

. . . *apart from me you can do nothing* (John 15:5)

On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit of Christ gives the church a foretaste of the life of the new heaven and new earth.

A. The new heaven and new earth.

The beautiful thing about the Christian life is that we are on a journey to the new heaven and the new earth. This is a beautiful thing because now we know that we do not have remain in this disfigured world full of disfigured people because of the disfiguring effects of sin. Instead, as we continue the journey each new day, we can meditate on and contemplate the life of the future that awaits us. This is why the Son created us. This is why the Son is recreating us. ***Pentecost is an important feast in the history of salvation that reminds us of this.*** In order to understand this more fully, we need to have a look at the relation of three Old Testament feasts.

B. Three Old Testament Feasts

The people in the Old Testament were also on a journey to a new heaven and new earth. Three of Israel's feasts clearly symbolize this. ***The first feast is the Feast of Passover.*** This feast reminded the people that God has passed over the blood-sprinkled Israelite homes and had killed the firstborn of Egypt. This is how God was able to lead his people out of Egypt and into the freedom of being his sons and daughters on their way to a new and better land. ***The second feast is the Feast of First Fruits.*** While the Feast of Passover was celebrated on the 14th day of the first month of the year, the Feast of First Fruits was celebrated three days later on the 17th day, the day after the Sabbath, in other words the first day of the week. ***This reminded the people that when God begins his work of redemption with the exodus from Egypt, He also completes this work. He brings them into the Promised Land. They would be reminded of this because the Feast of the First***

Fruits would first be celebrated once they had entered into the Promised Land, the destination of the exodus. On this Feast, among other things, a sheaf of the first fruits of the harvest was brought to the priest who would wave it before the LORD. ***Then fifty days after the Feast of the First Fruits, near the end of the harvest season, they were to offer a new grain offering to the LORD.*** This day was known as the Day of Pentecost and would remind the people that God not only brought them out of their slavery in the land of Egypt and into the Promised Land, but also enabled them to enjoy life in the Promised Land with the provision of a full harvest.

C. Three New Testament Feasts

The Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled each of these three Old Testament Feasts. With his death on the cross, the Lord Jesus dealt with the problem of sin and death once and for all and thus is the fulfillment of the Passover Feast. With his Resurrection from the dead, three days later, Jesus publicly demonstrated that He had dealt with the problem of sin and death once and for all with his death on Good Friday. As such, He is the fulfillment of the Feast of the First Fruits celebrated on the first day of the week, three days after the Feast of Passover. ***As the Feast of the First Fruits reminded the people of Israel that God not only starts a work of redemption, but also completes it by bringing them into the Promised Land, so Jesus' resurrection from the dead could remind the people of the same. This is where the journey is headed: to the new heaven and the new earth where there will be no more sin and death. Jesus' resurrection is the first installment and the guarantee of this glorious destination of our journey!*** Every

Sunday we intentionally celebrate this beginning of the eternal Sabbath. ***You now understand why there must have been quite some suspense when the third Feast was about to arrive: the Day of Pentecost—the Day that reminds the people that God not only brings them into the Promised Land, but also provides for them in the Promised Land, allowing them to enjoy life in this land with the provision of a full harvest. What would now happen on this day?***

This is all the more the case when we realize that our text could better be translated, "When the day of Pentecost was fulfilled." Sure enough, as with Good Friday and Easter Sunday, so now with the Day of Pentecost we see Jesus fulfilling another Feast with the outpouring of his Spirit. This is the Spirit of the glorified Lord Jesus Christ who is now physically in the heavenly Land of Promise. This is the Spirit who empowered him to perfectly live our lives for us and lay down our lives instead of us. This is the Spirit of fellowship of love between the Father and the Son. This is the Spirit of ministry of love between the Father and the Son. It is this Spirit who is now poured out on the church in an abundance as he had never been poured out before. And then, not just on Jews, as the book of Acts will show, but on the Gentiles too. ***As such, He gives us a foretaste of the fullness of the harvest that awaits us in the heavenly Land of Promise.*** He enables us to savor the flavor of the life of the new heaven and new earth. As such, he enables us to die to sin and arise to a new life as we share in his fellowship of love with the Father and his ministry of love from the Father. This is what we intentionally remind ourselves of on the Day of Pentecost. God does not just start a work of redemption, but brings it to completion. Pentecost is the foretaste of the eternal life of this completed salvation. Surrey Covenant Reformed Church

