



Words of Blessing

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Weekly Words Pentecost Week 6: June 27, 2010

Living the Word

Luke 9:10-17 The apostles came back and told Jesus everything they had done. He took them with him, and they went off by themselves to a town names Bethsaida. When the crowds heard about it, they followed him. He welcomed them, spoke to them about the Kingdom of God, and healed those who needed it. When the sun was beginning to set, the twelve disciples came to him and said, "Send the people away so that they can go to the villages and farms around here and find food and lodging, because this is a lonely place." But Jesus said to them, "You yourselves give them something to eat." They answered, "All we have are five loaves and two fish. Do you want us to go and buy food for this whole crowd?" (There were about five thousand men there.) Jesus said to his disciples, "Make the people sit down in groups of about fifty each." After the disciples had done so, Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up to heaven, thanked God for them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute to the people. They all ate and had enough, and the disciples took up twelve baskets of what was left over.

Pentecost: Building

*I have given you new life. Now what will you do with it?
Build a community of faithful people.
Break bread together.*

A community is a group of people who come together to help one another and to grow in friendship, trust, and loyalty. My disciples found and built a community and then went out to build more communities for the mission to share my love, words, and reality. I showed my disciples what a community was supposed to look like. We would come together as one and break bread together as we sat around a fire. We shared our mission, what we had done, and how many people we had reached or healed. That incredible act of just sitting around a fire together at the end of the day as we shared and prayed together was the model for the communities the disciples formed later, around the world, after my death and resurrection. Building a community of faithful people who come together to pray, share, and break bread is the model of faith that I want you to build and live today. It was a new life.

When we sat together sharing whatever food we had, we told our stories and listened to each other. We helped and comforted one another. We laughed and, yes, even cried at times. Our hearts were filled with love and our friendships deepened as we listened, prayed together, and talked about the new life ahead. This is what the disciples and my followers did after my death and resurrection. This is how they built a new church and a model of what a community of faith is like. My followers built those communities, and they are still being built today. As a community of faith my followers went out and gathered people together, broke bread, prayed,

blessed, healed, taught, and shared. What joyful hearts my disciples and people had! The laughter, sharing, and praying were building a community of faith. My followers then went out and offered the new life to others. They formed communities everywhere.

I have given you new life. You do not have to face death, which my early followers did to build communities and share my love, words, and reality. You face other hardships. But I want you to build up my church and communities of faith. Be a part of such a community. Each person's gifts are needed, from the young to the old. Plan ways to reflect and build a community and church of faith of the kind that began with me. Come together as one. Share meals, listen, share missions and outreach, and share your stories as we did. Share my words each week. They are a gift and hope. Keep building your community.

The Holy Spirit is moving in the church, in your church. It is time for renewal and the outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Now—this year—make *this* Pentecost special. Gather people to celebrate, learn, share, pray, and share my words each week. Build up the youth, missions, and the outreaches of healing, teaching, and helping. Go to nursing homes; tell teenagers to come and share. I will provide opportunities to build your church, community, and youth. Joy will fill your hearts.

Word for the week: Choose one of the following words or phrases that can most help you in planning or working on your mission and/or using your gifts to build up my church and people.

Build community

Filled with faith

Step out

Scripture for the week: Choose one of the following scripture passages that you believe is meant for you. What does it say about Pentecost, faith, building, and mission in your life right now?

2 Corinthians 9:6-10 Remember that the person who plants few seeds will have a small crop; the one who plants many seeds will have a large crop. Each one should give, then, as he has decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. As the scripture says, “He gives generously to the needy; his kindness lasts forever.” And God, who supplies seed for the sower and bread to eat, will also supply you with all the seed you need and will make it grow and produce a rich harvest from your generosity.

Acts 1:8 & 4:32-33 But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth....The group of believers was one in mind and heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God poured rich blessings on them all.

1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as the scripture says, “What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him.”

Action for the week: Meet with someone this week and talk about your community, your faith,

and how you feel called to help build up the lives and faith of others. Listen to the other person's story. Share—much as I did with my disciples sitting around the fire. Talk about how, after my death and resurrection, many came together during Pentecost to build a new church and welcome others. They welcomed others, brought people in, and were friends. They built new communities of faith.

Decisions/questions: I have given you new life. What will you do with it this week or year?

Witness my love and reality: Share these words with others this week and every week of Pentecost. Reach out to someone who does not know about these words I offer. Share what the words mean to you. Listen to what the words mean to others. Help others to see and hear their own special mission, call, and gifts through these words. I believe you can do this. Share these words each week and watch miracles happen. See my church renewed and its mission go out. I believe you can do this. Watch miracles happen. This is a gift. Look around. You will see me.

Special witness this week. Use these words to share your faith and build up my church and its people and witness. I have given you new life. What will you do with it? Share with someone what your faith means to you and how it has been part of your journey this year.

