses.

- a How to please God our Creator
- b The definition of a Christian
- c How to become a Christian and therefore be created in God’s likeness
- d How we receive eternal life

All are dependent on one thing, our life being controlled by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”*

Here we have the promise of our receiving the Holy Spirit in our lives.

What will the Holy Spirit do in our lives if we let Him?

John 16:5-11 [NIV] *“Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, **he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.**”*

- a) Convict us of sin; b) Show us true righteousness; c) Prepare us for judgement day.

John 14:26 [NIV] *“But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, **will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**”*

- d) Teach us; e) Bring Christ’s Words to mind when we need them.

What could stop the Holy Spirit doing this in our lives?

Ephesians 4:30-32 [NIV] *“**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**”*

If we grieve the Holy Spirit He will **not** be active in our lives.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 [NIV] *“Do not put out the Spirit’s fire;”*

We do this by resisting the work of the Holy Spirit.

If, however, we open our lives to the Holy Spirit, He will through that close relationship create in us the very “likeness” of our Creator God.

These characteristics are called the “*fruit of the spirit*”.

Galatians 5:16-25 [NIV] “*So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law. The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.** Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. **Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.**”*

This is fulfilling the mission the Creator God has for every human being.

God the Father will then have children created in His “*likeness*” whom He can love for eternity.

That is the all important meaning of this day of Pentecost on which the Holy Spirit first came with power for all humanity.