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## When Pentecost Had Come

By Oswald J. Smith, D.D.

Turn with me to Acts 2:17, 18: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."

Such is God's glorious promise, spoken first of all by the Holy Spirit through the prophet Joel, and again by the same Holy Spirit through the lips of Peter on the day of Pentecost. For ten long days they had waited, a hundred and twenty of them, and now at last Pentecost had come. Oh, wonderful hour!

They had not waited in vain. Their Master's promise was at last verified. The Spirit had been poured forth. In obedience they had tarried, no one even suggesting that they commence their great work. They knew that their Lord would be faithful to His Word, and they waited. Now He had come, and they were ready at last to go forth with His glorious gospel to all the world.

But no sooner had the Holy Ghost come than the crowds began to gather. Men of every nation and tongue had journeyed to Jerusalem to keep the Feast. Jewish proselytes abounded on every side. And so thousands were soon listening to the new Message. And to the amazement of all, each man was able to hear the gospel in his own tongue. The disciples were speaking every language and dialect required. "And they were amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in his own tongue, wherein we were born?" And well might their astonishment overwhelm them, for they were listening to simple Galilean fishermen—men who would find it extremely difficult to master any language, suddenly gifted to speak in a foreign tongue—so clearly, so perfectly, mark you, that they needed no interpreter to make their meaning plain.

No wonder they were confounded "because that every man heard them speak in his own language." Not in an "unknown" tongue, but in a distinct, understandable language. Look at the list: "Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians." Listen to their own testimony: "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." That was the thing that first startled them. "They were amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?"

But they were not all serious. Satan had his emissaries present also. "What meaneth this?" exclaimed the more

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## Highest In The Middle

Rev. Richard Traver, in "Free Methodist"

Look Daddy! See! The road is highest in the middle!" One of my children said it some years ago as we drove along; and it came back to me today, loaded with meaning. It is true in any field—if the highest way seems at one extreme or the other, it turns out later that we had not found the scope of the field, and had not properly defined its boundaries.

God has been at great pains to show us He wants us in the middle of the road. He inspired Paul to show us that somewhere between heathen debauchery and fanatical over-emphasis on manifestations and signs there is the clear way of righteous practice, couple with Spirit-anointing—in the middle of the road. James was led to save us from mysticism on the one hand and humanistic "work-ism" on the other. Disillusioned Solomon, in his older years, wrote several of the chapters of our Scriptures describing the pitfalls of a passion-driven life at one extreme and the dry emptiness of ascetic restraint-for-its-own-sake at the other; and counselled young people to reverence God and steer clear of bondage to the senses, and yet at the same time to gratefully and openly enjoy the legitimate delights which He intended life to contain.

The old prophet asked, "What doth the Lord require of thee, O man, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." Which command, completely followed, will employ all of one's powers—in the middle of the road.

Paul not only suggests such a course in all his writings, but also flatly commands, "Let your moderation be known to all men."

Moderation is not deadness, flatness, cowardice, nor compromise in the evil sense. Colorless, spineless, lacking deep convictions, are not characteristics of moderation. These are the ditch on the left of the road, just as fiery, inconsiderate, heedless zeal is the ditch on the right. The safe seaway for life's vessel lies between the deep whirlpool of fanaticism on one side and the dangerous mud flats of formalism on the other. The living way is cast up between the bramble-choked path of heresy and false doctrine on the one hand, and the rocky climb over the barren crags of dead orthodoxy on the other. The Pharisees were orthodox and the Sadducees were heretical, but they conspired together to kill Jesus.

Only the immature Christian (age regardless) can oppose the way of intelligent, determined moderation with any degree of clear conscience. He just does not know any better. As his divinely-implanted grace grows in wisdom and sense (Phil. 1:9-14), he will increasingly see that God's way is the central way—all the human and all the Divine with which the human may co-operate working together in a beautiful blend; living and working in the

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