Daily prayer for this week: Lord, you have shown me by your witness and by the witnesses of your disciples and followers that you want us to take the new life you have given us and share it with others in the world. I need to step out and break bread with others and to meet with people to listen and share our stories. Help me to see how I can do my share in building up a community of faith.

The following words are for you. You will know which ones speak to you and answer your questions or prayers. These personal words are guidance for you in your journey today.

- You know how important a Christian community is to your journey and using your gifts. It holds a mission for you, and part of that mission is building up your church. Make more time for your Christian community this year, especially in the areas and places that need your support and time. You can bring new life to activities. You can support faith-filled people around you. I need you to reach out to help them. Watch how you will live my word in a new way.

- I love it when you and your friends gather together and share the stories of your meeting me along the way, the times you have seen angels, and those moments when you realized how special these people are to your Christian journey. You are needed in your church by many people. Reach out in some way each week, and build up those people and their gifts. Listen.

- The church today is built on the mission and new life I gave to the world, but what are you doing? Are you building up the church? Are you bringing in new people and using the gifts of every single person who is there? Churches will close if something is not done soon. I count on you. I blessed you with new life. Now what will you do with it? Tell me now, with people around you.

- I can picture you sitting with me and my disciples as we talk about building up the faith of people who still need to know me and my love. It is in breaking bread that everyone is the same. We are a team. Philip tells a wonderful story of someone I blessed and healed that day. John tells a story about you and how you prayed for a poor man we saw who was begging for food along the road. You changed his life. He was healed and made new. You lived my words. Keep going out.

- Use your gifts more and more to build up my church and your community. Be there each week

for all that goes on. Help with outreach and projects. Pray with and for people. Come to activities, youth projects, healing services, and times to share the gift of these words you hold. Be my today disciple and offer new life to others. Save my church. The Holy Spirit has filled you with a passion and faith to step out. Don't wait until it is too late. Begin right now.

- Building and keeping a community growing takes faith, courage, action, and time. The Holy Spirit can fill and bless many. You will see a transformation happen as the Holy Spirit brings people together in a community of faith, sharing, and love—each one serving, not being served. I gave you new life. Build a community of faithful people who can be bread for the world and watch miracles happen. You can change the world! This is a call and a witness for you to give.

- The Holy Spirit will fill you and open your eyes to see me and your call to give others, especially youth; to step out to action in building a church community; and to bring people together as one. A youth group is important, and so are children and adult groups, men's and women's groups, and groups that share my words each week. Like pieces to a puzzle they all come together to make a powerful picture of faith in action and breaking bread together. What will you do with this call?

- My people and churches need so much hope and encouragement to grow but stronger. I know you need encouragement too because there is so much to do in my name to build up people and their gifts and mission. As I counted on my disciples because of their faith and courage, so I count on you. I know your strength and the sacrifices you are willing to make to build a community of faith and courage. To make it really happen, I count on you to go out with your community. You are ready.

- When you look at the people in your church, family, and journey as I do, and through my eyes, you will see that they give more than others, and they give unselfishly out of poverty and not plenty. They give all in my name and believe the community will grow. I have faith in you, my child, because I know the road you have walked. You, yes you, will take the new life and share it.

- Building a church and community of faith takes time, prayer, sacrifices, acceptance, compassion, and work. Paul took one step at a time because some were hard. You still see that today. The story is not over. Put up a sign in your church: "We are a work in progress. Our call is to spread the Good News. Join us! We are under construction." I will fill each of you and will make it happen. Don't worry about the bumps in the road. Be a living testament of faith and community.

- I am your friend. I want to be your best friend! When I set out on my mission, I chose people who could teach as well as be fed. As friends we shared the gifts of faith, love, and compassion. Friendship is a precious gift, ever deepening. Today, friendship with me means you are one with me. Be my best friend, and I will be yours. A miracle blessing will come into your life. It is huge.

- You are a joy to me and to many. Your faith, warmth, and kindness bless people every day and have blessed more people than you can ever imagine. You run from praise and give it to someone who needs affirmation. You turn from important positions and offer them to someone who needs growing joy and confidence. Like my mother Mary and my friend John, you are that faithful friend and you are part of a community that changes lives in my name.

- You have the gifts of healing and faith. These gifts are needed in this world more and more each day. Be open to how you are called to use these gifts. Sometimes it will seem like a simple act of helping someone or reassuring them in a struggle. And there will be times when a whole congregation or a whole family needs healing and faith. One way you can do this is to sit with someone, pray with him or her, and encourage him or her to believe in miracles and my love. Sometimes you will bring healing by sitting with someone, listening, and then together turning to

me. Together we will heal and bless people.

- I know you wonder about your mission. How do you go out and share your faith with others? You keep stepping out to do more and more things. Building a mission or your faith is much like building a family, a friendship, a church, a ministry, your gifts, or a new path. You turn to me, open to a new time. That new time is here and you are ready. All the things you have done for others and in my name have prepared you for the work of faith. Yes, faith—and that is needed in youth work, evangelism, healing, prayer, teaching, and leadership. Decide today where to begin. Ready?

- Your gentle spirit brings peace and hope to so many people. You seek nothing for yourself and do not even realize how your reassuring hug or smile comforts and inspires others. Our church needs renewing, and you can bring that to the church through your faith and the time you give to others. Yes, you are the one people want to hug. You are the person people seek for prayer, a smile, or just a single word. If I had more such as you in each church, the churches would be filled to overflowing.

- I love this time of year! School is out, vacations begin, and people relax and think of the things they did not have time to do just a few months ago. I want you to relax and be renewed because I know of all the things you do for others. But this is also free time, when schedules are relaxed, so I ask you to take on a project for me. It is called “Connect!” Reach out to people you do not have enough time for the rest of the year. Share my words with them and listen to me. Let go of your agenda and discern what I would have you do this summer that will bring more people together and build up their call and gifts. This is an important time. It is Pentecost! Begin now.

- My mother Mary is an inspiration to people of all ages around the world. And she is loved because of her humility, her joyful heart, her sharing what she had, and her kindness and faith. Think about the ways you would like to be more like Mary. Make time each day to spend some quiet with her, thinking, praying, and being open to what I will show you. Mary showed love to everyone. How can you offer the same in your life?

- I saw you sitting quietly while things were busy around you. Bless you. Making time to just be and to be open to the Holy Spirit builds up one’s faith and call. You pour out and help so many. Bless you. I have given you a very special call and mission that will be clear as you take time for this quiet. This call and mission is to build up my church and people and to build a community of joy, faith, prayer, and healing. When you take these quiet times, I will be there. You will hear me.

- Decisions are part of life. Praying and listening to my word and voice are ways to help you make those choices. I have a very important work for you to do in the church. It will not be easy, but you will grow in faith and courage. Make that time and I will show you the work and call. As you pray and listen, you will hear my words of guidance. Seek out three friends who will be praying for you as you discern what the call is and if you will do it.

- Your gifts of humility, faith, love, and prayer are used to bless so many people around the world. You have a story and witness to share around the world. You have a special gift that not many have, and yet others will be blessed by it many times. You change lives in my name. You are living Pentecost every day and so help others to believe.

- This year you will travel. Yes, far. What will you do? You will see your gifts used in many more ways to help others. You will see what it is to evangelize, heal, and pray out loud. You will meet angels and farmers, sick people, children, and teens seeking answers. You will see my mother Mary and be blessed by her protection and love. You will experience a miracle and a healing. You will break bread with many people and thus bring healing, hope, and miracles.

- You are being made new—healed, blessed, encouraged, and, more than ever, made clear on your call, mission, and gifts. You will change many lives. Your community of faith will become

closer, and all will see what the next steps will be. The old is gone. Anything that would hold you back is gone. It is time for new bread. It is time for the next step of faith so you can fully embrace the new life of Pentecost. This year will be an amazing unbelievable time in your life. Have faith.

- This summer will not be like others. You have chances to go out, to bring people together, and to offer and share my words with others each week. It is a new time. I am setting you free, for this summer, to create a path, journey, gifts, focus, and call in a Pentecost mission. Be free to help create this new miracle time. Do not hold back. You began this new time in your life, and in the lives of those you love, because of your faith, enthusiasm, courage, and witness. I will go with you because I love going out and meeting people. I really love those surprises and adventures.

- You will see and experience healing. You will see and experience miracles. You will see more clearly what I am calling you to do. You will believe in me as I believe in you. You will see people set free. You will see angels and my mother. You will see and believe that the call I have given you will truly be seen as you step out. Take time once a week to share all these things with a friend or two. Encourage these friends to believe that something special is ahead for them, too. They will see it. Believe in me and go out. I have shown you at least three ministries and gifts I have for you to do.

Read and pray my words to you

Please note that the Bible verses are drawn from the Good News Translation (or Today's English version), so references to a particular stopping place may not match your translation exactly.

Isaiah 58:7-9 (end with "respond")

Zephaniah 3:17-18 (end with "festival")

Psalms 71:14-17

Matthew 28:16-20

John 20:19-23

Acts 20:32-38

Mark 1:16-20

Matthew 16:15-20

Acts 14:21-23

Luke 24:28-36

John 15:16-20

Acts 16:13-15

Mark 8:22-26

Luke 17:11-19

Acts 17:10-12

Matthew 4:18-22

John 21:15-17

1 Corinthians 3:5-12, 22-23

Romans 12:4-13

Ephesians 4:11-16

Galatians 6:9-10

Philippians 1:27-30

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

Hebrews 10:22-25

Romans 15:1-2, 13

James 2:14-18
Philippians 4:2-7, 9

Note: For suggestions on how to conduct a weekly words sharing group, go to the Words of Blessing website at:
http://www.wordsofblessing.com/pdf_docs_other/word_sharing_instruct_v5.pdf

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